

UCT's Bertha Centre dishes out \$50k startup grant funding

 By [Tom Jackson](#)

13 Aug 2018

The Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business has awarded a total of R660,000 (US\$50,000) to ten startups via two different grant funding mechanisms.



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Established in 2011, the Bertha Centre has integrated social innovation into the GSB curriculum, established a wide community of practitioners and awarded over R7m (US\$556,000) in scholarships to students from across Africa.

Disrupt Africa reported in May the SAB Foundation has pledged R1.5m (US\$119,000) to the Bertha Centre Student Seed Fund, which offers grant funding to student-run social innovations, and the Bertha Centre has now disbursed R360,000 (US\$27,000) to five startups through this fund.

Sales management and data collection tool Ispani, decentralised residential recycling business Regenize, and community-based home monitoring system Jonga each secured R100,000 (US\$7,500), while urban farming business Little Green Things took home R50,000 (US\$3,750). Feminine hygiene product FemWash banked R10,000 (US\$750).

“Successful enterprises are those that reflect high potential for commercial viability and sustainability, whilst creating positive social impact at scale through innovation,” the Bertha Centre said.

The Bertha Centre also said it had received increased interest from independent donors wanting to further support the initiative, with one of those donors an alumni of the GSB who has pledged to support the fund with a donation of R100,000 (US\$7,500).

“As we seek to grow the fund, and the opportunities available for entrepreneurially inclined students, the Bertha Centre celebrates this achievement, and welcomes any further interest from willing donors,” it said.

Meanwhile, the centre also disbursed R300,000 (US\$22,500) in grant money via its partnership Pathways to Funding initiative, powered by donor investment management organisation Community Chest. Six startups were recipients of the funding, each receiving R50,000 (US\$3,750).

Regenize was again a recipient, while there were also grants for software NGO Ikhayalami, township destination marketing company DiscoverIkasi, accommodation platform Hustlenomics, B2B e-commerce platform Vuleka, and procurement service Kuba.

ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem

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