

# Entrepreneurial tender network welcomes proposed government e-tender portal

The announcement of a new government e-tender portal in last month's Budget Speech, has been welcomed by Opentenders.com, a platform that connects entrepreneurs with procurement opportunities from the public and private sectors, on a global scale.

## OPENTENDERS.

During his speech, Nhlanhla Nene, Minister of Finance, announced that it would implement a central tender portal from April 2015. "It will be compulsory that all public tenders be advertised on this portal and all tender documents be freely available there.

Tender advertisements in newspapers and the government gazette will be phased out."

The company's founder and COO, Mnive Nhlabathi says, "We are excited about this new government portal, as it makes our business easier but does not impact on the extra services our portal offers, such as SMME project finance and skills development."

"The company offers four main services; instant email notifications of tender and procurement opportunities from government and the private sector in South Africa and selected African countries; project finance for qualifying SMMEs; business-to-business online networking services; and training in the area of tendering and procurement."

## SMMES access to business critical

A 2012 Adcorp report stated that the number of business start-ups in South Africa was at an all-time low. It reported the closure of 440,000 small business over the past five years. The gravity of the situation is emphasised by the fact that, according to the report, 68% of all South African workers are employed by small business employing fewer than 50 people. Given that the typical small business employs 12 people (aside from the owner-manager); a revival of this sector could potentially create 5.3 million jobs.



"We believe that assisting entrepreneurs to have a better chance at becoming successful by providing them with the opportunities to do so through financing qualifying SMMEs, linking SMMEs that can cooperate successfully on tenders and providing training, is the best way to address the staggering unemployment in our country," he concludes.

According to Nhlabathi and his co-founders, Sivu Maqungo and Madoda Khuzwayo, the key difference between Opentenders.com and government's new portal, is that theirs is a B2B social network platform that affords small businesses an opportunity to connect and trade with each other and expand their business on a global scale. As an add-on, it also offers open government and private sector tenders. This allows any business to track available opportunities easily, within all sectors of their interest. For more information, go to [www.opentenders.com](http://www.opentenders.com).