

SAB Foundation awards over R9m to small social enterprises

The 2017 SAB Foundation Social Innovation and Disability Empowerment Awards winners were announced in Johannesburg recently. Over R9m in prize money was distributed among the 24 small businesses.

Social Innovation Award winners



L-R Livestock Wealth CEO Ntuthuko Shezi, Mbss Ngoasheng and Nandokazi Nodada

The first prize of R1.3m was awarded to GrassBeef by Livestock Wealth. GrassBeef, developed by Ntuthuko Shezi, is a new healthy way of producing beef that involves the upliftment of rural communal cattle farmers. Livestock Wealth assists communities to produce good quality calves and provides an off-take agreement (by which they purchase the communities' future production). The calves are then moved to a commercial farm setting and external investors are brought in to own the calves and provide for their upkeep. The new owner of the cow gets an annual return on investment of approximately 15% from the sale of the meat.

The second prize of R750,000 went to RailPro under the leadership of Ed Magan – the developers of the RailBus - a cost effective, low tariff transport solution that drives on road and rail. Using under-utilised rail networks both in South Africa and in many other countries, RailPro aims to deliver a lifeline to rural people and businesses. RailPro has won the SABS Design Excellence Award.

In joint third place, with prize money of R500,000 each, are ChemStart and Ivili Lloboya (Cashmere Production).

“ Co-founders [@Sergeraemaekers](#) and Abongile Ngqongwa proudly representing [@abalobi_app](#) at the 2017 [@sabfoundationsa](#) #SABFSIA ceremony  pic.twitter.com/KolxXusBpR— ABALOBI (@abalobi_app) [October 23, 2017](#) ”

Development Awards (worth R400,000 each) were awarded to I-Drop Water and Abalobi, and another two Development Awards (worth R300,000 each) were awarded to Commuscore and the Umgibe Growing System respectively.

Ten seed grants of R150,000 were awarded to HearScope, Balambie, Auto Turtle, Iziko Stoves, Vuleka, Smart Agri Solutions, Seebox, Excel@Uni, Timu Trust and the Aqua Test Kit.

“The submissions for this year’s awards have been remarkable. It is our hope that they will go on to provide sustainable and scalable solutions for South Africa and beyond. We are proud of the role the SAB Foundation plays by assisting innovators, both financially as well as with technical and business support,” says Bridgit Evans, SAB Foundation director.



SAB Foundation Social Innovation Award winners 2017

Disability Empowerment Award winners

GreenABLE and Brownies& Downies were announced joint first place winners receiving R1m each.

GreenABLE is a non-profit company which strives to empower and develop disabled individuals while benefiting the environment by training people with disabilities to dismantle empty printer cartridges into their recyclable components for recycling. The company currently employs 34 people.

Brownies & Downies is a coffee shop and lunchroom which serves as a training centre for people with intellectual disabilities and currently employs 36 people. Brownies & Downies provides on-site, work-while-training opportunities consisting of hard-skills, soft-skills and social-skills training.

“ Glamorous evening, awesome people, great company. [#SABFSIA2017](#) [#Ideas4Change](#)
pic.twitter.com/LC6YKo3wWx— Brownies&downieS (@BDSouthAfrica) [October 23, 2017](#) ”

The Rural Handbike for wheelchair users and Smergos were both awarded R400,000 in joint second place. Rural Handbike for wheelchair users are bikes that are specially designed to easily assemble and disassemble. Smergos creates a range

of wheelchair bags and other accessories that provide much needed functionality through a choice of simple, personalised designs.

In joint third place with prize money of R150,000 each are Finger Talk and Proxisee. Finger Talk is South Africa's first mobile app for learning South African Sign Language (SASL) and the app is aimed at Deaf South Africans and their families and friends. Proxisee is a mobile app, which aims to bring a sense of "sight" and navigation to blind or visually impaired persons by means of audible (sound) and touch sensitive (vibrations) signals.

"To date 105 entrepreneurs have benefited from the awards, which has resulted in 167% increase in jobs and a 245% increase in turn-over. We see these awards as the first step in what will be a long and fruitful relationship with these innovators and entrepreneurs. The intention of the foundation is to see these valuable businesses through to commercialisation to the benefit of all South Africans," says Evans.

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