February 4, 2019

**Company profile**

The African Business Incubation Institute (ABII) is a regional body of individuals and organizations dedicated to developing and supporting business incubation, acceleration and other Enterprise Development programmes across Africa. Believing that the small business is the driver for the economic development of the continent, the broad base of members of the institute is committed to supporting the success of such programmes and their clients.

**Our Mission**

The mission of ABII is to enhance the knowledge and skills of industry professionals; advance the success of incubators and their clients; to promote a better understanding of Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship and the role it plays in economic development across the continent.

**Our Values**

By promoting meaningful change in Small Enterprise Development we help people live healthier, more productive, and more independent lives.

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| **Excellence | Exceed expectations**   * Provide dedicated customer service. * Master skills and focus on details. * Solve problems, admit mistakes, learn and move on. * Set high standards and deliver quality results. | **Innovation | Be entrepreneurial**   * Be flexible and open-minded. * Take initiative and introduce new ideas. * Translate ideas to actions quickly. * Accelerate change and be part of the change. |
| **Integrity | Trust one another**   * Be transparent (open door, open book). * Do the right thing. * Honour commitments and be accountable. * Empower others to take action and make decisions. | **Opportunity | Think big**   * Be versatile. * Continue to learn and develop self. * Mentor and develop others. * Take chances on people and partners |

Page Content

**Our Approach**

Put simply, everything we do is in the service of our Enterprise Development mission, whether it is training in Cairo, supporting local communities in Cape Town, promoting sound incubation practices in Sierra Leone, encouraging local staff development in Zanzibar, or ensuring our own internal processes meet international quality standards.

**Our Company**

As an institute, we strive to provide excellence and value. We set the highest possible performance standards, and we believe our ownership culture and streamlined business model reinforce our development mission, allowing us to be efficient and effective in promoting meaningful change in Africa. ABII employs experts from around the globe and where possible from within Africa. Our team members provide solutions that are informed by their extensive experience in the ED development context with a deep understanding of the political, social, and economic dynamics of the countries in which we work. We take a multi-sectorial approach to development consulting and we understand that sustainable economic development requires the public and private sectors to work together. Our flexibility allows the ABII team to develop tailored solutions for its clients.

Page Content

**Our dedication to quality**

Our commitment to quality is a founding principle of the African Business Incubation Institute. We have gathered the most experienced Business Incubation and Enterprise Development professionals in Africa under one umbrella. We also maintain a world-wide network of professionals to enhance our own learning.

**Our global experience**

Although our focus is on developing countries with a specific focus on Africa, the group of professionals has extensive experience from every corner of the globe, on every continent. Our resource base extends to just about every country in Africa and is able to respond to our clients’ needs quickly and efficiently and to better assess and react to local demands. Our cross-cutting technical expertiseallows us to combine that local experience with best practices from around the world to bring the full breadth of our experience to bear to design innovative and sustainable development solutions.

**Our commitment to sustainable impact**

Our primary focus is on delivering developmental impact and is specifically designed to be financially sustainable to achieve true development impact over a longer term. Our internal standards of project excellence allows us to evaluate our programs as they progress to maximize results, promote innovation, and adapt to client and beneficiary needs.

**Our commitment to local partnerships**

We believe strong local partnerships are crucial to achieving our mission. Wherever possible we include as broad a stakeholder group as is feasible and work with local governments, businesses, associations, and civil society groups to ensure our projects address local demands and promote local ownership.

**Management Team**

Managing Director:

Leon Lourens is an Industrial Engineer and an accomplished business management professional and incubation consultant with more than 30 years of experience. He is the founder, CEO and Director of the Limpopo Wildlife Business Incubator and past CEO of an ICT incubator Softstart Business Technology Incubator outside of Johannesburg. He is also a founding member of the South African Business and Technology Incubation Association and the African Incubator Network and served as their Chairman.

Leon is recognized as a leading incubation expert worldwide. The list of his many accomplishments is extensive:

* + Currently engaged as a Team Leader in the Promoting Enterprise Development of the Economic Diversification Support Project in Lesotho for the AfDB.
  + Recently involved in the infoDev (World Bank) project on developing an Agri Entrepreneurship Program in Zambia.
  + Recently completed two new BI training modules and contributed to three others for infoDev.
  + Developed the National Business Incubation strategy for Egypt. (USAID)
  + Completed an assessment of all the Business Incubation programmes in Southern Africa (Finnish Government)
  + African Incubator Network infoDev project leader in Africa. (World Bank)
  + Completed an exploratory study on Small Business Development and Entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone. (Dutch Government)
  + Incubation programme review for Ethiopian Government.
  + Incubation training for stakeholders and incubator manager in Ethiopia.
  + Incubation programme development and training in Rwanda
  + Incubation programme development and training for Commonwealth Secretariat in Antigua.
  + Co-developed the mobile lab strategy for the Caribbean (World Bank)
  + Worked in various other countries including Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho, Uganda, Ghana, Brazil and Caribbean.
  + Certified World Bank- infoDev Business Incubation Management (BIM) trainer
  + Co-ordinator for BIM training in Africa.
  + Conducted the world first post graduate course on Business Incubation at UJ.
  + Currently conducts a post graduate course on business incubation and enterprise development at UNISA School for Business Leadership.

**Associates**

**Steven Giddings:** Steve has over 25 years of diverse business experience that includes scientific research, business development, incubation development and the founding and growth of two of his own companies – one in the service sector and the other in the manufacturing sector. In addition to serving on the boards of these companies, he consults internationally in business incubation, entrepreneur development and public-private partnerships and has worked in numerous African, Middle Eastern and Caribbean countries. He has run an innovation focused technology business incubator and served on the board of the Southern African Business and Technology Incubator Association. He has developed and presented training courses for SME support practitioners and business incubator managers. For the past eight years he has consulted extensively with infoDev in the Finance and Private Sector Department of the World Bank, where he has supports innovation and entrepreneurship development across Africa with mentoring, feasibility studies, incubator management training and start up support to business incubators. Steven has an M.Sc degree and an MBA in Strategic Marketing.

**Dr Jill Sawers:** Jill develops and implements programmes to stimulate innovation in entrepreneurship development. Such projects include the development of a business case for a Pretoria University-based business incubation programme; the evaluation of SAFIPA (a Finnish-funded programme implemented in South Africa); and the development of a business plan for a business incubator for the East London Science Park. Jill has been consulting to infoDev (World Bank) since 2009 and works with other infoDev consultants in the development and roll-out of business incubation programmes in developing countries. Projects include the implementation and on-going technical assistance to the Dar Teknohama Business Incubator (DTBi) in Tanzania; the design of a support programme for women entrepreneurs in Laos – the Mekong Women’s Challenge; and the design of a support programme for women in the Caribbean; the project management of infoDev’s training programme for Business Incubation Managers, and delivery of several of the training modules on various continents. Prior to this she set up and managed, for nine years, the Maxum Business Incubator at The Innovation Science Park in Pretoria, South Africa.

Jill is co-founder and co-owner of FEMTECH (Pty) Ltd which is an experiential learning programme for women growth entrepreneurs running technology-enabled businesses. FEMTECH training has been delivered successfully in South Africa, Tanzania, Botswana and Namibia. Jill has a BSc (Microbiology and Zoology), a MBL (Masters in Business Leadership) and a PhD in Technology Management.

**Leida Schuman:** Leida has 21 years’ experience in the design and implementation of various social and economic development programmes in communities surrounding the petrochemical plants and mining operations of a large corporate in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa. Her long tenure at Sasol and the various positions that she has held has contributed to her deep understanding and perspective of how the private sector operates. It has also honed her skills and developed her networks to have the capacity to engage market and private sector actors in development initiatives. Since 1990, she has worked extensively for Sasol in supplier and enterprise engagement, capacity building, women and youth development and education. Leida holds a Master’s degree in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management from the University of Pretoria.

**Associations**

AIN -African Incubator Network

SABTIA - Southern African Business Incubation Association

SPICE Group - Science Park and Innovation Centre Expert Group - International

Innovative Partners Incubation – USA

**Our Services**

Although our focus is not sector specific we have extensive experience in technology-, agribusiness- and manufacturing enterprise development programmes and in some cases with a special focus on women and youth groups. Our services include technical assistance in business incubation, accelerators, techno parks, innovation hubs, clusters and other ED models.

1. *Incubation and Enterprises Development feasibility studies and programme design* - Our Incubation specialists will help you to create feasible and sustainable enterprise development programmes that will greatly exceed your strategic requirements. Using our vast international experience we work closely with local partners in developing and proposing best-practice solutions to address organisational or countries’ vision for economic development and job creation.
2. *Develop National and Corporate Business Incubation Strategies and Policies* – We support the development of National strategies to develop incubation support programmes that are effective with the main aim of optimising limited resources and ensuring long term sustainability and impact for the donor community and/or Governments.
3. *Business Incubator Manager, staff and stakeholder training* - We can customise a training programme to suit your specific needs for your enterprise development programme or join one of our many training programmes held annually across Africa. You can choose from 16 different modules focussing on specific elements of running such a programme.
4. *Programme/Project management and implementation support* - ABII can provide you with a state-of-the-art ED management system which will constantly and in real time, track your progress and highlight and alert any variances in the milestone and key performance area goals. The management system operates on three main levels:- incubator client, business incubator and programme manager (or donor/funder) level. The programme will be modified to suite your specific needs. See the details on the Incubator Portal here;
5. *Audit, reviews and benchmarking of Incubation and Enterprise Development Programmes* - incubation and ED programmes. Fast track or evaluate your current programme to ensure the right structure, policies and procedures are in place and ensure you are achieving the required outputs.

**Projects**

**A selection of Projects completed:**

*Mining industry:* On behalf of the Finnish Government, developed two community based incubators in conjunction with mining the companies in Botswana and in Zambia to foster entrepreneurial development and support SMEs to provide services and products to large institutions. These incubator models differ widely with one a small scale manufacturing incubator and the second an agribusiness incubator. Which goes to prove the value of a proper feasibility study before embarking on a project.

*University Incubation:* On behalf of USAID, provided technical assistance to American University in Cairo -EIP in setting up the proposed business incubator and to develop the program’s strategy plan articulating the program vision and defining its strategic goals and objectives.

*Incubation Training*: Designed and delivered a business incubation training programme which covers the full range of business incubation from conceptualisation, prefeasibility, planning, managing, financing, marketing, monitoring, evaluating and benchmarking business incubators, technology commercialisation, mentoring and provision of business incubation services, and managing of Intellectual Property for incubates in Zambia, Namibia and Botswana on behalf of the Finnish funded Southern African Innovation Support Programme..

*Egypt National Incubation Strategy*: Egypt’s Competiveness Program (ECP) is a USAID‐financed initiative to improve Egypt’s competitiveness both domestically and internationally and through increased competiveness, spur more rapid economic growth to create the employment opportunities in the aftermath of the 25 January 2011 revolution. Based on “The Business Incubator Assessment and Strategy Proposal”, ECP provided extended TA to the Social Fund for Development (SFD) to become able to operate a number of business incubator units efficiently and/or establish new ones to maximize benefits of such services to targeted clients. The objective was to conduct an assessment, and restructure the current incubation program of SFD, develop and deliver a capacity building programme as well as develop necessary tools or guidelines and procedures necessary for a sustainable and successful operation of the incubators.

*Agribusiness Incubation:* Currently two of our members are engaged in an agri entrepreneurship programme for infoDev in Nepal, Tanzania and Zambia. Also provided training for representatives of 5 African countries under the UniBrain project. Conducted training as a certified trainer for World Bank infoDev on Agriculture Business module which provides a conceptual framework for understanding how agri-business incubation differs from conventional SME development. A member also completed a policy and procedure manual for the agriculture incubators in the program.

*Mixed use Incubation:* The Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority wished to set up an incubation programme in for the development of entrepreneurs and small business. They required support in the development and assistance with the initialization of a business incubation programme in the agro-processing, arts& crafts and packaging industries. The project is in sync with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda’s National Economic and Social Transformation (NEST) Plan, an initiative aimed at socio‐economic development by creating productive employment, reducing poverty and enhancing health and education opportunities.

*Multi Centre audit:* The purpose of the technical assistance was to conduct an evaluation, audit and due diligence of the operations of a group of incubation centres. The results culminate in recommendations for improving the efficiency and effective output of the Centres. The TA focused on the evaluation of following elements of the Centres:

1. Strategic and Business plan evaluation and progress in implementation;

2. Organisational Structure, management team and staffing efficiency;

3. Review and Evaluation of operations, programmes and services offered;

4. Review of policies and procedures utilised by the centres

5. Evaluation of Marketing and Sales activity and its efficiency

6. Suggestions and recommendations for improvements on the above items and proposals for improving quality, strategic direction and sustainability.

*National Programmes*: The Rwanda Development Board (RDB) is a government institution with the specific purpose of, amongst others to promote entrepreneurship and support the creation and development of private enterprises. In the framework of promoting entrepreneurship development in Rwanda, RDB/EED set up a business incubator within the Entrepreneurship Development Resource Center at Masaka, Kigali. A strategic Plan for the Incubation Programme was finalized and one of the strategic objectives was to evaluate the programme and develop and implement a training programme for incubator staff and stakeholders.

Evaluation of the small business development landscape and the current incubation programmes in Ethiopia. Training and workshops for all incubator managers and stakeholders involved in the incubation programme. This includes federal, provincial and city stakeholders and various universities.

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