

Ready, set, code! SAP Africa Code Week 2018 opens

The fourth edition of SAP's Africa Code Week kicked off in Johannesburg on Friday, 5 October 2018, in conjunction with UNESCO's World Teachers' Day, which was established in the 1990s to promote teachers' status in the interest of quality education.



South African Minister of Telecommunications & Postal Services, Hon. Dr. Siyabonga Cwele showcasing the importance of computer code to sisters, Nosiho and Karabo Mayisa, at the opening of Africa Code Week.

At the launch ceremony, Africa Code Week gave thanks to its most important participant by rewarding a community teacher who had made a significant impact to the programme. The prize includes a fully paid trip to the SAP showcase, SapphireNow, in Orlando, United States of America during May 2019.

Every year between June and September, SAP funds a series of Train-the-Trainer (TTT) sessions to empower teachers with skills and teaching materials that drive the advance of digital skills in the school curriculum. As part of this year's TTTs organised across 20 countries in the build-up to the 2018 edition, 500 teachers were trained in Ghana, 1,200 in Nigeria, 200 in Madagascar, and another 1,000 in Botswana.

"Content is going to be a key game changer for us as a continent in the fourth industrial revolution," said South African Minister of Telecommunications & Postal Services, Hon. Dr. Siyabonga Cwele, in his address at Friday's launch. "Initiatives such as the Africa Code Week are helping us to develop the local content which will drive demand for internet services. Crucially, we are going to rely on partnerships with the private sector and other social partners to develop the digital skills the continent needs to be competitive in the fourth industrial revolution. We also need to introduce coding to learners at an early stage."



Botswana builds digital education through Africa Code Week

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Digital skills and girl empowerment to drive the continent's development

According to Cathy Smith, managing director of SAP Africa, the fourth industrial revolution is forcing a complete rethink of how education is approached, with a strong focus on lifelong skills development. "Africa Code Week is our response: by inspiring a new generation of African youth through digital skills development, and by empowering teachers and communities with digital teaching tools, we aim to accelerate digital literacy while ensuring a more inclusive and innovation-led workforce. As the African workforce swells by 112 million people over the next two years, initiatives such as Africa Code Week will be instrumental in ensuring that our youth can be active participants in the global digital economy."

Placing an equally sharp focus on the gender divide in developing countries, Africa Code Week key partners SAP, UNESCO YouthMobile and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) joined forces in 2017 as part of the G20 #eSkills4girls initiative. "For Africa to take its rightful place as a key player in the global economy, we must collectively drive digital skills development while placing a strong emphasis on encouraging female participation in an effort to bridge the gender gap. Female participation in last year's Africa Code Week stood at 46.5%, indicating huge strides towards empowering girls in the digital century and fostering gender equality in African ICT education," Smith said.

Since its inception in 2015, Africa Code Week has introduced over 1.8 million African youth to coding skills in multiple African countries while facilitating the integration of ICT education in the school curriculum for more than 28,000 teachers and educators across the continent. The programme will occur during October with set dates for countries to accommodate the school calendar, Africa Code Week aims to engage an additional 600,000 youth across 36 African countries in 2018.

To find out when your country's Africa Code Week activities will take place, visit <https://africacodeweek.org/activities/2018-calendar/>.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>