



MINISTER
TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 424, PRETORIA, 0001, Tourism House, 17 Trevenna Street, Sunnyside, PRETORIA, 0002, Switchboard: +27 (0)12 444 6000, Fax: +27 (0)12 444 7000, Website: www.tourism.gov.za

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:

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1019. Ms N Buthelezi (MK) to ask the Minister of Tourism:

Whether she intends to convene structured and ongoing youth engagement platforms within the tourism sector in the 2026-27 financial year to enable direct consultation with young persons to (a) formally receive their inputs and proposals and (b) implement responsive policy and programme interventions; if not, why not; if so, what are the (i) timelines and (ii) implementation plans?

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REPLY:

The Department of Tourism confirms its intention to maintain and expand structured youth engagement platforms during the 2026-27 financial year. These platforms are integrated into the Tourism Growth Partnership Plan (TGPP) and the Department's Annual Performance Plan (APP) to ensure that the voices of young South Africans directly shape our policy and programme interventions.

(a) Receiving Formally Documented Inputs and Proposals

The Department utilises a multi-layered approach to gather formal youth input:

- TGPP: This dedicated TGPP group includes social partners like the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator to identify demand-side priorities and income-earning opportunities specifically for young people.
- Public Consultation on Policy: In the 2026-27 period, the Department will gazette the reviewed National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) for public comment, providing a formal channel for youth-led organisations to submit legislative and strategy proposals.
- Research and Knowledge Management: We conduct specialised evaluations, such as the assessment of work-integrated learning (WIL) blockages, to formally document the barriers young graduates face when entering the sector.

(b) Implementing Responsive Policy and Programme Interventions

Based on these consultations, the Department has committed to several responsive interventions for the 2026-27 financial year:

- Demand-Led Skilling: Implementation of ten specialised development programmes, including the Tourism Graduate Recruitment Programme and the Learn and Earn Youth Placement Programme, which were designed to address the specific needs identified by youth stakeholders.
- Pathways to Employment: Establishing scalable pathways into the industry in cooperation with major employers and the Youth Employment Service (YES) to ensure training results in actual absorption into the workforce.
- Digital Transformation: Enhancing the Tourism Skills and Employment Portal and the National Register of Tourist Guide Information System (TGIS) to make government services and job opportunities more accessible to digitally-native young persons.

(i) Timelines for 2026-27

The following milestones are set for the upcoming financial year:

- Quarter 1: Development of project plans for youth-focused recruitment, including the Culinary Programme and Educator Development Programme.
- Quarter 2: Hosting of a Tourism Investment Platform to connect young entrepreneurs with potential investors and gazetting the draft NTSS for public input.
- Quarter 3: Finalisation of the Tourism Skills Roadmap and the launch of the Tourism Opportunities Tracker in partnership with Harambee.
- Quarter 4: Full implementation of the integrated student placement and absorption model.

(ii) Implementation Plans

TGPP is jointly implemented by the public and private sectors:

- Intergovernmental Coordination: Utilising MINMEC and District Development Model (DDM) outreaches to ensure youth engagement platforms are not limited to urban centres but reach rural and township youth.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: The TGPP Dashboard has been enhanced to track youth-specific sub-targets, such as the number of Tourism Monitors enrolled and placed across all nine provinces.
- Strategic Partnerships: Leveraging Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the private sector to secure co-funding for youth aftercare and a flexible fund for stranded or transitioning young professionals in the sector.

END