

Development programme launched for women in renewables sector

Designed by the Wits Business School, the inaugural Management Development Programme for Women in Renewable Energy was launched earlier this month. The programme aims to address the skills gap in the renewable energy industry and to accelerate the growth of senior female leadership within the sector.



2023 cohort of the inaugural Management Development Programme for Women in Renewable Energy. Source: Supplied

The initiative is led by the South African Wind Energy Association (Sawea) through the collaborative Gender Diversity Working Group (GDWG) with the South African Photovoltaic Industry Association (Sapvia) and Energy & Water Sector Education Training Authority (EWSeta).

The programme, which runs over a nine-month period is founded on the key principles of self-development, understanding business models, design thinking for strategic management, managing people, as well as leadership, with several electives proven attractive to the sector at large.

Elevating sector leadership

“The programme is tailored specifically for women already employed within the renewable energy sector as well as female specialists, consultants and managers who are seeking to grow their business and management acumen in renewable energy. The aim is to provide the necessary skills and development that will result in a pipeline of gender-diverse leaders that will elevate sector leadership and deliver role models,” said Niveshen Govender, CEO of Sawea, in his opening address at the launch.

Around 32% of women are employed in the wind industry globally, with far fewer being represented in STEM jobs compared to administrative positions, as reported by the International Renewable Energy Agency.



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Truly reflecting society

“Gender diversity means a fair gender representation across all spheres of our industry. We recognise that the challenge of underrepresentation of women in the wind energy sector is as much a South African challenge as it is a global challenge,” said Govender.

“Our country’s renewable energy sector needs to truly reflect the society in which we operate if we are to thrive. As a sector, our ambition is to deliver a just transition and this must include the upliftment and inclusion of all genders. Inclusion widens the talent pool and enhances collaboration, improves retention, recruitment and reputation,” concluded Govender.

The 2024 class intake will open toward the end of 2023.

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