

Siemens launches the Digital Mining Incubator at Wits University's Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct.

Johannesburg, South Africa:

- South Africa faces a shortage in mining engineering skills, as well as new digital technology that could help transform mining processes.
- The Digital Mining Incubator (DMI) is aimed at developing the next generation of digital mining experts.
- Siemens will collaborate with graduates to co-create digital use cases for the South African mining sector.

Mining remains a critical player in the macro-economic landscape of South Africa and yet, there is still enough potential for the sector to further make a positive impact on GDP and skills development. Government, Business, Labour and Civil Society need to ask how they can align a 'here-and-now' emphasis on job creation while focusing on digitalization. This critical factor will enable South Africa to become more competitive globally and ensure that we increase digital skills in the industrial sector whilst promoting mining as a viable job enabler in the future.

Digitalization in the mining industry goes well beyond the automation of production. It allows for new approaches to business processes and creates real opportunities to merge the digital and physical worlds. The value of data coupled with Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Additive Manufacturing offers South Africa a remarkable opportunity to create smart mines of the future. For example, imagine intelligent machines able to adjust operating parameters based on information received from other machines. These advanced capabilities will boost production, predictability and scalability while translating to profits. Digitalization will contribute to the entire value chain with a shorter time-to-market, increased flexibility in volatile global markets, optimize productivity and create safer operations for everyone on site. What must be addressed critically is how investors and technology leaders can also become educators and skills developers.

The Digital Mining Incubator is a co-creation space focused on developing mining engineering competence. The incubator is integrated into the Wits Tshimologong Digital Innovation Precinct and is aimed at upskilling young individuals who have an interest in the mining sector, as well as disadvantaged individuals interested in actively participating in the future of mining. Together with mentors from Wits, Tshimologong and Siemens, students will be enabled with the necessary tools and skills to effectively transform and develop the South African mining sector.

Sabine Dall'Omo, Siemens CEO for Southern and Eastern Africa says, "Our partnership with Wits and Tshimologong is about advancing the digital opportunities that mining offers our youth. Failing to position the mining sector in South Africa within discussions about the Fourth Industrial Revolution means remaining stagnant on the path towards industrialization. It's like being back in the 80's watching black and white television and constantly trying to reposition the bunny aerial to get rid of those blurry lines, all while living in the year 2018. This is not where you want to be.

Professor Barry Dwolatzky, Director of Wits University's JCSE (Joburg Centre for Software Engineering) and Founder of the Tshimologong Precinct, says, "Having Siemens open a digital incubator dedicated to promoting innovation in Mining is a very significant landmark in bringing the benefits of 21st Century digitalization to one of the most critical sectors in the South African economy. The DMI will provide a dedicated platform for developing innovative solutions to some of our Mining Industry's greatest challenges including health and safety, environmental protection and improved productivity."

"At Siemens we believe that there needs to be genuine investment towards the localization of technology and the development of digital talent to enable a strong, future-oriented workforce. The integration of digitally adept youth into the world of work will not only inspire new ideas, it will also transform and advance industries" concludes Sabine.

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for more than 170 years. The company is active around the globe, focusing on the areas of electrification, automation and digitalization. One of the largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is a leading supplier of efficient power generation and power transmission solutions and a pioneer in infrastructure solutions as well as automation, drive and software solutions for industry. With its publicly listed subsidiary Siemens Healthineers AG, the company is also a leading provider of medical imaging equipment – such as computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging systems – and a leader in laboratory diagnostics as well as clinical IT. In fiscal 2018, which ended on September 30, 2018, Siemens generated revenue of €83.0 billion and net income of €6.1 billion. At the end of September 2018, the company had around 379,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.

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