

Investing in the future of building and architecture

The first regional finalist of the 32nd Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year Awards has been named, while the company gears up for a year of investment and expansion.



Ruan Jansen van Rensburg, regional winner from Tshwane University of Technology.

The annual Corobrik Architectural Student of the Year Awards have started with regional rounds at eight major universities throughout South Africa, and the overall national winner will be named in Johannesburg this May.

Tshwane University of Technology's regional winner and runners up

Ruan Jansen van Rensburg is this year's Tshwane University of Technology's (Tut) regional winner. He will compete alongside seven other regional winners for the national award.

Van Rensburg's dissertation is titled 'The design of an innovation farm' – an experiential facility for cannabis plants as an alternative resource in Eerste Fabrieke, Mamelodi.

Kyle Coulson, who collected a cheque worth R8,000, placed second. Carla Schmidt collected a prize of R6,000 and placed third, and Siyanda Nkosi collected a prize of R6,000 for the best use of clay masonry.



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Coulson's project is titled 'Space Lab,' a space centre for The South African National Space Agency (Sansa). Space Lab proposes to be the main launch complex for the African continent and only launch medium-sized rockets that carry small to micro-sized satellites into orbit.

Schmidt's thesis is titled 'The Design of an Education-centred Mixed-use Redevelopment in Central Pretoria'. The dissertation focuses on the design of a learning commons for a teachers' training academy in the Pretoria CBD.

Nkosi's thesis is titled 'The design of a centre for intangible heritage of Zulu culture'. It is situated at the Royal National Park in KwaZulu-Natal. The project focuses on Amazizi's - a Zulu tribe - rituals practices and spaces that can be translated into architecture.

New production facilities, new technologies, new products

Corobrik's commercial director Musa Shangase points out that the company plans on boosting local production capacity with an R800m mega factory that will be built alongside its existing Driefontein factory in Gauteng, the largest project of its kind underway worldwide at present.

This will be followed by another mega factory on the East Rand and expansion in the Western Cape within the next five to six years.

As a result, Corobrik has embraced new technology and is developing new products that will help shape the future of the built environment in South Africa. It recently commissioned the latest Building Information Modelling (Bim) files which can now be downloaded from its website by architects and other property development professionals.

The research and development have also led to the launch of innovative new products such as Corobrik's new Black Brick facebrick.

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