



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: The African Automation Fair And Rs Components To Shed Light On 4IR**  
**Date: 3 June 2019**

We are living in a connected society where most people have access to smart mobile devices. Having quick access to information has become an extension of our existence. We have begun to see internet access, among other things, becoming cheaper and far more accessible than ever before. Technology is spawning autonomous vehicles; processes and we are even seeing a rise in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in every day devices.

This is the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). According to Brian Andrew MD of RS Components South Africa, if businesses don't embrace this disruption, they will not survive. "Automation, IoT and connected devices impact all industries, it could grow business and create jobs, and already, we in SA can see its plethora of benefits. Furthermore, for South Africa to compete successfully in a 4th Industrial Revolution economy, stakeholders across all sectors must work together to drive progress in this country-Which is why we embrace opportunities to exhibit at events such as the upcoming Africa Automation Fair as it allows us to show companies, emerging businesses and individuals the impact of technology and IoT in all aspects of our lives," he said.

RS Components SA, a market leader in the electrical and engineering component space is one of the successful companies that will be exhibiting at this year's Africa Automation fair. "We at RS Components, pride ourselves and our brand to share our knowledge and support initiatives that promote, nurture and guide technological-driven programmes from STEM education projects at grass roots level to showcasing what can be done in this connected age at events such as the Africa Automation Fair. At RS, we promote technological thinking and this is further enhanced through our DesignSpark website for anyone of any age to share ideas, innovations, learn how to code or conceptualise designs with other users. DesignSpark has grown in leaps and bounds with more than 750 000 members-all who understand the importance of the connected age where IoT is revolutionising the way we see our lives moving forward," he said.

Now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year, the Africa Automation Fair sees more than 5000 visitors over the three-day event and this year's instalment promises to be even bigger with its 120 exhibitors covering automation, IoT as well as shedding more light on the 4IR.

Prof. Marcia Mkansi, an Associate Professor at the Department of Operations Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA) said that South Africa still lags behind world automation leaders such as Germany as China, and India in terms of industrial automation progress. "We shouldn't fall behind and become consumers and adopters of foreign intellectual property. We need to see sectors such as mining, agriculture, manufacturing and healthcare innovating to address challenges unique to our continent," she said.

Prof. Mkansi notes that automation cuts across all sectors, and is not limited to manufacturing or industry. "Automation is the future – it is the basis of the 4th Industrial Revolution. You see it in the service industry, for example, where airports use scanners instead of staff to check passports, and where restaurants have automated payment terminals. To make 4th Industrial Revolution progress, South Africa needs to embrace a triple helix approach in which government, industry and academia

make a coherent commitment to work together to support the country's ambitions. We need more emphasis on STEM skills and innovation development at grassroots level. We need industry and academia to collaborate to ensure that skills meet industry needs," she says.

She also highlighted that UNISA is currently collaborating with the Society for Automation, Instrumentation, Measurement and Control (SAIMC) to introduce South Africa's first formal automation qualification, to be delivered through UNISA's department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering. "Our partnership with Africa Automation Fair is another example of us being proactive in bringing together stakeholders across academia, industry and government to improve collaboration," she said.

The Africa Automation Fair takes place from 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2019.

**-ENDS-**

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**About RS Components**

RS Components is the market leader in the high service level distribution of electrical, electronic, mechanical, tools and industrial products. Operating in 32 countries whilst serving a further 100 through third-party distributors, RS serves every sector of industry in the procurement of their products relating to maintenance, repair, operations, low volume production, research and development.

With over 500 000 products across 2500 leading brands, the company is committed to ensuring that their 1 million customers have fast access to a broad, as well as deep range, of products and technologies, all under one roof.

It is proven that departments traditionally spend 80% of their time sourcing products that account for only 20% of their total procurement spend. RS is focussed on reducing the customers "total cost of product ownership" by reducing the need to make multiple calls to various companies to source products, reducing supplier related administration and allowing for the amalgamation as well as consolidation of supplier bases. Through this process, procurement efficiency is improved and time is freed up to concentrate on the more important business decisions.

For more information, please visit the website at [za.rs-online.com](http://za.rs-online.com)

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