

Property Point links SMEs and procurement for enterprise development

With its roots as the enterprise development programme of South Africa's largest JSE-listed Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT), Growthpoint Properties, Property Point has been changing the face of the South African property industry one success story at a time since 2008.



Shawn Theunissen, Head of Property Point and Corporate Social Responsibility at Growthpoint Properties.

Property Point has already enabled South African small businesses to generate over R217.4 million in procurement opportunities and report revenue growth of 27.5% - well above the national average.

The programme has also created 904 jobs and empowered 2,500 people with best business practices. Plus, 43% of programme beneficiaries are black women-owned enterprises and 95% of businesses continue operating sustainably after graduating from Property Point.

This Growthpoint initiative is now ready to effect even more transformation for the built environment by partnering with other property owners, developers and managers.

Property Point takes two new industry-changing steps

Now Property Point is taking two new industry-changing steps. It is making itself available to partner with property businesses looking for a ready-to-go enterprise development platform that delivers excellent, targeted results. It is also calling for its next intake of entrepreneurs to join the ranks of the 86 businesses that have already successfully participated in its two-year incubation programme.

Shawn Theunissen, Head of Property Point and Corporate Social Responsibility at Growthpoint Properties, explains: "Since Property Point's inception, it was always Growthpoint's intent to create an initiative that fosters collaboration and innovation in the industry."

He adds: "We've carefully grown Property Point, done our homework and created a winning recipe for enterprise success for the property industry. We're now in a position to be a catalyst for further collaboration and partnerships in enterprise and supplier development."

Theunissen believes enterprise development organisations can have a greater and more meaningful impact by joining together than by working in isolation or viewing other players in the space as competitors.

By linking SMEs and procurement, the Property Point programme unlocks real supply chain opportunities, ensuring sustainable transformation and job creation. Its efforts have gained it a strong understanding of small businesses in South Africa as well as the goals and targets of enterprise development and procurement professionals.

With its track record of success for supporting small businesses, Property Point has flourished to catch the attention of the industry at large.

"Over the years, several property sector peers have shown interest in our model and approach. They've encouraged us along the way. Now we're pleased to be in a position to share it with the industry," says Theunissen. "We believe the programme has the potential for greater impact on a larger scale, and one of the proven ways of doing this is collaborating with like-minded leaders and organisations."

And it's this spirit of collaboration that takes Property Point's programme well beyond a question of compliance and into the realm of making an impact on the industry and the economy.

"We are able to target interventions to help develop SMEs based on our partners' needs. Yet, the programme also drives economic transformation far beyond this. The quality of work from SMEs will improve, the businesses on the supply chain will be run at a higher level, and collaborative efforts have the potential to transform the property industry."

In short, everybody wins.

Incubation programme

Property Point has just opened its next application window for entrepreneurs to join its incubation programme. It is looking for motivated individuals running SMEs that specialise in electrical work, hygiene services, plumbing, landscaping, pest control, air-conditioning, fire protection services, security, waterproofing, and painting.

The entrepreneurs need to be based in or around Johannesburg; their businesses should be at least 51% black-owned (as per the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003); they must have operated for at least two years; and, offer services needed in the property industry. They must also be able to provide references and prior contracts of work, and prove that their business has the potential to grow and become a success. In addition, they cannot currently be on another incubation programme.

The next Property Point incubation programme begins in May 2015, and applications can be downloaded from www.propertypoint.org.za; alternatively, business details can be emailed to info@propertypoint.org.za.