

LexisNexis ignites interest in coding for Mandela Day

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While Nelson Mandela International Day 2021 was observed at the end of a tumultuous week in South Africa, it still provided an ideal opportunity for South Africans to rally together to honour some of the philosophies that guided Madiba, such as a strong focus on education and empowering young people.



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This Mandela Day, legal technology company LexisNexis South Africa once again partnered with Nelson Mandela University's Department of Computing Science to host a virtual tournament that will introduce school learners in various provinces to basic concepts in coding.

Learners will also gain exposure to some of the important careers possible in the field of software development.

Technology exposure is very important to LexisNexis South Africa, as a company invested in tech solutions that serve the legal, corporate and government sectors. One of the company's core values is also Innovation.

"At a grassroots level young girls and disadvantaged individuals often lack exposure to technology inclined careers early in their schooling career. Our long-term vision for this partnership is to see individuals who were first exposed to coding and tech careers through this programme, potentially coming to work for LexisNexis. More broadly, we want to make progress in changing the traditional face of the technology sector to be more representative of South Africa," said LexisNexis sales and marketing director, Mellony Ramalho.

Professor Jean Greyling, associate professor in Computing Sciences at Nelson Mandela University said, "The BOATS virtual tournament is part of an ongoing Coding Outreach Programme and will be taking place online over two weeks from Monday, 19 July. The tournament harnesses gamification to enable learners from disadvantaged schools to learn coding concepts."

During the tournament, learners logged in from home to represent their schools as they proceeded to answer multiple-choice coding related questions accessed via the BOATS Android mobile coding app. The app can be used with no prior coding experience.

Prizes were sponsored by LexisNexis.

The top three participating schools in each region won a TANKS School Kit, which introduces learners to coding concepts with the use of tangible tokens and image recognition, eliminating the need for a computer. The kit allows schools to present TANKS coding workshops to 40 learners simultaneously.

An additional BOATS School Kit suitable for Grades R to 3 went to the top scoring primary school.

The top scoring school from each region also nominated a cause to receive a R2000 donation.

LexisNexis has a software development office based in Nelson Mandela Bay and regularly works with Nelson Mandela University to attract talented students and graduates, as well as partnering on various coding tournaments to encourage an interest in technology among even younger South Africans.

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