

Food Lover's on the lookout for social enterprises to join supplier network

Food Lover's Market has launched its Seeds Of Change Supplier Development Partnership to create opportunities for social enterprises to join the fresh produce retailer's network as a supplier.



Food Lover's is looking for businesses that are ideally socially and environmentally focused, are passionate about retail and motivated to deliver the best quality product or service.

"Food Lover's Market is a business born out of entrepreneurship. The co-founders started the business in 1994 and, from its humble single-store origins, the company is now a thriving retailer with a sizeable footprint in southern Africa. We view social enterprises as innovators and job creators, who can become meaningful contributors to the economy if they are supported by bigger organisations – such as ours," says Siglinda Losch, sustainability manager for the Food Lover's Market Group.

"Often small businesses do not have access to the supplier networks and marketing tools to grow their business. We aim to provide the opportunity and the means for small suppliers to get the tools and training they need to be successful and operate their business as a sustainable supplier to the retail market," Losch adds.

Call for applications

Food Lover's Market is interested in social enterprises that fit into the fresh produce and food retail environments. The retailer intends to prioritise applications from businesses that will add value to the Food Lover's Market shopping experience. These include smallholder farmers, freight businesses, commercial services, as well as produce and products that sit within in-store departments such as bakery, confectionery, groceries and liquor.

Some of the requirements to apply include:

- The business should be operational for 12 months.
- The business should show financial stability.
- The business should have a business plan showcasing successful implementation.

Interested businesses can [apply online](#) – applications opened on 4 January 2021 and close on 14 February 2021. Once applications close, the top 20 will be selected and will attend a workshop, which will give them a taste of the retail experience and what will be required to become part of the supplier network.

After the workshop, the selected top 10 will attend a four-day bootcamp, during which they will receive the guidance, mentorship and necessary skills to market their business. They will also be exposed to a macro view of the global and South African retail landscape, including trends, challenges and opportunities within the sector. The top 10 businesses will then do a final pitch to the Food Lover's Market board, and one social enterprise will be selected as a supplier.

Seeds of Change will be facilitated by the Social Enterprise Academy (SEA), a specialist learning and development organisation supporting social change organisations in South Africa. With a proven track record globally, SEA has extensive experience of social enterprise models from South Africa and around the world.



FLM campaign dents SA's deepening hunger crisis

Lauren Hartzenberg 7 Aug 2020



Supplier development partnerships must be prioritised

The Covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a far-reaching impact on the unemployment rates in the country. South Africa's unemployment rate in 2020 stood at 28.5% with 2.2 million jobs shed by September of that year alone, as a result of the pandemic.

Social enterprises, as an emerging sector, provide an opportunity to solve many of the prevalent social and environmental problems in South Africa, whilst at the same time contributing to economic growth and job creation. Unfortunately, this sector is still not prioritised as a key driver in the South African economy. Food Lover's Market aims to challenge this mindset by presenting a unique opportunity for these businesses to become part of the corporate supply chain.

Concludes Losch, "Food Lover's Market is looking forward to applying its resources, network and management expertise to assisting social enterprises to grow a well-run and thriving business."

More information on the application criteria, as well as the application form to enter, [can be found here](#).

Applications close on 14 February 2021.

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