



merSETA
MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The merSETA Invites Applications for 2026/27 Special Funding Window for Career Awareness Discretionary Grant Funding

To: All Media and the merSETA Stakeholders

Attention: Media Houses, News Editors/Journalists/Manufacturing and Engineering Reporters; and eligible organisations, including Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs), private companies, sole proprietorships, cooperatives operating within the merSETA sector, trade unions, higher education institutions, TVET and CET colleges, accredited Skills Development Providers and event management companies.

JOHANNESBURG, 03 August 2026 - The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) has opened applications for the 2026/27 Discretionary Grant (DG) Special Funding Window - Specific Initiatives, inviting eligible organisations to partner with the merSETA in implementing Career Awareness initiatives that promote occupations in high demand within the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector.

The special funding window seeks to appoint suitably qualified organisations to plan, coordinate and implement Career Awareness events in urban and rural communities across all nine provinces. The initiative forms part of the merSETA's ongoing commitment to strengthening the skills pipeline by exposing young people to career opportunities and learning pathways that respond to the country's current and future skills needs.

The Career Awareness initiatives will focus on learners in Grades 8 to 12 attending Technical and Comprehensive High Schools, learners studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, learners with special educational needs attending special schools, and unemployed TVET learners. Through these interventions, the merSETA aims to increase awareness of occupations in high demand, promote technical and vocational education pathways and encourage greater participation in skills development opportunities.

A total of 50 Career Awareness events - comprising 25 urban and 25 rural events - will be implemented nationally. Applicants may apply to implement a maximum of four events across no more than two provinces, with final allocations remaining at the discretion of the merSETA to ensure equitable distribution of opportunities.

Successful applicants will also be required to establish strategic partnerships with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges to support Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities for unemployed TVET learners. These partnerships are intended to strengthen learner access to career guidance, artisan development pathways and post-school education opportunities.

Applications are invited from a broad range of eligible organisations, including Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs), private companies, cooperatives, higher education institutions, TVET and CET colleges, accredited Skills Development Providers and event management companies.

All applications must be submitted electronically through the National Skills Development Management System (NSDMS) Projects Portal. Organisations registering for the first time are advised that the registration of new organisations and Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) may take up to 48 hours and are encouraged to register well in advance of the closing date. Applications submitted after the deadline or through any platform other than the NSDMS will not be considered.

The application window opened on **Wednesday, 29 July 2026** and will close on **Friday, 14 August 2026**. Interested organisations are encouraged to access the application guidelines and submit compliant applications within the prescribed timeframe.

For enquiries relating to the funding window:

Telephone: 010 219 3000

Website: www.merseta.org.za

About the merSETA:

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) is one of the 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998 to facilitate skills development within the manufacturing and engineering sectors. The merSETA supports skills planning, training, artisan development and workforce transformation across the **metal and engineering, automotive manufacturing, motor retail, tyre manufacturing, plastics manufacturing** and related industries.