The Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative

The Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative (CiTi) is Africa’s oldest tech incubator. Working with government, business and society, CiTi promotes the inclusive growth of the digital economy.

CiTi was established in 1999. Over the past 21 years, CiTi has played an integral role in catalysing and supporting the Cape Town tech ecosystem, now recognized as the most productive on the African continent.

In 2019, both CiTi’s Entrepreneur Development and Skills Development (CapaCiTi) programmes expanded to support entrepreneurs and youth across the country, and on a Pan-African scale. We have offices in both Johannesburg and Cape Town.

The Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative excels through:

- Great industry reputation for delivery, thought leadership and innovation
- Physical presence in the vibrant communities of Woodstock and Khayelitsha
- Complete end-to-end business support from idea stage to R30m-a-year companies
- Proven clustering and ecosystem development in FinTech, EdTech and gaming
- B-BBEE Level 4 supplier that can address 3/5 elements of the B-BBEE Scorecard
- Strong corporate, public, academic and SMME partnerships
- Strong M&E and administration
- Scarce skills development and high-value job placement

CiTi Board Members

Brendan Hughes
Director CiTi

Ian Merrington
CEO CiTi

Ashley Minnaar
CFO Director CiTi

Brendan Hughes
Director CiTi

Raven Naidoo
Director CiTi

Koketso Tlhase
Director CiTi

Alexandria Claire Procter
Director CiTi

Ian Russel
Director CiTi

Fabian Brady Whate
Director CiTi

www.citi.org.za
VeloCiTi's purpose is to grow and support entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ventures through tech enablement, mentorship, funding and ecosystem access.

Why?
- By growing, supporting and scaling businesses we are fueling job creation, youth employment and stimulating the economy.

How?
- “We must look at what needs to be done to promote and encourage the entrepreneurial spirit and an entrepreneurial culture.” Cyril Ramaphosa.
  With the right mentorship, support, training, access to networks and funding, entrepreneurs will become the employment generators of tomorrow.

What support are we offering?
- Entrepreneurship on Demand
- Funding Readiness
- Customised training and mentorship programmes
- Tech enablement programmes (through Woman in Business and Youth in Business)
- Corporate ESD Solutions (for enterprise and supplier development)
- Ecosystem Access (across CiTi’s offerings)
- CiTizens (opportunity to be part of our Alumni and leverage our networks)
- Developing bespoke entrepreneurial programmes

Digital Skills Development

CapaCiTi Digital Career Accelerator is CiTi’s skills development division. Our vision is to enable inclusive growth of the digital economy by ensuring a supply pipeline of future, skilled employees with relevant technical skills matched to industry demand. We do this through innovative training and experiential learning programmes that focus on both technical and professional development.

CapaCiTi co-ordinates expertise, technology and resources to provide unemployed, young South Africans the opportunity to receive training and experience in highly demanded digital, job and career critical skills, giving them a foundation for successful and fulfilling careers. CapaCiTi currently offers three pathways for entry into the digital world of work at our campuses based in Salt River, Cape Town and Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Ecosystem Development & space

Providing space and engagement opportunities for entrepreneurs and business to engage, work and learn. We carefully select industries of the future to support and stimulate, with Open Innovation Clusters that include:
Open Innovation Clusters

When CiTi was established, our founders were motivated by the work of Michael Porter on cluster theory. He essentially codified what was happening in Silicon Valley and Northern Italy, explaining how regional economies built vibrant, tight ecosystems – highly integrated spaces between business, government, society and entrepreneurs. The open innovation clusters were exactly how regional economies were built into global superstars and that is what we want for South Africa and Africa.

By forming Open Innovation Clusters, CiTi is able to increase the productivity of companies in the cluster, drive innovation and stimulate new businesses in the field.

We carefully select industries of the future to support and stimulate, with Open Innovation Clusters that include:

- FinTech
- EdTech
- BioTech
- TravelTech
- DataTech

CiTi is entering its next strategic phase and will be building on its successful platform to expand its model to other African cities.

Information Technology

Information Technology has become more pervasive over the past 15 years. Today IT forms an integral ingredient for success across the innovation spectrum ranging from products and services innovation (internet of things) to business model innovation (mobile money for the unbanked) to social innovation. CiTi supports IT-enabled innovation across a multitude of sectors, including FinTech (and blockchain), TravelTech, HealthTech, Edtech, BioTech and OpenGov.

CiTi is continually facilitating access to the digital economy by providing training and support programmes to businesses enabling the adoption of efficiencies and opportunities available through software, the internet and mobile phone applications. In line with the innovation construct this platform generates opportunities for technology businesses to create products and services for these informed customers.
Women in Business Programme

Women in Business is a flagship programme aimed specifically at providing strategic support and developing the capacity of female entrepreneurs. The Women in Business programme creates a supportive space for women entrepreneurs to gain an in-depth, hands on experiential learning experience of game-changing tech tools available to aid in the growth and development of their business.

During the programme women business owners are introduced to an extensive range of powerful online and digital programmes and platforms to support their business activities.

Over and above the workshop content, the mentorship, peer-to-peer learning, soft skills and networking opportunities, this programme is also designed to provide the women-owned businesses with critical skills that will enable them to develop a robust technology strategy for their business. An Audit Plan, a Tech Plan as well as a Technology Strategy are the final deliverables of this programme.

The Roadmap: Our model

An increasing number of women are embracing entrepreneurship, an area of opportunity that has, until recently, been dominated by men. Research shows that the challenges faced by women are not typically shared by their male counterparts.

Women are defying social norms, dealing with the challenge of having limited access to funding, credit or capital, navigating tough competition, limited support, inability to scale effectively and work-life balance.

Through the Women in Business Programme entrepreneurs are provided with strategic targeted support to enable the implementation and adoption of relevant technology tools to move their businesses to the next growth checkpoints.

Step One:
The first ten weeks comprise of 10 two-hour face to face interventions.

The Key areas of focus are:
- 10 Steps Closer to a Tech Strategy
- Building your Brand
- Design Thinking and Collaboration
- Financial Management Systems
- Legal and Compliance
- Digital Marketing
- Cloud Computing
- Project Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Technology Strategy

A baseline assessment of technology use, a mid-way re-assessment and a final tech strategy development form the key evaluation indicators ensuring that the entrepreneurs receive the relevant support and assistance they require for success. A series of case studies and hands-on workshops introduce business owners to various platforms and technology tools ensuring easy accessibility and a constructive user-friendly environment. Inspirational and practical discussions, networking opportunities with other women entrepreneurs and small group mentorship sessions add much richness to the programme.

Step Two:
On completion of the initial ten week programme entrepreneurs are given the opportunity to further refine their offering over a ten-month period through a customised online programme. The aim is to introduce additional resources and further build on and refine the learnings of the initial phase. The online programme comprises of 10 modules, each of which is a combination of videos, downloadable readings and activities.

- Creating an entrepreneurial strategy
- Defining and marketing one’s value proposition and purpose
- The fundamentals of small business finance
- Talent management and staff development
- Leadership
- Funding your business

Step Three:
Group mentorship sessions take place in conjunction with the online learning portion. The topics tie into the monthly online programme.

We propose a group mentorship programme for each candidate. Research shows positive results from group mentorship sessions as participants are exposed to an increased body of knowledge and learning experiences to improve reflection and critical thinking aptitude. Group mentoring creates a learning unit which promotes diversity of thinking, practice, and understanding.

Small group settings build the individual confidence of mentees to share ideas, feedback and opinions. Group mentoring improves mentee capacity to receive and apply constructive feedback.

Post programme monthly sessions serve to ensure that the implementation of the skills and knowledge gained during the face-to-face and online training programme has been adequately implemented.

A mentor is a crucial resource to ensuring that the participants are moving forward to the next growth checkpoints in their journey.
Key Programme Outcomes

- Business owners are better equipped to compete in the digital economy
- Businesses offerings can be differentiated through digital channels
- Women are equipped with key entrepreneurial skills needed to operate
- Increased consumption of technology products and bandwidth, benefitting the broader IT industry
- Business owners are able to leverage tools which can assist their businesses to grow and scale

CiTizens Alumni Network: Post programmatic support

A thriving community of tech wizards, entrepreneurs, super-staff and friends of the Cape Innovation and Technology Initiative.

As a member of CiTizens, alumni will be able to influence and develop CiTizens to make it what they want it to be. It will be a living and evolving initiative that adapts as members champion activities they are passionate about.

Embedded in CiTizens is the DNA of contributing to help others. It is a platform to grow oneself and a way to contribute to the development of others, especially those who follow in our footsteps.

For more information please contact:

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Alumni Quotes

"Being Tech savvy does not only change how you do business, but it makes you more relevant!"
- Faatiemah Lodewyk

"I had many 'Aha!' moments in these sessions that I was able to implement in my life and my business."
- Lizelle Bailey

"Not only was it a pleasant experience engaging with like-minded women in an online space, but it was great connecting beyond the WIB programme to network and collaborate."
- Leigh Desai

"The more you learn the more equipped you will be to handle obstacle in your entrepreneurial journey."
- Fatima Khan-Wise

"No matter the size or age of your business, a programme like this will aid any entrepreneur."
- Raneah Carr

"I was extremely proud to have been afforded the opportunity to be with a diverse group of participants, even though it was during the lockdown."
- Patricia Manshon

"The Women In Business programme has accelerated my business to be able to thrive in this digital era, which has allowed me to be more efficient and in turn – more productive and creative."
- Stacy Jane Smith

"The programme has highlighted tech tools which I am currently using."
- Sonia Gimenez

"The programme inspires you to be passionate and innovative – women should not miss out on this space, it’s beautiful."
- Awonke Dyantyi