

Introductory paragraph: Brief overview (What we do?)

Nka'Thuto EduPropeller is a non-profit organization that brings technology and innovation in school playgrounds through addressing the following objectives:

- I. Spark an interest in the innovation, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEAMi) and TechnoPreneurship careers amongst learners.
- II. Expose learners to the process of research for the purpose of finding a viable solution to an unmet need in society.
- III. Facilitate learners to translate their research findings into business solutions with the potential to reach commercialisation.

What are the requirements?

The learners from the partners schools voluntarily participate in the program through signing up during learner recruitment stage. The organization permits only learners from Grade 8 to 11, where the learners in Grades 10 and 11 are expected to be taking on the science stream.

Who is the Competition Coordinator?

The Competition is coordinated by Nka'Thuto EduPropeller's team in conjunction with the school teachers as site managers.

Why Participate?

Our idea 2 incubation model composed of a combination of various skills development tools that we have integrated together to create a model that facilitates the learners at basic education level to define and solve various social/environmental problems and come up with STEM-based solutions that are turned into business concepts. These tools include research methodology skills, presentation skills, the business canvas model, design thinking, robotics and coding which to our knowledge have not been taught in the project-based manner we conduct it in.

Whom do we target?

Grade 8 to 11 learners from the schools based in townships and rural communities nationally in 7 provinces excluding the Western Cape and Northern Cape.

How it works

The idea to concepts incubation process is composed of 8 tiers:

- (i) Learners are recruited at the innovation activation stage
- (ii) The learners are taught scientific research methodology skills
- (iii) The learners emphathise, scope and define their problem statements as inspired by social challenges in their communities and propose STEM based solutions in addressing them.

- (iv) The learners are given a platform to showcase their STEM based solutions, and the projects are filtered through the next phase.
- (v) Mentorship stage- where the learners improve the quality of their project in preparation for the final innovation expo, through the help of young STEM professionals.
- (vi) During the innovation expo best science projects are selected and awarded. Simultaneously, projects that have potential to be commercialized are selected to progress to the next phase.
- (vii) Computer skills training, where the learners that were awarded, laptops are trained in Microsoft office, in preparation for the last phase of the programme.
- (viii) Technopreneurship bootcamp, business case development for the STEM-based solutions.

What will it cost?

Nka'Thuto seeks funding from various partners from the private sector, and public sector to sponsor the learners to access the program free of charge.

What am I awarded?

The learners get from Certificates of Participation, winners' certificates with different categories, electronic devices like laptops, tablets, external hard drives and even prize money to advance their academic life.

Competition timelines

The ideas to concept incubation program runs the whole year round but with a space of 3 weeks between each tier; taking into account normal schooling, school holidays and exams time.

For more information:

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