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TIA and W&R SETA partner to strengthen South Africa’s innovation, skills and entrepreneurship ecosystem



As South Africa accelerates efforts to build a more inclusive, innovation-led economy, strategic partnerships between skills development institutions and innovation entities are becoming increasingly important in unlocking new opportunities for entrepreneurs, young people and emerging enterprises.

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), an entity of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), and the Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&R SETA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening South Africa’s innovation ecosystem by aligning skills development with technology innovation, enhance entrepreneurship and enterprise growth.

The partnership seeks to bridge the gap between education, innovation and commercialisation by creating structured pathways that support individuals from skills development through to incubation, enterprise development and

sustainable employment. By leveraging the complementary mandates of both organisations, the collaboration will help cultivate a future-ready workforce equipped to respond to the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), digital transformation and an evolving economy.

The MoU provides a framework for collaboration across several strategic areas, including the co-development of sector-relevant qualifications, innovation-focused hackathons, internship programmes, startup incubation and commercialisation support, research initiatives, bursaries for Master’s and PhD students, entrepreneurship development, and skills programmes targeting youth, women and persons with disabilities. The partnership will also explore opportunities to strengthen access to innovation infrastructure, expand market access for emerging enterprises, and foster international collaborations that promote investment and enterprise development.

The partnership builds on the successful

collaboration between the two organisations during the South African Innovation Week (SAIW) 2026, where W&R SETA provided sponsorship to enable innovators to showcase technologies, engage potential investors, participate in commercialisation masterclasses and strengthen business development opportunities. The collaboration also highlighted the importance of repositioning skills development as a catalyst for entrepreneurship, innovation and inclusive economic growth.

Dr Titus Mathe, Chief Executive Officer of the Technology Innovation Agency, said the partnership reflects a shared commitment to building an innovation-driven economy that creates meaningful opportunities for South Africans.

“South Africa possesses immense talent and innovative potential. However, unlocking that potential requires stronger linkages amongst actors within the skills development, innovation and start-up ecosystem. Through this partnership with W&R SETA, we are creating pathways that enable innovators, entrepreneurs, and young people to transform ideas into sustainable businesses, quality jobs, and solutions that contribute to economic growth and improved livelihoods.”

Dr Mathe added that the partnership aligns with TIA’s mandate to accelerate technological innovation and support enterprises that address national priorities, while strengthening South Africa’s competitiveness in the global innovation landscape.

Tom Mkhwanazi, Chief Executive Officer of W&R SETA, said the collaboration represents a significant step towards preparing the wholesale and retail sector for the future.

“The future of the wholesale and retail sector depends on a workforce that is innovative, digitally enabled, and entrepreneurial. By partnering with TIA, we are expanding opportunities for young people and emerging entrepreneurs to access skills, innovation support and commercialisation pathways that will not only strengthen the sector but also contribute to inclusive economic development.”

The partnership underscores both organisations’ commitment to developing a responsive innovation ecosystem that empowers individuals, strengthens enterprises and supports South Africa’s long-term economic growth through strategic investment in innovation, skills development and entrepreneurship.



Current Dam Water Levels - 27/7/2026

Major dams	MI Capacity when full	27/7/2026
Berg River	130 010	89.3
Steenbras Lower	33 517	55.7
Steenbras Upper	31 767	100.2
Theewaterskloof	480 188	78.9
Voëlvillei	164 095	61.9
Wemmershoek	58 644	100.0
Total Stored MI	898 221	705 577
% Storage		78.6

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WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES CONTINUES

Western Cape crowned SA Schools Winter Games champions for 4th consecutive year



Over the past 4 years, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has made great strides toward delivering on its vision of quality education for every learner, in every classroom, in every school in the Western Cape.

While there is still so much work to be done, I am proud of what we have achieved so far:

Our #BackOnTrack programme is the largest learning recovery programme in the country, making improving learning outcomes our key priority; We have made a ground-breaking investment into foundational learning, including implementing reading and numeracy programmes for all learners and teachers in the Foundation Phase; We are building new schools and classrooms faster than any other province through

our Rapid School Build programme; We have expanded support for learners with special education needs, including learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Learners with Profound and Intellectual Disabilities; and We are attracting new private sector investment and independent schools through the Edu Invest initiative at Wesgro. None of this would have been possible without the incredible skill and commitment of our officials, school management teams and administrative staff, whose skill and commitment have informed these initiatives.

Finally, to our principals and teachers, the everyday superheroes without whom there would be no school system: thank you for your hard work, dedication, and love for the children of the Western Cape.

Western Cape Minister of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Ricardo Mackenzie, congratulates Team Western Cape on being crowned the 2026 SA Schools Winter Games champions, securing the provincial title for a fourth consecutive year.

The team recorded 18 losses and nine wins on a challenging opening day before regrouping, improving its performances on day two, and entering the final day determined to convert qualifying performances into medals.

The team delivered an outstanding performance, winning three gold medals, three silver medals and one bronze medal to finish ahead of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng and claim the overall Winter Games title.

The victory also secured a lead in the 2026 national school sport programme. Since the start of the current competition cycle on 1 April 2026, the Western Cape has been crowned national champions in Swimming, LSEN Schools Athletics and the Winter Games, while finishing as runners-up in High Schools Athletics. With only the Summer Games remaining in December, Team Western Cape has already done enough to be declared the overall 2026 SA School Sport Champions.

Minister Mackenzie said the results reflect the strength of the Western Cape's school sport system and the resilience of its young athletes.

"Congratulations to every athlete who wore the Western Cape colours with pride. To recover from a difficult opening day and finish as champions demonstrates resilience, discipline and teamwork. These qualities define not only

successful athletes but also future leaders."

The Minister thanked coaches, team managers and technical officials for their dedication to developing young talent.

"Your commitment extends far beyond competition. You help young people discover their potential, develop confidence and learn the values of discipline, respect and perseverance through sport."

He also acknowledged the vital role played by schools, parents and guardians.

"Thank you to every school, parent and guardian who supports our learners. Together we are creating opportunities for young people to participate, grow and succeed. Your encouragement makes these achievements possible."

Minister Mackenzie said the Western Cape Government remains committed to investing in school sport because it builds healthier communities and gives young people the opportunity to achieve with dignity.

"As a caring government, we believe that every learner deserves the opportunity to participate in sport, develop their talents and compete with dignity. This year's results show what is possible when government, schools, families and communities work together to support our young people."

The Western Cape Government congratulates Team Western Cape on another historic achievement.

IEC HOSTS DISABILITY ELECTORAL AWARENESS WORKSHOP

Members of the media are invited to attend the Independent Electoral Commission in the Western Cape's Disability Electoral Awareness Workshop in Worcester.

The event is aimed at promoting inclusive electoral participation and strengthening engagement with persons with disabilities. The workshop will bring together key stakeholders to discuss initiatives that enhance accessibility, electoral education, and the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in South Africa's democratic processes.

It will serve as a platform for information sharing and stakeholder interaction, which is in line with the IEC's commitment to accessible and inclusive electoral processes. Event Details

- Date: 29 July, 2026
- Time: 10am
- Venue: Innovation for the Blind, 132

Church Street, Worcester
LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER
The IEC would like to remind citizens who have not yet registered that the Online Voter Registration Portal will remain available until the official Proclamation of the 2026 Local Government Elections. Use of the online registration portal is also zero rated, which means that you will not require to use your data bundle.

Also remember the next and final Voter Registration weekend is on 1 and 2 August 2026 and voting stations across South Africa will be open from 8am to 5pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

All South Africans, especially our youth who are 16 years and older, are urged to register if it's their first time, or to re-register if their place of ordinary residence has changed. For local government elections, you must register where you live and you can only vote at the voting station where you are registered.

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