

# Mafikeng chosen for sixth Cisco Edge Centre

Cisco and the Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub (MDIHub) have launched a new Edge Centre in the North West province. The partnership aims to support SMEs in the region, with a special focus on agriculture, sustainability and cybersecurity. This centre will also offer training through the Cisco Network Academy to help upskill youth in the province.



Edge stands for “experience, design, GTM (go-to-market) and earn” and aims to share business knowledge to stimulate innovation, help develop small and medium businesses in the digital age, speed up their entry to market and create new jobs for the local economy. The centres offer local entrepreneurs and innovators access to state-of-the-art connectivity and networking technologies.



## Local recruitment startup Jobjack secures R45m investment

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“Bringing the Cisco Edge experience to regions including the North West is essential to provide South Africans with a chance to participate in the global digital economy. At Cisco, we believe that technology plays a critical role in powering an inclusive future for all,” said Clayton Naidoo, Senior Director for Country Digital Acceleration at Cisco Africa.

“By connecting people and businesses via the Cisco ecosystem and platforms, we create real impact and help prepare the country for a digital future.”

## Strategic cooperation

Edge Centres are part of Cisco’s Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) programme, a strategic cooperation with government leadership to bring to life elements of a national digital agenda and create new value for countries, industries, and citizens. It was launched in South Africa in 2019.

Last month, Cisco and South Africa's Department of Communications and Digital Technology announced a new phase of the country's CDA program to collaborate on economic development, digital skills and talent development, sustainable critical national infrastructure, cybersecurity and digitisation of government services.

The MafiHub incubation centre in Mafikeng is the sixth Edge Centre in South Africa, with other locations across the country in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban.

## **'Technology is powerful'**

"We believe that technology is powerful when combined with education and upskilling. By working with both SMEs and young people, we are aiming for maximum impact to speed up our region's social and economic progress," said Joseph Ndaba, CEO of Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub.

The centre will also offer digital skills training from Cisco Networking Academy, one of the longest-standing IT-skills-to-jobs programmes in the world. Since the inception of Cisco Networking Academy in South Africa, Cisco has trained close to 260,000 learners – with a strong female participation rate of 50%, and with in-kind contributions of over \$39m in curriculum, tools, resources and support to students, schools and instructors.

According to Networking Academy surveys from 2005 through academic year 2022, 96% of students who took Cisco certification-aligned courses have obtained a job or further educational opportunity.

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