

Media Release

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TechNovation Social 2023: Reviving Namibia's Culture and Creative Industry for Economic Growth

Twelve (12) Namibian MSMEs will have an opportunity to showcase their products at the upcoming Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) on the sidelines of the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) in Cote d'Ivoire this November following their successful win at the 2023 Technovation Social which took place in Windhoek, on Friday 31 March 2023. An initiative of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), the 2023 TechNovation Social is a biennial event, established to support and draw inspiration from Namibia's Culture and Creative Industry (CCI) with the aim to unlock enterprise opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The CCI in Namibia continues to be relatively under-supported and under-recognised. This was particularly apparent during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, when many MSMEs within the industry found themselves without an income. Conversely, this sector offers some of the most dynamic business and career opportunities worldwide. In other countries, the pandemic underscored the importance of the CCI as a catalyst for the creation of new platforms, infrastructure, and facilities, capturing the attention of the world. The NIPDB, thus, believes that an empowered CCI can carry the Namibia brand to the world through its timeless creations.

"The NIPDD is mandated to be the lead coordinator of MSME activities in Namibia and unlock enterprise opportunities that support the development and growth of MSMEs. We achieve this by fostering trust relationships between various stakeholders with the goal to bridge the gap between those who have access to capital and markets and those who need access to those resources. We believe that this is key to empowering MSMEs across

industries including, but not limited to, CCI,” stated Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the NIPDB, Nangula Uaandja.

TechNovationSocial, thus, exists to rejuvenate Namibia's CCI sector by offering MSMEs in this industry access to international markets, funding, and revenue-generating prospects, as well as a platform to carry the Namibian brand and showcase their talents on an expansive stage. MSMEs in the CCI were invited to participate in and exhibit at TechNovationSocial. The MSMEs represented various subsectors, including new media and graphic design, fashion design, architecture, technology, software development, game development, pottery, textile manufacturing, music and performing arts, cosmetology, and filmmaking, among others.

Twelve (12) MSMEs were chosen to participate in a seven-month enterprise development journey which will culminate in a participation at the CANEX Summit in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The CANEX Summit unites creatives from across the continent and beyond, offering a platform for industry visionaries to display their work, collaborate, and forge connections with key decision-makers, influential investors, financial experts, and fellow creative professionals. With a stellar lineup of leading brands, artists, musicians, producers, and distributors, CANEX is poised to become the biggest assembly of creative talent in Africa for the year.

The winners of 2023 TechNovation Social, who represent various regions and sub-sectors are:

1. Africa Brandberg Investments (Lisias Uusiku) – new media and graphic design company
2. African Naturals Trading (Zodidi Gaseb) – cosmetic company
3. Afroprint Line Trading (Ndeshi Fikameni) – fashion design company
4. Artist Sculptor (Kambezunga Ngavee) – visual arts company
5. By Ray Designs (Raymond Shikale) – textile manufacturing company
6. Couture by Kimatheus Boutique (Kaino Matheus) – fashion design company
7. Kuku’s Art (Vistorina Silvanus) – visual arts company based
8. Momve e-Theatre Service (Ndinomholo Ndilula) - technology, software development and game development

9. Ngandu Events (Steven Haingura) – music and performing arts company
10. RFC Creative Agency (Reggie Zaire) – filmmaking and production company
11. The WOW Company (Werner Alweendo) – technology, software development and game development company
12. Wision Media (Vaughan Weiss) – architecture company

This is what two of the winners had to say:

Vaughan Weiss of Wision Media: “Getting the opportunity to represent Namibia and Wision humbled me. I am excited for business to grow and reach the rest of the African continent. It was an empowering moment,”

Kaino Matheus of Couture by Kimatheus Boutique: “I now have faith in my capabilities. This win has indeed instilled within me the courage to refine my branding, especially after attending the branding masterclass which was recently hosted by the NIPDB. I aspire to elevate my business to new heights by absorbing valuable knowledge from everyone. The fact that I emerged victorious serves as reassurance to persistently innovate and enhance my brand and marketing strategies while preparing to sell my garments on an international scale. I sincerely appreciate the recognition from all stakeholders and sponsors,”

As part of the journey, the 12 MSMEs will participate in a training programme to gain the most value from their experience and participation. Amongst others, the programs will focus on brand development, capacity building, pitching for television and brand visibility through the partner and sponsor organisations – Coca Cola Beverages Africa, FNB Namibia, City of Windhoek, Multichoice Namibia, Turipamwe, Redflag, Creative Culture Investments, Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) at the Intra-African Trade Forum (IATF), Business Box and the MTC Windhoek Fashion Week.

Private sector collaboration is a crucial driver of MSME growth and development in Namibia, and we are grateful for the unwavering support of our key sponsor for the TechNovation Social event, FNB Namibia, a demonstration of their commitment. “Technovation creates a platform for FNB Namibia’s clients within the cultural and creative industry to grow their



businesses, meet like minded individuals as well as engage potential investors while also inspiring the next generation of business owners to chase their dreams and make tangible contributions to our nation,” stated Communication Specialist at FNB Namibia, Hileni Amadhila.

“While creatives work from a place of passion, it is equally crucial to prioritise the business and financial aspects of their ventures. If they are unable to handle these matters themselves, investing in a knowledgeable and trustworthy support team can be the difference between success and failure. Talent alone is not always sufficient to achieve success. To take the business to the next level, one needs to leverage new tools and resources. We at the NIPDB, along with our partners, want to support them on that journey,” shared Executive Director: MSME Development Innovation and Acceleration at the NIPDB, Dino Ballotti.

Global triumphs in the CCI have propelled economic growth in numerous countries. The Philippines has capitalised on pageant participation, utilising events like Miss Universe and Miss World to enhance its global presence, attract tourists, and showcase its cultural heritage. Similarly, the fashion industries in France and Italy have significantly contributed to their economic growth, with Paris and Milan Fashion Weeks positioning them at the vanguard of the global fashion industry, catalysing job creation, innovation, and exports of luxury goods and textiles.

Therefore, through TechNovation Social, we aim to leverage the potential of the creative economy to drive economic transformation, job creation, and sustainable human development. By placing MSMEs with their talents and skills at the centre of the development process and fostering cooperation across all levers of the economy, we can create a more inclusive and socially cohesive society. Our goal is to unlock the full potential of the creative industry and use it to leapfrog our economy into the much-touted knowledge economy.

Should you have any questions about the above, please do not hesitate to contact:



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