

Sumitomo Rubber Programme sets graduates on road to success

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Sumitomo Rubber South Africa (SRSA), manufacturers of Dunlop, Falken and Sumitomo tyres for the African continent, continues to intensify its efforts to create youth employment, including a renewed look at the company's ongoing graduate programme. This year SRSA has launched a refreshed 12-month programme aimed at graduates, to support the ongoing growth of the business, while contributing to the country's much-needed job creation and skills development agenda.



"We are of the view that skilled, capable youth are the foundation for our sustained success. Corporate South Africa must step up its efforts to partner with government to address the current crisis where the country's youth unemployment is over 65%. We need young talent to rebuild this country, said SRSA's CEO, Lubin Ozoux.

He added, "At SRSA, we are committed to taking tyre manufacturing to the next level so that we continue to evolve and grow. We believe that creating opportunities for youth at all levels, in all facets of our business, keeps us in tune with a new generation and injects fresh ideas and energy into our business."

"Since 2014, SRSA has run 400 tyre learnerships at the Ladysmith plant for unemployed youth aged 18 to 34, providing them with an NQF Level 3 certificate in one of three qualifications: Tyre and Tyre Components, Tyre Assembly and Quality Checking of Tyres. All qualifications are accredited with merSETA. Each qualification includes induction, six to eight weeks of classroom training followed by practical training in the plant," explained Yolandi van Wyk, director: HR and employee relations, adding that SRSA had taken on two cohorts of 20 learners each this year, one of which started in February and the second in April.

"Looking at our graduate programme, we have now taken a careful look at our business to identify suitable projects across the business that can provide young graduates with relevant experience and add vibrancy to the industry. Eighteen

graduates – seven at our Durban head office, 10 at our Ladysmith factory and one for our Young Potentials programme – have been selected for the 2022 Graduate and Young Potentials Programme. This will open the door for graduates looking to enter the automotive industry through a structured year-long development programme, helping to upskill young potentials and jump-start their careers,” added Van Wyk.

SRSA is a division of Sumitomo Rubber Industries Ltd (SRI), one of the leading premium manufacturers of automotive tyres and industrial rubber products in the world, headquartered in Japan.

Van Wyk believes the opportunity to work for a global organisation through this programme promises graduates a high-tech work environment where the spotlight is on delivering the quality and service, demanded by a leading international company.

“At SRSA, we are focused on innovation, sales and customer service and intent on disrupting the current tyre industry by bringing real value through efficiency and technological innovation. The projects selected for this programme aim to have a meaningful impact on our business and will be invaluable in equipping graduates for the next step in their career journey, which could include joining our talent pool or taking up other opportunities within the automotive sector, which has a huge impact on the economy at large,” she said.



Application process for graduate programme

To apply, graduates must have a primary degree in the required field for a project on the list. Relevant degrees include commerce, marketing, human resources, computer science, IT, supply chain management, engineering (chemical, mechanical, instrumentation and industrial), as well as business management, for specific projects. Ideal competencies include strong leadership skills, ability to work in a team and to work under pressure, problem solving skills, flexibility, commitment, motivation and good communication skills.

The programme includes an induction to provide graduates with an overview of the business with tasks and deliverables to facilitate team excellence, as well as specific training modules to support the graduates’ individual development. Focus will be given to equipping graduates with the necessary interpersonal skills building the required capability to succeed in our ever-changing business environment.

“Each graduate will be given a project of substantive value aligned to at least one of the company themes of Value Creation, Sustainability, Differentiation and Leadership Effectiveness, where they will be hands-on. They will each be assigned a project sponsor or mentor with oversight provided by an Executive Committee member, giving further proof of SRSA’s commitment to this initiative. At the end of the programme, projects will be presented to the Executive Committee as a close-out to their year’s journey,” van Wyk added.

Young graduates interested in applying to join the programme should send queries and applications to careers@srigroup.co.za, with the subject line: **Application 2022 Graduate programme** – followed by the project name they wish to apply for.

The seven SRSA head office projects are:

SRSA SAP FICO (Finance), Customer Development Framework (Sales), Dunlop Sure (Sales), HR driving efficiencies at Plant (Human Resources – Plant Talent), Creating Career Pathways and Learning Pathways (Human and Resources Learning & Development), Warehousing into the Future (Procurement), Creating an Overall Approach to Product Launches from Cradle to Grave by using Salesforce (Corporate Planning), as well as the Young Potentials project for Implementation of Business Continuity Plan in SRSA (Strategy).

The 10 SRSA Plant -Graduates projects are:

Polymers cycle time optimisation at Mixing (Mixing and Components), Reduce Static Tyre Balance Defect (Truck Bus Radial), Bladder pinching failure in Moulding/Curing department (Passenger Car Radial), Implement ProCal Calibration System (Maintenance), Material flow through the FIFO System (Industrial Engineering Passenger Car Radial), Localization Opportunities for S.A Tyre Manufacturer (Procurement –Raw Materials), Promote a Client Focused Approach (Procurement Consumer Good Stores / Services), Identify Control Points within the Quality Management System and implement accordingly (Quality Assurance), Enhanced Plant Forecasting and Plant Fixed Assets Accounting (Finance - Plant), SRSA FIFO System (IT Ladysmith Plant).

SRSA’s commitment to job creation and skills transfer is evident in other areas of its business. The company helps its network of tyre dealers to grow and develop their businesses from entry level enterprises through initiatives such as the Dunlop Container project, established in 2012 to drive sustainable township entrepreneurship and promote safety on the road. SRSA is the only tyre manufacturing company with a township and rural area enterprise development programme and has now developed accredited training programmes funded by merSETA and SRI for Dunlop’s Enterprise Development dealers to apply to send their employees for training in one of four focus areas: Technical Skills, Occupational Health & Safety, Business Acumen and Sales and Customer Care.

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Sumitomo Dunlop



Sumitomo Rubber South Africa, known as Sumitomo Dunlop, is a leading tyre manufacturing organisation in South Africa. Sumitomo Dunlop manufactures the Dunlop, Sumitomo and Falken tyre brands for Africa.

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