

FINALISTS SYNOPSIS

TOP ICT SMME

SIYAFUNDA COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Siyafunda CTC provides information through our community knowledge centres, where people can access computers, the internet, and other digital technologies that enable them to gather information, create, learn, and communicate with others while they develop essential digital skills.

The focus is on the use of digital technologies to support community, economic, educational, and social development — reducing isolation, bridging the digital divide, promoting health issues, creating economic opportunities, and reaching out to youth. Providing essential skills to the youth and the unemployed and people with disabilities, thereby making them employable and alleviating unemployment by networking with recruitment agencies, government agencies and businesses, thus becoming an enabler for job creation.

TOP ICT INNOVATOR

GoMetro

Bridging information gaps between public service providers and the consumer is a key challenge in emerging markets, specifically in transportation. In South Africa, three million commuters rely on Metrorail to carry out their daily activities. As with any large-scale transportation system, Metrorail is subject to delays, cancellations, and schedule fluctuations due to maintenance, train breakdowns, staff capacity, and so on. But the provider does not have the resources to offer real-time information to the consumer, leaving commuters with uncertainty and negatively affecting them in their daily lives.

The idea was born out of the founder's personal commuting experience. Justin Coetzee identified the need to improve the information provision for Metrorail commuters. He noticed that timetables in train stations were either non-existent or unreliable. Justin came up with the idea to use the information generated in the Metrorail control centers and deliver it directly into the mobile devices of everyday Metrorail commuters. They now have access to real-time, up-to-the-minute train schedules, as well as information on platform changes, route maps, a fare calculator, trip planner, and tourist and business services, all combined in an easy-to-use application. Additionally, the application provides a series of other services such as a complaints section, a jobs portal, or entertainment content.

GoMetro offers the application for free and generates revenue through the sale of advertising space to companies that want to reach commuters with information about their products and services. As a result, GoMetro's revenue depends mostly on the number of users of the application. In the CEO's own words: "Our focus is on the commuter [...] and number of eyeballs we have engaging with the service." With currently 450,000 users and a download increase of 10-15% each month, the application has become an attractive marketing platform.

GoMetro has partnered with Metrorail to obtain exclusive access to train traffic information and service announcements so that it is able to provide users with first hand information. Metrorail, in conjunction, is advertising Gometro on the train tickets. While collaboration started in the Western Cape province where GoMetro is located, so far contracts have been secured with the Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

ITSI SCHOOL PROJECT

ITSI provides a digital solution that enhances and simplifies the teaching and learning experience at every touch-point. Our technologies are designed with the teacher / educator in mind, enabling them to easily combine their own content – both found and personally created – with the most up-to-date curriculum content from leading publishers or the Internet. Our products are designed to work with all major smart device operating systems, enabling educators, lecturers and facilitators to deliver student-specific content to any device.

The ITSI Solution is the result of research and development since 2006 and was piloted in various public schools as part of the Ericsson Education Suite, as part of its Connect to Learn initiative, in the period 2010-2012. As the lead content provider for this initiative, the Education Suite was piloted in *Diepsloot, Bathabile* and *Westbury High School* in the South of Johannesburg.

In addition, the product was piloted in a private school in 2012 and has since then been adopted by more than 43 000 learners across more than 150 schools throughout South Africa. ITSI recently expanded into the UK and Namibia. The CURRO Holdings group, which is a publicly traded company listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, currently has 42 of their schools utilising the ITSI Solution.

ITSI currently distributes the electronic books of more than 80 publishers such as Oxford University Press, Pearson, NB Publishers, Van Schaik, Macmillan, Via Afrika and more. In 2015 ITSI became the official partner of Vodacom in their e-learning initiative and are actively involved in the Model Schools Project of the Western Cape Education Department as well as Government initiatives in the Free State. In 2013, PSG Asset Management acquired a substantial share hold in ITSI.

FUTURE ICT LEADER

TUMELO KOMAPE

Tumelo Komape – or TK, as he is known online – has been described as a ‘social media ninja’ and a ‘digital genius’. And while there can be little doubt that Tumelo can deliver a masterclass on how to effectively utilize Twitter, his skills extend to all digital platforms.

Tumelo is currently the Digital Manager for the City of Johannesburg where he is responsible for the websites, social media and other digital marketing platforms. In April 2013, the @CityofJoburgza twitter account – which deals with residents’ queries and complaints, and broadcasts information – had less than 4 000 followers, most of whom were angry. Under Tumelo’s watch, over a period of just three years, that number grew to 340 000, with about 20 000 new followers each month, and the account has become a case study in responsive customer service.

Tumelo is a Communications Studies graduate of the University of the Western Cape, and a (non-degree) Postgraduate Certificate in International Human Rights exchange program from the University of Cape Town and endorsed by Bard College New York. He is also a professional jazz pianist after doing three years towards a performer’s diploma in Jazz at UCT. He has qualified as a Web Developer with Certificates in web design (from Vega), and is currently completing a software engineering qualification at the University of Johannesburg. He has seven years of experience in Digital Marketing, Content generation and web development with hands-on experience in:

- social media customer service and strategy
- web design and development (*html 5, CMS –Joomla, Sharepoint, Wordpress,*)
- project management
- Digital marketing
- Mobile app development
- Lecturing and training on social media and online marketing

TOP ICT ACCESSIBILITY EXCELLENCE

ROBOBEAST 3D PROSTHETIC

Founded by Richard. When Richard lost some fingers one could say he went out on a limb to find the best solution for a prosthetic hand. This led him to 3D printing and the development of the ROBOHAND, which today can be printed anywhere in the world using his invention; the RoboBeast 3D printer. The ROBOHAND has helped hundreds of amputees as he continues his humanitarian drive in places as far afield as war-torn Syria. Next? A prosthetic leg.

MERAKA INSTITUTE- TEXT TO VOICE AFRICA LANGUAGES

The Meraka Institute is an operating unit of the CSIR focused on Information and communication technology (ICT). We are in the business of research, innovation and advanced human capital development. With over 200 staff and students, Meraka is the largest group in South Africa dedicated to ICT research. It has extensive national and international networks and actively collaborates with other organisations across the globe. Meraka contributes to enhancing quality of life and economic competitiveness in South Africa and the continent through ICT by:

- researching and developing new technology that enables ICT access, inclusion and use
- researching, developing and transferring innovative ICT products, processes and services into the market
- researching, developing, building and operating world-class cyber infrastructure
- Contributing skills and outcomes that are changing the profile of our ICT landscape.

Meraka's cross-cutting initiatives combine a number of capabilities in developing flagship opportunities in specific markets, notably for education and rural development.

TOP WOMAN IN ICT

CHARMAINE HOUVET

Charmaine has over 24 years telecommunications experience working with governments, private and public sector across Africa. Charmaine joined Cisco in March 2016 with several years' experience as a Senior Executive in diverse and transformative roles with leading ICT companies. She is responsible for supporting Cisco with country digitization programmes and enabling public sector policy reform across Africa.

Charmaine has a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of South Africa and a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from the University of South Africa. Charmaine serves as a Chairperson of the South African Women in ICT Forum board. SA Women in ICT works with businesses across the ICT industry and government to drive the development of women in ICT roles. She recently founded Afriel; a non-profit organization that mentors young female leaders. She is also a mentor for the NGO Company Girl Code za that works with government, private and public sector to empower young girls seeking a long term career in ICT by teaching girls how to code and design.

Charmaine represents Cisco on the board of the South African Communications Forum (SACF). SACF facilitates dialogue and policy review between the public, private sector and government to drive reform across the ICT sector with the objective of bridging the digital divide.

LOCAL ICT INDUSTRIALISATION

GEEKKULCHA

Established 15 March 2013, our focus is on empowering young geeks through ICT skills development and training while giving them a taste of what awaits them in the big world through industry exposure.

Geekulcha creates and enable platforms for Innovation and Creativity to develop skills and help grow the socio-economic structures of our society. We champion hackathons, start-ups, Big/Open Data, STEM, Maker Culture, Cloud Computing, Digitalization and others to unearth Innovation and create Impact.

HONORARY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

MICHAEL AYMER LAWRIE

Mike matriculated at SACS in 1957, and then served as a computer technician with ICL. He earned his National Engineering Diploma at Cape Tech in 1961, and graduated with a B.Sc (Hons) degree in mathematics at Rhodes University in 1969. He took up the post of Computer Manager at Rhodes University in 1971, and was soon deeply involved in multi-access computer networks. He earned his Masters degree at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in 1978, in the department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. He ran the Uninet network from 1994 until its closure in 2001. He is now retired, but runs the internal ADSL network at the retirement centre where he lives in Pretoria.

In 1988 Mike led the informal team at Rhodes University that established the first Internet networking in South Africa. From the outset, he set up Rhodes as a gateway to other African countries. In due course, there were links to Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. He has been a resource person at African networking conferences in Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi and Nigeria. Among others, he received an ICT Award for Internet Pioneers of Africa from the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation. He has attended a number of international networking conferences, and has had active involvement at several of them. He administered the ZA domain namespace from 1994 until 2002.