

# Student innovation designed to save lives

The winners of the 2018 HIP2B<sup>2</sup> 3M Innovation Challenge - a competition designed to engage students' interest in maths and science, while having them develop solutions to real world problems - were announced on Wednesday, 24 October 2018 at the 3M offices in Woodmead.



Project presentation: The winning team, with Devan Pillay, MD for 3MSouth Africa.

The winning project was created by Mpumalanga's Mandlesive Secondary School pupils, Trevor Simelane (Grade 9) and Joseph Mdluli (Grade 10). Inspired by the fire fighters who died on duty during the fire at the Bank of Lisbon building, Simelane and Mdluli's 'Fire Rescue Robot' is aimed at making the lives of fire fighters safer and will play an important role in reducing the deaths of people being affected by the fire.

The young inventors say that their creation has the capability to get inside dangerous burning buildings and can search for trapped people while at the same time extinguishing the fire. "The advantages of our Fire Rescue Robot extend to absorbing smoke in burning buildings and can provide oxygen for people who have just been rescued from the fire," explains Simelane.

According to the young innovators, the robot is designed to find the fire before it rages out of control. It can also detect obstacles even in places where the visibility is limited to humans due to smoke. "One of the other advantages of a robot is that it can safely go to places that are risky for humans; there are no risks of suffocating, getting lung and respiratory damage or burns and injuries from the building collapsing. It is built to absorb pressure and deliver results within a short period," says Mdluli.

## Challenging innovation

The challenge is the brainchild of 3M and HIP2B<sup>2</sup> and is designed to inspire innovation in everyday life. It is also backed by the national Department of Basic Education.

"We spark an interest and curiosity in maths and science and inspire school learners to spend time on these subjects at school. We show learners that these subjects are fun, and through a well-structured educational programme such as the HIP2B<sup>2</sup> 3M Innovation Challenge we want to unlock the inner innovator of each learner," says Cathryn Payne, MD of HIP2B<sup>2</sup>.

"Ultimately, through the HIP2B<sup>2</sup> 3M Innovation Challenge, we would like to create an entrepreneurial mindset, develop our human capital and create a skilled workforce focusing on the critical skills shortage that is key to South Africa's future economic prosperity," concludes Devan Pillay, MD of 3M South Africa.

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