



**Competition Commission**

23 June 2021

Online Market Inquiry  
DTI Campus  
Mulayo (Block C)  
77 Meintjies Street  
Sunnyside, Pretoria

Per email: [ojpmi@compcom.co.za](mailto:ojpmi@compcom.co.za)

Dear Mr Hodge and Ms Jokazi,

**RE: ONLINE MARKET INQUIRY – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM AIRBNB**

1. We refer to the letter sent by the Competition Commission (the “**Commission**”) to Airbnb Ireland UC (“**Airbnb**”) dated 19 May 2021 (the “**Commission’s RFI**”).
2. We note that Airbnb has also prepared a submission to the Commission which addresses some of the questions and themes raised in the Statement of Issues (the “**SOI Response**”). We have as much as possible avoided duplication across the two submissions and therefore this submission and the SOI Response should be considered in parallel.
3. Set out below are Airbnb’s responses to each of the queries raised by the Commission related to the activity of the Airbnb Platform in the accommodation and experiences sectors in South Africa. For ease of reference we have first restated each of the Commission’s questions before setting out the Airbnb response.
4. This submission is being made by Airbnb Ireland UC, a subsidiary of Airbnb, Inc., a company listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange. For any queries in relation to this submission or in relation to Airbnb more broadly, please contact [REDACTED].
5. [REDACTED]

**SECTION A - BACKGROUND AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES**

6. **Question 1 - Provide the most recent organogram depicting the companies directly and indirectly controlled by your parent company and all its subsidiaries**
  - 6.1. The Airbnb group (“**We**” or “**Airbnb**”) consists of more than 70 legal entities incorporated in different countries, [REDACTED]. Airbnb operates a global platform (“**Airbnb Platform**”) that enables registered users to offer and book accommodations and experiences offered by other registered users. Within the Airbnb group: (i) Airbnb Ireland UC, an entity incorporated in the Republic of Ireland, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

6.2. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

7. **Question 2 - Indicate if your company or related operating companies are owned and controlled by Historically Disadvantaged Persons (“HDPs”)**

7.1. No

8. **Question 3 - Briefly describe the platform business and how it is positioned relative to other platform businesses**

8.1. Under the Airbnb brand, Airbnb operates the Airbnb Platform, an online marketplace that enables registered users to offer accommodation and experiences (“Hosts”) to registered users that are seeking to book such services (“Guests”). Hosts and Guests communicate and transact directly with one another through the Airbnb Platform. The Experiences marketplace allows guests to book experiences (e.g., cooking classes, sightseeing tours, etc.) with Hosts, which are either provided in-person or online. As the provider of the Airbnb Platform, Airbnb does not own, control, offer or manage any services offered by Hosts and is not a party to the agreement concluded directly between Hosts and Guests. The Airbnb Platform is made available to users free of charge, but Airbnb charges fees to Guests and/or Hosts when a booking is made.

8.2. The sectors in which Airbnb participates are highly competitive and [REDACTED]. There is strong competition not only between platforms in these sectors (for example, travel aggregators and Online travel agencies (“OTAs”)) but also between platforms and enterprises that are not platforms. In relation to non-platform competitors (for example, travel agencies, hotel groups, and holiday rental companies), many of these businesses have very strong consumer brands and a well-developed online and offline presence, and compete vigorously with Airbnb. When considering the competitive landscape in the accommodation sector, it is therefore important to look not just at competition between platform entities, but also at competition between platforms and non-platform entities.

8.3. Users therefore have a range of options for listing their accommodation and experiences, both online and offline, and for booking their accommodation and experiences. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. This

“multi-homing” by hosts and guests is facilitated by several factors: (1) the absence of switching costs - it is free to list on Airbnb and most other distribution channels; (2) the ease of switching - Guests can generally search for accommodation online without registering an account, and only need to provide limited information in order to make a search and it is simple for hosts to move their listing information from Airbnb to other platforms, and (3) low barriers to entry for hosts - in order to become a Host on the Airbnb Platform you only need to have an internet connection and some free space at home that you want to share with Guests.

8.4. Low barriers to entry are also one of the main reasons that the accommodation sector is so competitive - and the Airbnb story illustrates this. Airbnb was started by two friends who offered airbeds in their home to three guests to earn extra income; in less than 12 years, the platform has grown to be a global marketplace.

8.5. For context, some of Airbnb’s competitors globally and in South Africa include:

8.5.1. Global OTAs, such as Booking Holdings (including the brands Booking.com, Priceline.com, and Agoda.com); Expedia Group (including the brands Expedia,

Vrbo, HomeAway, Hotels.com, Orbitz, and Travelocity); Trip.com Group (including the brands Trip.com, Qunar, and SkyScanner); Fliggy (a subsidiary of Alibaba); Despegar; and MakeMyTrip;

- 8.5.2. South African OTAs and travel aggregator websites such as Travelstart, TravelCheck, FlightSite and NightsBridge;
- 8.5.3. Internet search engines, such as Google, including its travel search products;
- 8.5.4. Listing and meta search websites, such as TripAdvisor, Trivago, Mafengwo, AllTheRooms.com, Property24, Gumtree, SafariNow, LekkeSlaap and government or city tourism websites such as Cape Town Tourism;
- 8.5.5. International and local hotel chains, such as Marriott, Hyatt, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Sun, International and City Lodge Hotel Group, as well as boutique hotel chains and independent hotels (all of which will readily accept walk-in business and therefore operate in both online and offline spaces);
- 8.5.6. Offline channels such as brick and mortar travel agencies and listings in travel magazines and newspapers; and
- 8.5.7. Online platforms offering experiences, such as Viator, GetYourGuide, Klook, Traveloka and KKDay.

## SECTION B - PLATFORM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

9. **Question 4 – Provide the most recent audited annual financial statements (AFS) (or management accounts if the AFS cover a number of businesses) for the South African operations of your platform business**

9.1. [REDACTED]

10. **Question 5 - To the extent that it is not contained in the AFS, provide a detailed financial breakdown of both revenue sources and operational costs of the platform for the most recent financial year (April-March Basis, if not, indicate).**

10.1. [REDACTED]

11. **Question 6 - Since the launch of the platform in South Africa, provide the following information for each year of operation: (i) site traffic; (ii) number of active consumers; (iii) number of businesses on the platform; and (iv) number of transactions or leads generated on the platform.**

11.1. As mentioned above, one of the features of Airbnb (and other online distribution channels) is the low barriers to entry for Hosts. To become a Host, you only need access to the internet, some free space in your home, or an experience to offer. The ease with which Hosts can list on the Airbnb Platform has made it possible for ordinary South Africans to participate and benefit from the tourism sector as well as spreading the tourism outside big cities (properties listed on Airbnb platform in rural areas have [REDACTED] in the past 5 years in South Africa). This means that many of the Hosts on the platform are not professionals, rather, they are South African

families that offer their experience or rent out a room in their house or their home on an occasional basis. Hosts in South Africa are not required to identify whether they are acting in a personal capacity or as a business when using the Airbnb Platform. For the purpose of this RFI response, we have therefore defined “**Professional Hosts**” as: (i) Hosts that have more than [REDACTED] listings on the Airbnb Platform; (ii) Hosts that list their inventory on the Airbnb Platform through professional channels - either by connecting directly to Airbnb’s Application Programme Interface (API), listing on Airbnb via a third party’s connection to the Airbnb API (e.g. through property management software system), or engaging a property management company to manage their listing on Airbnb. “**Non-Professional Hosts**” are hosts that do not satisfy these criteria.

- 11.2. As mentioned in Section A above, the Airbnb Platform is accessible globally (with the exception of very few countries), and so there has not been a specific launch date or event for each country in which we operate, including South Africa. For this reason, we have compiled the data for South Africa for the past 5 years (2016-2020):

11.2.1. Site traffic: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

11.2.2. Number of active businesses: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

11.2.3. Number of active consumers: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

11.2.4. Number of transactions: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2016	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2017	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2018	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2019	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2020	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

12. **Question 7 - Provide illustrative examples of any monthly management reports on key metrics used to track the performance of the platform. If no such report exists, then provide a list of the key performance metrics that management uses to track the performance of the platform.**

12.1. [REDACTED]

#### SECTION C – BUSINESS MODEL

13. **Question 8 - Provide investor or any other presentations that describe your company's current business and business model. If no investor presentations exist, provide internal documents describing the business model.**

13.1. As part of the initial public offering of Airbnb ("Airbnb IPO") that took place in December 2020 Airbnb Inc filed Form S-1 with the American Securities and Exchange Commission (<https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1559720/000119312520294801/d81668ds1.htm>). The S-1 contains comprehensive information about Airbnb and its business model.

13.2. Since then, Airbnb has released quarterly shareholder letters to investors. To date, only Q4 2020 letter<sup>1</sup> to investors and Q1 2021 letter<sup>2</sup> to investors have been released and are publicly available.

14. **Question 9 - Provide all internally and externally commissioned research and/or studies conducted in the past three years on the consumer side of the platform, the business user side of the platform and the market position of your platform relative to competitors.**

14.1. In the last three years [REDACTED]

15. **Question 10 - Provide copies of your company's latest marketing materials and presentations used in engagements with different types of potential business users of the platform.**

15.1. [REDACTED]

We also send emails to professional hosts to share best practices and to provide suggestions on how to optimise the performance of their listings on Airbnb<sup>4</sup>.

15.2. Aside from the above, Airbnb has created a dedicated help center page<sup>5</sup> in which any user can find useful information about local regulations as well as tax obligations. With regards to the latter, Airbnb has partnered with a local start up called "Tax Tim" in order to offer information to local hosts on how to declare their income and fill in the official forms.

<sup>1</sup> [https://s26.q4cdn.com/656283129/files/doc\\_financials/2020/q4/Airbnb\\_Q4-2020-Shareholder-Letter\\_Final.pdf](https://s26.q4cdn.com/656283129/files/doc_financials/2020/q4/Airbnb_Q4-2020-Shareholder-Letter_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://s26.q4cdn.com/656283129/files/doc\\_financials/2021/q1/Airbnb\\_Q1-2021-Shareholder-Letter\\_Final.pdf](https://s26.q4cdn.com/656283129/files/doc_financials/2021/q1/Airbnb_Q1-2021-Shareholder-Letter_Final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://press.airbnb.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/09/Airbnb-in-South-Africa-Positive-Impact-of-Healthy-Tourism.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Please find here one example of the content we share with professional hosts in these emails:

<https://view.highspot.com/viewer/603c65673f65f61b14b97d10>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/3009/responsible-hosting-in-south-africa>

16. **Question 11 - Provide copies of your company's latest marketing materials targeted at consumers.**

- 16.1. As mentioned in the previous question, [REDACTED] we have launched some joint initiatives with local stakeholders such as promoting remote working<sup>6</sup> with Wesgro in the Western Cape and promoting the diversity and beauty of KwaZulu-Natal<sup>7</sup> to local travellers in partnership with Tourism KwaZulu-Natal.

**SECTION D - RELATIONSHIP WITH BUSINESS USERS**

17. **Question 12 - Provide information on any segmentation of the business users on the platform used by your company.**

- 17.1. As explained at 9.1, we do not require Hosts in South Africa to identify on the Airbnb Platform whether they are business users or consumers.
- 17.2. The only differentiation between Hosts that you can find while browsing on the Airbnb Platform are some badges that might appear on the host profile or the property profile. On the host profile you might find the "superhost" badge that identifies experienced Hosts that meet the qualitative criteria set in the Superhost Terms<sup>8</sup>. This badge is aimed at giving recognition to those experienced Hosts that during the previous year have received outstanding reviews from the Guests that have visited their homes. Finally, in some listings you might find the "plus" badge that identifies those properties that have a certain number of amenities and comply with the criteria<sup>9</sup> set out for Plus listings.

18. **Question 13 - Provide documentation or presentations sent to business users that provide a breakdown of all fees and commissions levied by the platform including any add-on services available (e.g. promotions, display prominence, search prominence, market intelligence, etc) and penalty fees**

- 18.1. We have two different Airbnb service fee structures for accommodation listings<sup>10</sup>: (i) "split-fee", where both hosts and guests pay a service fee, and (ii) "host-only fee", where only the host pays a service fee.
- 18.1.1. Split-fee: A service fee is deducted from the host payout, and a service fee is charged to guests.
- 18.1.1.1. Host service fee: Most Hosts pay a service fee of 3%, but Airbnb Plus Hosts<sup>11</sup>, and Hosts who apply Super Strict cancellation policies<sup>12</sup> may pay more. This fee is calculated from the booking subtotal (the nightly rate plus cleaning fee and additional guest fee, if applicable, but excluding Airbnb fees and taxes) and is automatically deducted from the host payout.
- 18.1.1.2. Guest service fee: Most Guests pay a service fee that is under 14.2% of the booking subtotal (the nightly rate plus cleaning fee and additional guest fee, if applicable, but excluding Airbnb fees and taxes). The fee

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.airbnb.co.za/d/westerncape>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.airbnb.co.za/d/kwazulu-natal>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.airbnb.com/superhost/terms>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2675/airbnb-plus-program-standards>

<sup>10</sup> Users can find all the information on how the fees work on Airbnb here: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/1857/what-are-airbnb-service-fees>

<sup>11</sup> Please note that there are two categories of listings (not hosts) that comply with certain requirements, services and have a list of amenities that can be identified in the platform as Plus or Luxe.

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation\\_policies](https://www.airbnb.com/home/cancellation_policies)

varies based on a variety of booking factors and is displayed to Guests, including during checkout before they book a reservation.

18.1.2. Host-only fee: The entire service fee is deducted from the host payout, and no Airbnb service fee is paid by Guests. The host-only fee typically ranges from 14% to 16% and is mandatory for hotels and some other Hosts. It's also mandatory for Hosts in South Africa that connect to Airbnb through the Airbnb API. Airbnb Plus Hosts, and Hosts who use Super Strict cancellation policies may pay more.

18.2. It is free for Hosts to list and advertise their properties and experiences on Airbnb. It is not currently possible for Hosts to pay for enhanced display or search prominence on Airbnb.

18.3. There are no other paid "add-on" services on the Airbnb Platform available to Hosts in South Africa. It's worth noting that some listings that meet certain criteria can acquire the "plus" badge. For these cases some specific terms might apply<sup>13</sup>.

19. **Question 14 - Provide documentation on any criteria that must be met for business users to operate on the platform or to access certain features of the platform. If no such documentation exists, please describe the criteria that must be met.**

19.1. There is no specific criteria that Professional Hosts need to meet in order to operate on the Airbnb Platform.

19.2. All users joining the Airbnb Platform, irrespective of whether they are Professionals or Non-Professionals (as defined above), must agree to the following set of terms: (i) Airbnb Terms of Service<sup>14</sup>; (ii) Airbnb Payment Terms<sup>15</sup>; and (iii) Airbnb Privacy Policy<sup>16</sup>.

19.3. Aside from that all users of the platform must meet our Community Standards<sup>17</sup> which also include Airbnb Nondiscrimination policy<sup>18</sup>.

19.4. Hosts that connect to the Airbnb Platform through the Airbnb API are also subject to Airbnb's standard API terms<sup>19</sup> and sign an additional agreement that sets out the specific conditions of their API access.

20. **Question 15 - Provide documents describing to potential and/or new business users the onboarding process. If no such documents exist, please describe the onboarding process as described to potential and/or new business users.**

20.1. We send emails<sup>20</sup> to our community of Professional Hosts with presentations that explain to them how to create a new listing on the Airbnb Platform and how to use the different tools available on the Platform.

20.2. Similarly, Non-Professional Hosts (as previously defined) have the chance to attend online webinars and workshops in which we share best practices to improve their hosting journey.

<sup>13</sup>Plus host terms can be found here: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2195/airbnb-plus-program-terms-and-conditions>

<sup>14</sup>Terms of service: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2908/terms-of-service>

<sup>15</sup>Payment terms: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2909/payments-terms-of-service>

<sup>16</sup>Privacy Policy: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2855/privacy-policy>

<sup>17</sup>Community Standards: <https://www.airbnb.com/trust/standards>

<sup>18</sup>Nondiscrimination policy: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2867/nondiscrimination-policy>

<sup>19</sup> API terms: <https://www.airbnb.co.uk/terms/api>

<sup>20</sup> Please find here one example of the presentations we share with professional hosts: <https://view.highspot.com/viewer/603c65673f65f61b14b97d10>

20.3. Finally, and as part of the announcement<sup>21</sup> that Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky shared on May 24th, we will be launching a new onboarding process consisting of 10 simple steps to make it even easier for any Host to list their property on the platform.

21. **Question 16 - Provide the latest standard contracts and/or terms and conditions for business users on the platform. If these vary for different types of business user segments, provide examples for each business user segment.**

21.1. Please see our response to question 17 above

22. **Question 17 - Does your company, or any related company, sell your own goods, services or software over your platform (Y/N)? If yes:**

23. No

## SECTION E - RELATIONSHIP WITH CONSUMERS

24. **Question 18 - Provide the standard terms and conditions of use of the platform for consumers.**

24.1. All users willing to create a user account on Airbnb need to accept the same Terms of Service<sup>22</sup> when joining the platform, whether they act as a business or consumer.

25. **Question 19 - Provide the marketing plan of the company in respect of consumers, including the marketing budget and distribution of marketing spend by channel for the past financial year. If no formal plan exists, provide the marketing spend by different channels for the past financial year.**

25.1. As mentioned in our response to Question 10 above, [REDACTED]

26. **Question 20 - Provide information on all the factors used in customer search algorithms and their relative weight in the algorithm used for identifying relevant products and ranking results.**

26.1. The goal of the Airbnb search ranking algorithm is to help Guests find the perfect listing for their trip and help Hosts find Guests who are a great fit for their space. Airbnb takes into account nearly 100 different factors for every listing in every search<sup>23</sup>. Please find below the most relevant ones:

26.1.1. Guest needs: The algorithm takes into account review factors related to the Guest, including where they're searching from, their previous trips, which listings they've added to their Wish List or clicked on.

26.1.2. Listing details: The algorithm takes into account factors including the number of five-star reviews, price, location of the listing, if Instant Book is turned on, or how quickly the Host of the listing responds to requests.

26.1.3. Trip details: The algorithm takes into account how many Guests will be traveling, how long the trip will be, how far in the future the trip is or if they have set a minimum or a maximum price.

<sup>21</sup> CEO announcement new features: <https://news.airbnb.com/2021-release/>

<sup>22</sup>The last version of the Terms of Service can be found here: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2908/terms-of-service#Schedule1>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/39/what-factors-determine-how-my-listing-shows-in-search-results>

- 26.2. **Question 20.1. If the platform offers consumers different ways to sort the search results, provide information on each of the means to sort the results.**
- 26.2.1. The Airbnb Platform allows Guests to use a variety of filters<sup>24</sup> in order to see the listings that are the most relevant for them.
- 26.2.2. The most basic filters that a Guest can use to search for an accommodation are: (i) destination, (ii) check in and check out dates; and (iii) the total number of guests.
- 26.2.3. Notwithstanding the above there are other additional filters that the Guest might decide to apply such as:
- 26.2.3.1. Type of place: Guests can choose from options like an entire place or a private room.
- 26.2.3.2. Price: Guests can use the sliding scale to find listings in your price range.
- 26.2.3.3. Cancellation policy: Guests can choose from a variety of cancellation policies.
- 26.2.3.4. Number of rooms and beds: Guests can choose the number of bedrooms, bathrooms, or beds they need for their trip.
- 26.2.3.5. Amenities: Guests can select the amenities you want for their stay, like a kitchen or a TV.
- 26.2.3.6. Facilities: Guests can select from facility options like a gym or a pool.
- 26.2.3.7. Accessibility: Guests can select the features you need to move around a place comfortably and safely.
- 26.2.3.8. House rules: Guests can search for places that, for example, allow for pets.

#### LOCAL BUSINESS AND SME/HDP FIRM SUPPORT

27. **Question 21 - Does your company have policies/support mechanisms to bring SMEs and/or firms owned and controlled by historically disadvantaged persons on your platform (Y/N)? If yes, provide documentation which details the support provided. If no such documentation exists, please describe the nature of the support provided**

[Please refer to Question 22 below]

28. **Question 22 - If your company operates a global platform, does your company have policies/support mechanisms to develop South African businesses on the platform (Y/N)? If yes, provide documents (or a description if no documentation exists) which detail any policies/mechanisms to support South African businesses.**
- 28.1. Airbnb has always recognised the integral role that the platform can play in encouraging the participation of SMEs, and historically disadvantaged individuals.
- 28.2. Since 2017, Airbnb has invested millions of Rands to promote and support community-led tourism projects in Africa. In partnership with local organisations, Airbnb established the Airbnb Africa

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<sup>24</sup> More information about which types of filters guests can apply can be found here: <https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/479/using-search-filters>

Academy<sup>25</sup> (“AAA”), providing information, training and tools to support aspiring entrepreneurs from rural and under-resourced communities (typically historically disadvantaged individuals) across South Africa to list their own offerings on Airbnb (either Experiences or accommodation).

- 28.3. After an initial test phase in eight South African communities in 2018, the AAA is focused on further building out its impact model in partnership with grassroots tourism organisations. The AAA model has a dual approach: (i) building out training and curriculum materials addressing the unique challenges of under-resourced communities in Africa; and (ii) empowering partner organisations embedded in high-tourism communities to train and support emerging entrepreneurs to succeed on Airbnb.
- 28.4. As previously mentioned, the program is delivered in partnership with local organisations and destination marketing organisations which have included Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape Government, Africa Ignite and ABCD Concepts based in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape. The Academy was recognised in 2020 as best practice in Poverty Alleviation Through Tourism by the World Tourism Alliance, World Bank Group, and the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC).
- 28.5. To date, 30 communities have been included in the AAA, which has trained nearly 300 hosts that have been able to list accommodations and experiences on the Airbnb Platform.
- 28.6. This project is a long term commitment of Airbnb to SMEs and historically disadvantaged individuals. In April 2021, we also expanded to more rural communities in South Africa in partnership with DMO Tourism Kwa-Zulu Natal, who fully funded one of the bootcamps of this AAA model and now we are escalating this model to other countries in the world<sup>26</sup>.
- 28.7. The wider impact of the Airbnb platform also has benefits for small businesses not directly listed on the platform. According to the Economic Impact Study referenced in Question 9 above, 95 percent of hosts recommend local businesses to their guests, and according to a study of South African guests, 52 percent of guests’ spending in Africa occurs within the neighbourhoods where they stay.
- 28.8. In 2020, Airbnb played a proactive role in helping mitigate the disastrous effects of the COVID-19 epidemic in South Africa. The Airbnb Academy Fund, a relief fund established to provide much needed funding to tourism entrepreneurs who participated in the Airbnb Africa Academy, paid out R1 Million to hosts on Airbnb who have been hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis. It is also worth noting that the Airbnb Academy Fund was established as part of Airbnb’s #GetBehindTheMask campaign, a host-led movement to support communities struggling with the impact of COVID-19. In partnership with the Western Cape Government’s Maskathon and Afrika Tikkun, the initiative aims to donate 50 000 cloth face masks to communities who need them most. Airbnb has committed R1.75 million towards this public health initiative and to date, over 20 000 masks have been donated.
- 28.9. In 2021, Airbnb together with South African Tourism, the Gauteng Tourism Authority and Curiosity, partnered with its hosts to develop the Support Jozi, Shop Local initiative to support local businesses during COVID-19 and beyond<sup>27</sup>. Hosts on Airbnb have recommended much-loved hidden gems in their neighbourhoods - from coffee shops and cinemas, to bookstores and clothing stores. To make it a little easier to support these small businesses, Airbnb has partnered with the mobile payment app, SnapScan on a rewards campaign which allows hosts and guests on Airbnb, as well as the broader Johannesburg public, to earn vouchers called ‘Jozibucks’ (paid

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.airbnb.co.za/d/airbnb-academy?locale=en&\\_set\\_beve\\_on\\_new\\_domain=1601295358\\_xqdoHJXHHb8i6VuL](https://www.airbnb.co.za/d/airbnb-academy?locale=en&_set_beve_on_new_domain=1601295358_xqdoHJXHHb8i6VuL)

<sup>26</sup> Please find more information about hti initiative here: <https://news.airbnb.com/empowering-diverse-communities-to-benefit-from-the-return-of-travel/>

<sup>27</sup> Please find here a short video of Shop Local initiative here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sibzjR2eRLE>

for by Airbnb) and spend them at any business featured in the Support Jozi, Shop Local map during the month of March.

- 28.10. Given that Airbnb provides offerings outside of traditional tourist districts, the financial impact of hosting can be significant for emerging travel destinations.

## SECTION G - CONTACT DETAILS OF BUSINESS USERS

29. **Question 23 - Kindly provide the names and contact details of the following business users:**

- 29.1. Please note that we have contacted our most relevant professional hosts as well as SME hosts operating on the Airbnb Platform in South Africa to encourage them to proactively engage with the Commission and answer the official survey for Business hosts.

## SECTION H - OTHER

30. ***If the aforementioned questions do not cover any areas you consider important for the understanding of your platform or other platforms against which you compete, and which are not covered in submissions to the Statement of Issues, you are welcome to send the Inquiry other documents and/or information that may assist the Inquiry. The Inquiry is likely lend greater weight to evidence-based facts.***

[Please refer to the SOI Response, which includes additional information regarding Airbnb and its platform.]

31. Kindly note that parts of information set out herein and many of the annexures to the submission are confidential to Airbnb. In this regard please find attached the requisite **Form CC7** and **Schedule** thereto.
32. We trust that the above is of assistance to the Commission in its Online Market Inquiry. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any additional queries or would like to discuss any aspect of the above.

*[Transmitted electronically without signature]*