



Launch of Social Enterprise Connect: Community of Practice for Social Entrepreneurs

Social Enterprise Connect is an exciting new Community of Practice (COP) for social entrepreneurs in South Africa. The COP was born out of a partnership between Social Enterprise Academy Africa (SEAA) and the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC).

This ambitious initiative is aimed at recognising, sharing and amplifying the work of social entrepreneurs, while building social capital amongst these impact makers. The COP will create a platform for social enterprises to discuss needs, problems and solutions within the social impact space in SA; either face-to-face or online. The Community will also seek to encourage engagement with policy and other macro-level discussions by creating a critical mass of self-organised voices.

Social Enterprise Connect consists of an online intervention programmes during the COVID-19 crisis; an online resource platform specifically designed to address the needs of social entrepreneurs and in-person/ on-the-ground networking and learning events to be hosted in all 9 provinces in SA. The community events will commence in the following four provinces in 2021: Gauteng, Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-Natal.

Social Enterprise Connect supports the development of social entrepreneurship in South Africa because we believe that social enterprise holds the solution to solve the prevalent social and environmental problems in our country, whilst contributing to economic growth and job creation. The Social Enterprise Academy is the only specialist learning and development organisation supporting the enterprising social sector in South Africa.

Social impact organisations nation-wide are invited to participate in the online launch programme series: **Peer Connect Support Series (6 x 90-min sessions)** - running from August-December 2020.

To apply for a bursary valued at R7500, or for more information [click here](#).

Join the Movement!

Am I a social entrepreneur and should I become part of this Community of Practice?

- Do you run a business with the purpose of uplifting your community through economic activity in South Africa?
- Are you reinvesting most of your profit back into the fulfilment of your mission?
- Do you want to improve your business and leadership skills to grow the sustainability of your enterprise in order to create more impact?
- Do you feel alone in your quest to make a difference in this world and have a longing to be part of community of like-minded people that can support you on your journey?
- Are you looking to learn from and grow with other social impact makers in South Africa?

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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What is a Social Enterprise?

Social enterprises are innovative, independent impact- focused businesses that exist to deliver a specific social and/or environmental mission. Their profits are reinvested in their mission, providing a dynamic, ethical and more sustainable way of doing business.

What is a Community of Practice?

A community of practice refers to a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. The term was first coined by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991.

Communities of Practice succeed due to the social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in a subject or area collaborate over an extended period of time, sharing ideas and strategies, determining solutions, and building innovations. Practitioners in many sectors seek peer-to-peer connections as the most valuable learning opportunities.

Why develop a Community of Practice?

Within South Africa social enterprise is an emerging and growing field. Currently most social enterprises are small – only 12% have an annual income of more than R1m. However, 65% of social enterprises report growth above inflation and 67% plan for significant growth in the coming 2 years.

Social enterprises provide a unique opportunity to solve many of the prevalent social and environmental problems in our country, whilst at the same time contributing to economic growth and job creation.

Who we are:

Social Enterprise Academy

Social Enterprise Academy delivers transformational learning and development programmes for people and organisations working for social change. We are a social enterprise driven by a vision of a society which combines economic activity with community benefit, led by dynamic social entrepreneurs and enterprises. Our unique approach to learning has helped thousands of social entrepreneurs and social change organisations to become stronger and more resilient, increasing both their impact and their economic sustainability. Social Enterprise Academy South Africa is part of a worldwide network of 14 hubs, supporting social change within local communities and beyond.

Industrial Development Corporation (IDC)

The **IDC** is a national development finance institution, owned by the South African government under the supervision of the Department of Trade Industry and Competition. The organisation promotes economic growth and industrial development in South Africa. The IDC's vision is to be the primary driving force of commercially sustainable industrial development and innovation for the benefit of South Africa and the rest of Africa. As a national finance institution the IDC's primary objectives are to contribute to the generation of balanced, sustainable economic growth in Africa, and to the economic empowerment of the South African population, thereby promoting the economic prosperity of all citizens.

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