



The Pretoria High School for Girls team, which has won the national Formula 1 in Schools competition, poses with the winning racing car model. From left are: resource manager Akhona Manefenuka, Grade 12; design engineer Ingrid Lambert, Grade 11, team manager Keyuri Naidoo, Grade 12; manufacturing engineer Samantha Rogers, Grade 11; graphic designer Lean Goslett, Grade 12; graphics and design engineer Eleanor Harding, Grade 12; and technology head of subject Lynelle van Heerden.

PICTURE: SARAH MAKOE

MOGOMOTSI MAGOME

THEY have defied the odds to beat all South African schools in the Formula 1 national competition.

Now they are racing against time to get money to take on the world.

The Pretoria High School for Girls' Team Celeritas entered the Formula 1 in Schools challenge, with six pupils competing against 30 other schools to design and manufacture the best racing car model.

They have won the national challenge, but now R140 000 stands between them and a chance to represent South Africa at the World Championships in Singapore.

At the global competition pupils from various countries will be showcasing their mettle.

The local team needs to confirm

F1 team in race against time to raise cash to vie for world title

its participation with the organisers by tomorrow, but if the girls fail to raise the money they will have to give up their shot at the World Championship title.

The cost for each pupil to make the trip is about R20 000.

This includes food, registration, airfare and accommodation as they will be staying there for 10 days.

However, the girls are not asking for handouts.

They have offered an incentive for any company or individual who pledges financial support to help them compete in Singapore.

Should a company or individual back the team, the team will brand its car with the sponsor's logo to give the sponsor international exposure.

"We now have the colours of our school because it is our main sponsor, but it can be joined by others who can help us make the trip.

"Sponsors will also get advertisements on our exhibition in Singapore to acknowledge their support in getting us to the championships," said the team manager, 18-year-old Keyuri Naidoo.

The challenge is also part of the initiative to encourage young people to study mathematics and science.

And in this group a rich vein of potential talent in science has been unearthed.

The girls used a computer-assisted design system to create and manufacture their model racing car.

It is powered by a compact carbon dioxide gas cylinder, and the car can reach 20m in about 1.2 seconds.

The school's public relations officer, Joan Manders, said she had been trying to raise as much money as she could to enable the all-girl team to compete in Singapore.

This was mostly because the school prioritised science and mathematics for the girls and to expand its pupils' knowledge.

The school was confident that its team's car could beat any other model car competing at the World Championships.

All potential sponsors have been asked to phone Joan Manders at 012 430 7341 or 082 572 0686.