

SIMON SIZWE MAYSON

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PROFILE

Over 13 years' experience managing community-facing programmes as Project Officer, Project Coordinator, Assistant Director, Project Lead, Programme Lead and Manager. Eight years' supervisory experience, including six leading teams in NGOs working directly with municipal officials.

EXPERIENCE

INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT | Lead

2025 – Current, Cape Town

- Project manage a community development programme across six Dwarsrivier Valley settlements: youth activation, leadership and financial literacy training, and mentoring, funded by Boschendal Village.
- Implementation of Adam Tas Corridor as an integrated human settlement for Western Cape Economic Development Partnership, contracted to Stellenbosch Municipality.
- Advised Steve Tshwete Local Municipality on the Mhluzi Industrial Park for Pegasys Consulting, funded by FCDO UK.
- Supported design and structuring of small business hubs for Boston Consulting Group, funded by FCDO UK.

ICLEI AFRICA | Manager

2025, Cape Town

- Provided strategic direction and people management for a multi-project unit with staff across Africa, accountable for performance, budgets, work allocation, supervision and staff development.
- Managed M&E and progress reporting across regional and national programmes, meeting all funder and board deadlines; represented the organisation at the Africa Climate Summit.

WESTERN CAPE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Programme Lead (2023–2025); Project Lead (2022–2023)

Cape Town

- Project managed Energy Resilient Community Hubs with the City of Cape Town's Sustainable Energy Markets Department and the Resilient Cities Network, to make municipal facilities function reliably for residents in backyard dwellings and informal settlements facing outages of six months or more. Built a multi-criteria analysis framework, ran a city-wide EOI process, and completed pre-feasibility on four City facilities — a sports centre, clinic, meat market and library. The MCA tool institutionalised a City prioritisation process; City champions granted additional budget to implement the first hub. Published as an EDP case study.
- Commissioned and directed Innovative Local Government Procurement project integrating recycling SMMEs for the City, testing lawful mechanisms to contract small enterprises within MFMA, PFMA, PPPFA and B-BBEE constraints, engaging City officials, SALGA and SACN.
- Established and managed a funded programme of seven concurrent projects, controlling budgets, contracts and procurement; motivated for and established a permanent business unit, taking on recruitment, line management and performance oversight.

MAKERS VALLEY PARTNERSHIP NPC

Chairperson of the Board (2020–Current); Co-Founder and CEO (2018–2020)

Johannesburg

- Co-founded and led the intermediary organisation for six inner-city suburbs, partnering the Johannesburg Inner City Partnership, social enterprises, NPOs, developers, local government and resident structures. Built it to be youth-led, with young people now holding core operational roles.
- **Youth:** established the Makers Valley Studio, a free coworking and training hub reaching ~900 unique individuals a year with WiFi, computers, creative equipment, digital literacy and job readiness support; ~80 youth entrepreneurs supported annually; a six-month Social & Creative Enterprise Incubation Programme culminating in market testing; Junior Rangers and a STEAM club. Delivered 120 Social Employment Fund placements and eight YES placements, and established Urban Ranger teams patrolling six days a week, maintaining 12 food gardens and reducing illegal dumping sites from ~40 to 8.

- **ECD:** founded Changemaker Children with the CDP Trust — a playgroup with practitioner-led play-based learning and caregivers trained to make resources from recycled materials; Uncle Lassie Mobile (2019), an adapted bicycle and trailer of arts materials and educational toys serving 15 crèches; a small crèche run with two day-mothers, and 'Magic Malume', engaging men in safe caregiving roles.
- **Facilities:** established the Troyeville House, a heritage property and another property converted into ECD and co-living infrastructure housing the Changemaker School and accommodation for vulnerable groups including women and their children under two; the Studio at Victoria Yards on a rent-free lease; and three Changemakers Residences.
- **Arts and culture:** creative placemaking, public art and storytelling projects, support to creative-industry and food entrepreneurs, and a Makers Valley Festival planned for ~9 000 attendees.
- **Safety and vulnerable groups:** initiated Makers Valley Gateways, a resident-led alternative to a City Improvement District, with crime and dumping hotspot data, bin access audits, CCTV mapping and Pikitup, Community Policing Forum and law enforcement partnerships. Programmes reached migrants, informal settlement dwellers, rough sleepers and residents affected by substance abuse, with Women's Circle, peer learning and therapeutic support for retention.
- **Food security:** built the COVID-19 response into six community kitchens serving 60–80 meals twice weekly, a Recycling Swap Shop, and a needs database triggering R400 food parcels by SMS within 24 hours, informed by a census of 2 175 households by 20 volunteers; urban food gardens in place of dumping hotspots.
- **Funding and governance:** secured and administered grants from the US Consulate, British Council, Issroff and Segal Family Foundations, Dis-Chem, TUHF and the Social Employment Fund, with full financial administration, procurement, donor reporting and audited standing. Oversaw formalisation into a governed NPC with NPO and PBO status and appointed an incoming CEO. Incubated The People's Pantry, Safe Study and Skills Village, all still operating.

CITY OF JOHANNESBURG | Assistant Director

Johannesburg

- In the Office of the City Manager to coordinate a cross-departmental transformation roadmap across all City departments, entities and external stakeholders.

- Project managed Bad Buildings, Urban Management Hotspots and the Special Process for the Relocation of Evictees, addressing homelessness, rough sleeping and displacement with social development, human settlements, law enforcement, legal and finance functions. Managed City properties in distress from assessment through remediation and reporting.
- Coordinated the Inner City Housing Strategy and Municipal Human Settlements Development Plan, and project managed Transitional Housing across the inner city.
- Attained and managed municipal budgets, led M&E of the municipal entity's performance, and managed compliance, performance agreements and reporting cycles. Prepared reports for the City Manager and Mayoral Committee.

EARLIER ROLES

Project Coordinator, National Association of Social Housing Organisations | 2013–2015 — project managed collaborative research and sector-support projects end-to-end, including consultant procurement, budget control and stakeholder reference groups.

Independent consultant | 2013–2015 — research and advisory projects for the South African Cities Network and others.

Intern, UN-Habitat, Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch | 2013, *Nairobi*

Project Officer, Planact | 2012 — established an inner-city programme; project managed an informal settlement programme; worked with residents facing eviction, insecure tenure and substance abuse.

Director, Inkanyezi Mentorship Programme and Mobile Info-Centre, UCT | 2009–2010 — 400 learners across four township schools, 100 student volunteers, and a mobile info-centre providing computer and internet access.

GOVERNANCE AND VOLUNTARY ROLES

Advisor, Langa Bicycle Hub | 2023 – *Current* — mentor the Director on strategy and risk; guided the acquisition of the organisation's own property, structuring loan finance and providing governance and financial guidance. The Hub runs Learn2Cycle classes, child road-safety training and youth employment with the City's Recreation and Parks Department.

Chairperson, United World Colleges Trust South Africa — national governance, scholarship selection and fundraising oversight.

EDUCATION

PhD, Urban Planning | Wits University, 2021 — *Enabling a Wellbeing Economy: changemakers in inner-city Johannesburg*. Four years' embedded action research including a 2 175-household census and a dedicated ECD research cycle. Canon Collins Trust (Scholar of Scholars), Wits School of Governance and NRF funding.

MSc Development Planning (Distinction) | Wits University, 2012 — 80% average; SAPI Prize for Best Student in Town and Regional Planning.

BSocSci, Social Anthropology and Environmental & Geographical Science (Stream Distinction) | UCT, 2010

International Baccalaureate Diploma | United World College Red Cross Nordic, Norway, 2007 (full scholarship)

AWARDS AND PUBLICATIONS

Canon Collins Scholar of Scholars (2020) | News24 Mandela 100, Leadership (2019) | Mail & Guardian 200 Young South Africans (2016) | Brand South Africa '40 Under 40' (2016) | Young African Leaders Initiative, Public Management (2016)

Co-author, 'How Cities Can Ease Spatial Inequalities in Early Childhood Development', SACN with National Treasury's Cities Support Programme (2022) | Co-author, urban safety policy brief on public spaces, SACN (2020) | Chapters in *Politics and Community-Based Research* (Wits Press) and *Densifying the City?* (Edward Elgar) | 'Accommodation and Tenuous Livelihoods in Johannesburg's Inner City', *Urban Forum* (2015)

Independent coverage of this work in *Daily Maverick* (three features), *The Guardian*, Thomson Reuters Foundation and Radio 702.

REFERENCES

Emanuel Sotomi — Director: Project Support, Housing Department, City of Johannesburg. *My direct line manager at City of Johannesburg (Deputy Director post vacant).* +27 (0)11 018 6601 | emanuels@joburg.org.za

Jodi Allemeier — Lead, South Africa Urban Resilience Programme, Adam Smith International. *My direct line manager on the Mhluzi Industrial Park programme.* +27 84 792 7305 | jodi.allemeier@adamsmithinternational.com

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