

Huawei ICT competition winners ride a wave of success

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Members of the South African team which took a top spot in the 2022-2023 Huawei Global ICT Competition held in Shenzhen, China recently are still riding high following their success. The two University of KwaZulu Natal graduates, Lutho Sigidi and Nqubeko Asanda Shabalala and University of Johannesburg graduate Terry-Anne Fredericks have all been employed by Huawei and, recently were singled out for praise by South Africa's president Cyril Ramaphosa when he visited the Huawei Campus.

The remarks came during President Ramaphosa's official opening of the Huawei Innovation Centre, which showcases Huawei's latest and most innovative digital technologies and solutions such as 5G, Cloud, and AI. Its purpose is to foster and encourage joint innovation with Huawei's South African partners, app developers, SMMs, and South African youth such as Sigidi, Fredericks and Shabalala, who are passionate about ICT.



Lutho Sigidi, Huawei IP engineer, Nqubeko Shabalala, pre-sales engineer and product manager at Huawei, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa and Terry-Anne Fredericks, Huawei network engineer

While touring the innovation centre, the President met the graduates and had high praise for their achievement at the global ICT competition.

"Also most impressive [were the] winners of the ICT Global Competition who I had the opportunity to greet earlier and I'd like to be photographed with them later, if they'll allow me," he quipped. "Then it will rub off on me a little bit as well."

The winning trio have all been employed by Huawei in different roles since they graduated.

Asked how she felt about the affirmation they received from the president, Huawei Network Engineer Terry-Anne Fredericks said, "It evoked feelings of excitement, pride, and honor, as it provided me with a unique opportunity to engage with one of the most powerful and influential figures in the country. We have been given a chance to showcase our capabilities so that we can build a better life and future not only for ourselves, but for our country as well."

Fellow team member, Nqubeko Shabalala, now a pre-sales engineer and product manager at Huawei said, “When I started the competition I did not, even in my wildest dreams, imagine meeting the president of the Republic of South Africa. Being part of such an important launch is also a great step into showcasing the vast ICT technology offerings in a more practical, scenario-based environment. This kind of exposure through places like the Innovation Centre, I believe, is exactly what’s needed here in South Africa.”

Team leader, Lutho Sigidi, has been employed as an IP engineer with Huawei. He said, “I felt honored as a representative of South Africa's youth, showing the endless capabilities of our talent. I am certain that I represent many young people from around the country and I hope I have motivated and encouraged others.”

Speaking after the ribbon-cutting ceremony and a tour of the facility, President Ramaphosa said that initiatives such as the Innovation Centre are firmly in line with the South African government’s policy of emphasising digital technologies as an economic and youth development imperative.

He also expressed admiration for how Huawei integrates youth whose skills it’s helped build through initiatives such as the LEAP programme, its ICT academies, and DigiSchool projects.

Ramaphosa further noted how programmes such as those run by Huawei fall in line with the government’s own youth development initiatives.

“South Africa has a robust and sophisticated ICT sector with expertise in data centres, cloud computing and storage, and rapidly expanding wireless and fibre infrastructure,” he said. “It is when we work together with a company such as Huawei that’s cutting edge, that we will be able to have greater capability and greater efficiency.”

“I congratulate Huawei for the work it is doing to cultivate local digital talent through its various programmes,” Ramaphosa concluded.

Huawei SA call for entry as ICT Competition 2023-2024 kicks off

As a global event, the Huawei ICT Competition is a platform for university and college students to study and show off their skills in the latest technologies like 5G, AI and Cloud.

Registration for this year’s [Huawei ICT Competition](#) is now open and any student with a background in science and ICT can enter and participate through self-study.

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