

Western Cape launches R5m export fund for businesses

The Western Cape Government's Department of Economic Development and Tourism has launched a new programme to help businesses become more competitive in the global market. The Export Competitiveness Enhancement Programme (ECEP) will provide support to businesses that are export-ready or working towards export readiness.



Source: Drazen Zigic via [Freepik](#)

"Expanding exports of products and services is a priority focus area of our provincial Growth for Jobs Strategy. Our research indicates that if we can increase exports by 10%, we can generate an estimated additional R6bn to the Western Cape Gross Domestic Product, creating many more jobs," says Mireille Wenger, minister of finance and economic opportunities.

Minister Wenger continues that "enabling access to global markets is key to achieving break-out economic growth for the Western Cape economy precisely because exports create opportunities for domestic producers to expand and diversify their customer bases, so that they can grow their businesses."

The focus of the programme will be on developing and investing in the capacity of businesses to unlock export opportunities through a structured process, such as business turnaround or business improvement, and on improving the entrepreneur's skills and the business's competitive position in relation to scale and efficiency. It will also position the business to expand into current markets as well as new market opportunities.

Interventions target specific businesses and provide support mechanisms to improve the capability, competitiveness, productivity, and export growth of these businesses.

The fund will support the following activities:

- Product reformulation and refinement.
- International packaging, labelling, and printing requirements.
- International product certification and standards for international market access.
- Product registration with relevant international bodies in export markets
- International nutritional analysis
- Specialised shipping requirements

"The application process closes at midnight on 30 June 2023, and I encourage businesses in the Western Cape to apply for this exciting opportunity and look forward to seeing many more of our proudly Western Cape goods on shelves across the globe, and of course, to assisting many more businesses to expand, creating many more jobs for the residents of the Western Cape," concludes Minister Wenger.

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