Kia South Africa embarks on focused drive to include more women in its retail network

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- Accelerated drive to include more women in variety of positions across business functions
- Large-scale recruitment of female sales executives in retail network

Kia South Africa kicks off 2023 with a focused mission to include and empower women in the automotive industry by actively promoting and recruiting to include more women into a variety of positions across its operations. This is the brand's next step to attract more women to the motoring business and is in keeping with Kia's goal of becoming a top gender-empowered employer.

"By making our workforce more representative of our nation, Kia South Africa will drive our aspiration to be fully in tune with the South African way of life," comments Gary Scott, CEO of Kia South Africa. "Movement creates the space to find inspiration and fresh perspectives, which is critical to taking any step towards changing our world for the better. We're committed to change, and specifically to change in South Africa, and our mission – to be loved by all South Africans – compels us to be better and do better, starting with our own business."

In 2022, Kia sponsored the *Top gender-empowered organisation: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award* in the annual Standard Bank Top Women Awards, positioning itself in the broader business community as a brand that takes gender empowerment seriously. This approach is endorsed by Kia's HR Executive, Latisha Naidu, who joined Kia's executive management team in 2022. She is focused on driving transformation and empowerment across all business functions and levels in 2023 and beyond.

"We actively want to effect change in the industry, not just by shifting perceptions about women in motoring, but also through creating multiple, tangible opportunities for women to join and grow in the industry" comments Naidu. "To this end, we are taking a multi-pronged approach to ensure that women empowerment not only remains a priority but is effected across all levels."

Kia is celebrating 25 years of operating in South Africa, during which the brand has grown from an unknown Korean brand to a top 10 sales brand with 5% market share. A slew of new model introductions over the years, multiple awards for automotive design and a six-year run as the highest ranked brand for quality has made a significant contribution to Kia's

success, underpinned by a strong national retail network. As part of a vertically integrated business model, nearly a third of Kia's national dealership network falls under Kia Retail Operations, operated by Kia South Africa.

"Kia has made great strides towards empowerment and transformation in the past year, and we're proud that our head office operations includes 66% women overall, and 63% at Head of Department level," comments Naidu. "However, with such a large retail network in our business, it is also a prime opportunity for accelerated empowerment in the retail space."

To this end, Kia will embark on a nationwide project, starting immediately, to recruit at least 65 female sales executives to join its fast-growing, exciting business. "We are looking for individuals who live our values of fun, simplicity, dependability, consistency and being brave," comments Naidu. "Joining the brand as a sales executive places women at the coalface of our operations, and brings excellent opportunities for training and career growth, including training towards becoming a sales manager and, ultimately, dealer principals."

The minimum requirements for interested candidates is a matric qualification, a valid South African driver's license and at least one year's sales experience, regardless of industry. "We're opening this opportunity to women who may not have much experience in automotive sales," comments Naidu. "Our approach to development is holistic, with up to 70% being on-the-job training, complemented by online and classroom training on the Kia brand, its product line-up, and effective selling techniques."

However, the opportunity is also open to female sales executives who have more experience in order to grow skills and capacity across all levels. "We're especially excited at the prospect of empowering more women from the industry to advance into sales management and specialist roles, whether it is in new vehicle or used vehicle sales," Naidu adds.

Women who are interested in joining the Kia family can apply through this link. For any other opportunities at Kia South Africa, as well as Motus, visit the Motus e-recruit portal.

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Kia South Africa

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