Government partners with leading companies to address unemployment

Monday, 24 June 2013

The Department of Public Works (DPW) and the South African Graduates Development Association (SAGDA) have partnered with the Transport Education and Training Authority (TETA), KPMG, Nedbank and Old Mutual to provide employment for 64 graduates across the country.

Launched last week, the Prestigious Internship Programme is a prime example of how public-private partnership can address the national challenge around high numbers of unemployed youth and particularly unemployed graduates in South Africa. Remaining true to its name, the programme will be amongst the highest paying internship programmes in the country and more importantly; enable the graduates to gain critical skills required by young professionals entering the world of work.

"Our Former President Nelson Mandela once said that there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children. And given that the youth is our future, as we strengthen the department's capacity to deliver on its mandate to all South Africans; we have prioritised playing a key role in creating jobs for the unemployed youth and graduates of our country. This is being done through our current Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) and this internship programme." said Thulas Nxesi; Minister of Public Works.

The vision shared by all the partners of the programme is to contribute towards the National Development Plan and Youth Employment Accord through up skilling graduates and thereby making a significant contribution towards the eradication of unemployment in the country. Beyond the R10 million investment over the next two years; the partners will assist the graduates in acquiring relevant work experience through hands on involvement that will ultimately empower and allow for the graduates to gain work place competence, professional networks and reputations within the financial and accounting discipline.

"Our first 64 graduates have been contracted to work in the offices of the DPW as junior consultants and assist the DPW in managing their audit processes as part of the DPW turn-around strategy. KPMG along with the other partners are proud to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of South Africa through the up skilling of graduates." says Moses Kgosana, Chief Executive of KPMG

The programme is the brainchild of Minister Nxesi who recognised the growing number of unemployment amongst graduates and high turnover in interns at the DPW and then decided to partner with SAGDA to find solutions aimed at attracting and retaining interns, thereby ensuring consistent productivity and ongoing skills development and training within this critical field. With 16 years of serving as a hub for the preparation of unemployed graduates for the world of work; SAGDA

was able to work with the Ministry in identifying key partners which have led to the formation of this effective public private partnership.

"Through various levels of engagement we were able to bring other funders such as Nedbank, TETA and Old Mutual to the project. With additional funding, the aligned partners for this programme were able to offer the interns not only higher than industry norm basic salaries, but access to benefits like UIF, Hospital Plan, annual, sick and study leave that they ordinarily would not have access to during an internship – making this internship truly prestigious." says Thamsanqa Maqubela; CEO of SAGDA.

According to TETA CEO, Mrs Maphefo Anno Frempong, "We view the Prestige Internship initiative as a step in the right direction. As an organisation we made a commitment to avail funding to the amount of R 54 million for internship or workplace experience and other initiatives to help unemployed graduates in the country to be work ready. This commitment covers learners from both FET and HET institutions and will further continue until 2016 and we dearly appreciate the contribution of the DPW, KPMG, SAGDA, Nedbank and Old Mutual in ensuring the success of this milestone project."

In addition to gaining real on-the-job experience in facilitating audit processes, the interns will also receive guidance and mentoring in developing key skills that are critical to their future employability, including, business ethics, work experience related to their field of study, interpersonal skills and career management.

SA - the Good News

ORIGINAL STORY AVAILABLE:

http://www.sagoodnews.co.za/employment/government_partners_with_leading_companies_to_address_unemployment_.html