



**WELCOMING REMARKS**

**DR. GERT GUNZEL**

***VICE RECTOR: ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE***

**NAMIBIA BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTRE (NBIC) IDEA  
COMPETITION**

**TUESDAY, 19 JULY 2011**

**16:00**

**UNAM (LEISURE CENTRE)**

Master of Ceremonies

Ms. Dagmar Honsbein, *Director: Namibia Business Innovation Centre (NBIC)*

Mr. Michael Mukete: *Assistant Governor: Bank of Namibia*

NBIC Staff

Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

My duty this afternoon is to welcome you to NBIC Business Idea Competition Award Ceremony 2011. I hereby want to express our warmest welcome and appreciation to you all for deciding to be with us at this important occasion, marking the second anniversary of the NBIC Business Idea Competition.

In 2009, the Polytechnic of Namibia embarked on a journey that seemed impossible. I am referring to the establishment of the Namibia Business Innovation Centre. In line with the mission of the Polytechnic that seeks to promote national competitiveness by providing multiple opportunities for excellent education, applied research, innovation and services, the NBIC has been created to be a National Institution of Excellence aimed at raising the nation's capacity and confidence in innovation. This project is captured in NDP3. Innovation plays an important role in ensuring that our country reaches an acceptable level of international competitiveness. The NBIC embarks on product innovation, marketing innovation, process innovation and organizational innovation. In the case of product innovation, the aim is to ensure that there is commercial introduction of new or significantly improved goods or services in the economy through varied knowledge applications, thereby diversifying the current economy that is heavily reliant on minerals and few other products and services, to become more knowledge driven.

Whereas the overarching goals of the NBIC are to stimulate knowledge and technology transfer in the country to help convert the economy from resource-based to knowledge driven, its programmes are designed to inspire, motivate and encourage all citizens, whether young or old, to use innovation as a means to improve their quality of life by mainly promoting self-employment.

Let me highlight some of the programmes the NBIC runs:

- Idea Creation workshops: Mostly targeting the students, they are aimed at stimulating interest among the youth to initiate innovative business ideas.
- Business Idea Competition: Targeting the general public, it is another form of inspiring citizens of Namibia to initiate innovative business Ideas.
- Business Plan Competition: Targeting the general public to encourage and draw people's creative thinking in order to come up with good business plans. This is a transition of a good idea into practice.
- Create Your Future: Initiated to assist Entrepreneurs and Youthful Professionals to nurture and develop their creativity for success.
- Creativity in General: Connecting experts with various players in order to give impetus to creative thoughts, projects, products and services.

Since 2009, the NBIC has been running with exciting and innovative programmes such as the few I mentioned above. Today, we are here to witness one of the outcomes of the NBIC Programme which is the Business Idea Competition 2011. The Business Idea Competition is one of the first steps to draw the interest of the citizens to self-employment by establishing businesses. The next step is the writing of the business idea into a business plan. I encourage you to visit the NBIC "Innovation Village" to familiarise yourselves with all its programmes.

In this holistic innovation effort, it is not only the Polytechnic nor the NBIC standing alone; there are other active participants contributing to the work of both the Polytechnic and the NBIC in particular. The Business Idea Competition 2011 is made possible with the sponsorship of N\$ 250 000 received from the Bank of Namibia. We really appreciate these contributions. The Bank of Namibia, in particular, plays an enabling role and embraces programmes that also help achieve its strategic development goals, and has been a constant source of financial and other support.

A total of 38 new business idea submissions, compared to 33 last year, have been received for this year's competition. It is a positive indication that this programme is growing in its status and prestige. All the participants in the competition will receive an evaluation feedback that is provided by a team comprising of Internal and External Experts.

We want to thank our evaluators for the time they set aside to guarantee quality evaluation and feedback. The team is comprised of: Prof Muyingi, Dr. Krishnamurthy, Mr. Andima, Ms. Kaimu, Mr. Ipinge, Mr. Mukete, Ms. Diergardt and Ms. Breyer.

Today marks the handing over of the awards to the top three winners, as well as the recognition of the ten best Ideas. However, the winners should not be overwhelmed by these awards to the extent that they would stop being creative. The prizes should serve as an incentive to spur them on to work even harder. I would, therefore, like to advise the winners to really put their ideas into practice. Remember: the NBIC is there for you!

With this few words, I once again welcome you and wish you an inspirational evening in the company of the NBIC.

Thank you.

- End.