

Animation School selects Honoris as its partner for expansion

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The television entertainment sector in South Africa is undergoing a digital revolution, with streaming services such as Showmax, Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ disrupting the traditional business model South Africans have used for many years.



The power of these services is immense. These platforms boast impressive content rosters and allow users to curate their content list, watching as and when they please, without repeats or interruptions. Additionally, users seek localised content that sees Africans tell African stories. This is a clear indication that African content is in high demand globally.

The power is shifting to Africa

African creativity is taking its rightful prominent place on the global stage as the creative arts industry in Africa steadily grows, driven by rich cultural diversity, a youthful population, and increasing international interest in African art, music, fashion, film, and literature. These factors created an exciting value proposition for expanding global streaming platforms into Africa.

Afreximbank's African Trade Report 2022 cites a contribution of \$58bn generated by creative industries in Africa and the Middle East, with almost 7% of South Africa's total workforce employed in the sector. As part of this, the multi-billion-dollar global animation industry offers tremendous employment opportunities for the largest youth population in the world, encompassing a wide range of animation from feature films to TV shows, video games, and online content. In recent years, the industry has experienced significant growth, driven by the popularity of animated content from major studios such as Triggerfish Animation Studios, Disney, Pixar, DreamWorks Animation, and Studio Ghibli.

Additionally, unlike the rest of the world, Africa is experiencing a positive population growth rate and boasts the largest

emerging youth population in the world, as digital natives redefine how entertainment is packaged and consumed.

Capitalising on demand

The growing demand for localised content has created an opportunity for growth. Responding to this, Honoris United Universities is pleased to announce the latest addition to its group: The Animation School (TAS) in South Africa.

Renowned as one of the global leaders in animation training, TAS will join Honoris to cultivate the creative trailblazers of tomorrow in one of the fastest-growing sectors on the continent.

Based in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, TAS opened its doors in 2000 and has established itself as a leading source of specialist animation education, ranked 12th in the world by the Animation Career Review website in 2023. TAS alumni go on to varying roles, including animators, lighting artists, modellers, composers, directors, studio owners and more, supported by a team of faculty who are working professionals from the industry.

Creating employment opportunities

The future of African entertainment looks bright and will create many employment opportunities for skilled professionals. This is especially enticing for South Africa, which faces a severe Unemployment Crisis.

Employer partnerships with global industry leaders, including Triggerfish Animation Studios and many others, reinforce opportunities for students to gain work-ready training and support employability initiatives for a successful career transition. The Animation School has partnered with Netflix for the past two years to provide a three-year scholarship to two talented students to boost opportunities for graduates on the continent further. This shows that streaming services are committed to promoting the production of localised content.

Whilst TAS students already perform internationally, aligning with the power of the network at Honoris United Universities will showcase South African artists' talent, vision, and masterful storytelling. Honoris will support its pan-African growth plans to expand access to high-growth employability sectors whilst focusing on investment in academic excellence, learning environments, support services, and faculty development.

A significant announcement

The inclusion of TAS into the Honoris network is a significant announcement for both esteemed organizations.

Commenting on the announcement, Honoris Group CEO Dr. Jonathan Louw, said: *"Today marks a significant milestone in championing our creative arts sector, as we proudly welcome The Animation School into the network. This collaboration reinforces our dedication to delivering transformational, relevant education, and positions us to shape the future of African creative talent. I eagerly look forward to expanding the footprint of The Animation School to empower the visionaries of tomorrow, providing them with unparalleled opportunities to excel in the dynamic field of animation."*

Nuno Martins, director, co-founder, and principal of The Animation School, added: *"Studios across the globe are increasingly turning their attention to Africa, as the wealth of creative expertise garners global attention. We are confident that we've chosen the perfect partner in Honoris for our mission to widen access across Africa to an industry with bountiful opportunity, creativity, diversity, and fulfillment. We passionately believe in the power of Africa's youth and the growth arising from exposure to different cultures and mindsets, all the more important in our creative sector."*

TAS becomes the fifth Honoris institution in South Africa alongside MANCOSA, REGENT Business School, Red and Yellow Creative School of Business, and FEDISA Fashion School. The transformational African education network now comprises 16 institutions in 10 countries and 32 cities, delivering its Education for Impact mission to over 85,000 students.

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