



THE INNOVATOR

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RESEARCH AND INNOVATION DIRECTORATE



“ I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT PROVIDING SOLUTIONS”

Tafadzwa Muusha

Feature Innovation

Smart Stick

Research Week Inflammation

UZ on the move: Seeding Industry

Innovator of the Month

Tafadzwa Muusha

INSIDE



INNOVATOR OF THE MONTH

Tafadzwa Muusha



Her source of inspiration

For the smart stick I draw my inspiration from University of Zimbabwe visually impaired students whom I saw struggling to maneuver on their own using the traditional walking sticks. I felt I could contribute to their safety and independence.

Do you think innovation can be taught?

“Yes. My mentors from Computer Science Department and the University Innovation Hub management taught me not just to be creative but also to be open to novelty; possibilities; to be tolerance for complexity and hard work; and to be passionate about finding solutions rather than just identifying problems. That is innovation.”

Her innovation

The Smart stick, which is based on obstacle detection and avoidance for visually impaired people.

On why she believes in innovation

“I am passionate about providing solutions to our own problems in Zimbabwe. We dependent so much on foreign solutions and imports yet we can produce ourselves, using our locally available materials”.

What advice can you give to a first year student just enrolling into the university?

Achieving your goals requires hard work, focus and determination. Do not succumb to unnecessary peer pressure, surround yourself with friends who share the values and beliefs especially those who believe that you can do it. Being at the University is not just about acquiring a degree, you need to utilize the knowledge to develop yourself, the community and the country. We learn so that we implement what we have learnt practically in the real world.

UZ innovators solving societal problems!

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA) co-organized a virtual hackathon that focused on how ageing in today's increasingly digital world could be enhanced through the use and applications of ICT's. Participating teams were required to develop ideas and demonstrate proof of concept in one of the main challenge areas that were:

- ◊ Alzheimer's Disease and Cognitive Decline – including solutions to support early detection and diagnosis, integrated care, or quality of life for patients and their families
- ◊ Frailty – including solutions to support better bone health or reduce the risk of falls
- ◊ Transportation and Mobility – including solutions that support greater independence for those with vision loss or limited mobility
- ◊ Financial Tools for Longevity – including solutions that support retirement planning for longer lives or protect against financial abuse

The competition

872 teams from 48 different countries competed. The University of Zimbabwe team won first

position in under Challenge 3: Transportation and Mobility.

The Team

The team was composed of:

- ◊ Tafadzwa Muusha (Team Leader),
- ◊ Kapil Narotam,
- ◊ Munyaradzi Musonza and
- ◊ Leo Muchenje.

The Innovation

A Smart Walking Stick for elderly people suffering from vision loss and limited mobility. The walking stick provides support for mobility and detects physical obstacles inclusive of water.

The innovators are interns under one of the University of Zimbabwe Innovation Hub flagship programs, 'The Graduate Innovator Programme', funded



Tafadzwa Muusha

by the Government of Zimbabwe meant to harnessing talent, innovations and inventions produced by graduates from the institution. They won a collective \$1000 USD and six months in-house mentorship.



Kapil Narotam



Leo Muchenje



Munyaradzi Musonza

UZ on the Move: Seeding Industry!

The 2021 University of Zimbabwe Research Week will be held from 23 to 28 of August 2021. The Research Week is one of the three most important events at the University including:

- ◇ Enrolment of students and
- ◇ Graduation.

What to expect

With over sixty years of its service to the nation, University of Zimbabwe carefully analyses the current and emerging demands by society and sets a path to acquit itself as a 21st Century institution of higher learning.



The Research Week is an opportunity for the public, industry, business and development sector to interact with researchers. During the Research Week one can expect:

- ◇ Research-based and evidence-backed oral presentations;
- ◇ Exhibitions of cutting-edge innovations that deliver advancement of practical solutions to current challenges.

The University values partnerships and co-production of knowledge products. The Research Week provides platforms for engagement with government, industry, commerce, civic society. As usual, the University will also host its Alumni, the institution's impressive human capital outputs.





UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

INNOVATION

HIGHLIGHTS



This month's highlights focus on the limited unveiling of some of the University of Zimbabwe Innovation Hub projects

These include the:

- ⇒ Smart power monitoring and protection system
- ⇒ Smart Stick
- ⇒ Pharmacy Locator Application

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Product of the Month

ORANGE REFLECTIVE WORKSUIT



- Excellent quality with special combined performance material
- Protective wear for high-risky work environments
- Protects against dirty, unpleasant and hazardous chemicals
- Complies with OSH (EN ISO 20471) Legislation standards on occupational safety health.
- Durable and long lasting

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our products and services:

University of Zimbabwe
Research and Innovation Directorate,
Office of the Vice Chancellor,
630 Churchill Ave, Mt Pleasant, Harare

Telephone: + 263 242 303211 Ext 11242/ Direct: +263 242 333 676/ Mobile: +263 776 573 786

Email: research@admin.uz.ac.zw; www.uz.ac.zw; <https://www.facebook.com/UZcovidTaskforce>

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