

WCape govt launches R5m Tourism Challenge Fund

The Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) has introduced a new initiative called the Growth for Jobs Tourism Challenge Fund, worth R5m, in collaboration with the Western Cape Government. This fund aims to support tourism development projects and programs in the categories of Tourism Infrastructure Support and Tourism Product Development Support.



Source: stevepb via [Fxabay](#)

The fund will provide financial support to development programmes and projects that benefit Western Cape-based tourism attractions and businesses. DEDAT invites organisations engaged in these areas to apply for project funding through this fund.

Western Cape minister of finance and economic opportunities, Mireille Wenger welcomed the launch of the fund, saying, "Our tourism and hospitality sector was hit hard by the Covid pandemic but has seen a remarkable recovery over the last year, with international arrivals reaching 100% of their 2019 figures in February this year. To enable future growth, we need to remove barriers that stand in the way of the sector, ensure we get the basics right, and help support small businesses to add new and exciting experiences, while investing in infrastructure that will unlock success. This is what Growth for Jobs is all about."

Wenger continues: "An important aspect of this fund is that it challenges the tourism ecosystem to co-invest as partners, to ensure that we get maximum impact with the resources we have available. Partnering with the private sector is essential if we are to achieve much higher levels of economic growth in the province."

Growth for Jobs objectives

The first category of the fund will support regional and local tourism organisations, industry associations and district and local authorities to enhance high-volume tourism attractions through tourism infrastructure development or upgrades and/ or place-making/ beautification activities.

Wenger adds: "Tourism infrastructure upgrade means the enhancement or development of any existing or new infrastructure required to ensure that tourists can visit attractions and experiences in a safe, clean, comfortable and accessible manner. Examples of tourism infrastructure include trails, walkways, signage, street furniture, public lighting, public toilets, shelters, hides and more."

The second category of support is to provide financial support to enhance and/or expand collaborative programmes and projects aimed at assisting SMMEs with tourism product development.

Wenger continues: "This includes product/and/or experience development, helping with access to funders, marketing and branding, and provision of bespoke support such as machinery, equipment, licenses, and accreditation to name a few. The fund will prioritise private sector initiatives aimed at stimulating high yield forms of tourism including in Halal, adventure, gastronomy, heritage and sustainable tourism."

"Tourism is an incredible catalyst for growth and job creation in communities both urban and rural, across our beautiful province. It was the driving force behind the Western Cape achieving 99% of the employment gains in South Africa in the last quarter's QLFS release. It is for this reason that we are focussed on unlocking and enabling its future success. We encourage you to be part of this exciting journey," concludes Wenger.

Interested businesses/organisations have until Monday, 22 May 2023, at midnight to submit their online applications. Further information on the application process can be accessed [here](#).

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