

Erica Elk a finalist in Africa's Most Influential Women in Business and Government Award

Erica Elk, the executive director of Cape Craft + Design Institute (CCDI) is a finalist in 'Africa's Most Influential Women in Business and Government Award'...



This latest shortlisting follows previous awards that acknowledged her achievements: Regional Social Entrepreneur of the Year by the Business Women's Association in 2013, the inaugural Department of Arts and Culture Mbokodo Award (craft sector 2012) and recognition by Decorex SA in 2008 as one of 15 South Africans who have made a significant contribution to design.

Under her dynamic leadership, the not-for-profit CCDI's database grew from 60 in 2001 to over 5500 craft and design enterprises in 2014, with more than 1,100 directly accessing CCDI services and support each year. The CCDI is the official implementing agency for the craft and design sector in the Western Cape and over R25m of direct investment was leveraged for sector

development last year.

Elk says she is delighted to be selected as a finalist for the continental award. "The central focus of our work is developing local talent, supporting creative businesses and positioning a contemporary South African and African aesthetic both locally and globally to grow our consumer base - and to build a healthy design eco-system that fosters the use of design thinking to improve our businesses and solve some of the pressing challenges our country faces. Awards such as these give us another platform to promote the assets of our craft and design sector - so it's a great opportunity for the sector."

She is currently on the boards of organisations such as the National Arts Council and the Broadband Foundation, and was a board member of Cape Town Design (the World Design Capital 2014 implementation company), Cape Town Routes Unlimited and the Western Cape chapter of the Visual Arts Network SA, among others.

The winners will be announced in Johannesburg on 28 July.

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