

Celebrating 'My Africa' and honouring excellence

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The 20th anniversary of the Standard Bank Top Women Awards, brought to you by Topco Media, celebrated the voices and collective achievements of women 'Rising above the Noise' to further strengthen the empowerment of future generations in the workplace in Africa.



Keynote address by Tasneem Mtshali, Gauteng MEC for Economic Development

The 20th anniversary of the Standard Bank Top Women Awards, held on Tuesday, 7 November 2023, at the prestigious Sandton Convention Centre, was a celebration of 'My Africa' – a tribute to the strength, diversity, and achievements of women across the continent. The event, hosted by Master of Ceremonies Carol Tshabalala, brought together distinguished guests, thought leaders and changemakers to recognise and honour outstanding contributions to the empowerment of women.

Two decades of gender empowerment

Standard Bank and Topco Media have worked together since 2011 to bring to life this powerful platform for diverse women leaders in South Africa offering masterclasses, networking, and a space to address important issues. The EmpowerHER series has grown into a movement for positive change, embraced by women in South Africa and across Africa. Over the last 20 years, South Africans have witnessed incredible progress in terms of gender equality in the country, across all sectors. However, it's clear that more work needs to be done and the Top Women Awards will continue to recognise and celebrate the leaders who are rising above the noise.

"I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our dedicated judges for their tireless commitment and the extra effort they put in to ensure the best results tonight," says Ralf Fletcher, CEO, Topco Media & Communications.

Tshabalala added: "Under Mr Fletcher's leadership, Topco Media and Communications has truly become a leading voice in transformation. It has shaped opinions and created multiple platforms for dialogue and positive collaboration."

Spotlight on Dr Anna Mokgokong - Lifetime Achiever Award recipient



Top Women Lifetime Achiever 2023 sponsored by Standard Bank, Dr Anna Mokgokong

Dr Anna Mokgokong, a trailblazer in the business world, was honoured with the Lifetime Achiever Award, a recognition of her outstanding contributions to society. Her inspiring journey from overcoming overwhelming odds to establishing her presence in a male-dominated industry serves as a beacon of hope and resilience.

In her acceptance speech, Dr Mokgokong emphasised the need to continue dismantling barriers and working towards a society where everyone, regardless of gender or background, can thrive. She dedicated the award to freedom fighters, her family, and every woman who has dared to dream.

The event was further enriched by powerful speeches from dynamic speakers, each a leader in their organisations and industries:

- **Sharon Taylor, chief people and culture officer at Standard Bank** urged young women to carefully consider their life partners, emphasising their impact on one's journey. "Your choice of a life partner matters more than you know. I speak to all the young women who join the Standard Bank Graduate Programme every year about this."
- **Alicia Eggington, vice president and general manager at Procter & Gamble South Africa** celebrated the entrepreneurial spirit of African women, highlighting their ability to overcome challenges. "The entrepreneurial spirit of African women is a force to be reckoned with. They've shown that no challenge is too great and no dream too ambitious despite the challenges we all face."
- **Tasneem Motara, Gauteng MEC for Economic Development** emphasised the power of women in driving societal transformation and called for continued efforts in addressing critical issues. "Women have the power to break free from the chains of oppression, to uplift their communities, and to drive societal transformation."

Guests were welcomed by the sounds of The Muses, a dynamic string quartet with a repertoire spanning from top 40 hits to African favourites, leaving the diverse audience mesmerised by their ability to infuse classical pop with excitement and originality.

BluBamBoo, a band unparalleled in the South African music industry, graced the evening with their professionalism, versatility, and exceptional musicianship. From current pop/dance hits to the smooth melodies of jazz and latin, electrifying disco beats, timeless rock & roll classics, and soulful R&B tunes, they left the audience captivated. Additionally, they paid homage to South African jazz and kwaito, demonstrating their ability to cater to diverse musical tastes.

As the evening concluded, the resounding message echoed – a united effort is needed to create a future where every

woman can proudly say: **'This is my Africa. I belong. I can make a difference.'**

An evening of this calibre is only possible with a host of partners, making it possible for over 700 guests to gather and celebrate excellence. The support of these partners does not go unnoticed: "We thank them for their unwavering commitment to our cause," concludes Fletcher.

- Platinum partner, Standard Bank
- Gold partner, Procter & Gamble
- Category partners: Kia South Africa, Harmony Gold Mining Company, Sanofi, Sanbi, Wipro, Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport & Recreation
- Host city partner: Gauteng Tourism Authority
- Strategic partners: Primedia Outdoor and the British Chamber of Business Southern Africa.

Leaders from across the continent and fellow South Africans are invited to share in the excitement and extend congratulations on social media to all the winners using #RiseAboveTheNoise #SBTopWomen and #SBTopWomenAwards.

Congratulations to the individuals and organisations, at the 20th Annual Standard Bank Top Women Awards, who were acknowledged for their commitment to strengthening the voice of women in the workplace and in our communities.



Top Women Business in Resources, Construction & Infrastructure Development 2023

- Winner: Sibanye-Stillwater
- Highly commended: Tshepa Basadi

Top Women Business in ICT 2023

- Winner: Mint Group
- Highly commended: Etion Connect

Top Women Business in Retail and E-Commerce 2023

- Winner: Takealot
- Highly commended: The Foschini Group

Top Women Business in Health & Pharmaceuticals 2023 sponsored by Sanofi

- Winner: ICAS
- Highly commended: Biovac

Top Women Business in Biodiversity, Conservation & Environmental Management 2023 sponsored by Sanbi

- Winner: Nestlé

Top Women Lifetime Achiever 2023 sponsored by Standard Bank

- Dr Anna Mokgokong

Top Women in Sport 2023 sponsored by Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport & Recreation

- Winner: Kirsten Neuschäfer

Top Women Business in Public Service 2023

- Winner: NYDA (National Youth Development Agency)
- Highly commended: FASSET SETA

Top Women Business in Corporate Citizenship 2023 sponsored by Harmony Gold Mining Company

- Winner: PepsiCo

Top Women Owned Business SMME 2023 sponsored by Gauteng Tourism Authority

- Winner: Green Door Environmental
- Highly commended: Revio Pay

Top Women Business in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion 2023 sponsored by Kia South Africa

- Winner: In2Food

Top Women Business in Youth Development 2023

- Winner: Liquid Intelligent Technologies

Top Women Business in Skills Development 2023 sponsored by Harmony Gold Mining Company

- Winner: Dimension Data

Top Women Gender Icon Awards 2023

- FedEx
- Exxaro
- Kellanova
- Microsoft
- Sasol Limited
- JSE (Johannesburg Stock Exchange)
- Sun International
- British American Tobacco
- Gauteng Convention & Events Bureau
- Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa

Top Women Business of the Year 2023 sponsored by Procter & Gamble

- Winner: JSE (Johannesburg Stock Exchange)
- Highly commended: Institute of Directors SA

Top Women in Professional & Support Services 2023

- Winner: Mandate Molefi, Nene Molefi
- Highly commended: Nutun Group, Dineo Sekwele

Top Women in Property 2023

- Winner: Liberty Two Degrees, Amelia Beattie

Top Women Leader in STEM 2023 sponsored by WIPRO

- Winner: Maponya 911, Simphiwe Mamvura
- Highly commended: University of South Africa (UNISA), Prof. Usisipho Feleni

Top Women Leader in Public Sector 2023

- Winner: INSETA, Gugu Mkhize

Top Male Leader Driving Gender Empowerment 2023

- Winner: Smollan, Michael Power
- Highly commended: MetroWired, Tinashe Nyahanana

Top Women Media Personality of the Year 2023

- Winner: Amanda du-Pont

Top Women Media Icon of the Year 2023

- Basetsana Kumalo

Top Women Young Achiever 2023 sponsored by Standard Bank

- Winner: Sue Phalane Trading and Projects, Portia Phalane
- Highly commended: Takealot, Dikeledi Sathekge

EmpowHER Entrepreneur sponsored by Standard Bank

- Winner: Durban: Ntokozo 'Melo' Ntleko, Takkie Wash

Top Women Entrepreneur of the Year 2023 sponsored by Standard Bank

- Winner: OMI Solutions, Robyn Mellett
- Highly commended: Family Matters Fertility Centre, Dr Qinisile Cele

Top Women Business Leader of the Year 2023 sponsored by Standard Bank

- Winner: BP Southern Africa, Taelo Mojapelo
- Highly commended: Institute of Directors SA, Parmi Natesan

- **Empowering Africa through technology: Insights from Sentech Africa Tech Week 2024** 31 May 2024
- **Nedbank returns as Platinum Partner for the Top Empowerment Conference marking 30 years of democracy** 21 May 2024
- **Top innovators shine at the 6th Annual Africa Tech Week Awards** 17 May 2024
- **Calling women entrepreneurs! Pitch your business at the EmpowHER Entrepreneur Development Series 2024** 30 Apr 2024
- **Celebrating 30 years of democracy with the 23rd edition of *Impumelelo: Top empowerment*** 30 Apr 2024

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