**NEWS ARTICLE**

Zutari celebrates its women engineers on World Engineering Day

**27 February 202****4:** A significant occasion to recognise the pivotal role of engineering in shaping our world, this year’s theme for [World Engineering Day](https://worldengineeringday.net/) on 4 March is ‘Engineering Solutions for a Sustainable World’. It showcases how engineers develop innovative solutions to address global challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Celebrating engineers raises awareness about their contributions and inspires young minds to pursue careers in engineering, ensuring a talent pipeline for future generations. Leading consulting engineering and infrastructure advisory firm [Zutari](http://www.zutari.com) showcases four exceptional women engineers from its ranks.

**Hirna Bhikha, Civil Engineer | Built Environment, Zutari**

Hirna is the Lead Design Engineer for civil infrastructure projects associated with residential and mixed-use developments, from concept to closeout. Her responsibilities involve designing, collaborating with professionals across various disciplines and ensuring deliverables align with Zutari’s standards.

“I enjoy a challenge and find immense joy in overcoming obstacles,” says Hirna. Her passion for sustainability drives her to get involved in projects with sustainability components. As a woman in civil engineering, she relishes bringing a unique and diverse perspective to the profession, fostering a dynamic and inclusive environment.

Hirna proudly shares that she was part of a women-dominated consulting team for the Nine Palms and On-Park development, adding that collaborating with women leads in architecture, landscaping, mechanical, and structures was a career highlight. Lastly, witnessing the tangible impact of her work in projects like Ratanga Park in Century City was an incredibly fulfilling moment.

“I envision creating safe spaces in both society and the workplace, where women feel empowered and secure. This includes fostering a culture of respect, support and equal opportunities for women to thrive and contribute fully,” says Hirna.

Her advice to young women is to find a mentor for guidance, to be confident in their unique contributions and take initiative in shaping their career path. “Embrace your authenticity; you do not have to change who you are to make a powerful and lasting impact,” stresses Hirna.

**Meaghan van der Velden, Process Engineer | Resources, Zutari**

This is the third year that Meaghan has been a part of a team consisting of both process and mechanical engineers in the Tshwane office. She works mainly on projects in the industrial, oil and gas and petrochemical sectors.

“The fact that I constantly get to work on new and exciting projects keeps me passionate about what I do. I love being challenged and solving new problems. Doing this every day is very fulfilling,” says Meaghan.

Working with Zutari’s industry-recognised professionals has been a highlight to date. “The knowledge I am gaining from their guidance is setting me up for success,” says Meaghan. Having already worked on several projects with different teams and people, she has been in meetings and on-site as the only woman present. “I have learnt to recognise my own skills and talents. I strive to ask questions and absorb knowledge, no matter who is in the room, so that one day I may be the best engineer I can be.”

**Vera Mpofu, Associate: Engineer | Transport, Zutari**

Vera is a professional Civil Engineer specialising in traffic engineering and transport planning, forming part of a team of senior and young engineers and transport economists from different backgrounds.

She is currently an Associate in the transport planning team at the Tshwane office.

Apart from being a line manager responsible for the day-to-day technical operations of the team, her critical role entails creating an enabling environment for holistic career growth for individual team members, which fundamentally has inclusivity as one of its pillars.

Just like the human circulatory system carries blood to the various organs to keep it functional and alive, so do transport systems and services improve the welfare of communities and economies by linking people to opportunities and desired places to enhance their quality of life.

“My passion for making a difference is reignited when I see transport projects I worked on being implemented and making a difference, even in the smallest way, like recommending a walkway in a school vicinity,” says Vera.

**Majd Mohamed, Electrical Engineer | Energy, Zutari**

Working within the Transmission and Distribution (T&D) team, Majd mostly specialises in earthing and lightning protection studies for various energy facilities such as photovoltaic plants, battery energy storage facilities and substations. In addition, she is in involved in the design and construction management of electrical distribution projects.

“We are committed to fostering the growth of younger staff, empowering them to evolve into skilled and independent engineers. The continuous learning opportunities make each day at work both rewarding and exciting, transforming what could be routine into a dynamic experience,” says Majd.

She initially came from a different academic background, but once she delved into the T&D industry, she found it so fulfilling she could not imagine going back to her initial career aspirations. “It was a bit harder to fill the gap; it required a lot of self-studying and bothering my seniors for guidance,” she adds.

“Though we have made significant strides, I believe there is still room for improvement within the construction environment. Shifting our focus towards one’s capabilities and experience, rather than factors like gender, religion, race, etc., will naturally foster an inclusive space for everyone.

“You are the main character of your story; you (and you alone) dictate the timeline and narrative. There may be plot twists and supporting characters, but they are there to enhance the story. Just keep on writing it,” concludes Majd.

***Ends***

**Notes to the Editor**To download hi-res images for this news article, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Zutari link to view the company’s press office.

**About Zutari**

As an infrastructure engineering and advisory practice, we believe infrastructure has unparalleled potential to create enduring impact.  Never more relevant, this potential can be realised only if we plan, design, deliver and manage infrastructure in ways that maximise its value.  Our work in water, transport, energy, resources, and built-environment infrastructure does just this – helping to nurture thriving communities, growing economies, and healthy environments.  At Zutari we understand that radical impact doesn’t just happen; it requires more of us to connect differently, work smarter, and stay rooted.

**We connect differently**. Our broad collective of in-house experts connects across traditional disciplines to provide integrated results. We collaborate with clients, partners, and end-users, leaning into diverse perspectives to create superior solutions - together.

**We work smarter**. Our people lead the industry. We draw from deep technical skills, accrued over decades, and embrace the transformative power of digital technology to find simpler, better, and more innovative ways to deliver value.

**We stay rooted**. Few can rival our local capacity and understanding. Building on solid foundations, now 90 years in the making, we are trusted to shape locally relevant solutions through our extensive footprint in Africa and the Middle East.

At Zutari our people connect differently, work smarter, and stay rooted. Working in this way, we reliably deliver impact through infrastructure, making the world a better place – one project at a time.

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