

Women significantly under-represented in construction

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

23 Aug 2016

Athi Myoli is the director of the [Women in Construction Awards](#), an event that recognises excellence within the African construction, cement and concrete industry. We interviewed Myoli to find out more about the annual awards, what some of the issues are that women face in the construction sector, and what her message for Women's Month is.



Athi Myoli

■ ***Who is Athi Myoli and what is your role as director of the Women in Construction Awards?***

I am a 31-year-old NMMU BTech Management graduate. I was born and bred in Port Elizabeth and I am the second-born in a family of six siblings. I moved to Cape Town some three years ago to join Hyphenica, an international multimedia and events company. My role as awards director is multifunctional - from putting together a judging panel of industry heavyweights to giving guidance and direction on the nomination categories. I seek sponsorship from different companies and drive the entire awards evening with the support of my team.

■ ***Could you tell us more about why the awards are necessary in the construction industry?***

The Women in Construction Awards programme not only honours women who have pioneered the development of the African built environment, but also recognises the emerging leaders of the industry. African women are significantly under-represented in the construction sector. The number of women involved in technical professions and in engineering is a concern as women are still grossly under-represented, with the percentage of women graduates in engineering still below 20% in many countries on the continent, and the number of women actively employed in the construction sector being much lower. It is for this reason that it is necessary to recognise the work and valuable contribution women in the construction sector have in Africa's infrastructural awakening.

■ ***How have the awards grown over the last four years?***

Now in the fourth year, the call for nominations for the Women in Construction Awards resulted in 37 nominations. A panel of judges, which consisted of 19 global industry experts, identified five individual finalists, representative of three African countries and six organisational finalists. The awards have certainly grown year upon year. We are excited about the direction the awards are headed in and the impact the awards has had on the industry and on all the individuals and organisations that have recipients.

■ ***What do you think is the biggest issue facing women in the construction industry?***

Access to finance remains the biggest struggle and lack of business mentors.

■ ***Is there a female figure that has had a positive influence on your life?***

Oh yes, several women; Wendy Luhabe, Pam Golding and Dr Thandi Ndlovu - such phenomenal women constantly breaking ground.

■ ***Do you think, in 2016, it's important to have a month dedicated to women in SA?***

Certainly, our role as women both professionally and in communities needs to be recognised, rewarded and celebrated!

■ ***What is your message for Women's Month?***

All of us carry within us an infinite potential for greatness.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

Sindy Peters (@sindy_hullaba_lou) is a group editor at Bizcommunity.com on the Construction & Engineering, Energy & Mining, and Property portals. She can be reached at sindy@bizcommunity.com

■ #YouthMonth: ABB's Arleta Mukhesi on navigating a global transition - 12 Jun 2023

■ #YouthMonth: Izadri van Niekerk on engineering as a force for good - 2 Jun 2023

■ #BehindtheSelfie: Raymond Mhlongo, engineering manager, Sedna - 24 Mar 2023

■ Sanna Sebone shares tips on building a sustainable woman-owned construction enterprise - 17 Mar 2023

■ Schneider Electric's EcoStruxure platform powers interactive 4IR lab at UJ - 7 Mar 2023

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>