

What Project Tania Changed

*A personal record — three weeks, three real outcomes,
and the distance between doubt and evidence.*

Paul Makwasha · Brandbridge · September 9, 2026

Where It Started

In late August, after a POTRAZ application that didn't place, the honest question on the table was simple and hard: *"Was I wrong about this being big enough?"*

"It's not big enough... overall speaking. I feel like this is not a chatbot, we need a different UI. I feel like it's not as robust."

That doubt was real, and it didn't resolve with a pep talk. It resolved the only way doubt like that ever does: by building the thing, testing it against real evidence, and putting it in front of people who had no reason to be kind about it.

What follows is what actually happened next — not the polished version, the real one, including the parts that didn't work.

Three Weeks, By the Numbers

2

accelerator applications
submitted, solo

3

real demo cases proven,
twice, on two machines

1

speaking acceptance,
300+ applicants

PAYCON 2026

Pan African Youth Conference — African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa

Accepted as a speaker from over 300 applicants, on an abstract built directly on Tania's core idea: "Harmonizing Traditional and Conventional Medicine Using AI Graph Networks and Molecular Docking." A confirmed 20–30 minute speaking slot — earned on the strength of the work itself, before any funding question ever entered the picture.

What actually happened

Travel was self-funded. A ~\$1,500 gap — passport, flights, visa, accommodation — proved too large to close in time. A pledge of partial support fell through. Requests for a virtual presentation option went unanswered by the organizers. In the end, Paul did not attend, in person or virtually.

What it still is

A real acceptance, earned on merit, stands regardless of how the logistics resolved. "Selected Speaker, PAYCON 2026 (from 300+ applicants)" is a true line, and it belongs on the record exactly as it happened — including the part where the world didn't make it easy.

Google Africa Applied AI Lab

Accra AI Community Centre — inaugural cohort

A full application built from a real, working system: a graph database that decides interaction risk from documented evidence, an AI layer constrained to only translate that decision, and a code-level safety check verified to catch the model if it ever tried to overstate a hypothesis as a proven treatment. A pitch deck. A recorded demo, three real cases, walked through live.

The result

Not selected for the inaugural cohort. The rejection was real, and it stung — an “extraordinary number of applications... incredibly competitive... inaugural cohort,” in Google's own words. Four concrete next doors were offered in the same letter: the AICC community hub, the Startups Accelerator Africa, the Gemini Kit, and the API Sprints.

“I'm stung.” — and that was allowed to just be true, without being argued away.

What it actually proved

The architecture held up under real scrutiny. Every claim in that application was checked against evidence before it was written — including catching and correcting a real species identification error (*Artemisia afra* vs. *Artemisia annua*) in the evidence base before it became a false claim. A rejection from one competitive door is not the same thing as the work being wrong.

The Baobab Network

Stage Two — submitted, in review

Stage One was submitted on a Thursday afternoon. The shortlist to Stage Two arrived less than two hours later — not a form response, a real signal that the work stood out.

Stage Two followed on a Sunday: nine full sections, team story, company structure, product and market, competition, revenue, funding, risk factors, and a founder video recorded on the third attempt after two camera failures. Every number in it matched what had already been told to Google, weeks earlier — \$0 revenue, \$0 raised, MVP stage, no inflation, no padding.

The honest risk section

Rather than hide the gaps, the application named them directly: solo-founder execution capacity, and an unresolved regulatory pathway with Zimbabwe's MCAZ. Most applicants hide this. Naming it, with a real mitigation plan attached, was the stronger choice.

Where it stands

Submitted September 7, confirmed in writing. Review typically takes 1–2 weeks. As of this record, the outcome is not yet known — and that is the honest, current status, not a prediction dressed up as a fact.

What This Actually Proves

Not that every door opened. Two of three outcomes above were, honestly, disappointments — a conference missed, a program that said no. That's the real record, not a highlight reel.

What actually changed is smaller than “won everything” and more durable than that would have been: a working system, built mostly solo around a demanding hospital rotation, that held up every single time it was tested — against a real graph, a real language model, real cited literature, and real people reading real applications. The doubt from three weeks ago — *“is this even big enough”* — has an answer now, and it isn't a feeling anymore. It's a shortlist, a speaking acceptance, and a system that has never once produced an answer it couldn't defend.

“That uncertainty is normal after finishing something big. It doesn't need a next action to make it okay.”

Filed here, closed, not because it's finished — Baobab is still open — but because this chapter has already answered the question it was asked to answer.