

## **Deputy Minister of Tourism engages Youth in Tourism**

**8 July 2019**

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela, today visited tourism establishments in the Western Cape that have collaborated with the Department to provide training and employment opportunities for youth, especially in the Department's Wine Service (Sommelier) Youth Training Project. These included Simonsig and Lanzerac Wine Estates.

The Deputy Minister's visit sought to highlight the importance of youth skills development programmes and sector collaboration in growing an inclusive, robust and sustainable tourism economy.

"A thriving and inclusive domestic tourism economy depends on an adequately capacitated and skilled workforce. Tourism is a labour intensive service industry, and human resource development is pivotal to its growth," said the Deputy Minister.

In the 2018/19 financial year, a little over 35% of the Department's budget was dedicated to upskilling youth for the tourism workforce. Funded through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the Department's youth skills development projects addressing the skills gaps that exist in the sector, whilst contributing to curbing the high unemployment rates amongst the youth.

"The Wine Service trainees we interacted with today, represent a larger constituent of the youth we hope to upskill through our training programmes over the next five years. We will focus on providing training to vocations identified as scarce or critical skills to uphold service levels in the sector, and our competitiveness globally."

"We are grateful for the partnerships we have with sector stakeholders, and commend the industry for creating an enabling environment for us to empower the youth," added Mahlalela.

The Deputy Minister's engagement with the youth is one of a number of events that will be hosted by the Department of Tourism leading up to #TourismBudgetVote2019 on Wednesday, 10 July 2019. For further information visit [www.tourism.gov.za](http://www.tourism.gov.za)

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