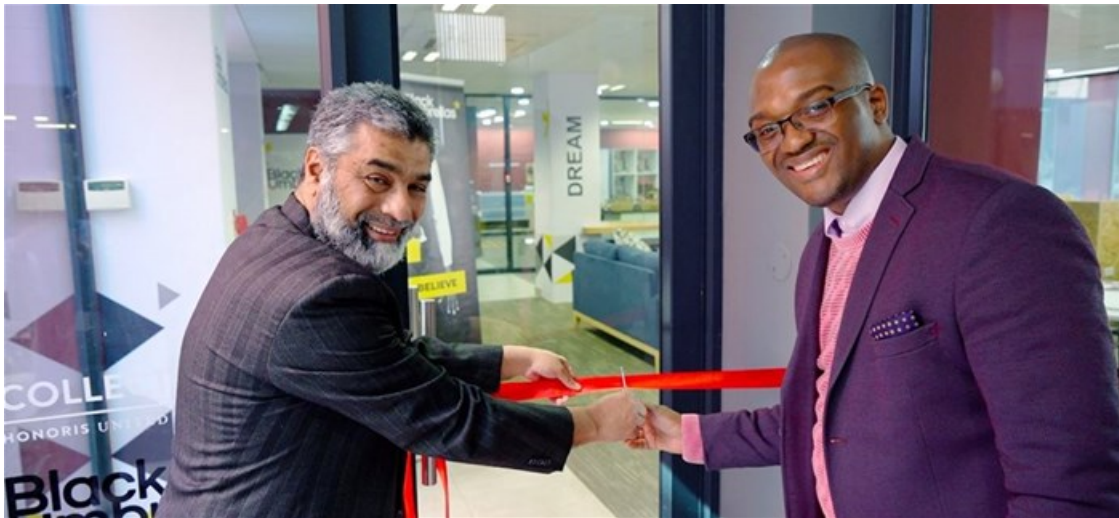


First Black Umbrellas incubation lounge launched in KZN to empower youth and entrepreneurs

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KwaZulu-Natal startup entrepreneurs will have easy access to assistance to grow their business with the launch of the Black Umbrellas incubation lounge at the Regent Business School Durban campus.



Hoosen Essof, manager of redHUB at Regent Business School, and Xolile Ndundum, Black Umbrellas chief operating officer at the official opening of the Black Umbrellas incubation lounge at the Regent Business School Durban campus

A partner entity of Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation, this is the second of three incubation lounges to be run nationally with Regent employment arm RedHUB which demonstrates the aim of mainstreaming entrepreneurship as a career path. The first incubation lounge has opened in Johannesburg.

Black Umbrellas incubation lounges offer aspiring entrepreneurs and students access to industry experts for training, mentoring and coaching, a tried and tested programme to its visitors.

The space is geared at meeting the business and educational needs of students and entrepreneurs, providing them with access to Wi-Fi, printing facilities, professional reception staff, and boardrooms for use.

Hoosen Essof, manager of RedHUB, a specialised unit of Regent Business School said the Black Umbrellas incubation lounge is open to students at Regent Business School and as well as non-students who can research and learn at a place where they can consult and meet with mentors and coaches.

“The redHUB offers programmes for business startup, business foundation, business management, and business financial management.

“This incubation lounge is extremely beneficial as Black Umbrellas have provided a tried and tested and mature programme which delivers efficiently to students,” he said.

Essof added that there is no need to recreate systems and training programmes. RedHUB and Black Umbrellas can offer the requisite services immediately.

Xolile Ndundum, Black Umbrellas chief operating officer said the organisation aims to expose individuals to the world of business by empowering upcoming entrepreneurs with knowledge and skills to create a sustainable startup business by showing them the why, when and how of building a startup business through practical and case study based education.

“Black Umbrellas offers an internationally acclaimed virtual incubation programme. Through training, mentorship and business coaching that takes place virtually on the organisation’s virtual incubator, entrepreneurs are able to solidify their business practices and become sustainable in increasingly competitive environments. The business incubators offer SMEs short-term and long-term co-spacing.

“Between redHUB and Black Umbrellas, we are able to assist entrepreneurs in any stage of development, from idea generation to validating it, to regulatory compliance and growing their business and funding it, as well as facilitating procurement opportunities. This is in effective one stop shop,” he said.

Liat Madinane, founder and chief creative officer at Sika Creative Agency, joined the incubation programme to structure her business, build confidence and learn as much as she could. Her marketing, branding and communications agency recently won Silver for Best Upcoming Agency at the 2022 Prism Awards.

“In 2019, at the age of 22, I had the courage to start a business without any experience. I am thankful to a platform like Black Umbrellas that helps people like me with no experience at all to learn, grow and be mentored by experienced business people,” she said.

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