



Stefanie Swanepoel
Strategic communications consultant

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Profile

Stefanie Swanepoel is a creative, lateral thinker with a strong practical understanding of the African economic, financial, political and social landscape. She is passionate about change processes that bring about transformative shifts in people unlocking their potential to embrace and overcome challenges in creative ways.

Key skills and competencies

- Strategic thinker, with experience in developing organisational and communications strategies.
- Skilled in working in long-term, multi-country projects with varied cultures and worldviews.
- Able to establish, build and hold communities of practice, including virtual communities.
- Experienced learning facilitator for young adults and adept with various learning pedagogies.
- Experienced in managing large communication teams and in building communication competencies.
- Three decades experience in both print and online publishing, and in identifying innovative ways to communicate information.
- Trained social change facilitator with an understanding of cultural complexities.
- Experienced food system researcher with an understanding of socio-political dynamics.

Personal projects

- Founding director of African Earth Rights: a communications consultancy.
- A founding director of Mycelium Media Colab: a cooperative of multimedia specialists.
- Founder of Ecobrick Deep South: an awareness-raising collaboration around single-use plastics.
- Co-founder of Boskos Nursery – a wild food and medicine garden and nursery.

Key work experience

Communications and project management

- Regional communications manager for the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Southern Africa, part of the German Reserve Bank-funded Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture. Work includes managing a communications team of 11 in five countries, providing editorial, content creation and design services, producing bi-monthly newsletters and a quarterly magazine.
- Regional communications manager for the French Development Agency's Southern African Biodiversity Partners Program. Work includes crafting a communications strategy, content creation for the programme, designing and conducting a module on business branding and communication, and holding the community of practice for 2021 and 2022 participants.
- Communications manager for the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation's Green Action Week. Work includes drafting a communications strategy, programme of communications training for about 40 organisations around the world and leading on global communications for the campaign.
- Communication project manager and senior editor for the drafting of South Africa's National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Provided input to the chapter on climate change communication. Work included project managing 5 communications officers, facilitating public engagement events, content writing and editing services.



- Project management of the production of the Department of Science and Technology's 20 Years of Science, Technology and Innovation in South Africa and the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation's 20-Year Review.
- Editor of Wine Tourism News and the Wine Tourism Handbook for the World's Favourite Publications. Work included conceptualisation, management of 5 members of the production team, marketing strategies and content creation and editing.
- Researching and drafting a stand-alone 2018 and 2019 sustainability report for the Shoprite Group and the sustainability content for its 2017 integrated report.
- Writing and knowledge management for the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Fund and drafting and editing of various reports for the International Finance Corporation.
- Initiative for Global Development: editing an impact report on programme activities in the Niger-Delta region, Nigeria.

Strategy writing, research, writing and editorial

- Strategic communications work (research, communications strategy drafting and content creation) for the Department of Basic Education's E-cubed programme, RCL Food's employee engagement sustainability strategy and Nedbank's biodiversity champion's programme, as examples.
- Drafting of a background paper for a nutrition guide for low-income households – commissioned by the European Union.
- Editing of Changing Markets, a report on South Africa's water infrastructure (2016) sponsored by ActionAid.

- Food systems researcher (on topics like seed, financialisation and biodiversity) for African Centre for Biodiversity, Zambian Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity, Seed and Knowledge Initiative, Biowatch and Oxfam Germany, among others).

- Researcher and writer for a United Nations Environment Programme-funded 10 Year Food Programme project focused on trialling a mobile app in South Africa aiming to reduce food waste on farms.

- Report writing for commissioned United Nation booklets, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and Oxfam Namibia.
- Drafting negotiation guidelines for the African Union in its post-Cotonou negotiations with the European Union.

Learning design and facilitation

- Designing and administering a research methodology MOOC for the Stellenbosch University's School of Public Leadership's Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Development.
- Designed and facilitated a Creative Expression for sustainable development module for a Stellenbosch University three-year undergraduate diploma in sustainable development.

Education

- Stellenbosch University, South Africa
 - Masters Sustainable Development, 2013 (cum laude)
 - Honours Sustainable Development, 2011 (cum laude)
- Rhodes University, South Africa
 - Bachelor of Arts, 1992 Majors: Journalism I Third World Politics

