

Shoprite and Trevor Noah Foundations expand digital learning with new Soweto robotics lab

Learners in Soweto will now have access to advanced coding, robotics and artificial intelligence training following the launch of a new robotics laboratory at Siyabonga Secondary School, established through a partnership between the [Shoprite Foundation](#) and the Trevor Noah Foundation.

The lab, which was launched on 21 May, provides learners and educators with cutting-edge learning opportunities in coding, robotics and emerging technologies such as motion sensors, microcontrollers and smart devices that can detect movement, respond and communicate data.

“Robotics is no longer a niche area in education – it’s a rapidly growing field reshaping how young people learn and engage with technology globally,” says Maude Modise, Director of the Shoprite Foundation. “By bringing labs like this into South African schools, we aim to support learners to step confidently into the future. Technology is already part of their everyday lives, but these skills are essential to help them unlock the opportunities and innovation it brings.”

The Siyabonga Lab is the fifth one established by the Trevor Noah Foundation in Gauteng and forms part of the non-profit organisation’s [flagship Khulani Schools programme](#). It provides students with ongoing opportunities to engage with coding and robotics. Situated in the same community as the [Moses Kotane Primary School](#), which is already equipped with a robotics lab, it supports learners by seamlessly continuing to develop these skills into high school.

The lab sets a structured progression from Grade 8 to matric. Grades 8 and 9 follow curriculum-aligned Coding and Robotics in the formal school timetable, while Grades 10 to 12 participate in an after-school programme focused on AI and career readiness. Schools are also encouraged to sustain robotics clubs beyond the initial setup.

We believe every learner deserves access to the tools, skills and educational pathways they need to thrive,” says Olona Tywabi, Communications Manager at the Trevor Noah Foundation. “The expansion of this new lab into another community marks an exciting step forward in bringing AI, coding and robotics into our partner schools. Access to digital learning is about far more than technology; it’s about unlocking confidence, creativity, and future opportunities. By creating spaces where learners can explore, experiment and build real-world skills, we are helping young people imagine new possibilities for themselves and empowering them to contribute meaningfully to their communities.”

The partnership model combines the strengths of each organisation: the Trevor Noah Foundation contributes community insight and long-term educational commitment, while the Shoprite Foundation is equipped to scale community projects and now supporting its seventh lab, following two earlier launches this year in [Dullstroom \(Mpumalanga\)](#) and [Khayelitsha \(Western Cape\)](#) – provides the necessary learning infrastructure. Sifiso EdTech works with schools to design the curriculum, train teachers and ensure the programme runs smoothly.

“This lab will provide a space where learners bring coding and robotics to life by tackling real-world issues,” explains Xoliswa Mahlangu, Head of Digital Learning and Technology at Sifiso EdTech. “They will tackle community challenges like designing safety systems or monitoring soil to manage water in school and community gardens, using coding and robotics. These hands-on projects build skills in problem-solving, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.”

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