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MEDIA STATEMENT

SOUTH AFRICA'S ADVANCED MANUFACTURING PROGRESS IN SPOTLIGHT

South Africa's Advanced Manufacturing progress will be showcased at the inaugural African Advanced Manufacturing and Composites Show in November.

Details of the event which includes an exhibition, conferences, learning tours and national awards function were announced this week.

Former Council for Scientific and Industrial Research scientist Andy Radford who now spearheads a cluster for South Africa's composites role-players, said the event would create synergy and opportunity for advanced manufacturing business.

"While manufacturing remains an essential part of South Africa's economy - contributing around 19% of GDP, our efforts towards Advanced Manufacturing in South Africa are highly fragmented, but we do have significant pockets of excellence."

"The African Advanced Manufacturing and Composites Show will not only bring all the key role-players and technology partners together towards a common vision, it would also inspire emerging engineers."

"Three-dimensional printing, lasers, automation and artificial intelligence are exciting tools to encourage a new generation of engineers and scientists but we need to expose them and industry to these technologies and there is no time to waste," Radford said.

Radford said government policy like the National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) and the Integrated Manufacturing Strategy (IMS) recognize that South Africa's future competitiveness will depend on the capacity of the manufacturing sector to master advanced technology domains. Radford said the KPMG 2016 Global Manufacturing Survey, showed the extent to which global manufacturers were racing for advanced manufacturing leadership.

"25% of 360 respondents said that they had already invested in three-dimensional printing and additive manufacturing technologies. An equal number had also already invested in artificial intelligence and cognitive computing technologies.

Two-fifths of survey respondents said they would definitely channel significant amounts of their research and development investments towards robotics before 2019.

"The message is clear that certain manufacturers and manufacturing countries will ensure their sustainability and growth in Industry 4.0 where others will be left increasingly far behind in servicing an increasingly demanding global client base."

Andrew Binning the CEO of Inkanyezi Events said the inaugural African Advanced Manufacturing and Composites Show would take place at the iconic Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth. Binning said the Mandela Bay Composites Cluster was driving the event with the endorsement of the dti, CSIR, TIA and Mandela Bay Development Agency.

The event, featuring conferences, learning tours, demonstrations and an exhibition would have both a trade and public component.

"The venue for the event, alongside the North End Lake, is ideal for the outdoors demonstration of boats, vehicles, and drones all of which encapsulate Advanced Manufacturing technologies and indoor exhibits showcasing automation, computing and 3d printing, among others.

Radford said the organisers of the Show had a vision and strategy to ensure that the African Advanced Manufacturing and Composites Show attracted global role-players in all areas of Advanced Manufacturing, including Composites.

Radford will accompany 12 South African composites businesses to the largest exhibition for the composites sector worldwide - JEC World 2018, from 6 to 8 March in Paris.

"We are delighted to announce that the dti has approved 12 companies to attend this prestigious show as part of a "South African Pavilion". Aerosud as well as the Cluster will also join the group. Our message to the world is that the South African composites industry is alive and well and is open for business."

For more information: www.africanadvancedmanufacturingshow.co.za

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Issued by Deon Engelke
Inkanyezi Events
CEO Andrew Binning
082 372 9247
andrew@inkanyezi.co.za
FOR
Mandela Bay Composites Cluster
MD: Andy Radford
andy@mandelabaycompositescluster.co.za
072 375 3671