merSETA

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES SETA



DISCRETIONARY GRANT (DG):

SPECIAL FUNDING WINDOW FOR THE 2026/27 FINANCIAL YEAR APPLICATIONS - SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

Career Awareness Initiatives

TWO DISTINCT EVENT CATEGORIES: (A) Career awareness for learners from Schools of Specialisation (SoS), technical and comprehensive high schools; and **(B)** accessible, appropriately adapted career awareness for learners with special educational needs attending special schools. Applicants must identify the event category for which they are applying.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The previously advertised 2026/27 Discretionary Grant (DG) Special Funding Window: Career Awareness Initiatives has been withdrawn due to technical issues.

Revised Application Period

Opening Date: 23 November 2026 **Closing Date:** 27 November 2026

Important: All organisations that submitted applications under either of the withdrawn funding windows are required to submit new applications during this funding window. Previous applications will not be considered.

INVITATION TO APPLY

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) hereby invites eligible organisations to apply for funding under the 2026/27 Discretionary Grant Special Funding Window- Specific Initiatives.

The purpose of this funding window is to appoint suitably qualified service providers to implement Career Awareness Initiatives that promote occupations in high demand within the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector, while supporting merSETA's strategic priorities and the National Skills Development Plan.

PROJECT

Career Awareness Events on Occupations in High Demand

The merSETA intends to appoint experienced and capable organisations to plan, coordinate and implement Career Awareness Events in urban and rural communities throughout South Africa.

The initiatives are aimed at increasing awareness of career opportunities within the manufacturing and engineering sector, promoting skills development pathways and encouraging learners to pursue occupations in high demand.

A total of 50 events (25 urban and 25 rural) will be implemented. Applicants must specify their proposed urban and rural events.

The 50-event programme includes both event categories. The allocation of events between categories, provinces and regions/districts is subject to merSETA approval; no category-specific allocation is prescribed in this advert.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES

1. **CATEGORY A:** Learners in Grades 8–12 attending technical and comprehensive high schools, including learners studying STEM subjects and Schools of Specialisation.
2. **CATEGORY B:** Learners with special educational needs attending special schools.

Each category requires an appropriate, distinct implementation plan and cost breakdown.

Career Awareness events must primarily target:

- Learners in Grades 8-12 enrolled at Technical and Comprehensive High Schools, as well as Schools of Specialisation.
- Learners studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.
- Learners with Special Educational Needs attending Special Schools.

IMPLEMENTATION AREAS

COMPULSORY GEOGRAPHICAL DECLARATION: Applicants must specify the province(s) in which they wish to implement events AND the specific region(s)/district(s) within each selected province. For every proposed event, indicate the school type, proposed participating schools, estimated learner numbers and urban/rural classification. Applicants may apply for one or both categories; separate proposals and BOQs must be supplied for each category.

Projects will be implemented across all nine provinces:

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- Northern Cape
- North West
- Western Cape

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH TVET COLLEGES

For special-school events, the selected TVET venue and activities must be accessible and appropriate for participating learners, with suitable support, adapted demonstrations and transport arrangements. These requirements must be addressed in the application and budget.

Successful grant applicants will be required to implement Career Awareness Events in partnership with a local Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College.

The partnership will be for the purpose of implementing Career Awareness Events at the TVET colleges, to strengthen learner access to career guidance, artisan development pathways and post-school education opportunities.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications will be evaluated against the published criteria (ToR), including organisational capacity, relevant experience, implementation methodology, project team, value for money, and compliance with the mandatory requirements.

Scan QR Code to access the **Terms of Reference** and **Application Guideline**

Link:

https://www.merseta.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/merSETA_DG-Special-Window_TOR_and_Appl-Guideline.pdf

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applications are invited from suitably qualified organisations, including:

- Community-Based Organisations (CBOs)
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs)
- Private Companies
- Sole Proprietorships
- Cooperatives operating within the merSETA sector
- Accredited Skills Development Providers
- Event Management Companies

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the listed mandatory documents, the application must include a completed event-category declaration and proposed province/region schedule, with separate category-specific plans and BOQs where both categories are selected. These requirements must also be reflected in the NSDMS application fields and published compliance checklist.

Failure to submit any of the following documents will result in disqualification:

#	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.	A list of the proposed participating schools, showing the number of learners from each school, and the proposed partnering TVET College(s).
8.	Signed application and declarations; Discretionary Grant Application Declaration of Interest Form

TO ENSURE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF OPPORTUNITIES

Submission of an application does not constitute or guarantee an award. The allocation of provinces, the number and location of events (including the urban/rural distribution), and the final award of funding are made at the sole and absolute discretion of the merSETA. The merSETA reserves the right to allocate fewer events than applied for, to award in some provinces and not others, or to make no award at all.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must select Category A, Category B or both and identify their proposed province(s) and region(s)/district(s). Please consult the ToR and Application Guidelines for the category-specific requirements and the prescribed BOQ.

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

Applicants are advised that:

- Registration of new organisations and Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) on NSDMS may take up to 48 hours.
- Applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered.
- Incomplete applications will be disqualified.
- Applications submitted via email or any other platform will not be accepted.
- The merSETA reserves the right to request additional information or clarification during the evaluation process.
- Applicants will be afforded seven (7) working days to submit any requested outstanding information. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

ENQUIRIES

For enquiries relating to this funding window, applicants should contact the merSETA through the details available on the official website.

Website: **www.merseta.org.za**
Telephone: **010 219 3000**