

# Q&A: Mic Mann talks SingularityU SA Online Summit 2020



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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In line with the theme, #FutureProofAfrica, this year's SingularityU South Africa Summit will take place online from 14-15 October 2020. The summit will focus on teaching delegates about exponential technologies and their potential to solve the global grand challenges....



Mic Mann, co-CEO of SingularityU South Africa

## **What is the SingularityU South Africa Summit all about?**

The SingularityU South Africa Summit is all about bringing the best thought leadership and innovation to South Africa and Africa to build a community of change makers that will solve the continent's challenges and future proof Africa. It's also about helping people and businesses learn how exponential technologies can help them in their everyday lives and business.

Over the last couple of years, we have brought some of the world's top thought leaders to the stage, which we continue to do. This year, we have expanded our themes which are:

- Exponential technologies
- Global grand challenges
- Leadership & entrepreneurship
- Digital Marketing

- SME's

■ ***This year, the summit is completely online. Could you tell us how things will be different to previous years?***

The online format enables us to stage a completely different event. We are not limited by space for our activities or our audience, so we have expanded themes, topics and stages. This year, we have four stages plus live workshops all happening simultaneously.

It allows us to attract a global audience – nobody has to fly in. The ticket prices are reduced giving more access to more people.

We have also treated the content differently. We understand Zoom fatigue, so we are keeping the content short, sharp and high value, constantly evolving to keep the audience engaged. The shorter talks have made way for more variety. There will be more than one talk per session to choose from as well as highlights and relive channels.

■ ***Could you elaborate more about the platform? How it was built?***

When the Covid-19 pandemic started, we started studying all of these new platform. We landed on Hopin which appealed to us (UK-based) which allows for the personalisation and customisation that we wanted. The platform includes capabilities for multiple stages, digital expos, speed dating and live workshops. We've tailored it to our needs to create a unique experience for summit attendees this year.

■ ***There are always amazing speakers. Who can we expect to hear from this year?***

There are over 100 speakers at this year's summit, but just to name a few:

- Peter Diamandis, executive founder and director of Singularity University; founder and executive chairman of the XPRIZE Foundation
- Jerry Wonda, Grammy Award-winning producer
- David Roberts, leading expert on business disruption and exponential leadership; founder of GEDI Training
- Cathy Wood, founder and CEO of ARK Invest
- Jaya Baloo, chief information security officer at Avast Software; SingularityU Faculty member of cybersecurity and Quantum Computing
- Steve Leonard, CEO of Singularity University, and many more



More speakers added to SingularityU SA Online Summit 2020

18 Sep 2020



### ▣ ***How are the speakers chosen?***

We look for people who show current expertise based on our topics and themes. The bar is really high so we value people who show extraordinary thought leadership, people who are trailblazing in their field and people leading ground-breaking innovation around the world. Our over-riding mission is to future proof Africa, so it's all about who will deliver the most value to our audience in that capacity. We also get plenty of requests and proposals for speakers who we then research.

### ▣ ***What is the process of putting the agenda together?***

The process is quite intense and lengthy. It takes a few months. Overall, the agenda is based on the themes, topics and narratives.

We have a team who carefully steer the agenda to ensure that the right flow throughout each day, so that there is variety including factors like no two people speaking on the same thing at the same time.

### ▣ ***What highlights can we expect at this years' summit?***

Plenty! I'm very excited about the thought leadership talks. We have large amount of top end leaders from around the world with great variety and depth in the presentations and panel discussions. There is so much to learn in these few days. It's like getting a mind upgrade in a very short time.

Also having Peter Diamandis on our stage is a big thing. We are thrilled that he will be addressing the African audience.

There will be a highlights channel on 14-15 October with highlights from previous year's summits. On Friday, 16 October, we go live with our Relive Experience that will enable you to watch the talks or discussions you missed during the week.

Our "Drinks in the Bush" VR after parties are also going to be a great highlight! You'll be able to choose your avatar from the Big 5 and drink with other animals.

Lastly, I am excited that we are giving people the opportunity to connect and interact with each other. This has been missing from so many other online events and there's a real need for this.

To find out more, go to <https://singularityusouthafricasummit.org/>

## ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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