

Techies showcase talents at Red Bull Basement Hatch

Johannesburg's brightest young tech geniuses gathered at the Tshimologong Precinct recently to share their ideas and their creations at the Red Bull Basement Hatch event.

The Red Bull Basement Hatch brings together tech enthusiasts, makers, creatives, designers, IT students, incubator managers and funders, in one room. Here they debate, talk, showcase, network and up skill each other, with the aim of connecting and building a better South Africa through the use of technology.

RS Components South Africa partnered up with the event organisers, Red Bull and Geekulcha by sponsoring Raspberry Pi Kits and Pi-top computers for the innovation hub at the event.

Brian Andrew, MD of RS Components South Africa said that these events truly add value to the youth of the country.

“We, at RS Components are passionate about education and nurturing the next generation of innovators. Events such as the Red Bull Basement excites us and we are proud to partner up with Red Bull and Geekulcha and look forward to future events where we can see South Africa’s tech geniuses at work,” he said.

Sifiso Gcabashe, the social innovation manager for Red Bull said the main aim of the Red Bull Basement project was to give young people who had created amazing innovations which are aimed at solving problems in their communities or wherever they may be working from a platform to learn, create and nurture their technical abilities.



Two innovators fine-tuning their coding at the Red Bull Basement event.

“The Red Bull Basement brings together the community to share ideas as well as practicality so that we are not only talking about these innovations, we show what other people are doing. We have a big focus on women and we want to expose women doing amazing things in their communities and there are a few of them present at the event today,” he said.

Exposing innovations from across Africa

Gcabashe also added that these projects focus on technology and innovation.

“We also want to focus on the African continent because we feel that there are innovators in Africa doing absolutely amazing things and we want to expose those stories and innovations. We want to tell the ‘African Story’ and why this fits into the Fourth Industrial Revolution,” added Sifiso.

Mixo Ngoveni from Geekulcha said that these events have shed much needed light on coding, technology and innovation to not only the youth but for everyone keen to learn something new.

“Each event brings about something new, and the Geekulcha team and I are truly humbled to be a part of this movement. We in South Africa have a lot to offer the world in terms of innovation and technology and all we need is a platform such as this Red Bull Basement event. I would like to thank all who made the event possible and RS Components for always supporting our projects,” he added.

One of the guest presenters and renowned South African woman in technology, Lebogang Madise spoke about how women need to maintain their relevance in a tech-driven world.



Lebogang Madise showing a student how to code.

“The reason why I am focusing my presentation on women specifically today is because from an industry perspective, there are very few of them. We also can’t afford to lose the ones already on board. I want to open up coding and make it look attractive so that people don’t think that you have to be a genius to be a part of a development team. There are many roles one can be a part of especially with regards to solving problems. If you are a person who likes solving problems, irrespective of computing skills, coding is for you,” she said.

She further added that events like these help people like her reach out to the youth and influence them positively to get interested in technology, computing and coding.

Innovator and creator, Ponso Thobejane showed off his creation at the event. Thobejane created a robotic device that responds to Tweets sent to it.

“The car I created responds to instructions given to it in the form of ‘Tweets’ sent to it via social media platform Twitter. The data it gets from the tweet looks at the direction and distance the car needs to travel. I created this car, using my Java programming skills and an Arduino kit. This car has various applications which I am still developing,” he said.

The Red Bull Basement Hatch event was a day filled with technology, coding and robotics, leaving the participants inspired and ready to innovate in their various communities. The event also highlights the private sector’s commitment towards making a change and nurturing South Africa’s youth to harness their technical and computing skills for a brighter future.

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