



MINISTRY  
TOURISM  
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## **Speech by the Deputy Minister of Tourism Mr. Fish Mahlalela at the media launch of the 2023 National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE)**

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It is such an honour for me to be here today and I cannot think of a better way to start Tourism Month than to be here. This is the time when we get to meet our future leaders, game changers, risk takers, future policy makers and nation builders. We also witness young people with an appetite for learning and growth. And these are the kinds of people that we want to attract to the tourism value chain. It all starts here.

The National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE) is celebrating its 13th year. It is a collaboration of the three partners, the Department of Tourism, the Culture Arts, Tourism, Hospitality & Sport Education Training Authority (CATHSSETA) and the Gauteng Department of Economic Development, represented by the Gauteng Tourism Authority (GTA) as the host province and the implementing agency.

Tourism is the world's fastest growing employment sector that continues to adapt to new trends. South Africa is therefore rebuilding the sector to ensure its sustainability for future generations. To drive growth and recovery of the tourism sector, we need to boost the talent pool. A robust recovery plan needs to be firmly anchored in bold strategy that will position the economy on an upward trajectory and growth path. A demand-led skills supply in the sector is therefore pivotal.

The NTCE is designed to bridge the information gap between the industry, government, learners and educators. The expo aims to drive the goal of the National Tourism Sector Strategy to create an additional 300 000 tourism jobs opportunities by 2026.

Themed “Tourism Investment for People, Planet and Prosperity,” the NTCE aims to showcase the plethora of opportunities that exist in tourism as the sector works towards economic recovery.

This theme highlights how the Government, sector stakeholders and the private sector have invested in tourism to drive initiatives that create opportunities for:

People (by investing in education and skills); Planet (by investing in sustainable infrastructure and accelerating green transformation) and; Prosperity (by investing in innovation, technology and entrepreneurship).

Last year the UNWTO hosted the first Global Youth Tourism Summit and concluded with the launch of the Sorrento Call to Action, a bold and ground-breaking vision for young people to be active participants in tourism's restart and growth as a pillar of sustainable and inclusive development. This was a hugely important first, for UNWTO and for our sector, and that young talent from every region will be supported to give them a stage to voice their ideas about tourism's future..

This trio of robust pillars are mutually interdependent and are critical components to ensure accelerated inclusive and sustainable growth. Indeed, the survival of tourism depends on this mix.

The theme also gives expression to our vision is to be a leading platform for communicating career path, job and entrepreneurial prospects and further education opportunities in the tourism sector. Our mission is to inspire the present and prospective tourism learners and unemployed youth to rise to new heights in search for tourism careers and professional opportunities.

The purpose of the NTCE is to provide a platform for the sector to create awareness on the available careers and professional opportunities in the tourism industry and give the learners/students an opportunity to interact with their potential employers.

Its objectives seek to:

- Highlight the skills development challenges and potential solutions within the sector
- Highlight initiatives and programmes that are set to drive tourism recovery
- Showcase partner contribution towards skills development, education and training in tourism
- Showcase inclusive growth initiatives in the tourism sector

The tourism sector is one of the critical intervention areas that have been identified in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan as tourism is a key driver of the economic recovery in the country. The Department of Tourism together with its stakeholders, have collaborated to develop the robust Tourism Sector Recovery Plan. This Plan is anchored on three interlinked pillars or strategic themes: protecting and rejuvenating supply, reigniting demand and strengthening enabling capability for long term sustainability.

Tourism is a people-centred interactive service industry that strives to create memorable travel experience. The travel and tourism industry is highly competitive, innovative and always adapting to new trends and technologies.

Career opportunities in tourism are limitless. The hospitality and tourism industry presents a unique career path for professionals who specialise in creating the finest guest experiences. Indeed, tourism is a conduit for people to learn new things and discover the world through its diverse cultures. Careers found in the tourism value chain range from food and beverage, cruise ships, transport, adventure tourism, travel trade, events and conferences, tour operators, tourism entrepreneurs and travel bloggers – the list is endless and the opportunities are limitless.

For NTCE 2023 we invite learners follow their passion and to find their niche in the tourism value chain.

I thank you.