**NEWS ARTICLE**

Zutari’s young engineering talent commended at major industry awards

**19 September 2024:** Young talent from leading consulting engineering and infrastructure advisory practice [Zutari](http://www.zutari.com) was in the spotlight at the 2024 CESA Aon Engineering Excellence Awards when **Istiaan Lubbe** received a commendation in the Young Engineer of the Year category.

The impact of Istiaan’s eight-year experience in the industry sets him on a pedestal among South Africa’s brightest young engineers, reshaping the industry to not only innovate new ways of working but also reinforce present-day capabilities to build a sustainable future, proving him deserving of the recognition of the commendation award.

Istiaan graduated with a BEng in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Pretoria (UP) in 2017 and recently became an ECSA (Engineering Council of South Africa) Certified Professional Engineer in 2023. He is a member of the South African Institution of Mechanical Engineering (SAIMechE) and a member of the Consulting Engineers South Africa Young Professionals Forum (CESA YPF).

In addition, he holds a ASSE 6005 Medical Gas Generalist Certification, making him the youngest medical gas specialist within Zutari and possibly across South Africa. With his accreditation as a medical gas specialist, Istiaan conducted a thorough study in 2019, comparing international medical gas design standards to those practised in South Africa – a contribution he sincerely regards as his most significant to the medical gas field.

The study aimed to ensure medical gas systems are designed with the highest standards of reliability and patient safety and to establish uniformity among all designers. His findings were presented to a panel of industry leaders and subsequently adopted as the formal standard for all medical gas system designs within the Netcare Hospital Group. Istiaan’s contribution proved invaluable in supporting healthcare facilities when the demand for oxygen and other medical gases surged during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond medical gas systems, he has showcased his versatility as an engineer by excelling in a range of projects spanning various market sectors, industries, and clients. His experience extends the design of specialised HVAC systems, vertical transportation, and clean rooms. He has served as Lead Engineer on more than 28 successfully completed projects and is currently leading 15 ongoing and in-process projects.

Istiaan has acted as a Technical Integrator and MEPF Project Manager on several multi-disciplinary mega and giga projects in the Middle East. “About 90% of our projects, especially on a mega-scale, reassure clients that everything is handled in-house. This results in a well-coordinated, integrated service delivery and product,” he shares.

He elaborates on how the role of a young engineer has changed significantly over the past decade. Apart from technical skills, soft skills like meeting presentations and interacting with different cultures on-site are becoming more important than purely technical knowledge. Leadership and adaptability have become crucial in integrating complex professional teams.

Istiaan credits his mentors and employers who helped him harness his potential early on as he started to show enormous growth potential. This resulted in an exposure to an array of projects. At just 30 years old, he has proven himself as an innovative individual, an agile project leader, a dynamic coordinator, and an exemplary Lead Engineer who takes great pride in not only his work but in being part of a collaboration.

Zutari’s emerging talent ecosystem offers a range of programmes to nurture and develop emerging talent in the engineering field and create an impact like Istiaan. From mentorship to training programmes, it provides practical experience and growth opportunities. This starts from grassroots level with Grade 11 and 12 learners through its Job Shadowing initiative in partnership with CESA, supporting young scholars with an interest in engineering from an early age.

The consultancy offers engineering students comprehensive course funding and support, including academic assistance, career guidance, and development, that ultimately help them succeed in their studies. Its Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programme partners with educational institutions to provide students with industry exposure and technical experience. Graduates and interns are afforded the opportunity to work alongside industry leaders and experts, gaining the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to become recognised professionals.

The 2024 CESA Aon Engineering Excellence Awards took place on 14 August at Vodacom World in Midrand. Organised by Consulting Engineers South Africa (CESA) in partnership with Aon South Africa, the awards celebrate outstanding engineering achievements and contributions to infrastructure development in South Africa. They highlight innovation and collaboration within the engineering sector and showcase projects and professionals who have made significant impacts.

***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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