Township Tech Wrap-up

**As part of the Western Cape Government DashTech projects, funded by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to further encourage growth in various tech sectors, the Township Tech project (managed by CiTi) delivered insights through various community engagements into the key challenges experienced by local entrepreneurs and business owners within Cape Town townships.**

**These challenges include:**

- Lack of connectivity and access
- Existing services and support not reaching the people and the scale required on the ground to make the impact required
- General safety and security of consumers and businesses within the townships

To understand the broader issues around safety and security within the townships, we need to ask the question: how do we keep businesses and consumers safe while facing:

1. Extortion / protection fees and intimidation from organised crime and corrupt law enforcement

2. Ensuring successful prosecution and conviction through evidence to support law enforcement

3. Removing cash transactions to limit muggings or robberies around and on the premises of

   township businesses

Read more about the TownshipTech Intelligence report here.

In a bold bid to demonstrate creative innovative technology solutions to some of the challenges faced by people in Cape Town's townships, young entrepreneurs from as far as Stellenbosch gathered, collaborated and ideated in the TownshipTech hackathon and pitch competition organized by the Cape Innovation & Technology Initiative in partnership with the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT).

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The online hackathon saw 40 innovators from various fields battle it out using short creative videos explaining their solution to one of the themes, namely Safety and Security, Reach of Support and Services, and Increased Connectivity.

Six finalists, made up of technologists, entrepreneurs, or innovators were named after a fierce round of competition at the hackathon and participated in a final pitch competition on March 10 at the Woodstock Bandwidth Barn.

The competition culminated in an exciting battle that took place as a hybrid event and was live-streamed from the Woodstock Bandwidth Barn on the Khayelitsha Bandwidth Barn Facebook page.

Here's a snapshot of what happened on the day.



The winners were announced after a difficult and close deliberation among the judges, who included Ian Merrington of the Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative (CiTi), Bianca Mpahlaza of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), Faith Kolala of the City of Cape Town, Charmaine Lambert of ABSA, and Ndithini Tyhido of the Khayelitsha Development Forum.

For the Safety and Security theme, Team Tech Khaltsha, coached by Carrie Leaver from the Allan Gray Makers Programme, won R5000 and a 10-month Entrepreneurial Programme.

Team Tech Khaltsha also walked away with a further R5000 for winning the Pitch of the Day. They also won 3 months of co-workspace and video production of their business or product to help them launch in the market.

With a solution called 'Safer Townships with IoT', Team Tech Khaltsha seeks to educate entrepreneurs to stay safe by using a cashless system. Further, they propose the use of CCTV cameras, IoT devices such as Raspberry Pi, command centres and panic buttons.

For the Reach of Services & Support theme, **Team Basket**, coached by Lara Rosmarin from CiTi won R5000 and a 10-month Entrepreneurial Programme.

Basket is an app that connects informal traders and SPAZA shop owners directly to wholesale farmers.





For our Increased Connectivity theme, **Team Cyberspace**, coached by Tyrone Adams from Skywalk Innovations, won R5000 and a 10-month Entrepreneurial Programme.

Cyberspace believes free internet access should be a basic human right and want to partner with social network companies like MTN & Vodacom to bring free internet access to poor communities (through data mining).

Zandile Tlhapi, a team member of the overall pitch winners for the day, Team Tech Khaltsha said "Winning is amazing, we are really in need of the capital to move to the next level and get their business sorted with connectivity – this will help us get there."

"The event was an amazing experience," says Fezeka Mavuso, General Manager at the Khayelitsha Bandwidth Barn. "The contestants were excited and they all worked hard to achieve results for their projects. The coaches were dedicated to assisting the teams and ensuring they reach their full potential throughout the pitch competition."

**Carrie Leaver**, Team Tech Khaltsha's entrepreneurial coach that also won Coach of the Day, added "The experience with the overall pitch competition winners was an absolute pleasure. The team was utterly dedicated to their cause as well as to their existing business. They had great communication and time management skills when it came to building their project." Carrie was most impressed by their team cohesion and how efficiently they worked together. Team Tech Khaltsha complimented each other with their various skills and they were open to feedback and suggestions.



"The Tech Township Hackathon is a fantastic initiative that shines a light on the incredible entrepreneurial ingenuity that is thriving in township communities all across our country. Absa is proud to support it and the young technologists as they look to solve critical challenges within their communities." Andrew Davies, Digital Partnerships Ecosystem Lead at Absa Group.