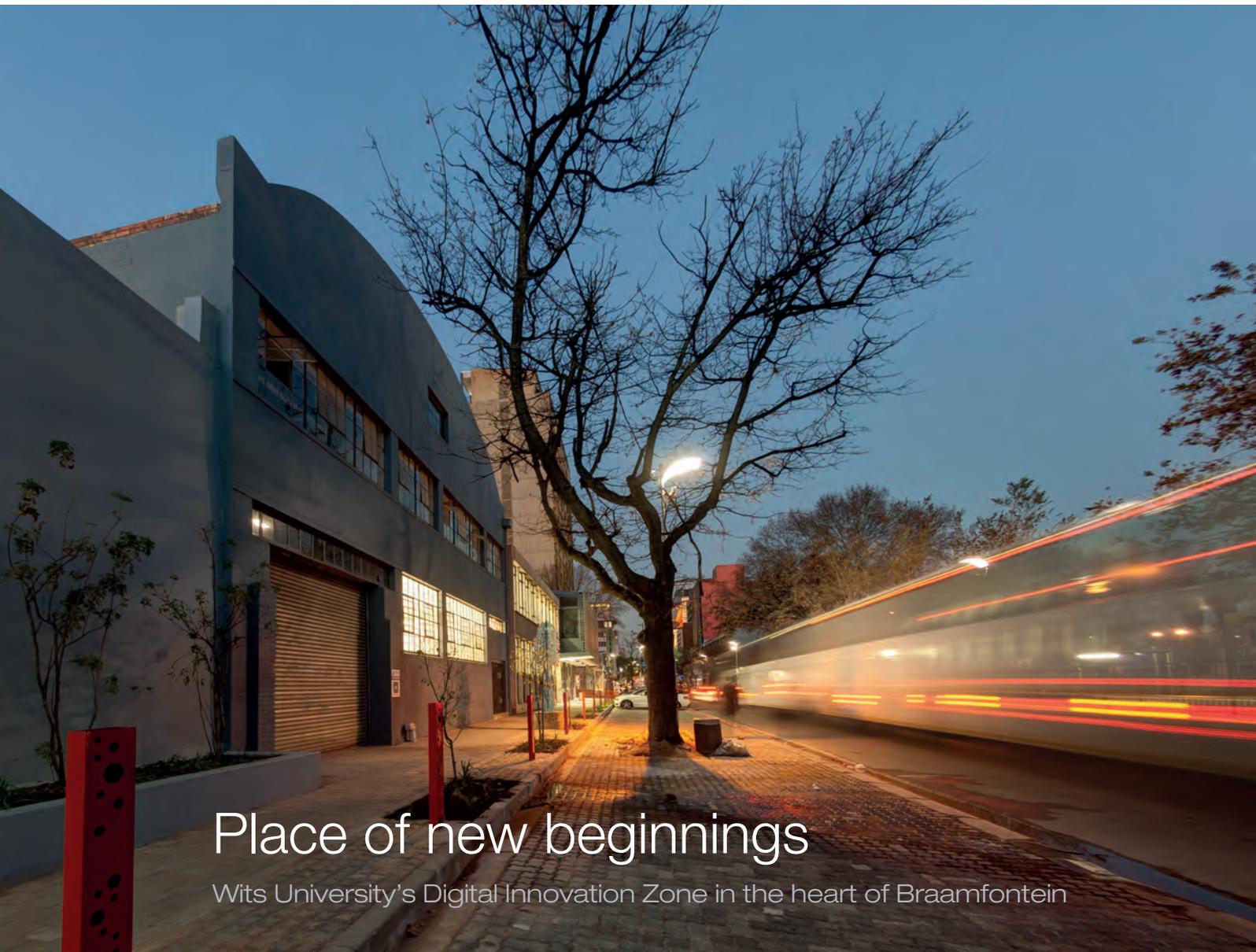


UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



TSHIMOLOGONG PRECINCT

Investment Programme



Place of new beginnings

Wits University's Digital Innovation Zone in the heart of Braamfontein

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

It's a difficult time to be a young person in South Africa. Unemployment, poverty and inequality, the so-called "triple challenge", are of particular concern to the youth of our country. However, it's also a very exciting time to be living in South Africa in the 21st Century – especially if you're young. The "Fourth Industrial Revolution" offers the promise of sharing in the exciting opportunities brought about by innovative digital hardware, software and content within an increasingly connected world. While many countries in the northern hemisphere are being forced to deal with negative population growth rates and an aging workforce, Africa's greatest opportunity is its large percentage of bright, creative and energetic young people.

The digital economy offers many exciting ways in which we may channel the energy and creativeness of our youth. South Africans have the potential of becoming the innovators and creators of digital technology, rather than being consumers of technology and content produced elsewhere.

www.tshimologong.joburg



MEETING THE TRIPLE CHALLENGE

Skills Development

Twenty first-century economies require a highly skilled workforce. South Africa needs a greater supply of people who are able to work with modern technology and who are flexible, motivated, self-learning and good communicators. While skills are required in all sectors, the digital economy has a huge deficit in certain categories of skills. Over the past 12 years the Joburg Centre for Software Engineering (JCSE) at Wits University has developed a solid reputation in developing top quality ICT skills. Hundreds of people, ranging from school children, unemployed youth, students and working professionals have benefitted from the JCSE's skills development programmes. The Tshimologong Precinct will provide space and facilities to significantly grow all of these programmes.

“South Africans have the potential of becoming the innovators and creators of digital technology...”

Enterprise Development & job creation

A study in 2010 found that over a 30-year period all net new jobs in the USA came from Startups. On average 3 million jobs were created each year by Startups. Over the same period all new jobs created at existing companies were offset by job losses at other companies within the same sector, resulting in a neutral impact on job creation. A follow-up study in 2013 showed that high technology Startups were 23% more likely to become successful businesses than in other sectors. In the case of ICT Startups the chance of success is as high as 48%. Similar studies in other countries reached the same conclusions.

“...a catalyst for urban regeneration in central Johannesburg”



TSHIMOLOGONG: WITS UNIVERSITY'S DIGITAL INNOVATION PRECINCT

Over the past two years Wits University, through its JCSE, has been driving an initiative to promote the creation of successful digital Startups. A “Digital Innovation Precinct” is being established in a row of 5 university-owned buildings in Juta Street, Braamfontein, close to the University’s main campus. The Precinct will provide an exciting environment that will attract young people - students and a broad spectrum of other residents of Johannesburg - with an interest in digital innovation and entrepreneurship. Various activities and programmes, such as Hackathons and Challenges, will be run with the aim of developing skills, encouraging innovation and promoting the development of new enterprises. All of the JCSE’s existing skills development initiatives will also be run in the Precinct. The name chosen for the Precinct – Tshimologong - is from the seTswana word for “new beginnings”. Creating the Precinct will become a catalyst for urban regeneration in central Johannesburg.

WHO’S ALREADY INVOLVED

An innovation hub is both a physical place and an ecosystem that supports skills development, innovation and the nurturing of startup enterprises. A number of Strategic Founding Partners (SFPs) have come together to support Wits University in its efforts to establish the Tshimologong Precinct. Each of the SFPs has made a substantial contribution. This support has provided the resources necessary to carry out the renovations to the existing buildings. It has also established the foundation that will support the emerging ecosystem.

The first phase of the Tshimologong Precinct was officially opened on 1st September 2016. **The support of the following SFPs was celebrated at this launch:** Gauteng Provincial Government through its Department of E-Government; The City of Johannesburg; Microsoft South Africa; IBM Research; MMI Group; Telkom through its Future Makers programme; Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA); Technology Innovation Agency (TIA); Cisco; Teraco Data Environments; DataCentrix; KMJ Services.



IBM Research | Africa



HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

The Tshimologong Precinct is destined to become one of the most important venues for Digital Innovation in Johannesburg and South Africa. Wits University, through the JCSE, is looking for support to grow this vision. There are many options and opportunities for all levels of contribution and investment. If you would like to be involved in this exciting project, please feel free to contact us.

Sponsor a seat

The Precinct is a community of members. Members have access to the Precinct and all of its facilities. These facilities include a working space, mentorship, specialized resources (eg. a Maker Space), events and access to the network of Partners. Members will either pay a monthly fee or will have a sponsored seat. This will ensure a diverse community.

Become a Strategic Partner

Strategic Partners (SPs) will join the group of SFPs that came together at the launch of the Precinct. SPs and SFPs will work with Wits to develop strategies for growing the Tshimologong Precinct and its ecosystem.

Sponsor an event or programme

The Precinct will become a venue for a rich and diverse set of activities aimed at growing digital skills, innovation and entrepreneurship. Sponsors are being sought to support activities already planned. You could also work with the JCSE to develop and sponsor other activities.

Become a mentor

Mentorship is a key feature of the supportive ecosystem being established in the Tshimologong Precinct. A panel of mentors is being recruited to provide both face-to-face and remote mentoring to members of the Precinct's community.

Expand the infrastructure

While funds have been raised to cover setting up of most of the Tshimologong Precinct's core infrastructure, additional support would make it possible to grow and enhance the facility.

Extend the reach

The Tshimologong Precinct is located in Braamfontein. Wits has also developed a strategy to link the Precinct to an international network of similar university-based digital innovation hubs, and to facilitate the creation of satellite hubs in other parts of South Africa. Funds are required to enable this extension.



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