



TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

DESCRIPTION	AWARD OF DISCRETIONARY GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER GUIDANCE AND AWARENESS INITIATIVES ON OCCUPATIONS IN HIGH DEMAND		
CLOSING DATE	14 August 2026	CLOSING TIME	23h59

Applications submitted after this time will not be considered. Manual, emailed or hand-delivered submissions are automatically disqualified.

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GRANT SUBMISSION Link	Applications must be submitted electronically through the National Skills Development Management System (NSDMS) Projects Portal: https://nsdms.merseta.org.za

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Reviewed: Senior Manager: Supply Chain and Contract Management		Controlled: Chief Executive Officer	

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) is a Schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998), Registration Number 17/merSETA/01/04/20, to facilitate skills development for the Metal and Engineering, Motor Retail and Components Manufacturing, Automobile Manufacturing, Plastics Manufacturing and New Tyre Manufacturing Sectors Automotive Components Manufacturing Chamber. The merSETA is inviting potential service providers to submit the proposal for the services described under scope of work.
- 1.2 The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) invites suitably qualified and experienced service providers to submit proposals for the planning, coordination and implementation of Career Awareness Initiatives under the 2026/27 Discretionary Grant (DG) Special Funding Window: Specific Initiatives.
- 1.3 The purpose of these initiatives is to increase awareness of occupations in high demand within the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector while promoting artisan development, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) opportunities, and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) pathways.

2. Background

merSETA is responsible for facilitating skills development within the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector in accordance with the Skills Development Act, the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), and the Sector Skills Plan (SSP).

As part of its Annual Performance Plan (APP), merSETA seeks to implement fifty (50) Career Awareness Events comprising twenty-five (25) urban events and twenty-five (25) rural events across all nine provinces of South Africa. These initiatives are intended to expose learners to occupations in high demand, career pathways, artisan development opportunities, and post-school education options while strengthening partnerships with TVET Colleges.

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3. Purpose of the Service

The purpose of these Terms of Reference is to outline the requirements and eligibility criteria for the award of Discretionary Grants to eligible organisations to implement the following initiatives:

- Plan and manage Career Awareness Events.
- Coordinate all logistical arrangements.
- Promote occupations in high demand.
- Support the implementation of merSETA Annual Performance Plan targets.
- Facilitate partnerships between merSETA and TVET Colleges.
- Support the registration of unemployed TVET learners for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL).
- Deliver high-quality career guidance events that comply with all legislative, safety and governance requirements.

4. Scope of Work (Service)

Organisations Awarded Discretionary Grants shall:

- Plan, coordinate and implement Career Awareness events across South Africa.
- Implement a total allocation of approved events as awarded by merSETA.
- Promote occupations in high demand within the manufacturing and engineering sector.
- Increase awareness of artisan development opportunities.
- Promote STEM careers.
- Strengthen collaboration between schools and TVET Colleges.
- Facilitate learner exposure to TVET workshops and practical demonstrations.
- Register unemployed TVET learners into Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities.
- Support merSETA's strategic priorities and Annual Performance Plan targets.

5. Deliverables

The Successful Grant Applicants shall be responsible for the complete planning and implementation of Career Awareness events, including but not limited to:

5.1 Project Planning

- Develop a comprehensive project implementation plan.
- Develop a stakeholder engagement plan.
- Conduct planning meetings with merSETA.
- Conduct site inspections.
- Coordinate project schedules.

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5.2 Stakeholder Coordination

Liaise with:

- National Departments of Higher Education and Training
- National Departments of Basic Education
- Provincial Departments of Basic Education
- District Education Offices
- Circuit Managers
- School Governing Bodies
- School Principals
- TVET Colleges
- Local Municipalities
- Traditional Leaders (where applicable)
- Community Stakeholders

5.3 Event Management

The Successful Grant Applicants shall provide:

- Venue preparation
- Marquee structures
- Furniture
- Stage
- Branding
- Registration
- Sound
- LED screens
- Power supply
- Health and Safety compliance
- Security
- Ambulance services
- Photography
- Videography
- Live streaming
- Event programme management

5.4 Learner Management

Coordinate:

- School participation

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- Learner registration
- Indemnity forms
- Transport
- Catering
- Learner packs
- Attendance registers
- Certificates (where applicable)

5.5 TVET Partnership

The Successful Grant Applicants shall:

- Secure partnerships with participating TVET Colleges.
- Facilitate the signing of an MOU between merSETA and the TVET College.
- Coordinate TVET exhibitions.
- Promote artisan training.
- Facilitate Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) registration.

5.6 Reporting

The Successful Grant Applicants shall submit:

- Project implementation plan
- Bi-Weekly progress reports
- Risk register
- Attendance registers
- Financial expenditure report
- Photographic report
- Video highlights
- Social media report
- Close-out report
- Final project report

6. Duration of the Project

The project duration will be six (6) months from date of last signature.

7. RFP Submission

Applications must be submitted electronically through the National Skills Development Management System (NSDMS) Projects Portal: <https://nsdms.merseta.org.za>

Applications open **29 July 2026** and close **14 August 2026**

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8. Submission of Proposal Rules

The following rules will apply for this Request for Proposal:

- The price(s) quoted shall be valid for a minimum period of Ninety (90) days from the closing date and time.
- To be eligible for the award of a Discretionary Grant, an organisation must be validly registered on the National Treasury's Central Supplier Database (CSD).
- Successful applicants will be bound only by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed with merSETA; separately, they must facilitate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between merSETA and the participating TVET College before implementation.

8.1 Advertisement of the Funding Window

- Publication of the approved DG funding window.
- Applications submitted through the NSDMS before the closing date.

9. Evaluation Criteria for the Award of Discretionary Grants

Eligible applications that comply with the mandatory requirements will be evaluated against the following criteria.

Stage 1 — Mandatory Compliance (Pass / Fail). An application that fails any item below is disqualified and is **not** scored. All documents from the Guideline are required:

#	Mandatory document / requirement
1	Proof of company registration (CIPC)
2	Valid Tax Compliance Status (TCS) PIN or Tax Clearance Certificate
3	Valid B-BBEE Certificate or verified Sworn Affidavit
4	Official bank confirmation letter
5	Central Supplier Database (CSD) report
6	Detailed cost breakdown on the prescribed BOQ template
7	Signed letters of intent from participating schools and/or TVET principals
8	Signed application and declarations; no conflict of interest; legal registration in South Africa

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Stage 2 — Technical Evaluation (Functionality, scored out of 100). Only compliant applications are scored. The minimum qualifying threshold is 70%.

Criterion	What is assessed	Weight
1. Organisational Capacity, Experience & Project Team	Demonstrated capacity and track record in delivering career-awareness/skills-development initiatives of similar nature and scale; suitability, qualifications and roles of the proposed project team	25%
2. Technical Proposal & Implementation Methodology	Quality, feasibility and innovation of the approach — project planning, stakeholder engagement, TVET/WIL coordination, risk management, and monitoring/reporting mechanisms	25%
3. Alignment with Funding Window Objectives	Understanding of the ToR and alignment with Career Awareness objectives, Occupations in High Demand (OIHD), STEM/TVET/WIL promotion, and APP targets and outcomes	20%
4. Financial & Project Management Capacity	Sound financial systems, governance arrangements, and ability to manage grant funds responsibly	15%
5. Value for Money & Cost Effectiveness	Reasonableness of the BOQ budget and efficient use of funds to achieve intended outputs	10%
6. Monitoring, Evaluation & Sustainability	Ability to monitor performance, measure outcomes, submit quality reports, and demonstrate longer-term impact	5%
Total		100%

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Stage 3 — Due Diligence and Governance. Applications meeting the 70% threshold proceed to due diligence (verification of capacity, experience, tax/CSD/banking) and then through the governance chain:

Discretionary Grant Verification Committee (DGVC)

Discretionary Grant Evaluation Committee (DGEC)

Discretionary Grant Adjudication Committee (DGAC)

Management Committee (MANCO) for final approval under the Delegation of Authority and DG Policy.

Recommendation for award additionally requires the 70% threshold, full compliance, demonstrated capacity, value for money, and available budget.

10. Due Diligence

- Verification of information submitted by applicants.
- Validation of organisational capacity, experience, tax compliance, CSD registration, banking details, and other supporting documentation where required.

11. Recommendation Report

- Preparation of an evaluation report with recommendations (award or non-award) to the Discretionary Grant Evaluation Committee (DGEC) based on the scoring results.

12. Discretionary Grant Evaluation Committee (DGEC)

- Reviews the evaluation of the DGVCC report.
- Confirms that the evaluation was conducted in accordance with the DG Policy and approved criteria.
- Makes recommendations to the Discretionary Grant Adjudication Committee (DGAC) for award or non-award.

13. Discretionary Grant Adjudication Committee (DGAC)

- Reviews the DGEC recommendations for governance compliance before submission to Management Committee (MANCO) recommending award or non-award.

14. Management Committee (MANCO) Consideration

- Management reviews the recommendations and endorses the projects for approval or non-approval.

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- Final approval is granted by the delegated authority (MANCO) in accordance with the Delegation of Authority and the DG Policy.

15. Notification of Applicants

- Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their Discretionary Grant applications.

16. Contracting

- Successful applicants awarded Discretionary Grants will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with merSETA before project implementation.
- Processes payments in accordance with the approved milestones.

17. Project Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

- Project implementation commences.
- merSETA monitors performance and verifies deliverables.
- Successful applicants awarded Discretionary Grants shall prepare and submit a comprehensive Final (Exit) Event Report to merSETA for consideration.



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18. Bill of Quantities & Pricing Template

Budgets must conform strictly to the statutory merSETA cost breakdown matrix:

Category Component	Quantity Metric	Target Units	Total Cost (Incl. VAT)
Pre-Planning Forums & Site Visits	4	Meetings	
Learner Logistics (Within 120km Radius)	1,000	Learners	
Delegate Logistics / Support Line	100	Guests	
Learner Catering (Breakfast & Lunch)	1,000	Persons	
Delegate Catering (Buffet Service)	100	Persons	
Full Structure Venue & Layout Pack	1	Package	
Learner Packs (Branded Bag & Stationery)	1,000	Packs	
Integrated Sound & PA System Setup	1	System	
LED Wall & Stand-Mounted TV Screens	1	Package	
Cinematography & Event Archival	1	Service	
Ambulance Services & First Aiders	4	Personnel	
Multi-Platform Live Streaming Feed	1	Stream	
Mobile Sanitation Units	15	Toilets	
Silent Power Generation (75kVA–100kVA)	1	Unit	
Omni-Channel Media Campaign Integration	1	Campaign	
Direct School Donation Reserve	—	—	
Alumni Presenter Honorariums & Travel	5	Speakers	
merSETA Career Booklet Re-printing	1,000	Books	
TVET College partnership on WIL	2	Learners	
SUBTOTAL COST			
Miscellaneous Contingency Allowance	1%	Fixed	
Management / Project Execution Fee	7.5%	Fixed	
GRAND TOTAL			

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19. SERVICE PROVIDER DECLARATION

I / We, the undersigned, confirm that:

- the pricing submitted in this Annexure B is complete, accurate, and inclusive of all costs required to deliver the scope of work and deliverables stated in the submission;
- the prices quoted are firm for the validity period stated in the submission;
- no additional charges will be claimed for work required under the RFP unless expressly approved in writing by merSETA.

Name of Grant Applicant	
Authorised Representative	
Designation	
Signature	
Date	

AUTHORISATION SIGNATORIES TO CONFIRM RFP			
The employee signing below hereby affirms the accuracy of the information requested for the proposal.			
Technical Representative			
Full Names	Lucky Mathenjwa	Date	
Signature			

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