



FOUNDER AND CEO - BRAND LEADERSHIP GROUP
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN - BRAND AFRICA
FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL - AFRICA BRAND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN - VUMA: AFRICA CREATIVE FESTIVAL

Everything Thebe Ikalafeng does is centred around Africa. Having been to every country in the continent, building brands across Africa and summiting the highest mountain in Africa and highest free-standing in the world, Mt. Kilimanjaro, he lives and believes in the continent's possibilities. He is passionately engaged in inspiring and driving an Africa-focused brand-led agenda that positively shapes the continent's image and competitiveness. He is widely quoted globally as the pre-eminent authority on brands in Africa.

*He has been recognized by New African Magazine as one of the **100 Most Influential Africans**. He founded **Brand Africa**, an inter-generational movement to create a positive image of Africa, celebrate its diversity and drive its competitiveness, **Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands**, the only pan-African research and ranking of brands in Africa, to highlight and promote excellence in building brands in Africa; **Africa Brand Leadership Academy (ABLA)** to ignite and enable Africa-focused global brand leadership and **VUMA - Africa Creative Festival**, a global African initiative to celebrate creative excellence inspired by Africa.*

*After a distinguished corporate career which started at Colgate Palmolive in New York, US and concluded as chief marketing officer for NIKE for Africa, during which he won **over 75 awards** in branding and marketing communication globally, he established the award-winning Brand Leadership Group and has **worked on over 100 corporate, nation and political brands across Africa**. Brand Leadership has been recognized by Fin Week Magazine as "Marketing Services Agency of the Year" in 2008 and was inducted into the **Rebrand Hall of Fame for Excellence in Branding** in 2015. He has judged awards on design, branding and leadership globally, including the Red Dot awards in Germany and St. Gallen Symposium 'Wings of Excellence' in Switzerland. He served as the inaugural vice-chairman of the Brand Council of Southern Africa and as the first African chairman of the Loeries, the premier advertising awards in Africa.*

*A fellow of the Institute of Directors, he is a non-executive director at **South African Tourism, Cartrack Group and WWF South Africa**. He has held directorships in the public and private sector, including a 15 years tenure on the board of Mercantile Bank Group and full terms on the Brand South Africa, Foodcorp and Nike boards.*

*Ikalafeng holds **BSc and MBA** degrees from Marquette University in the USA, completed executive education at Harvard Business School in the US and is a **Chartered Marketer (SA)**.*

*An adventurer and avid traveler, beyond **Mount Kilimanjaro**, he has summited **Mount Elbrus in Russia**, the highest mountain in Europe; sky-dived in Swakopmund Namibia, the only place in the world where the sand dunes meet the ocean; jumped the **216m tall Bloukrans Bridge**, the highest bungee in the world, and took a **plunge into the coldest waters on the planet in Antarctica**, in his travels from his birthplace in Kimberley, South Africa and to every country in Africa and every continent in the world.*

*Based in Johannesburg, South Africa, he advises, writes and speaks on Africa-focused branding, leadership and related matters. Africa is in everything he does.
www.ikalafeng.africa*