

10th Annual Social Innovation Awards winners announced

Meat Naturally and Agricool Finance were awarded joint first place in the 10th Annual Social Innovation Awards, while Leafline Washable Sanitary Wear scooped first place in the Disability Empowerment Awards. All three winners were awarded R1.3m in grant funding. A total amount of R12.6m in grant funding and business development support was given away to all 17 Finalists.

The Social Innovation Awards are aimed at innovators, entrepreneurs and institutions with prototypes or early-stage businesses that solve a social problem through a sustainable business model.

Top 3



Zamokuhle Thwala developed Agricool Finance

Agricool Finance, based in KwaZulu-Natal, is a digital crowdfunding platform developed by Zamokuhle Thwala, that creates financial inclusion by providing small holder farmers with finance and market opportunities through its digital platform



Sarah Frazee founded Meat Naturally

Meat Naturally, social enterprise based in Mpumalanga, founded by Sarah Frazee, that supports communal farmers in building a sustainable farming model and provides market access for red meat producers.



Kathryn Malherbe founded Invisio AI

Third place and R850,000 in funding was awarded to Invisio AI, founded by Kathryn Malherbe. Invisio AI uses machine learning to identify, segment and predict breast cancer type by means of ultrasound images and algorithms.

Disability Empowerment Awards winners

The Disability Empowerment Awards are aimed at promoting social innovations that improve the quality of life for people with disabilities through assistive devices, training or employment.

Leafline Washable Sanitary Wear, founded by Candy Androliakos and based in Port Alfred, was awarded R1.3m. Leafline employs people living with disabilities to manufacture affordable and biodegradable sanitary products, nappies, chair and bed protectors made from natural fibre.

Three other businesses were each awarded R500,000 in development funding. These businesses were:

- Sipokuhle Community Development founded by Sithembale Dlutu is a sustainable agricultural project based in East London that aims to empower young and vulnerable people with intellectual disabilities through skills development and job creation.
- Digital Interactive Educational Books, launched by the National Institute for the Deaf aims to promote language acquisitions through play.
- Virecom founded by Jabu Blose is a video remote communications company that provides high-definition video remote interpreting, on-site interpreting, written-text-to-sign language translation and training.

“Over the past nine years, we have invested R80 million in supporting 170 talented South African innovators,” says Bridgit Evans, SAB Foundation director. “After all of these years of being involved with social innovation at the SAB Foundation, I am still amazed and humbled by what each new round of our annual awards presents to us, and the levels of commitment and sacrifice that these unique entrepreneurs are prepared to make. This year in particular we were so inspired by the entrepreneurs that we have met – despite a challenging year due to the ongoing pandemic, we have seen these incredible people not just surviving, but in some cases, thriving ”

“ Thank you @eNCA for this great feature! <https://t.co/ZR32sFxp8q>— SAB Foundation (@sabfoundationsa) [February 10, 2021](#) ”

All other finalists were awarded development and seed funding.

All the winners

Social Innovation Award winners

(Joint 1st place, R1.3 million) **Meat Naturally**, Mpumalanga: A social enterprise supporting communal farmers to build a sustainable farming model that provides market access for red meat producers. Meat Naturally aims to revolutionise livestock production in South Africa by addressing environmental degradation and social inequality through supporting communal farmers. Farmers receive formal training on regenerative grazing techniques, rangeland restoration, cattle management, stock theft patrol and predator control. Mobile auctions and abattoirs also provide them with the opportunity to

reach new markets.

(Joint 1st place, R1.3 million) **Agricool Finance**, KwaZulu-Natal: A digital crowdfunding platform that creates financial inclusion by providing small holder farmers with finance and market linkage opportunities. These farmers are offered affordable, efficient and reliable options, and are linked to a network of informal vendors and supermarkets to sell their fresh produce.

(3rd place, R850,000) **Invisio AI**, Gauteng: A web-based software and patient application platform that receives images for ultrasound units in practice. The images are fed into a unique deep machine learning system that identifies any abnormal breast cancer masses. This system speaks to both the specialist physician and patient to provide diagnostic solutions and educational platforms.

(Development Award, R650,000) **Umoya Foods**, Gauteng: Premium health food products that are sourced from small scale farming operations. Umoya Foods creates nutritionally valuable products using ingredients sourced from crops that are optimised for small scale farming production. The aim is to increase income in rural communities by commercialising local crops. They have developed a premium range of health food products based on amaranth, using both the leaf and seeds.

(Development Award, R450,000) **Word of Mouth**, Western Cape: A digital market system that connects informal micro-enterprises with customers looking for local services. Customers are able to find local services faster, at affordable prices, from reliable service providers. Business owners, meanwhile, have access to benefits such as group discounts on suppliers and training.

(Development Award, R450,000) **OYI Medical Card**, Gauteng: A prepaid medical expense credit card for individuals and families that do not have access to funds for unexpected medical and healthcare needs. It works as a savings card for medical spend only and is supported by secure payment technology.

(Development Award, R450,000) **Healthforce**, Gauteng: A user-friendly web-based application that enables nurses to improve their clinical care with the support of remote general practitioners via a video telemedicine service. Doctors are HPCSA registered and are able to provide medical advice and treatment, repeat or first-time prescriptions and vaccinations, family planning, chronic and acute illnesses, referrals and sick notes.

(Development Award, R450,000) **Zenzeleni Community Networks**, Eastern Cape: A solar powered wireless community network that works closely with cooperatives in rural communities. It aims to deliver affordable voice and data services, charge mobile devices and to transfer skills. It also tackles unemployment by empowering these cooperatives to generate an income from the sale of voice and data services.

(Development Award, R450,000) **Syked**, Gauteng: A virtual private counselling platform for individuals looking for alternative ways of seeking support without putting themselves at risk. This online wellness platform provides a full turnkey solution that connects patients with suitable qualified counselling practitioners. This is done via video call in the comfort of their own homes and can be conducted outside normal operating office hours.

(Seed Grant, R200,000) **Respo**, KwaZulu-Natal: A mobile application offering an effective way of requesting emergency services through a GPS tracking system. Respo offers people an easier way of requesting an ambulance in the event of life-threatening emergencies. The mobile app uses GPS tracking and data capture technology where patients' medical information is preloaded to match them with the closest available emergency services vehicle.

(Seed Grant, R200,000) **MALII**, Gauteng: A mobile application that enables taxi commuters to make payments without the use of cash. Commuters are able to load their monthly taxi fare into an e-wallet and pay via a QR code sticker in the taxi window. The driver gets an instant notification of their payment and the funds reflect immediately in the driver's bank account.

Disability Empowerment Award winners

(1st place, R1.3 million) **Leafline Washable Sanitary Wear**, Eastern Cape: An affordable and biodegradable sanitary product range made from natural products using the inner part of the cayenne pineapple leaf. This washable, cost effective and environmentally friendly sanitary product range that is manufactured by people living with disabilities includes sanitary towels, adult and children's nappies, breast pads, as well as chair and bed protectors. The leafline fibre absorbs moisture and odours, and is easy to wash and dry.

(Development Award, R500,000) **Sipokuhle Community Development**, Eastern Cape: A sustainable agricultural project that aims to empower young and vulnerable people with intellectual disabilities through skills development and job creation. The project equips these young people with food production, vermiculture and administrative skills to enable them to produce premium quality vegetables that are suitable to be sold to the local market.

(Development Award, R500,000) **Digital Interactive Educational Books**, Western Cape: A digital interactive educational book launched by the National Institute for the Deaf. It aims to promote language acquisitions through play. The book provides parents and caregivers without South African Sign Language skills the opportunity to interact with their deaf child or infant. The digital book is also a useful resource to stimulate linguistic development for deaf children, whilst developing the child emotionally, socially and academically.

(Development Award, R500,000) **Virecom**, Gauteng: A deaf-owned video remote communications company that provides high-definition video remote interpreting, on-site interpreting, written-text-to-sign language translation and training. It was developed in response to the shortage of qualified sign language interpreters. The tool allows deaf people to gain opportunities and resources to ensure equal communications access.

(Seed Grant, R350,000) **Para-Tube**, Gauteng: A cost effective retro-fitted seating device with a built-in toilet enables those that are wheelchair-bound to utilise the toilet without having to be lifted out of their wheelchair. The device works using biodegradable disposable bags, the seat is breathable and waterproof, and its height protects the user's lumbar spine.

(Seed Grant, R350,000) **Carel Du Toit Trust E-Training Platform**, Western Cape: An e-learning digital platform that assists hearing impaired children to learn to hear and talk, while providing parental and professional guidance. The objective of the app is for these children to develop adequate spoken language, enabling integration into the hearing society.

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