

# INNOVATE

# DURBAN



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DURING COVID-19

AURELIA ALBERT: CEO

*DURBAN - 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021*



## BACKGROUND

Innovate Durban was initially established in 2013 as the Innovation Programme of the eThekweni Municipality and subsequently set up as a separate Non-Profit entity in 2016.

The organisation was set up as a special purpose vehicle to support innovation, innovators and innovation ecosystem through programmes, research and capacity building and skills development.

The programmes and activities of the organisation are supported through the virtual and physical platforms and events.





## Programme Area 1: Innovation Support

### Start Up Support Programme

The Start Up Support Programme is an accelerated mentorship programme providing innovators with business and technical skills to help take their ideas from concept to commercialisation

### Youth Innovation Challenge

YIC seeks to take a group of around 60 - 80 youth (18 - 35 year olds) through the innovation pipeline centred around finding innovative solutions for challenges faced by the residents and businesses of Durban.

### Pitching Den

**The Pitching Den** is an initiative aimed at allowing innovators to pitch their business concepts to a panel of judges.

### Innovator Support Programme and Fund

Innovate Durban also offers support on an ongoing basis to innovators through the Innovator Support Programme. This programme also includes an Innovator Support Fund, which is a prototype and testing fund.



## Programme Area 2: Capacity Building and Skills Development

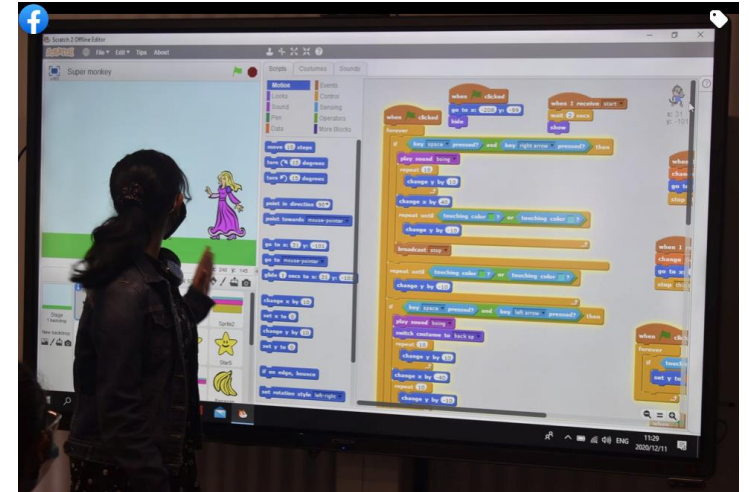
Innovate Durban is committed to improving capacity building around:

- Critical and **Future Skills**, including the introduction of new technologies (robotics and drone pilot and mechanics training)
- Digital Skills - **Digital Literacy**, Coding, and app development

### Design Thinking Workshops and Sprints

**Design Thinking** is a powerful and critical tool for innovation and collaboration.

It is a process for creative problem solving with a user-centric approach.



## Programme Area 3: Research

**Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Snapshot:** Innovate Durban partnered with The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) to conduct an innovation and entrepreneur ecosystem mapping exercise for the Durban region.

ACHIEVEMENTS 2019 / 2020

ENTREPRENEURIAL  
ECOSYSTEM SNAPSHOT

151 SUPPORT  
PROVIDERS SHOWCASED

FUNDING MAP

FUNDING MAP DEVELOPED  
741 FUNDERS AND FUNDING  
MECHANISMS SHOWCASED

INNOVATION PUBLICATION  
INAUGURAL EDITION OF THE  
PUBLICATION PUBLISHED

FIRST ONLINE INNOVATION AND  
INNOVATOR DASHBOARD PUBLISHED

### Funding Map:

During the last year, Innovate Durban undertook a research project, in partnership with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), to map funding mechanisms and opportunities available to innovators. The Funding Map depicts the full funding spectrum focused in innovation in various capacities.

### Innovation Publication:

During 2019, Innovate Durban published the first edition of the Innovation Publication. The objective of the publication, which will be published annually, is to provide information to all stakeholders, including innovators and investors, on the state of innovation in KZN.





## INNOVATION CO-LAB

Innovate Durban is passionate about community development, upliftment and provision of skills and tools, which prompted the launch of the first Township Innovation Co-Lab in Cato Manor, Durban in March 2020. The purpose of the lab was to decentralize programmes to communities and individuals for the promotion of access, information and tools.

The Innovation Co-Lab has a host of various facilities and technologies available.

### Technology includes:

- FDM Printers
- Laser Cutter
- Large Format Printer and Vinyl Cutter
- Acrylic Bender
- Drones
- VR headset
- Robotics Kits

### Facilities include:

- Co-working Space
- Co-creation Space
- MakerLab
- Digital Training Studio
- Cafe







## COMMUNITY CHALLENGES DURING COVID-19

- Businesses in the cooked food and retail sector have been unable to carry out deliveries
- Many businesses are unable to perform cash-less transactions
- Businesses do not have access to smart technologies
- Businesses are not marketing themselves digitally
- There is limited or no access to internet connectivity
- Inability to service current debt (rental, utilities, salaries etc.)



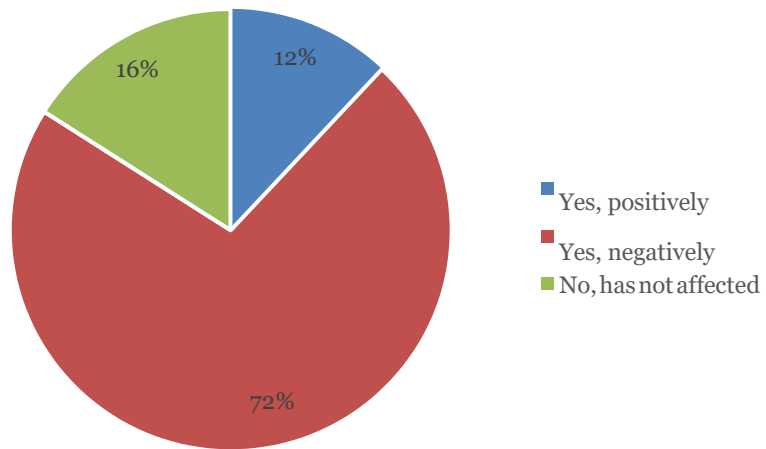


# COMMUNITY CHALLENGES DURING COVID-19

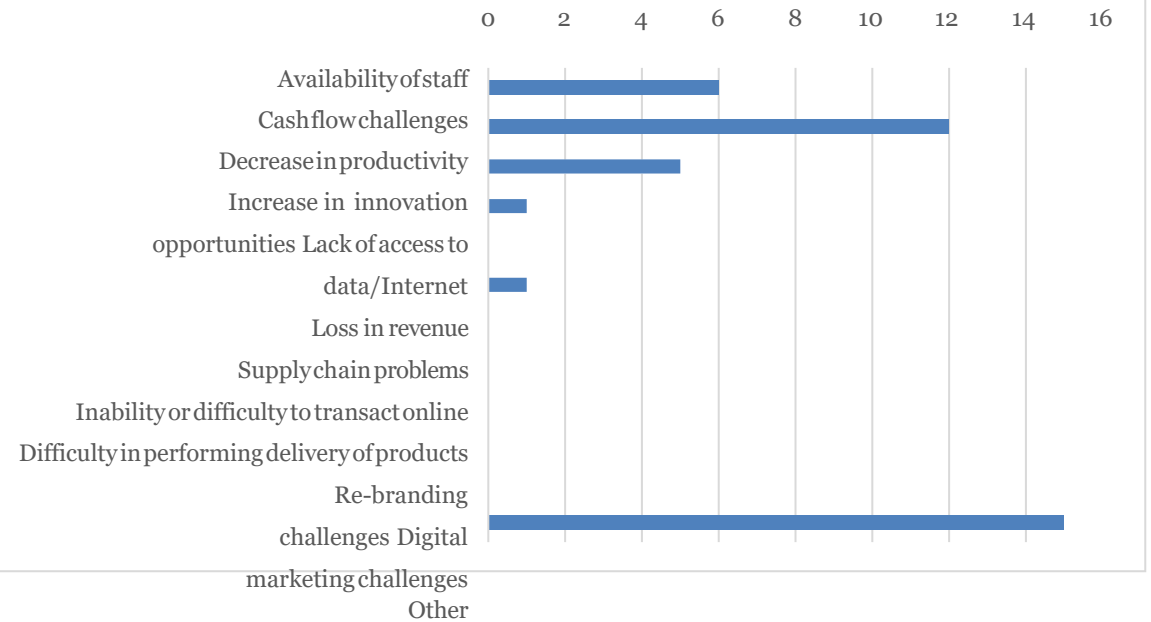
- A community needs assessment was conducted

## RESULTS:

Has your business been affected by COVID-19?



In what ways has your business been affected?





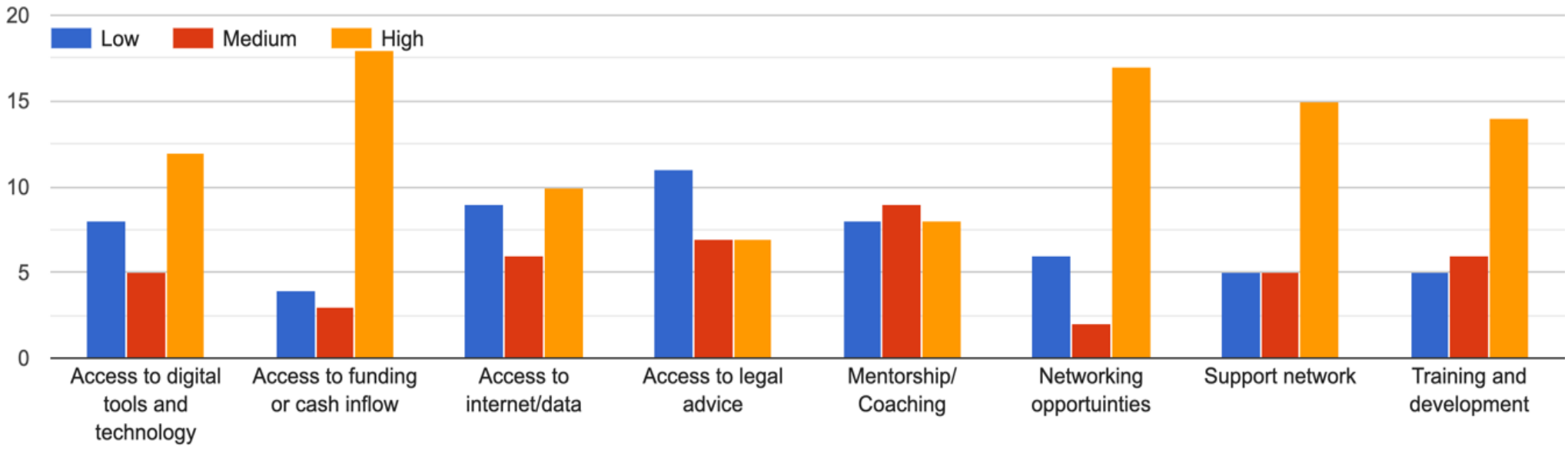


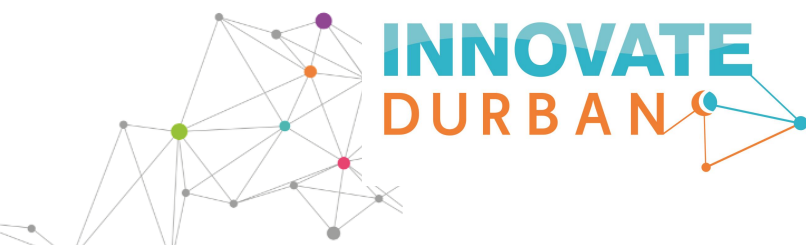
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# COMMUNITY CHALLENGES DURING COVID-19

## RESULTS:

Rank your needs as related to COVID-19?





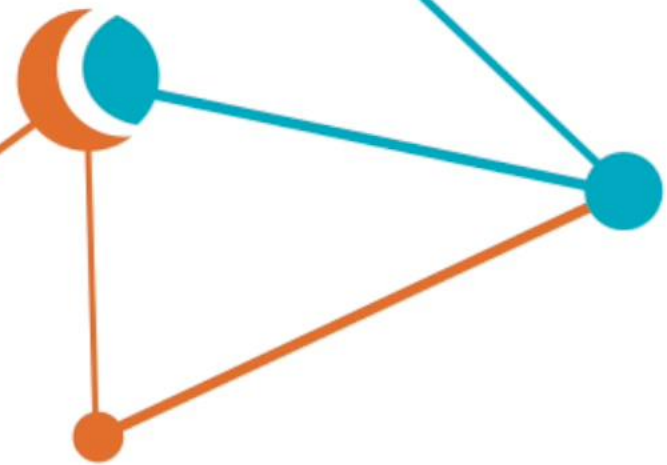
# INNOVATE DURBAN'S RESPONSE

| Task  | Need  |
|---|---|
| Exploration of low data and data-free technologies                  | Access to digital tools and technology                                    |
| Webinar series (specifically aimed at innovators)                   | Networking, training and development, support network                     |
| Webinar series (specifically aimed at generic SMMEs)                | Networking, training and development, support network                     |
| Showcase Funding Mechanisms available (Innovate Durban Funding Map) | Access to funding   |
| Community WIFI Project  | Access to public WIFI<br>Limited ability to transact and market digitally |
| Online Business Directory   | Limited ability to market digitally                                       |



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