

SAYNA brings digital studies to Madagascar

 By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Matina Razafimahefa is the founder of SAYNA, an innovative edtech venture based in Madagascar. The business sources, trains, and produces highly equipped young Africans in industry-specific digital skills. As a finalist in the 2020 Anzisha Prize, she shares more about the startup and what she would do if she wins...



Matina Razafimahefa, founder of SAYNA

The Anzisha Prize is a programme in partnership with the African Leadership Academy and the Mastercard Foundation that seeks to grow the number of job-generative entrepreneurs on the African continent and to provide them with the support needed to ensure the sustainability of their projects.

■ ***Could you tell us about SAYNA?***

SAYNA is the first digital school focused on digital studies in Madagascar. We source, guide and train the youth in IT development professions, and we open doors to the job market and work opportunities for them.

■ ***When, how and why did you start SAYNA?***

I started SAYNA in 2019 when I was 19 years old. I started it out of frustration due to injustices I noticed: access to education in Africa is very expensive and doesn't always necessarily assure access to jobs.

■ ***What's the main function of SAYNA?***

At SAYNA we redefine the future of work. We train students at very affordable fees so that they have peace of mind and then we offer them work on our task-based platform - that's what we call the "MicroTaskingForce" also known as crowdsourcing in the United States.

■ ***What challenges have you surmounted since inception?***

The market in Madagascar is really complicated in terms of mentality, ecosystems and culture. Starting a business in Madagascar, in the edtech sector, as a young woman is one big adventure. In addition to that, finding a product-market fit was very difficult.

■ ***Do you have any advice to give you other young and aspiring entrepreneurs?***

My only advice would be to make lots of mistakes.

■ ***What achievement are you most proud of so far?***

Having helped dozens of marginalised Malagasy youth find more than just a job: a better life and a better future. It's priceless.

■ ***What does the future of entrepreneurship look like for you?***

I think the future of entrepreneurship is brilliant in Africa. There's are many opportunities to build.

■ ***What would you like to see changed in the Madagascan startup landscape?***

I dream of seeing a Madagascar where there is more collaboration and where we give everyone a place to scale and grow.

■ ***According to you, what are the characteristics that an entrepreneur needs in order to succeed?***

The characteristics of a good entrepreneur for me are resilience, the capacity to understand their business all around, as well as the capacity to sell and to manage. Finally, the most important capability is to pick oneself up after failure.

■ ***You're a finalist for the 2020 Anzisha Prize. What does this mean for you?***

I'm very happy and moved. For me, this signifies an openness to the African continent.

■ ***If you're crowned as the winner, what will you do with the prize?***

We will recruit salespeople and a bigger, more experienced tech team.

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