

SIMON SIZWE MAYSON

Phone: +27 (0)65 901 7793 **Nationality:** South African
Email: simon@thecolab.org.za **Location:** Cape Town
Languages: English (native), Afrikaans (basic), isiZulu (very basic)

ACADEMIC EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2017-21 Doctor of Philosophy, Urban Planning

University of Witwatersrand (School of Architecture & Planning)
National Research Foundation Scholarship: 'Urban Resilience & Spatial Justice' (2017-20). School of Governance Life in the City Scholarship (2019). Canon Collins Sol Plaatje Scholarship (2020-21).

2011-12 Master of Science in Development Planning (With Distinction)

University of the Witwatersrand (School of Architecture & Planning)
*Awarded distinction in 10 of 11 courses and in research report. Overall average: 80%.
 South African Planning Institute Prize for Best Student in Town and Regional Planning at Wits University; John Muller Prize for best thesis (2014). Postgraduate Merit Award Scholarship; Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Merit Scholarship; National Research Foundation South African Research Chairs Initiative Bursary (2012). DF Corlett Merit Award, three conference awards (2011).*

2008-10 BSocSci with Social Anthropology and Environmental and Geographical Science (With Stream Distinction)

University of Cape Town.
Faculty Scholarship for Overall Academic Achievement (2009).

2005-07 International Baccalaureate Diploma

United World College Red Cross Nordic, Norway (UWCRCN).
Full Scholarship.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Founder and Executive Director, The CoLab – Co-creating Opportunities for Local Action and Bridging divides.

Assembled team of associates and affiliates bringing together place-based development & just transition. (2025).

Manager, Sustainable Energy, ICLEI Africa – Local Governments for Sustainability. Led the Sustainable Energy Unit, managing a team delivering on initiatives including the E-Moto Project (Rwanda), Just Municipal Embedded Generation (South Africa), and the Clean Cooking Centre (regional). Provided strategic direction, staff management, and business development. Represented ICLEI Africa at high-level forums (e.g. Africa Climate Summit). Built partnerships with funders, governments, development banks, and civil society. Cape Town (2025).

Chairperson of the Board, Makers Valley Partnership. Oversight and critical issue resolution. Johannesburg (2020-current).

Programme Lead: Energy & Climate, Economic Development Partnership. Established the Energy & Climate Programme, initiated and managed seven funded projects including urban waste management, social performance of green hydrogen projects, municipal role in social ownership of renewable energy, and innovative/green municipal procurement projects. Advocated for organisational development and built a business unit with dedicated staff. Co-supervised Masters students' theses. Cape Town (2023-2025).

Project Lead, Economic Development Partnership. Managed partnering for impact projects including sustainable energy, circular economy, spatial transformation. (2022-2023).

Co-Founder and Partner, The Troyeville House. Heritage property social enterprise. See www.troyeville.house. (2020-2024).

Independent Consultant, South African Cities Network. Coordinated and co-authored research publications. (2020-21).

Co-Founder, Changemaker Children. Enabled Changemaker Centre, Mobile Centre social enterprise, ECD training. (2019-20).

Founder and CEO, Makers Valley Partnership. Enterprise development: social & creative entrepreneurs. Enabled diverse partnerships with incubators, NPOs, for profit developments, local government and entrepreneurs. Secured US Consulate, British Council and other grants for neighbourhood development through youth employment. Other projects included urban upgrading with the Johannesburg Development Agency (City of Johannesburg), and Engineers Without Borders UK, USA and SA. See www.makersvalley.org.za. Johannesburg (2018-2020).

Various freelance & volunteer work. Lecturing at Sheffield University, UK; work-stays around Europe. (2017).

Chair, United World College Scholarship Trust. Rebuilt national committee after corruption scandal (2015-2016).

Assistant Director: Inner City Transformation Roadmap, Office of the City Manager, City of Johannesburg. Kick-starting implementation of Inner City Transformation Roadmap with all City departments/ entities and external stakeholders. High priority projects including Bad Buildings, Urban Management Hotspots, Special Process for the Relocation of Evictees. (2015-2016).

Assistant Director, Johannesburg Social Housing Company, Housing Department, City of Johannesburg. Project packaging & management. Coordinated Inner City Housing Strategy and Implementation; Municipal Human Settlements Development Plan; Transitional Housing projects (Johannesburg Inner City); monitoring and evaluation of Johannesburg SH Company. Attained, managed various budgets. (2014-2015).

Co-Founder, Innovate Jozi, a chapter of G-Min International. A staged competition and mentoring programme that ignites and nurtures invention and entrepreneurship among youth. Johannesburg (2014-2015).

Project Coordinator, National Association of Social Housing. Managed collaborative research projects: design & scope, procurement of consultants, reference group, consultation. Johannesburg (2013-2015).

Intern, United Nations, Habitat Agency Headquarters, Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch. Nairobi, Kenya (2013).

Independent Consultant, Centre for Municipal Research and Advice. Johannesburg (2012).

Project Officer, Planact. Started inner city programme. Built partnerships with civil society organisations, government, private sector, residents committee network. Johannesburg (2012).

Chair, Student Council, School of Architecture and Planning Wits University. Reinvigorated the Council. (2011).

Director, Inkanyezi. Built organisation from 2 active volunteers to 16 coordinators, 60 volunteers & 200 learners at four schools, offering a Mobile InfoCentre, mentoring and curriculum advice. (2008-10).

Founder and Director, RideLink. Alternatives enabling a reduction of carbon emissions, including a safe web-based carpooling tool, preferential parking system and cycling infrastructure. UCT (2008-9).

Additional work experience including Data Link University researcher (Ghana, 2009), Oil spill cleaner at WWF (Norway, 2007).

AWARDS

Canon Collins Scholar of Scholars Award. Selected by previous and current cohort of scholars for practical changemaker work linked to PhD project. (2020).

News24 Mandela 100. Leadership category. Recognised as a 'young Mandela of the future' for Makers Valley work. (2019).

Mail and Guardian 200 Young South Africans. Politics and Government. Awarded for work at City of Joburg. (2016).

Brand South Africa '40 South Africans Under 40'. Recognised for work in affordable housing, in commemoration of 40th anniversary of 16 June 1976 anti-Apartheid protests. (2016).

Young African Leaders Initiative: Public Management. A President Obama programme. (2016).

Brightest Young Mind. Awarded for leading entrepreneurship within not-for-profit sector. (2010).

PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

'How cities can ease spatial inequalities in early childhood development and enhance collective wellbeing'. Co-authored for Spatial Determinants of Wellbeing, South African Cities Network. (2022).

'Public space and urban safety'. Co-authored Urban Safety Brief. South African Cities Network. (2020).

'Residential alienation or the right to the city? 'Rooms' and 'spaces' as a mode of densification in Johannesburg and Cape Town'. Densifying the City? Global Cases and Johannesburg. (2020).

'Sharing a flat in Yeoville: Trajectories, experiences, relationships'. Chapter in Politics and Community-Based Research. Wits Press. (2019).

'Accommodation and Tenuous Livelihoods in Johannesburg's Inner City: the rooms and spaces typologies'. Co-author Dr Sarah Charlton. Article in Urban Forum, a Springer journal. (2015).

'Good Practices in Rental Housing: The role of councillors in rental housing'. A project for Centre for Municipal Research and Advice. South African Local Government Association. (2013).

'The Underbelly of Active Citizenship'. State of Local Governance publication. Isandla Institute. (2013).

'Real Sustainable Settlement Solutions: Accommodation along the formal-informal continuum in Johannesburg'. 11th Asian Urbanisation Conference. *Full scholarship.* Hyderabad, India (2011).

REFERENCES

Nishendra Moodley. CEO, Economic Development Partnership.
Ph +27 (0)82 338 8994 | Email nishendra@wcedp.co.za

Prof Marie Huchzermeyer. Director of Centre for Urbanism and Built Environment Studies, Wits University.
Ph +27 (0)11 717 7688 | Email marie.huchzermeyer@wits.ac.za

Brian Green. Lead Developer, Victoria Yards, Lorentzville, Johannesburg.
Ph +27 (0)83 325 1316 / Email brian@vicyards.co.za

Emanuel Sotomi. Director, Project Support, Housing Department, City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.
Ph +27 (0)11 018 6601 | Email emanuels@joburg.org.za