

Autodesk assists unemployed engineering grads in the first step toward their career

 By [Shan Raddiffe](#)

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Autodesk is providing engineering graduates with a leg up into the working world of manufacturing through the launch of its First Step in Your Career initiative. Initially launched in Turkey in 2021, this skills training programme is now available in South Africa.



Murat Tüzüm, Autodesk's head of manufacturing industry EMEA emerging

We chatted to Autodesk's head of manufacturing industry EMEA emerging, Murat Tüzüm about the programme and what it means for South Africa's engineering and manufacturing sector.

■ ***What is the First Step in Your Career programme - who is it aimed at, what does it offer, and how do graduates sign up?***

Murat Tüzüm: This programme includes soft skill training such as CV preparation and interview techniques as well as hands-on software training. There are also webinars with industry experts (such as Cindy Norcott and Richard Hansen), advice on dos and don'ts during the job search process, and 1:1 mentorship. The programme is aimed at recent engineering graduates who have not found a job yet. Programme details and eligibility criteria as well as application details can be found at www.autodesk.co.za/first-step-in-your-career-program.

Registration for the programme opened last week and will close on 24 June 2022.

■ ***Why is such an initiative so necessary for engineering graduates?***

Tüzüm: Youth unemployment is a chronic problem in emerging countries, and yet companies are saying they're not finding the relevant skills for their open positions. Millions are looking for work, millions are looking for employees but there's a gap between the two. This initiative will help young graduates upskill themselves for what employers are wanting.



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■ **What kind of soft skills are required in the manufacturing sector?**

Tüzüm: Communication, collaborative working and adaptive skills.

■ **Manufacturing and engineering are largely considered male-dominated industries. How can women engineers leverage the First Step in Your Career programme to make themselves stand out in the job market?**

Tüzüm: The world is changing rapidly and the manufacturing industry is too. Technology is playing a large role in this industry and as such, female engineers are just as suited to mastering the software as their male counterparts. During our programme, graduates will be exposed to Autodesk's next generation CAD, CAM platform, Fusion 360.

The poster for the 'First Step In Your Career' program features a large yellow arrow pointing upwards. To the left of the arrow, under the heading 'Contents of the Program:', are listed: 'New Generation Design Training with Fusion 360', 'Interview techniques and Resume Preparation', 'Guidance Sessions with Industry Professionals', and '1 on 1 Mentorship'. To the right of the arrow, under 'Application Criteria:', are listed: 'Graduated from one of the Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Industrial Design, Manufacturing Engineering, Mechatronics Engineering, Aeronautical Engineering departments in 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.' and 'Not currently employed'. Below the arrow, three speakers are introduced: Cindy Norcott (Motivational Speaker, Author, Entrepreneur, Business Coach, Philanthropist, The Robin Hood Foundation), Erich Mentjies (Senior Vice President Engineering DRA Global), and Richard Hansen (Managing Member Bolt Engineering). A QR code is provided for application, with the text 'In order to apply to the program, please use the QR code or visit the link below. autodesk.co.za/first-step-in-your-career-program'. A yellow circle in the top right corner states 'CLOSING DATE 24.06.22'. The Autodesk logo is at the bottom right.

[click to enlarge](#)

■ **The First Step in Your Career programme is volunteer-based - what kind of volunteers are you looking for and how can they go about getting involved?**

Tüzüm: There are eligibility criteria for the programme. We are looking for engineering graduates who graduated anytime from 2019 to 2022 and have an interest in innovative technology and are ready to close the gap between their skills and their dream job. A design software background is essential for the technical training aspect.



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■ **Having originally launched in Turkey, what has the response been like to the programme so far?**

Tüzüm: We first launched in 2021 in Turkey and 100+ engineering graduates completed the programme. Feedback from participants, project partners and candidates was very encouraging. Some graduates have already been placed in permanent positions. Overall, the graduates felt more confident in tackling their next job interview and I've no doubt they're one step closer to landing their dream job.

■ **Where can we expect the First Step in Your Career programme to go next?**

Tüzüm: Under Autodesk's future of manufacturing vision, we are helping manufacturing companies embrace digital technologies to make better products and generate greater value. Technology has a critical role to play but needs people to

ensure success. Today's graduate engineers are crucial for the future of engineering and investing in them is investing in the future. We are working to expand this programme in other emerging countries.

ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

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