

Leaders of entrepreneurial networks programme

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The Embassy of France in South Africa is working with the Entrepreneurship Development Academy (EDA) at the Gordon Institute of Business School (GIBS) to develop a tailor-made programme to support entrepreneurial networks in South Africa.

Entrepreneurship is widely seen as a means through which poverty can be alleviated; not only through empowering individuals to build livelihoods but also through multiplier effects of creating jobs for others. To this end, the French Embassy hopes to contribute to the development and strengthening of the South African entrepreneurial ecosystem by borrowing proven concepts from the French entrepreneurial and innovation system.

This project forms part of a Solidarity Fund for Innovative Projects by the French Embassy that was set up at the request of French President Emmanuel Macron. The objective is to support the development of these entrepreneurial networks over the long term through the development and mobilisation of expert skills and to support the structuring and development of South African entrepreneurial and innovation networks. The aim is also to increase the strength of networks with France to develop exchanges of expertise, cooperation, and business opportunities.

"We are very pleased to be able to collaborate with GIBS, the prestigious business school of the University of Pretoria, in the development of such a training program dedicated to the South African entrepreneurial networks. The quality of the discussions that we have been able to have in the construction of this training programme has been remarkable. We hope that our partners will derive real benefit from it," said French Ambassador Aurélien Lechevallier.

Miranda Hosking, Director of the GIBS EDA added, "The EDA recognises the important role that networks and support organisations play in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. We are delighted to be partnering with the French Embassy to strengthen the capacity of these organisations so that they are better equipped to serve their members and promote entrepreneurship". The programme will develop leaders of entrepreneurship associations or networks with skills to enable them to better contribute to the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and to build a network that supports entrepreneurs.

20 members from five associations will benefit from this programme. Associations include the Circle of Global Women Business, the African Farmers Association of South Africa, the AMEU Women In Electricity, Women's Chamber of Entrepreneurs as well as the South African Grain Farmers Association.

The six-month training programme will be offered by the GIBS EDA in a blended format (online activities and classroom components). Delegates will also work on an Action Learning Project to consolidate their learnings.

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