



merSETA

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

Annexure Guidelines: DG Funded Projects Feb 2021

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This Annexure Guidelines contains detailed information on the following items:

6: TVET Colleges and training facilities as spaces for stimulating the growth of community based enterprises

1. Background

Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Colleges and other training facilities have a wealth of resources that are not fully utilised for the greater benefit of the community around them. There are a number of informal workers, cooperatives and community based entrepreneurs (involved in economic activity under the mer sector) who may benefit from access to TVET College and other training facilities and workshops that have equipment and machinery, that may be financially out of reach to them. To grant access to such facilities may be of great economic benefit.

Given the current economic context which has been worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic which has plunged the country into a recession with growing unemployment due to retrenchments and de-industrialization has widened poverty and inequality. These current circumstances call upon institutions such as the merSETA to work with entities to come up with creative solutions to empower informal workers and encourage entrepreneurs to increase their earning potential. Many skilled workers do not have the financial means to invest in equipment and machinery to either start or grow a viable business. There is a need for equipment and machinery to assist informal workers and entrepreneurs, creating an opportunity for TVET Colleges and other training spaces in communities to offer a sustainable solution, while empowering informal workers and entrepreneurs alike.

2. Link to merSETA strategy

The merSETA as part of its 2020/21 SLA and APP has set a targets for supporting a number of TVET Colleges and entrepreneurs. This research project will be responding to:

- Strategic Output 7: Support to the growth and quality improvement of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges.
- Strategic Output 6: Facilitation of skills development interventions to support the development and establishment of sustainable SMEs, cooperatives, and local or community based employment and income generation activities aligned to merSETA engineering and manufacturing value chain.

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This research project seeks to look into the possibility of new approaches to stimulate growth and income among the social economy enterprises such as informal workers, co-operatives and community based enterprises and entrepreneurs with the mer sector. This is key in strengthening the merSETA's responsiveness to sector skills demands and providing the sector with a skilled, flexible and agile workforce and skills for productive enterprises within the social economy to support the integration into the merSETA sector engineering and industry value chains.

3. Problem statement

Many TVET Colleges have invested a considerable amount of money in equipment and machinery, which is often not fully utilised. This essentially creates an opportunity for TVET Colleges to open their facilities to informal workers, cooperatives, and entrepreneurs, giving them an opportunity to take on work that may not have been previously possible. There is therefore an opportunity to conduct research into how TVET Colleges can effectively be used as workspaces for informal workers, community-based enterprises and entrepreneurs. Such a project could potential benefit a community and provide new income earning potential. In order to do this one has to determine how TVET Colleges share their resources with their communities to create new opportunities for informal workers, community based enterprises and entrepreneurs.

4. Research approach and key questions

This research into the investigation of opening facilities of TVET Colleges and other training spaces to informal workers and entrepreneurs, has real potential to benefit communities at little to no extra cost and possibly create future income. What is also unknown is what sort of initiatives (similar to this), have been conducted and the impact of such projects (locally or globally). This will help establish national best practices, and grow a network of organisations looking to increase their community offering. An investigation into such an opportunity should be conducted, while a number of factors need to be taken into consideration. The research is envisioned to take on somewhat of a feasibility study .The research study should therefore use a mixed methods approach. Some of the questions that this research needs to unpack include the following:

- Where are potential TVET Colleges and other training facilities that could participate in such an initiative located?
- What resources could be made available for different types of potential businesses?
- Are there potential partners who may be interested in this initiative?
- Are there informal workers and entrepreneurs in close proximity to the TVET Colleges or training facilities who might be interested in this opportunity?
- What would be the best way of screening/assessing and recommending businesses with potential?
- What is the perceived value of offering such a service to the greater?
- What would the cost be to ensure TVET Colleges and training facilities can participate safely in such an initiative?