

R900m earmarked for student, staff development

Higher Education and Training Minister Naledi Pandor says R900 million will be earmarked each year to support the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP).



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“Universities apply for funding through this grant. The grant is a resource for seeding development/enhancing capacity and providing space for innovation and testing of ideas to support successful students, staff and institutions. It’s used to establish a number of partnerships or collaborations.

“One collaboration is the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education Programme. The programme started with assistance from the University of Johannesburg. It has three main focuses: entrepreneurial students, entrepreneurship in academia (curricula and staff capability) and entrepreneurial universities,” said Minister Pandor.

She was speaking at the Black Business Council roundtable on education and skills held in Johannesburg this week.

UCDP was launched in March 2017 and a student entrepreneurship week took place on all university campuses in the same year.

The programme is to be expanded this year to bring in all partners (including TVET and Community Education and Training colleges and SETAs) so that it incorporates the whole Post School Education and Training (PSET) system.

Minister Pandor said UCDP is as a critical programme to ensure employability of graduates and sustainability of the system. Universities South Africa (USAf) has agreed to host the programme at their offices in Hatfield and processes are underway to set up a permanent office that will coordinate activities across the university system.

“I am inspired by the success of young South African entrepreneurs and innovators who have taken advantage of the booming tourism industry, the booming mobile industry, the growing market in renewable energy, and the evolving market in the cultural and creative industries.

“It is our local innovators and entrepreneurs who will ultimately create the millions of jobs that we need to grow an inclusive economy. As we know – from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor - our early stage entrepreneurship is low in comparison with other similar countries,” said Minister Pandor.

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