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Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag XI15, Pretoria, 0001 | 40 Church Square, Pretoria, 0002 | Tel: +27 12 315 5111



@Treasury_RSA



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@treasuryrsa

www.treasury.gov.za

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JOBS FUND OPENS 13TH FUNDING ROUND, CATALYSING DEMAND-LED GROWTH IN THE GREEN AND INFORMAL ECONOMY

- National Treasury's Jobs Fund launches 13th Funding Round to drive innovative, scalable employment solutions across South Africa
- The focus is on unlocking job creation in the green and informal economies
- Applications are open to experienced organisations and intermediaries, with submissions closing on 30 June 2026

18 May 2026, Johannesburg, South Africa. As South Africa continues to grapple with persistently high unemployment and widening inequality, the National Treasury's Jobs Fund has officially opened its 13th Funding Round, calling for bold, innovative solutions that can unlock scalable, sustainable employment. Under the theme 'Catalysing Demand-Led Growth in the Green and Informal Economy', the new funding round will be open from 18 May to 30 June 2026. The Fund seeks to partner with experienced intermediaries across the private, public, and non-profit sectors to accelerate job creation in high-potential areas of the economy, with a strong focus on the green and informal sectors.

South Africa's labour market remains under significant strain. As of Q1 2026, the [Quarterly Labour Force Survey](#) showed the unemployment rate stood at 32.7%. Youth and women continue to face the highest barriers to entry, reinforcing the urgent need for targeted, scalable interventions that can absorb labour and stimulate inclusive growth. The Jobs Fund's 13th Funding Round is a catalytic response to these challenges. By leveraging the match-funding model, the Fund aims to crowd in private and non-profit sector investment, de-risk innovation, and support solutions that can deliver measurable employment outcomes at scale.

Since its inception in 2011, the Jobs Fund has committed R7.7 billion in public funding, leveraging an additional R15.7 billion in matched contributions from partners. This collaborative approach has supported



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over 180 projects across 12 funding rounds, resulting in more than 343,000 jobs and internships created, and over 418,000 work-seekers and entrepreneurs trained. Notably, 66% of programme participants have been youth and 58% women, with 98% from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

The 13th Funding Round builds on this track record by targeting sectors with strong labour absorption potential and long-term sustainability. In particular, the green economy presents a significant opportunity to drive job creation while advancing South Africa's transition to a more sustainable, low-carbon future. At the same time, the informal economy, which employs over [5.7 million people](#), remains underdeveloped relative to other emerging markets, highlighting the need for innovative approaches to unlock its full potential.

Despite these opportunities, both sectors face structural barriers, including limited access to finance, skills shortages, regulatory constraints, and market access challenges. The Jobs Fund is therefore seeking proposals that directly address these constraints through innovative, scalable, and implementable solutions.

“The scale of South Africa's unemployment challenge requires a fundamentally different approach, one that moves beyond traditional interventions and actively catalyses new markets, new industries, and new ways of working. Through the 13th Funding Round, we are looking to partner with organisations that are responding to today's employment challenges and are actively shaping the future of work in South Africa. This is about unlocking investment, enabling innovation, and delivering sustainable impact at scale,” said Najwah Allie-Edries, Head of the Jobs Fund.

Applications for the 13th Funding Round are open to sector intermediaries with a proven track record of implementation and the ability to deliver measurable results within a three-year period. All proposals must demonstrate innovation, financial sustainability, and a clear pathway to job creation, with a requirement for matched funding to ensure shared commitment and impact. The minimum grant to be allocated for successful applicants is R5 million.

The funding round will operate on a competitive basis, with only the most impactful and feasible proposals selected for support. While there is a strong focus on the green and informal economies, the Jobs Fund remains open to high-quality proposals from other sectors that demonstrate significant job creation potential.



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Applications close on 30 June 2026 at 15h00.

For more information on the application process and eligibility criteria, or to submit a proposal, applicants are encouraged to visit the [Jobs Fund website](#) or contact jobsfund@treasury.gov.za.

As South Africa looks to accelerate economic recovery and build a more inclusive future, the 13th Funding Round represents a critical opportunity to harness innovation, mobilise investment, and create meaningful employment at scale.

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About the Jobs Fund

The Jobs Fund was established by the National Treasury in June 2011 to support innovative initiatives and approaches to sustainable job creation. It is administered through the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC). The R9 billion fund operates on challenge fund principles, with all allocations made on a competitive and transparent basis. The Jobs Fund is not a mass employment programme, nor does it seek to address the long-term structural causes of unemployment in isolation. Rather, it provides a targeted programme of support for effective labour market interventions that result in sustainable employment creation.

Media Enquiries

Jobs Fund Communications | jobsfund@treasury.gov.za

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