

Top 10 finalists announced for first 2023 Mpumalanga green solutions pitch challenge

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The Top 10 finalists for the first 2023 Mpumalanga green solutions pitch challenge have been selected, from a wide range of cross-cutting green economy entries.



MPUMALANGA GREEN CLUSTER AGENCY

Mpumalanga Green Solutions PITCH CHALLENGE 2023

TOP 10 innovations

- Clearfountain
- Green Guru Solutions
- GMS with the E-pacer 100
- House Harvest
- Kruger to Canyons (K2C) Biosphere region (NPC)
- SAMANJALO
- Smart Food Growing (SFG) Technologies with WickBox™ & The WickTray™ grow trays
- SolaGeyza
- Solar Rais
- Thrive Land Restoration (Pty) Limited

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH: SOUTH AFRICA UK PACT

SUPPORTED BY: GreenCape

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“The projects encompass renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, circular economy, water and sanitation green solutions. 90% of the entries are from black-owned businesses, and 46% are female-owned,” said Nathi Nkonyane, Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency CEO. “We are excited to celebrate and showcase early-stage green economy solutions in Mpumalanga, and want to ensure that investment and job creation in the green economy is catalyzed through initiatives such as these.”

These pre-venture and early stage start-up green businesses will now be preparing to pitch to a panel of judges at a shark tank-style networking event, hosted in Emalahleni on 1 November 2023. The finalist will have the opportunity to network with potential investors, business incubators, local government decision-makers and green economy experts.

The judging panel will include representatives of the [Presidential Climate Commission](#), the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency, Grindstone, Untapped Global and Seriti Green.

Sponsors and partners

The winners of the 2023 Mpumalanga green solutions pitch challenge stand to win cash and in-kind business support prizes from [Seriti Green](#), [Anglo American Foundation](#) (for the best youth-focused project), [Sarebi](#), [The Ethical Agency](#) and a marketing video worth approximately R40,000. [Thinkroom Consulting](#) will be sponsoring Thinkubate licenses for all the pitches. The workshop and pitch challenge is supported by [GreenCape](#) in partnership with the [UK PACT](#) (Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions).

“Mpumalanga is the energy heartland of South Africa and the just transition towards a sustainable future without leaving anyone behind is key. This initiative provides opportunities to future proof Mpumalanga,” said Peter Venn, CEO of Seriti Green.

“The Anglo American Foundation is delighted to support the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency and their Green Solutions Pitch Challenge. We are inspired by the creativity and trailblazing innovation of the finalists to tackle their community's toughest challenges with green solutions. They are the architects of tomorrow's greener, more equitable world, and we are proud to shine a spotlight on the youth-driven project that epitomises this vision that this is well aligned with the foundations' focus on youth empowerment.” said Maike Von Heymann, head of Anglo American Foundation.

The top 10 will also be attending an investment readiness workshop, sponsored and hosted by [Grindstone](#) in the build-up to the pitch event.

The 2023 top 10 finalists are, in alphabetical order:

- **Clearfountain:** Providing sustainable solutions for the effective and efficient isolation of chemicals from water treatment sludge, promoting environmental and social responsibility. They customise chemical isolation of water treatment residue at water utility plants.
- **[Green Guru Solutions](#) with their Conscious Waste Management Services:** Implementing Black Soldier Fly farming for sustainable food waste disposal in Mbombela and surroundings, offering safe disposal and producing valuable resources for agriculture and animal feed.
- **GMS with their E-pacer 100:** An electric cargo bike ready for piloting, supplying to recyclers and buyback centers.
- **[House Harvest Produce](#):** An aquaponics startup that sells leafy greens and fish using a circular model of waste management by incorporating Black Soldier Fly.
- **[Kruger to Canyons](#) (K2C) Biosphere region (NPC) with Agri SSME aggregation:** Establishing a production kitchen facility that will support the market access systems for rural based smallholder farmers.
- **[Smart Food Growing \(SFG\) Technologies](#) with their WickBox™ & The WickTray™ grow trays:** Smart food growing solutions that are self-watering and made from recycled plastic. Water-use efficient and high crop-yielding with little effort.
- **[Samanjalo](#):** A flyash beneficiation business based in Emalahleni that uses technology to beneficiate the coal waste into green products used in construction and infrastructure environments such as green cement, bricks, pavers, barricades etc.
- **[SolaGeyza](#):** Solar heated hot water for households without running water.
- **[Solar Rais](#):** Enabling the monetisation of carbon offsets. Their product is an online platform where energy certificates can be bought for the trade of CO2 of projects, after creating the virtual asset for trading (creating a voluntary carbon market).

- [Thrive Land Restoration \(Pty\) Limited](#) with their **hyper-accumulator crops**: Working with mining companies to regenerate degraded soil and water resources, developing communities of waste collectors, composters, growers and food and fibre processors supplying each other in a sustainable circular economy.

This initiative forms part of a multi-year project delivered in collaboration with the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency by GreenCape in partnership with the UK PACT.

“We are delighted to support the Green Solutions Pitch Challenge in Mpumalanga. Identifying and supporting entrepreneurs with new and exciting green business ventures can help create new jobs and economic opportunities and contribute to a genuinely just transition. It is part of a range of wider efforts being developed by the UK with the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency to drive economic growth opportunities in Mpumalanga. Having supported the establishment of the Agency we are also please to commit funding towards its activities for a further two years,” said British High Commissioner to South Africa, Antony Phillipson.

The winner will be selected by a judging panel on the day of the event. Their decision is final.

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GreenCape is a non-profit organisation that drives the widespread adoption of economically viable green economy solutions from South Africa.

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