

# Sisanda Tech is making science learning easy, fun and engaging



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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With the lack of access to science apparatus and equipment for experiments in public schools, Mbangiso Mabaso developed SI Realities, a virtual science laboratory which leverages augmented reality and virtual reality to make science learning easy, fun and engaging.



Mbangiso "Baso" Mabaso

Mpumelelo Macu © / [Red Bull Content Pool](#)

Using a special cube and a phone or a tablet, learners are able to interact with virtual apparatus and experiments through the screen and manipulation of the cube.

The project came from Mbangiso Mabaso's own experience in high school in wanting to, but not having access to proper equipment for science experiments.

We chat to Mbangiso "Baso" Mabaso, founder of Sisanda Tech, to find out about the virtual science lab solving the problem of access to science apparatus...

## ■ Can you tell us a bit about Sisanda Tech?

Sisanda Tech is a learning company that uses technology to enhance learning experiences in and out of the classroom. Our vision is to give every child in the world a platform to thrive through building and creating platforms or spaces that can allow them to explore their curiosity, experiment anywhere and anytime and play learning.

Sisanda Tech was founded in 2017 when I got an investment from a friend Vuyisile Mdtjuliwa and borrowed a laptop from Tshediso Goeieman to build my first game for Sisanda Tech.

The game was called EED (Energy Efficiency Diva), which was an energy awareness game to teach kids between the age of 8 to 13 on how to save energy. It reached 589 downloads on Google Play store and came third position at SAB Kickstart Ignite.

We then pivoted from EED after struggling to raise money to develop it further to SI realities. SI realities is a virtual science laboratory for science learners and teachers. It uses the camera of the smartphone or tablet to project virtual science apparatus in front the learners so they can be able to dissect, manipulate and extract objects just like how will they do it in a normal science lab. SI realities uses the same methodology as EED of using game mechanics to make learning enjoyable.

#### ■ ***When, how and why did you get started?***

Sisanda Tech was founded in 2017 as I mentioned before.

I'm a Product Of Public School (POPS) and as a science learner from a public school you could only imagine science, but never get the opportunity to experiment with it due to a lack of a science lab.

I remember one day my Physical Science teacher, Ntate Ramohomane introduced a concept of generating electricity through the movement of magnets and motors. It was so fascinating that I and a fellow classmate would end up debating the possibility of this concept which made us want to go to the science lab to experiment it.

We asked permission from Ntate Ramohomane, which we got, and we didn't want to waste any time to get the science lab, only to find out that doors were falling off, taps were blocked and even worse, there was no apparatus to perform our experiment

This affected my time at university because it was a struggle for me to compete on the same level as the students who were exposed to well-functioning labs at their schools.

My three nephews are attending the same schools that I used to attend and I would be dumb if I didn't work and dedicate my time to work on a virtual science lab that could benefit the 12 million learners in public schools, 400,000 in private and the 100,000 who are homeschooled.

I just want to see them have an opportunity to explore their curiosity, experiment anywhere and anytime and play while learning.

#### ■ ***What is the core function of Sisanda Tech?***

We are building a virtual science laboratory called SI realities.

### ▣ ***What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?***

I borrowed a laptop from Tshasa to build my first game, funding was a challenge when it came to building my first prototype, and the cost of data.

### ▣ ***What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs?***

Death is upon us all, so let's create while we are still alive.

### ▣ ***What has been your proudest achievement thus far?***

Selling 150 cubes, building a team and winning MTN Most Innovative Solution just after a year. Also completing two months business and product development with Redbull Basement Residency and four months with Redbull Amaphiko



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### ▣ ***What does the future of entrepreneurship look like to you?***

To me, there is no choice but to be an innovator and entrepreneur. I like the idea of creating ideas out of nothing and to hustle to sell them.

### ▣ ***What do you think is the importance of startup accelerator/incubator programmes?***

I am part of the Red Bull Amaphiko programme. Conversations there always start with how are you as a person? Your personal wellbeing is important to the programme more than anything. The importance of this programme is focused on the mental health of the entrepreneur, which is critical. It then provides you with coaches and mentors that could actually listen to you when you talk and advise accordingly.

### ▣ ***What would you like to see changed in the South African startup landscape?***

We need to do away with entrepreneurship programmes that just tick the box for BBBEE boxes, for doing entrepreneurship for black entrepreneurs, just to exploit us even more.

### ▣ ***What do you believe are the traits an entrepreneur needs in order to succeed?***

Resilience and work ethic!

### ▣ ***Would you encourage someone to become an entrepreneur? Why?***

No, don't do it. It's baaaaaad!!!! Just kidding. Yes, definitely!

### ▣ ***Where would you like to see Sisanda Tech in the next five years?***

We would like to see the child in Section J, Botshabelo, South Africa have the opportunity to explore her curiosity with a child in Uganda, Kampala and where teachers are able to perform experiments with their learners anywhere and anytime.

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