

M. von Nkosi Bio — Fall 2024

M. von Nkosi is a distinguished leader, technologist, and architect with a solid foundation in strategic planning, community development, and equity-focused initiatives. His extensive experience over decades and dedication to community and business stakeholders uniquely position him to support public, private, and philanthropic needs.

As the founder and President of the Institute for Local Innovations, Inc. (ILI), a New Orleans-based 501(c)(3) organization, von Nkosi has been committed to helping communities maximize their potential through local efforts since June 2012. Notably, he led the design team for the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District in Atlanta in the early 1990s, aiding the transformation of a troubled neighborhood into a sustainable community.

Nkosi's expertise spans technology and innovation, marked by Space Act agreements and licenses with NASA from 2017 to 2025. His award-winning collaborative work aims to advance technologies into the marketplace, focusing on entrepreneurs of color and addressing climate impact issues, showcasing his ability to blend cutting-edge solutions with community development.

His skills in strategic planning and implementation are demonstrated by his work on the Mixed-Income Communities Initiative and the Atlanta Regional Commission's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). These projects highlight his capability to develop and execute comprehensive plans aligned with broader community goals.

Nkosi's commitment to liberatory practices is evident through initiatives like the Mi Rialiti (my reality) platform. This platform enhances data capture through media (audio, video, photo, and documents) of individual, organizational, and community narratives to drive smarter public, private, and philanthropic decision-making, reflecting his dedication to centering community voices and promoting equity.

Throughout his career, von has excelled in collaboration and relationship building. He has united diverse groups of professionals and stakeholders, fostering partnerships for clients where collaboration is a core value. His extensive experience in public policy and disaster recovery includes directing \$30 million for housing programs in post-Katrina New Orleans, showcasing his ability to manage large-scale projects with a focus on equity and sustainability.

Nkosi is also a renowned public speaker and facilitator, leading numerous high-profile conferences, workshops, and training sessions. His strong communication skills enable him to convey complex ideas and foster meaningful dialogue among stakeholders effectively. Combined with his extensive project management experience, this ensures projects are completed on time, within budget, and to high quality and safety standards. His expertise in strategic planning, urban/community planning, equity, collaboration, communication, and project management makes him exceptionally well-suited to support any public, private, and philanthropic endeavor. His proven track record of integrating equity into strategic initiatives and fostering partnerships is invaluable in achieving long-term visions for civil societies.

Key Accomplishments include:

- (1) Created the [Technology Transfer Ideation Studio process to support NASA T2X](#) goals by providing novel approaches to commercializing NASA innovations available for licensing by HBCU/MSI Alumni— [Winner of a 2024 NASA Catalyst Prize](#).
- (2) Implemented Mi Rialiti Structured Inquiry Model for the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) 2022 five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to provide traditionally underserved regional stakeholders a voice in the Economic Development process to meet the overall objective of developing a more inclusive community input process (<https://tinyurl.com/kmh3avut>)
- (3) Directed 30 million dollars of Disaster CDBG funds to development into a Soft second housing program, funds for non-profit developers to boost housing production, allocated funds for the creation of a one-stop housing resource center;
- (4) "Making a Case for Mixed Income and Mixed Use Communities, An Executive Summary" became and remained the #1 search result on Google for eight years (2004-2012) (<http://ow.ly/JzvI30bWrSJ> and <http://ow.ly/8Ncc30bWs1w>).
- (5) He negotiated a 2-year working agreement between ANDP and the ARC, resulting in the establishment of a housing resource center at the ARC in 2006, and is ongoing - <http://www.atlantaregionalhousing.org>
- (6) Leading the design team that created the implementation plan for the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC) and Bank of America in Atlanta, revitalizing a once crime-ridden neighborhood into a sustainable urban development. Neighborhood Size – 10 acres, \$2M project;



Education:

Georgia Institute of Technology
Master of Science (Architecture) M.S.
Atlanta, Georgia

Illinois Institute of Technology
Master of Architecture
Professional Degree: M. ARCH.
Chicago, Illinois

Hampton University
Bachelor of Architecture
Professional Degree: B.ARCH.
Hampton, Virginia

University of Chicago, Leadership &
Society Initiative Fellow — June 2025

MIT Slone School of Management
Artificial Intelligence — Implications for
Business Strategy Certification — 2023

Plan Coach for Learning for Action -
Equity Learning Lab for Health Leaders
Fellowship Program — 2020-2023

Coach-Mentor for W.K. Kellogg
Foundation Community Leadership
Fellowship Program — 2014-2021

Honors:

Institute of Georgia Environmental
Leadership (IGEL)

Fellow – Duke University – University of
Cape Town South Africa – Centres for
Leadership & Public Values

NCI Charrette Planner – National
Charrette Institute – 2005

Leadership Midtown [Atlanta]

Regional Leadership Institute (RLI)

Recipient of the American Institute of
Architects (AIA) Medal and Certificate of
Merit from the Henry Adams Fund for
Excellence in the Study of Architecture
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[von Full CV](#)