



South Africa Siyasebenza

The Jobs Fund: Guidance on applications

Who Should Apply?

Given the limited resources and time available for the Fund, it will prioritise applicants which offer most 'bang for buck' in terms of job creating impact, innovation, sustainability and potential for systemic change. This informs the following broad targets:

1) **Large, game-changing initiatives** which offer scope for significant learning and 'systemic change' in the way companies, NGOs, government entities operate, and which have a direct link to sustainable job creation.

This contrasts with the proliferation of small projects and pilots which characterised the first funding round, and which offered little by way of demonstration, impact and sustainability beyond their particular initiative.

2) **Leveraging existing capacity, experience and resources**, not looking to start new entities and projects – unless these are being used as a vehicle for experimentation and R&D by established players.

This contrasts with start-up initiatives which do not have a proven track record, resources or demonstrable capacity in the proposed area of investment.

3) **Credible, partnership-based initiatives** which pull together like-minded players and partners with a shared interest and a complementary 'offer' in relation to the aims of the Fund.

This contrasts with questionable, paper-based, opportunistic partnerships and consortia which are not rooted in any previous association or shared interest.

4) **Initiatives which go beyond the mere extension of an existing project**, and which have as an explicit objective the replication or expansion of a proven or high potential model in new areas or sectors – without the need for endless outside support.

This contrasts with applicants who seek funding for the prolongation of programmes or projects, without any reference to systemic change, sustainability or enhanced learning.

5) **A clear logic and 'line of sight'** between the proposed activities and the stated outcomes in terms of job creation impact and learning.

This contrasts with numerous applications which fail to demonstrate any credible link between the resources requested, the activities to be financed and the outcomes in terms of sustainable job creation.

In developing their ideas and interpreting the criteria prescribed by the Fund, prospective applicants are encouraged to engage the Jobs Fund to explore, test and develop their proposals.

Examples of Projects

Outlined below are some examples of initiatives which reflect the aims and criteria of the fund. The examples of approved projects have been made anonymous to protect the project holder from unwanted publicity and approaches.

The examples of notional projects serve as illustrations of ideas that might be developed. They should not serve as templates for funding submissions: all applications are competitively assessed and independently adjudicated.

Example 1: Enterprise Development Window

An initiative which scales up an existing, highly effective SME incubation model which is currently linked to the core business of the sponsoring corporate entity.

Funds were approved to support the scaling-up and replication of the programme from one located in a handful of sites to one operating at a national level, and represented in all high potential areas of the country.

One important aim of the project involves adapting the existing funding, skills training and mentorship model from one which is based on commercial linkages to the sponsoring company, to one which supports enterprises with no historical or prospective link to the company, but which is based on the corporate's past learning and proven methodology.

The initiative is thus about adapting, replicating and scaling up a proven SME support and commercial incubation initiative to operate at a national level. The experience of the project will offer invaluable learning and insights to policy makers and implementers in the SME sector, and could in time inform the design and operation of a major national PPP initiative.

Within this window, opportunities for potential applicants in the next round include:

- Consortia or partnerships aimed at effective commercial or public-private partnership approaches to entrepreneurship development and SME incubation;
- Established retailers pursuing innovative models for the diversification of procurement relevant to small and emerging suppliers;

Example 2: Infrastructure Window (prospective)

A corporate, public entity or a PPP requires co-funding for the development of light infrastructure (e.g. irrigation, transport, market and storage facilities, broadband signal distribution etc.) in relation to areas historically excluded from formal market opportunities but which offer high economic potential.

In such cases, the costs, uncertainties and risks of transacting in these areas may be too high to justify investment unsupported by outside partners. Proposals for such catalysing infrastructure investments which demonstrably will unlock downstream economic activity and job creation will be well received by the Jobs Fund.

Example 3: Renewable Energy Investments (across all possible windows)

'Renewable energy' is currently an area of significant interest, investment and innovation – across all points in the value chain, across numerous sectors and in relation to pro-poor products as well as enterprise opportunities. Where this translates into opportunities for R&D, training, learning, replication and scaling up; where there are barriers to purely commercially financed activities; and where there is a strong overlap of commercial profitability with significant social impact in terms of employment creation, the Fund would welcome applications.

High potential initiatives might conceivably arise from every part of the R&D, investment, production, distribution and financing cycle. Care must be taken that projects do not displace or 'crowd-out' profitable commercial activity, but rather enable its extension to areas and market segments associated with higher risk and uncertainty.

The above examples offer illustrative examples and themes of the kinds of ideas and innovation that the Jobs Fund is seeking. They in no way serve as a guarantee of funding. This will be determined through a competitive assessment process in relation to the key adjudication criteria outlined in the application form.

See: www.jobfund.org for further details.