

A BCom to empower Africa's youth towards a brighter future

 By Earle Holmes, issued by AFDA

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AFDA has identified the possibilities of growing the AFDA School of Business Innovation & Technology.



The fourth industrial revolution is well underway and it is shaping up some of the most significant opportunities and challenges of our lifetime. The surging high-tech, sharing economy is transforming jobs, industries and entire economies as we witness our digital and physical worlds continue to merge.

At the centre of this digital transformation is the ongoing adoption of new emerging technologies. It is vital that tertiary education institutions equip the future workforce with the essential skills for this disruptive era.

AFDA has identified the possibilities of growing the AFDA School of Business Innovation & Technology by responding to a call to action in offering a future proof programme designed to stimulate and build capacity in digital transformation. This will ensure that South Africa, SADC countries and the African continent become global competitive players in the digital revolution. Possibilities include focussing on meaningful tech-focused outcomes via the updated Digital Technology discipline as well as expanding the development of two innovation hubs located on the Johannesburg and Cape Town campuses from 2020, in this way adding meaning for our students as well as future credibility of the qualification.

"I feel privileged to be part of an institution that is built on the foundation of entrepreneurship and innovation. The same principles that inspired the creation of AFDA 25 years ago to what it is today is what we impart in the BCom degree course. We are industry focused, we produce graduates who are practically ready to take on the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution. At AFDA change is the constant, whatever it takes to produce the calibre of the graduate that aligns to the industry is implemented," says AFDA Johannesburg Head of Business Innovation and Technology School, Busisiwe Hlatwayo. "AFDA has expanded my entrepreneurship muscle and agility to function in the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) world that we live in."

The tech-focused outcomes allow students to collaborate in realising their businesses through real tech prototyping while expanding the opportunities for more exploration of new technologies with more immersive experience content. This includes learning coding techniques as well as Augmented Reality, Mixed Reality and Virtual Reality. Research shows that Virtual Reality (VR) & Augmented Reality (AR) will become the computing platforms of the future. VR & AR are changing how we design, create, and experience everything from retail, to architecture, health industries, engineering, education & entertainment. VR & AR are destined to replace the future of computing, as these technologies begin to disrupt the PC & smartphone as they evolve towards smart glasses. Globally the VR & AR market will be worth \$215 billion by 2021.

BCom projects go through a rigorous process of grit, critical thinking, collaboration and research as they identify a relevant value or gap in the South African market place, which can be exploited or improved through systems design and technology. In 2019, one projected research outcome was for the development of a non-disposable and smart tampon that could be developed to use for personal blood testing purposes - a truly innovative concept which the team hopes to achieve by 2025.

The integration of entrepreneurship and technology hubs on campuses will create opportunities for students through collaboration, resources and deeper learning where entrepreneurial strategies are applied to real digital outcomes for testing and greater probability of release to the marketplace.

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