

Winners of the 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year competition announced

The winners of the 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year competition were announced this morning with Samuel and Motlapele Molefi, founders and owners of Modi Mining CC, named as the overall winners. Modi Mining provides contract mining services to companies specialising in the South African mining sector.



Samuel and Motlapele Molefi, founders and owners of Modi Mining CC. Image supplied.

Speaking at the event, spokesperson for the 2018 edition of the competition, Gugu Mjadu, said that the Molefi couple was selected as the overall 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year winners because of the remarkable growth and expansion their business has exhibited, in spite of a harsh economic climate.

“Despite operating within an industry that continues to face significant challenges, Modi Mining has experienced an average growth of over 30% per annum since starting operations in 2011, increasing net asset value from below R1m in 2012 to over R80m last year. This is truly impressive!” says Mjadu.

Other 2018 category winners

2018 Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year: Louw Barnardt, founder of [Outsourced CFO \(Pty\) Ltd.](#) A financial management company that renders technical and visionary CFO services to emerging tech and innovation businesses, Outsourced CFO helps businesses in the start-up and scale-up phase, who require the time and skills of a qualified CA or CFO, but don't have the resources or capacity to take one on full-time.



Scaling up for your best year ever

Louw Barnardt 19 Jan 2018



2018 Small Business Entrepreneur of the Year: Kerry and Craig Motherwell, founders of [Foxolution Systems Engineering](#). Foxolution designs and builds on-site gas generators of all sizes for various industries using its own home-grown technology. Their generators separate out oxygen from the air and are used by industrial clients – typically for applications like gold recovery, wastewater treatment, water purification and odour control.

2018 Medium Business Entrepreneur of the Year: Pepe Marais and Gareth Leck, founders of [Joe Public United](#). The entrepreneurial duo was named as a finalist last year when they wowed judges with their innovative business model, which was positioned as a simple take-away menu of advertising offerings at inception. They went straight back to work and re-entered this year with a stronger business and a more purposeful approach, which saw them become winners.



Joe Public tops the tables as Loeries Agency of the Year

Joe Public 23 Aug 2018



2018 Job Creator of the Year: Phillipa Geard, founder of [RecruitMyMom](#). When Phillipa Geard became a mother, she never imagined that the business of motherhood would be the brainchild behind her very own business. Today, her online recruitment agency, RecruitMyMom.co.za fills a unique gap in the market and provides moms all over the country with the opportunity to juggle both parenthood and a successful career.



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Shan Raddcliffe 30 Nov 2017



2018 Innovator of the Year: Muhammad Simjee and Sofiah Docrat, co-founders of [A2D24](#). This digital consulting and implementation company was founded in June 2015 when Muhammad discovered a gap in the South African tech market for low-cost innovative solutions which can be readily available and rolled out at a fraction of the cost of the usual operating models of big corporations.

Beverley Gumbi, the founder and owner of [Isivuno Container Business](#) ("Isivuno") was awarded a **special Judges Prize** in this year's competition. The judges prize was introduced in 2014 and seeks to acknowledge a business that may not yet be at the same level of the other entrepreneurs (in terms of size and turnover), but makes an impression on the judges due to the business' social impact and future potential and the business owner's attitude and positive entrepreneurial outlook.

Mjadu says the judges believe that Gumbi has the entrepreneurial attitude and determination required to go far. "Beverley's energy is just contagious and, while she is a female with no engineering experience or technical training, she is tackling a traditionally male-dominated industry and making a success of it!"

Lifetime Achiever award

As part of this year's 30-year celebration of the annual competition, the judges also recognised the illustrious South African entrepreneur and property developer, Dr Richard Maponya, with a Lifetime Achiever award.

“Dr Richard Maponya is an entrepreneur par excellence and his family name is synonymous with entrepreneurship in South Africa. He did not only make a success of business in an era when black entrepreneurs faced many obstacles that prevented them from being successful but has built a formidable business empire in the democratic South Africa which should remain for generations to come.

Dr Maponya is a legend and an excellent role model for entrepreneurs in South Africa across all genders and races. It is a true honour that he has availed himself to accept our Lifetime Achiever Award.”

A celebration of the hard-working self-starters

The competition provides prizes worth R2m, which include cash prizes of R70,000 per category and R200,000 for the overall winner, towards further growing their businesses. Beyond these monetary prizes, Mjadu adds that each winner will also receive valuable mentorship support, networking opportunities and associated marketing and national media exposure to further drive their business’ success. “Past winners have also gone on to win other prominent national and international awards as a result of their success in the competition and form valuable partnerships with fellow winners and finalists.”

Now in its 30th year, this competition and others like it serve a particularly important purpose in South Africa, concludes Mjadu.

“ *Entrepreneurial competitions of this calibre serve a dual purpose – they are a celebration of the hard-working self-starters in the country, and also act to inspire budding entrepreneurs who have the potential to create employment and economic growth at a time where the country is facing numerous challenges in this regard.* ”

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