CULTURE SUMMIT

Brought to you by HAPPYSANDPIT

The archaeology of culture: from digging up stories to building legacies

Navasha Chetty
Chief People Officer
JSE

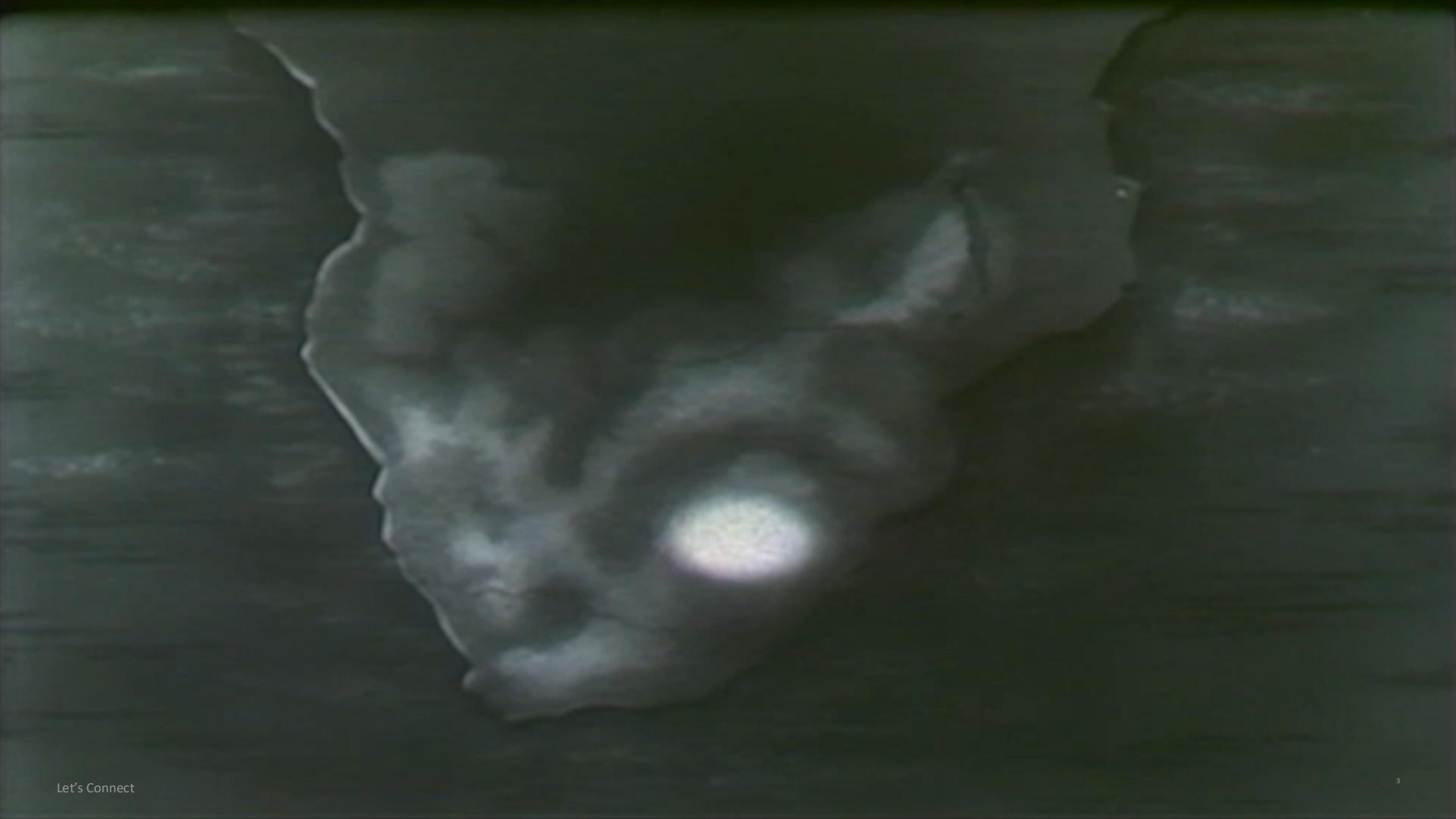
SPILL THE TEA

FORGE 2031

The Archaeology of Culture

From digging up stories to building legacies





The Hook:

FORGE 2031

CMO calls me
THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Abi's girls call it
SPILL THE TEA

I call it
CULTURE

"When only the tea leaves are left behind... what story is there?"

The Tulum Spark

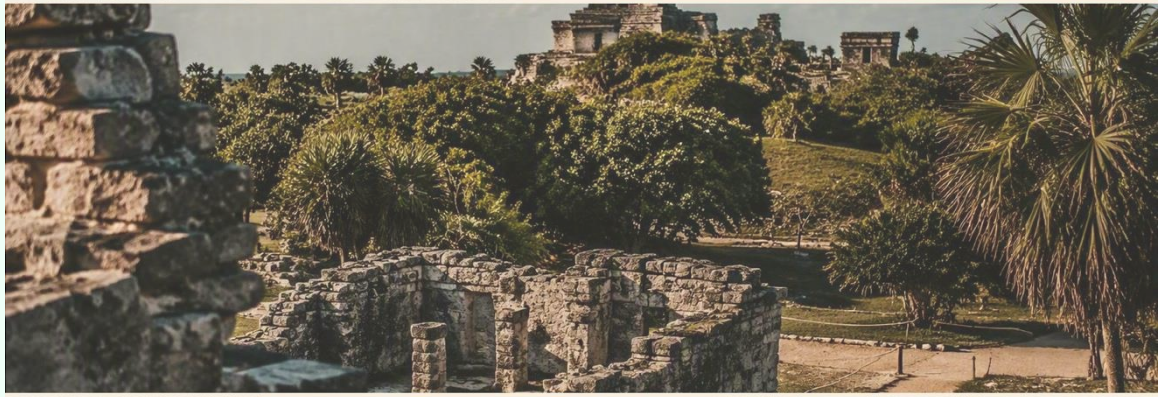
A lost civilisation triggered a culture question

The buildings remain.

But where are the stories?

Where are the people?







That moment reframed culture as legacy.

The Human Brief After COVID

Reconnect people to pride, place and purpose

**People came back...
but connection had not fully come back.**

The JSE story had to be protected and made alive again.

How do people feel part of a living history?



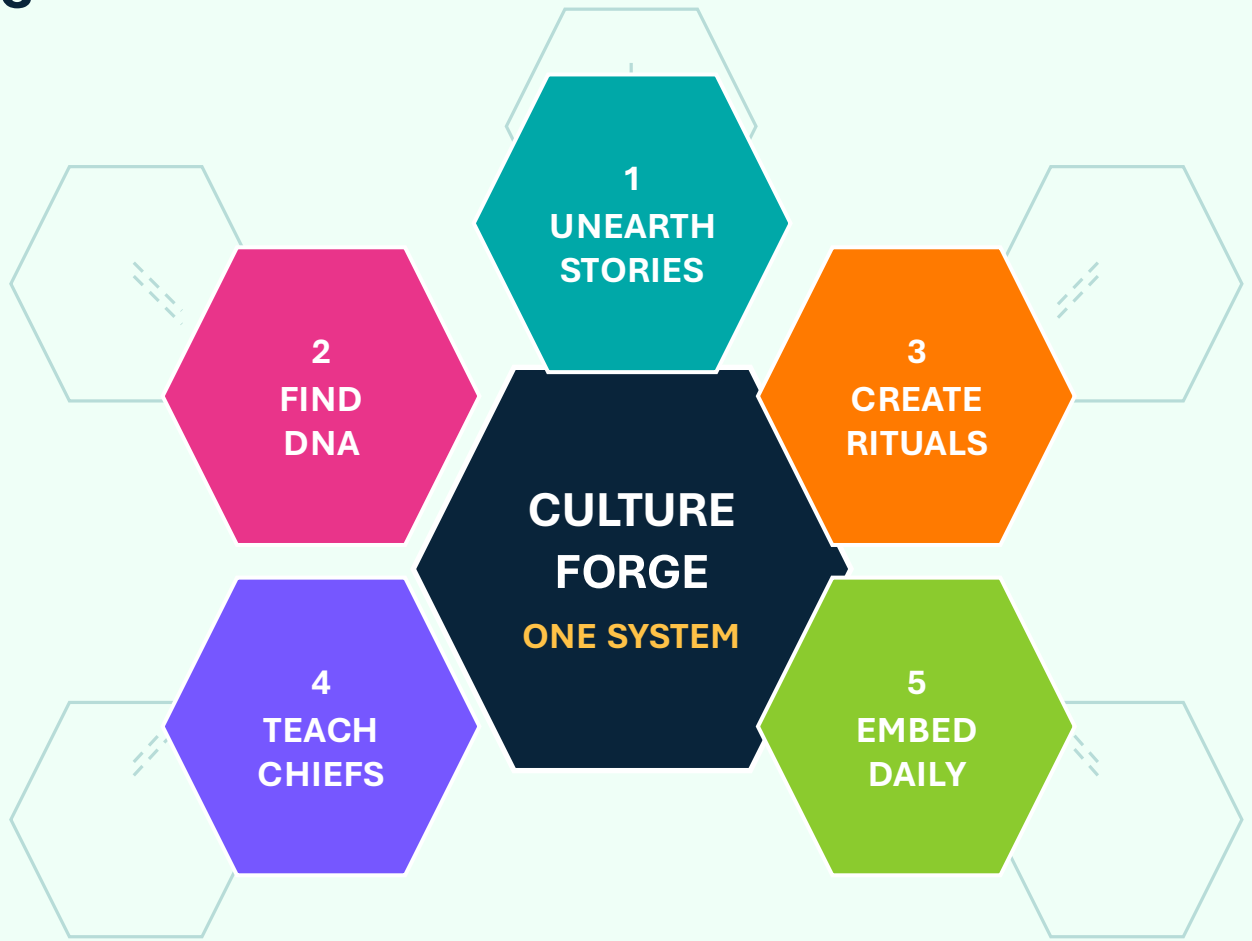
“Who remembers their very first day at work?”

Not the policy. Not the job description. The feeling.

That feeling is culture.

The Culture Forge

The blueprint becomes a build sequence



Less “change programme”. More forge: heat, shape, cool, strengthen, repeat.

Layer 1: Unearth Stories

Crowd-source the culture,

LISTEN | CROWD-SOURCE | MAKE VISIBLE

Focus groups asked people what culture they wanted
Employee voices shaped commitments
Handprints became visible culture artefacts
People own what they help create

We invited them to leave fingerprints on it.



Layer 2: Find the DNA

The strongest cultures know who they are

WHO ARE WE?

WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

WHAT DRIVES US?

“People want to smell the place.”

Freshly baked chocolate-chip cookies is a culture strategy too.

Layer 3: Create Rituals

Rituals are how culture gets remembered

- Manifesto Days
- Imbizos
- Culture Connect
- Brown Bag Days



“Archaeologists do not find strategy documents. They find artefacts.”

Layer 4: Teach the Chiefs

Leadership behaviour is the loudest culture campaign

“Culture changes only when leaders do.”

Conscious leadership as a shared language
Show up differently under pressure
Dial up empathy, care and compassion
Treat people as the foundation of delivery

The fastest way to kill culture?
Put it into PowerPoint and hope people behave differently.

Layer 5: Embed Daily

FORGE 2031

Culture is the repetition that turns into memory

DAY

WEEK

MONTH

YEAR

From the security gate to the desk — culture should feel like home.

Repeated moments become the organisational heartbeat.

Strategy Needs Culture

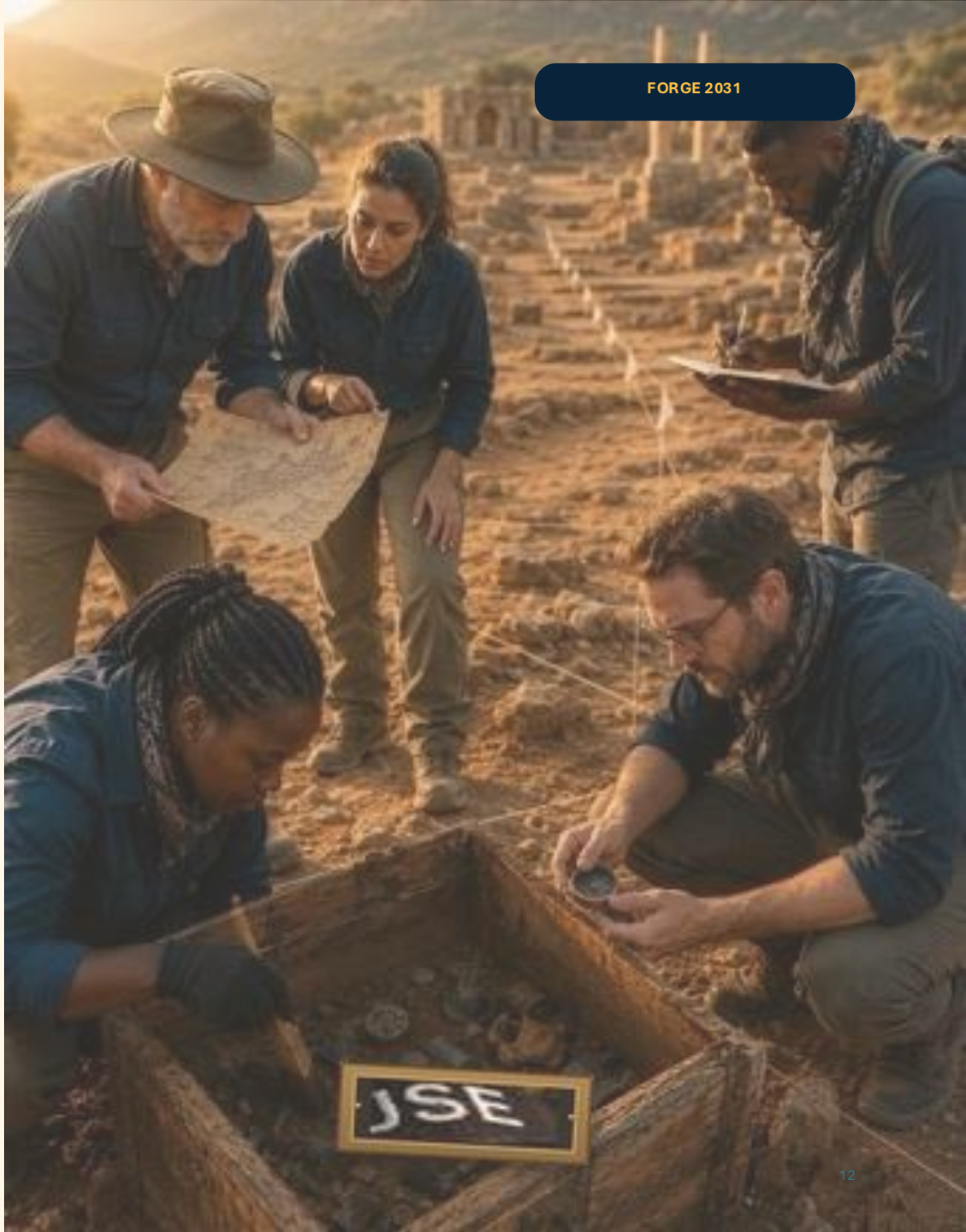
Culture is the fuel that fires the rocket

> “Strategy tells us where to go. Culture decides whether anyone wants to make the journey.”

FUEL

MOMENTUM

HEARTS + MINDS



Forge 2031: The Next Culture Journey

Build the exchange of the future

Culture diagnostic

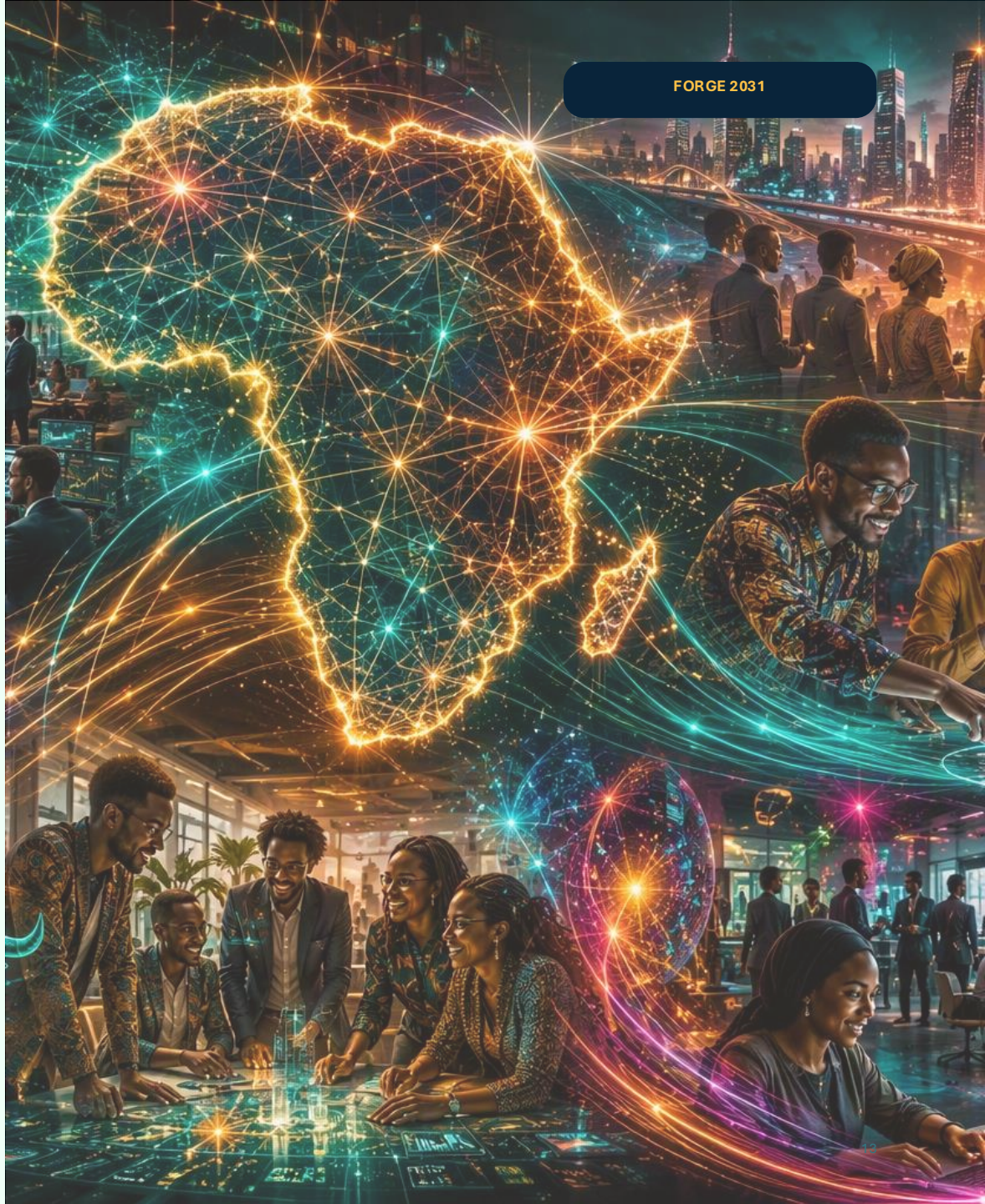
Culture charter

Commercial mindset

Innovation + curiosity

Pan-African ambition needs a culture that can build, sustain and scale.

Personas + high performance + rewards for what matters



The Builder’s Mandate

The moment that made the work personal

“Go build. Then come back and tell us how it went.”

— Chairman

Win hearts and minds to execute strategy.

The Secret Sauce

South African stories that hit the spot

Nando’s hot sauce

Ocean Basket garlic butter

Oros



“Culture is not only what is on the label. It is the feeling it leaves behind.”

Your Culture Footprint

One day, someone else will sit in our chair.
Someone else will hold our title.

“What did you leave behind?”

- Architect
- Steward
- Builder of legacy

What is your culture footprint?



SPILL THE TEA

FORGE 2031

The Archaeology of Culture

Thank You!

