

4 career paths for success in the metaverse

The metaverse is set to become a major contributor to the world economy, with the potential to deliver a R2.3tn boost to the global economy by 2025, according to an assessment conducted by PwC. Augmented and virtual reality (VR) tech will impact a variety of sectors - from gaming and healthcare to edtech and retail. With well-known consumer brands such as Nike and Gucci already investing in virtual product development and sales, the demand for metaverse-related skills could be on the rise. For young South Africans, preparing for a successful career in the metaverse starts now.



“There’s a lot of talk around the metaverse, and a lot of caution too. It’s important for parents and their children to understand the hype verses the reality, and how to prepare for the opportunities this will present. With artificial intelligence and VR positioned as the core technologies of the metaverse, building knowledge in these areas is a good start for students,” says Rebecca Pretorius, country manager at global mentorship company Crimson Education.

International universities like New York University and Stanford have already started incorporating the metaverse into their curricula, with students wearing VR headsets in their dormitory, or anywhere in the world, to take classes remotely.

Not wanting to be left behind, other tertiary institutions are likely to follow suit. At the same time, existing degrees may start to incorporate elements of virtual reality into their curricula.

Pretorius highlights four degrees that are likely to emerge as key to success in the metaverse:

1. Law: With people spending time creating digital art, buying property, and even opening businesses in the metaverse, metaverse lawyers may become indispensable in building and upholding a digital legal system.

2. Asset management: Big companies and financial institutions have their eye on the metaverse. Universities will need to teach students how to manage and invest money in both the real world and the digital one.



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Digital asset advisors will need to be able to provide suggestions on investments in Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs), blockchains like Ethereum, or even virtual collectors' items.

3. Software engineering: Expertise in large-scale system design, networking and data storage, as well as artificial intelligence is crucial to building a seamless virtual experience.

While schools will need to start laying the foundations for this knowledge, universities are expected to dedicate an increasing number of resources to the study and development of the metaverse.

4. Art and the humanities: While the metaverse is powered by ones and zeros, the look and feel of a virtual universe are what really draws the average person in. From metaverse avatar stylists to journalists and chief meme officers, humanities degree holders may be responsible for bringing the fun to the online world.

"When it comes to the metaverse, opportunities for success seem endless. High school students interested in building a career in a virtual space can get a head start by investing their time in extracurricular activities that develop their digital skills and help them hone their ability to innovate. This will also ensure they stand out when applying to top universities around the world," says Pretorius.

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