

The Wild Bean Design-A-Cup competition: creating opportunities for emerging creatives

 By [Emily Stander](#)

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Especially with the challenges brought forward by Covid-19, it is essential that opportunities are created, specifically for emerging creatives, to help nurture the creative economy. In South Africa, the Wild Bean Design-A-Cup Competition is one such campaign.



Belinda Peterson

The UN General Assembly declared 2021 as the International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development - a testament to the industry as a crucial part of global sustainability.

We spoke with the convenience general manager of BP, Belinda Peterson, to find out more about the campaign, her thoughts on the creative economy, and some advice for youth trying to enter the industry...

Why did the Design-A-Cup initiative start initially?

The Wild Bean Design-A-Cup Competition has now been running for three years and was borne out of a desire to engage with the communities that we serve. The initial thoughts were actually to give school children an opportunity to create artwork and then the idea evolved to student designers - as they are our coffee lovers. We wanted to engage our customers and give them the opportunity to have their artwork showcased on cups throughout the country. This is an initiative started in South Africa and has now been shared with our other global regions within Wild Bean Cafe to inspire more young designers across the world.



#BehindtheMask: David Tshabalala, illustrator and graphic designer

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■ ***Have you reached the goals you set out originally with the initiative?***

Each year the campaign attracts more designs and there is more engagement - particularly through social media - but there is still more to come, keep watching this space to see how the campaign will evolve and get bigger.

■ ***How do you think campaigns like this can enrich the lives of young creatives in South Africa?***

Our youth have had an extremely challenging two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic; this campaign aims to shine the spotlight light on South Africa's young talent. At BP, we believe in investing in future generations. We have a strong graduate programme and have been recognised by the youth as a top employer

■ ***How do you think we can move past the challenges Covid poses in the creative industry?***

We need the industry to gain momentum again - in a safe and appropriate way.

■ ***What does 'creative economy' mean to you, and how is it significant to your company?***

The creative economy provides young and old with a platform to express their talents, ideas, and creativity and make a living from these. In view of the youth unemployment challenges in South Africa, BP is investing in the dreams of young artists to help play our part in ensuring that the creative economy sustains itself and thrives.

■ ***What advice would you give to young creatives trying to make it to the top?***

Keep going, keep believing in yourself and never let anyone dampen your passion. A career is a journey, not a destination, enjoy each and every stage and don't try and run before you can walk. Good things come to those who wait.

■ ***Tell us a bit more about yourself and the work you do?***

I head up the convenience business across SA for BP. This means I oversee a team that looks after our shopping brands - BP Express, Pick n Pay Express and BP's international coffee shop brand - Wild Bean Cafe. My team is also responsible for partnerships that we have with various quick-service restaurant brands on our forecourts and our home delivery business. I'm a passionate retailer at heart and enjoy putting myself in the shoes of our customers to continually see how we can offer our shoppers more reasons to choose BP.

■ ***How did your career path lead you to this point?***

My career actually started off in property development, and I discovered retail through my position as a development manager in the UK working for a leading shopping centre owner and developer. For the first time in my life, the project wasn't just about bricks and mortar; my eyes were opened to the world of retail and designing and building spaces that delighted customers. I was intrigued by customer behaviour and what leads us to spend our hard-earned money at one store vs the next. Retail is detail and there is so much to get right to delight customers.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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