

Save the date for Fak'ugesi 2016 – Africa's best digital innovation and creativity festival

From 19 August to 3 September the Fak'ugesi African Digital Innovation Festival is back in Johannesburg to explore and celebrate technology and creativity by Africans for Africa.

The 2016 festival has cast its central theme as 'Afro Tech Riot' as community, femininity, notions of the spiritual, and exploring African knowledge systems in the creative, innovative and technological space come to life in an unmissable calendar of events.

The Tshimologong Precinct, previously Inc nightclub, is located at 47 Juta Street in Braamfontein and extends half the city block along Juta Street and between Station and Henri Streets. It will be transformed into an energetic techno-sphere for two weeks of playing, making, shifting, and sharing through seminars, talks, exhibitions, game arcades, workshops, performances, innovation riots, installations, tech demos, pitches, parties and future sounds. All events are open for public participation and are aimed at all levels of experience, from 'just interested' to professional developers. Keep your eye out for the full program on www.fakugesi.co.za by the end of July.

Now in its third successful year, Fak'ugesi was originally founded by Prof Christo Doherty and Tegan Bristow from Wits Digital Arts, together with Prof Barry Dwolatzky from the Joburg Centre for Software Engineering (JCSE). From the isiZulu term meaning "add power" or "put on the electricity", Fak'ugesi acts as a platform that brings together diverse digital and technology sectors to collaborate and share skills in digital media and technology innovation.

In the spirit of celebrating African technology and innovation through creativity, and supporting the festival in its project to develop Johannesburg's ICT capacity, the primary sponsor for Fak'ugesi 2016 is the City of Johannesburg. The festival's annual partners also include the JCSE, Wits University, the British Council's ConnectZA and InnovationZA and the Goethe Institut, together with new partners Pro Helvetia Johannesburg and the Innovation Hub.

2016 Festival Director, Tegan Bristow, says that The Tshimologong Precinct, which has been under construction for the last year and a half, will officially launch with this year's Fak'ugesi Festival with what promises to an outstanding line up geared towards bringing tech

innovation to people in a fun, accessible and playful way.

In 2016, annual favourites return to the festival, including:

Fak'ugesi Digital Africa Residency, in which artists and creative technologists work together to better understand and explore contemporary technology from a creative perspective. In 2016 the Fak'ugesi Digital Africa Residency is supported by and is being produced in collaboration with Pro Helvetia Johannesburg. Visitors can attend exhibitions and workshops with artists.

Agile Africa Conference, the software developer's conference organised by the JCSE. Developers, testers, project managers and line managers participate in three days of sessions focused on the challenges of software development in Africa. The conference will run from 22 to 24 August.

Members of the South African Maker Collective together with the ConnectZA lead Market Hack, to present playful activities around electronics, digital making and general Saturday fun on the 27 August alongside the weekly Neighbourgoods Market in Braamfontein.

A MAZE Johannesburg, a festival in its own right focusing on both local and international indie gaming and playful media will take place from 31 August to 3 September. Visitors can look forward to talks and workshops, as well as playing in the A MAZE Arcade.

Soweto Pop Up, started in 2015 in collaboration between A MAZE Johannesburg and Maker Library Network (ConnectZA), this is a day-long festival pop-up that aims to bring digital making and playful media to locations outside of Braamfontein.

In addition to annual favourites, the following will be key events in this year's brand new and exciting program:

ALIGHT, led by Between10and5 and Create Africa in partnership with the French Insitut and ConnectZA this street event is a spectacular showing of light art, light sculpture, architectural light installation and light based interactive games.

Future Sounds, in this project Berlin based artists and technologists, The Constitute, (hosted by Goethe Insitut Johannesburg) will collaborate with Johannesburg based Create

Africa in a project that will bring together SA's hip-hop and electronic music artists, local filmmakers lead by Lebo Rasethaba and technologists. The outcome of the collaboration will be performed live at the festivals ALIGHT party.

Smart City Day, a day focusing specifically on Johannesburg and the city's drive towards better ICT and will feature the 2016 Hack Jozi finalists, the School Project in collaboration with Wits Digital Arts and much more.

Geekulcha Maker Library Pop Up, is the ConnectZA Maker Library grant recipient for 2016 and will be 'occupying' the festival for its full length to bring a series of fun, interesting and playful tech related workshops and events. Their full programme will include everything from learning about 3D to making holograms and even space walking.

Fak'ugesi Festival Talks, a fun and informative talk series featuring the Fak'ugesi Residents and projects, with nights curated by special guests such as Bubblegum Club and more. The series is designed to speak directly to the 2016 festival themes; community, the feminine, and spirituality in technology in Africa.

Along with these key events, the Fak'ugesi African Digital Innovation Festival will be packed with smaller events, workshops and engagements aimed at people, young and old, and at all levels of expertise. The festival invites everyone to claim their territory in the digital innovation movement, and bring together creativity and technology by Africans for Africa.