

## MEDIA RELEASE FROM GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES

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### **The award-winning Greenovate Awards Programme just got even bigger**

Engineering students can now achieve green glory too! Inspiring and encouraging university students to discover, explore and invent ways to live more sustainably, the hotly-contested Greenovate Awards Programme is taking environmental innovation even further this year by introducing a new category to the awards for engineering students.

The Greenovate Awards Programme, founded by Growthpoint Properties with the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA), sets students of the built environment on a quest to find more sustainable ways of living. It stimulates green building thinking and rewards excellence in its application.

A first of its kind in South Africa, the University of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand, and University of Pretoria piloted the flourishing programme for the built environment in 2015 in the property studies and construction faculties of these universities. Last year, students of these faculties at University of Free State and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University joined the pursuit to find new ways to support more sustainable living.

Now in its third year, the Greenovate Awards programme has been extended to create a new category to include students from another high-impact stream - engineering. The competition is now open to students of the electric, electronic, mechanical, and civil engineering fields.

An inspiring eight leading South Africa universities' are contending the Greenovate Awards this year to show their groundbreaking environmental achievements. Two more innovation-leading universities have joined the programme: Stellenbosch University and the University of the North West at its Potchefstroom Campus, both from the engineering faculties.

Embracing the challenge on both fronts, the University of Cape Town, winner of the Greenovate Award property and construction studies faculty category for two years running, will now also compete in the engineering category, effectively competing in both categories this year.

Rudolf Pienaar, Growthpoint Properties Office Division Director and Chair of the GBCSA, says: "We are thrilled to introduce the Greenovate Awards for engineers to the programme. It widens its reach to more universities and students with a passion for our environment who want to find more sustainable ways to live. It gives an outlet to innovation that will make our world a better place."

Head of Sustainability at Growthpoint, Werner van Antwerpen, says: "It is exciting to see South Africa's future industry leaders showcase their understanding of the importance of preserving our natural environment as they address sustainability in our urban fabric. Greenovate has already



generated significant and meaningful impacts on our environment today, but also for tomorrow. Growthpoint is proud to include the Greenovate Awards among our initiatives that further our business commitment sustainability and climate change mitigation.”

Dorah Modise, CEO of the GBCSA says that the organisation is excited about the extension of the Greenovate programme into the engineering faculty. “The Greenovate student awards have exceeded our expectations, and have received wide acclaim from the growing list of participating universities as well as the built environment. Pitting our universities and students against each other in healthy competition, the awards have had the effect of lifting the bar and exposing students to practical industry implementation. Now, recognising and rewarding engineering students too will pave the way for these awards to further change the way the world is designed, built and operated for the sake of our environment and future generations to come.”

So, how does the Greenovate Awards Programme work? The challenge is set for final-year and honours university students to come up with ideas that result in a research project that promotes a more sustainable built environment. It can be any idea that makes the way we live greener and our environmental footprint lighter. These ideas can apply to any aspect of a building - design, development, planning, construction, materials, or a collaboration across different areas. The same goes for the engineering awards, including electric, electrical, mechanical or civil engineering.

For both streams, round one of the competition is internal. Each university’s panel will select the top two projects submitted by individual students or groups. In the second round, students from each university’s two top projects get to interact with professional mentors before they face off against one another in front of judges.

Then, the finalist from each university will present their ideas to an external judging panel of industry experts. The last round takes place in November, after university exams.

There’s a big stack of greenbacks for the best green ideas - R110,000 all-in-all. The winning team from each of the two streams - property and construction studies, and engineering - will take home R30,000. The winners will also present their research to leading built environment professionals at the esteemed annual GBCSA Green Building Convention the following year. Second and third prizes for both streams are R15,000 and R10,000 respectively, and tickets to the GBCSA Convention.

The young green stars will also access an exciting platform to introduce their talent to the industry. “We see the Greenovate Programme as a source for potential Growthpoint graduates and internships, as well as opening up doors to many of the other business leaders attending the awards dinner and the GBCSA Convention. It supports Growthpoint’s recruitment of students who have a good understanding of sustainability, which is a priority for us,” says van Antwerpen.

Besides the prospect to shine as a leader for climate change and the environment, each university taking part gives their students the opportunity to complete the Green Star SA Accredited Professional Programme (GSSA AP) at discounted student group rates. This qualification affords them a prized professional recognition in the green building arena.

“The built environment has a major impact on the environmental sustainability of the planet and on the health and wellness of people, and Greenovate is inspiring the next generation to create a built environment in which people and planet thrive,” says Modise. “We are proud that last year, Greenovate won the prestigious Excellence Award for Innovation from the South African Property



Owners Association, and we thank Growthpoint for their incredible ongoing support of this initiative.”

“Everyone wins when we invest in green thinking and nurture sustainability. Greenovate encourages future industry leaders who are passionate to create better, more sustainable communities and cities,” says van Antwerpen.

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