



Abridged Biography | Dr McLean Sibanda



Dr. McLean Sibanda, is a seasoned business executive, respected intellectual property, innovation and entrepreneurship expert, with a wealth of experience on innovation ecosystems. He was the Chief Executive Officer of The Innovation Hub (Gauteng, South Africa) for seven and half years (February 2011-June 2018) before joining Bigen Group where he is Managing Director for Bigen Global Limited.

An engineer and admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa, and registered South African patent attorney, he co-founded boutique intellectual property firm Sibanda & Zantwijk Attorneys (and practiced until February 2019) and consulting company Intangible Consulting t/a Ideanav, for which he is a director and shareholder. He has served on several boards including the CSIR, the Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF, Kenya), was Chairperson of South Africa's National IP Management Office (NIPMO), he serves on the Board of the Africa Health Research Institutes (AHRI), the Council of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa), and Chairs the Board of Qualibasicseed Group (Kenya, South Africa). An Adjunct Professor at UNISA from 2021, he is a visiting lecturer at the Africa University (Mutare, Zimbabwe) where he lectures Entrepreneurship and Innovation for Masters in Intellectual Property (MIP) offered by WIPO, ARIPO and Africa University, and also supervises student dissertation. He has served as a consultant to Africa Union, SADC Secretariat, Governments of Tanzania and the Kingdom of Eswatini, as well as UNECA. He was the chief drafter of South Africa's Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 2008, and accompanying Regulations.

McLean holds a Doctorate of Laws (PhD) from the University of South Africa (UNISA) and his thesis supervised by Professor Dr. Dres. h.c. Joseph Straus from Max Plank Institute (Munich, Germany) is entitled, Enabling Intellectual Property and Innovation Systems for South Africa's Development and Competitiveness. He has authored a number of articles on IP matters and the recent article "The Intellectual Property System as a Catalyst for Socio-Economic Development for Middle Income Countries: Lessons from South Africa" jointly authored with Joseph Straus to be published in European Intellectual Property Review Issue 11 (2020). He has authored two books entitled "Nuts & Bolts - Strengthening Africa's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems" (Jan 2021), and "Footprints - Laying the Path. Intellectual Property for Innovation and Economic Development" (Sept 2021), both published by Tracey McDonald Publishers.
