

SMME development programmes essential to SA tourism business growth

During a two-day information session hosted by the Department of Tourism in Polokwane and Tzaneen, Limpopo entrepreneurs and aspiring entrants gained valuable insights, by means of SMMEs Development and Incentivised Support programmes, into how to grow and sustain their tourism businesses. The Limpopo sessions took place afoot the recent call for applications for the Tourism Transformation Fund, which is a dedicated capital investment mechanism that will support black investors and communities to develop and expand tourism-related projects.



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"The recent announcements on the department's incentivised programmes such as the International Market Access Support Programme, the Green Tourism Incentive Programme (GTIP) and the Transformation Fund, made it critical for us to provide information to SMMEs through these platforms and enlist their participation. These are but a number of information sessions that will be conducted nationwide by the Department in the 2018-19 financial year," said Blessing Manale, department spokesperson.

The information sessions featured presentations on the Tourism Enterprise Development and Support Programme, grading incentives for tourism establishments and information on tourist guiding and the tourism complaints officer.

Entities such as the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) and National Empowerment Fund (NEF), were among the invited exhibitors that provided one-on-one consultations and assistance to SMMEs.

"We have collaborated with various public and private entities to provide comprehensive information on all aspects of doing business in the tourism industry, whilst linking SMMEs to institutions that can further provide resources that will ensure their growth and sustainability.

"An inclusive sector is vital to the future success and sustainability of our industry. We strongly encourage SMMEs and new entrants, especially those located in our rural tourism nodes, to attend the information sessions in the upcoming months and help build an inclusive and transformed sector," added Manale.

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