



**tourism**

Department:  
Tourism  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **Women have a lot to offer to the tourism industry**

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“We made a conscious decision as the Department of Tourism to champion the recognition of women who are pushing boundaries and making a difference in the tourism industry,” said Minister Tokozile Xasa during the Women in Tourism (WiT) Networking Session held at The Cullinan Hotel in Cape Town. The WiT breakfast is held annually to acknowledge and celebrate women and their contribution in the tourism economy.

The breakfast sessions were held simultaneously in five provinces namely, the Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth), Gauteng (Johannesburg), KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) and North West (Brits), in order to nationally mobilise women in the sector, raise awareness and facilitate networking to strengthen women’s networks in tourism.

The WiT was established in 2014 as a platform to drive programmes to support the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector and also provide networking opportunities. The programme is driven by Respect, Recognition, Representation and Reward, of the women in sector.

“The reason we are here as women is to encourage young women in the industry to hold on and strive for the best. As a woman in the industry I do not want young people to face the same problems I did when I entered the sector, hence we need to have constant engagements,” stated Ms Ingrid Jones from Mikateko Media.

With the majority of employees in the sector being women, an empowered women talent pool can only serve to strengthen the sector’s global competitiveness.

“Various studies have shown that the leadership style that women bring to organisations tends to create more responsible organisations that achieve sustained growth over time. Through the WiT organisations in the sector we will have access to the most talented women they can collaborate with to grow the sector.

“We want to give women in the industry the much needed training which is why we came up with the Executive Development Programme. We cannot allow obstacles such as education and training keep women from growing. It is important to note that women are ready to challenge the obstacles in the industry. If we talk about inclusive participation we are dealing with diverse issues such as support, funding and networking,” said Minister Xasa.

In providing feedback on the progress made thus far, Minister Xasa indicated that WiT is in the process of establishing an Advisory Council for Women in Tourism. The Council will provide the Minister with advice on how to attain tangible results within the next five years given the projected economic performance of the sector against the transformation compliance levels related to participation of women in the sector. Council Members will be a focused group of women with distinguished track record on women empowerment issues and thought leaders, who are willing to spare their time for the Women in Tourism programmes in their advisory capacity to the Minister.

### **Enquiries:**

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