

Winners of the Future Africa Grant for extended reality creators announced

Africa No Filter and Meta have announced the six finalists of the 'Future Africa: Telling Stories, Building Worlds' programme - focused on harnessing and investing in the next generation of Extended Reality (XR) creators in Africa.



Source: APO

The winners, selected from Mozambique, South Africa, Nigeria, Mauritius, Cameroon, and Kenya, will incorporate the creative uses of music, multimedia installations, films and sculpture to explore projects around spirituality, heritage, the cosmos, imagination and memory and masculinity into their extended realities projects - all with a focus on telling compelling African stories that are contemporary, narrative-shifting, and immersive.

The six participating storytellers are:

- **Pierre-Christophe Gam** (Cameroon): A multimedia artist who is working on a hybrid art installation that fuses VR, film, photography, and mixed-media sculpture to imagine the future of Africa from the perspective of an African family living in 2070.

- **Xabiso Vili** (South Africa): A writer, performer and new media artist, Vili's visual album is a speculative fiction piece that explores reconciliation and healing. Vili hopes to turn toxic masculinity into compassionate masculinity.
- **Nirma Madhoo** (Mauritius): A fashion filmmaker, XR creator and PhD candidate, her work explores African cultures as technologies, which she illustrates through ancient practices like cultural astronomy.
- **Michelle Angawa** (Kenya): A film editor XR creator, this creation centres around a short tragicomedy that depicts a day-in-the-life of a Nairobiian boda boda rider, exploring desire and the complexities of Nairobiian life.
- **Malik Afegbua** (Nigeria): A multimedia artist who is focused on curating a virtual heritage experience of the Kofar-Mata dye pit, a cultural and historical site in Kano, Nigeria.
- **Lara Sousa** (Mozambique): A director and producer, this creation uses the journey of Lemanjá, the Afro-Brazilian goddess of wisdom, to explore the ocean as a sacred site of spirituality.

As part of the 'Future Africa: Telling Stories, Building Worlds' programme, each creator will be supported with funding of up to \$30,000 and also participate in XR-industry events to improve their creativity and drive interest in their projects. They will also access mentorship from Electric South and Imisi3D.

Sherry Dzinoreva, Meta's Public Policy Programs Director, Africa, Middle East, and Turkey, said: "This specially curated program is an opportunity to support African storytellers who are leveraging the power of the next evolution of social technology, whilst also shining a spotlight on the amazing, creative, and diverse talent pool we have here on the continent. We understand the power of Extended Reality and how it can be used to tell stories that shift narratives about and within the continent - and we're excited to see these visions come to life."

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