

SingularityU South Africa Summit promotes innovation

The inaugural SingularityU South Africa Summit is taking place in Johannesburg on 23-24 August 2017. SingularityU Summits have developed into a point of inspiration and connection for the local community, an opportunity to highlight breakthrough ideas and technologies and a catalyst to accelerating a local culture of innovation.



“The SU-Deloitte alliance began more than four years ago and is built upon the shared philosophy of using innovation to solve our global grand challenges,” says Rob Nail, associate founder and CEO, Singularity University.

Key topics for discussion

The advancement of exponential technologies, including digital biology, robotics, artificial intelligence and nanotech, and strategies for companies to work within this new environment are the key topics for discussion at the SingularityU South Africa Summit, the next in a series of high profile two-day conferences held across the globe as part of a multi-year strategic alliance between Deloitte and Singularity University (SU), a global learning and innovation community headquartered in Silicon Valley that uses exponential technologies to tackle the world’s biggest challenges in order to build an abundant future for all.

“It is important to understand how technological advancements and innovation ultimately accelerate industry capabilities and economic outputs, improve outcomes for consumers and increase prosperity, and how businesses and governments should be reacting to take the fullest advantage of the opportunities that arise,” advises Valter Adão, chief digital and innovation officer for Deloitte Africa. “Much like Darwin’s ‘survival of the fittest’ aphorism, it will be the workers, organisations, and governments who are quickest to adapt to change who will survive the next wave of disruption.

“An organisation’s competitors are no longer the traditional large, local, or multinational corporates. They are agile organisations and entrepreneurs often from other industries that are embracing new and exponential technologies to disrupt long-standing norms and leaders,” he explains.

Your organisation is not immune to disruption

Adão cautions that leaders who believe their organisations are immune to such disruptions do not truly understand the seismic impact that digital technologies will have on every facet of business, industry and society. This would apply not just to fields like manufacturing and logistics, where automation already has a significant impact, but also to financial services,

healthcare, education, technology, professional services, and a range of “white collar” industries once believed to be safe from digital disruption.

“The question is not *if* disruption is coming to your field of expertise, it’s *how soon*? Large, already successful organisations need to be proactively constructing a business environment and culture that is quick to recognise these challenges, adapt, and innovate effectively. Responding to this challenge will require moving beyond restrictive, overly narrow ideas of what innovation means,” concludes Adão.

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