



South Africa Siyasebenza

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jobs Fund to open a scale-up round of funding to existing portfolio

Now into its third financial year the Jobs Fund is placing even greater emphasis on achieving sustainability and systemic change by opening a scale-up round of funding to its existing portfolio of 57 projects. This move aims to give projects with the ability to achieve systemic impact the chance to scale up.

The Jobs Fund aims to create jobs by supporting initiatives that generate employment in innovative ways. The Fund has to date offered once-off grants in the areas of enterprise development, infrastructure, support for work seekers and institutional capacity building in order to catalyse creative approaches to job creation.

Historically the Jobs Fund operated on the principle of once-off grants that are paid over a limited duration. This principle is in line with the theory that a Jobs Fund grant should catalyse sustainable investment and activity, and so a project should not in fact require additional grant funding to sustain its activities once the implementation period has ended.

It is important that the Jobs Fund remains true to this principle to avoid the risk of becoming simply another grant fund. Enabling recipients to scale up and grow with recurring grant allocations will undermine the sustainability of the projects funded.

However an analysis of the current portfolio does suggest that while many projects have performed well, this has generally been at a limited scale or in a specific region. In projects that have pursued more innovative models, the implementation period has at time not been sufficient for lessons learnt to be fed back into the model to maximize learning around what truly works.

This is important, as the Jobs Fund aims to uncover models of job creation that are both scalable and replicable, with a view to disseminating these lessons to a broad range of stakeholders both inside

and outside of government. With its learning agenda in mind, the Jobs Fund is interested in supporting those projects whose job creation models could begin to achieve systemic impact.

The Jobs Fund is not interested in funding the simple expansion of existing projects, who would like to do more of the same activities but for a longer period. Rather the Jobs Fund seeks to fund interventions that combine the previous project model with new elements – and these new elements must be based on the lessons learned during implementation. In particular, the proposed scale-up activities should take the project closer to the point of sustainability.

It is anticipated that applications under this round will fall into one of the following categories: Geographic & Sectoral scaling; Scale for Impact and Partnering with other Jobs Fund projects.

The total grant allocation for supporting the scale up of successful Jobs Fund projects is R 300 million.

Grant sizes will range from a minimum of R20 million to a maximum of R100 million meaning that a minimum of 3 projects and a maximum of 15 projects could be funded under this round.

If you are an existing Jobs Fund project and would be interested in applying to the Scale-up round please look out for updates on the Grant Management System for details on the opening and closing of the round.