



higher education
& training
Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Dear University Community

Call for Expressions of Interest in establishing university-based EDHE Economic Activation Offices

We are excited to announce a significant opportunity for your university to take a leading role in advancing entrepreneurship and innovation within our institution and across South Africa. As part of our commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and economic development, we invite Expressions of Interest in establishing an EDHE Economic Activation Office (EAO) within your university.

The Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) programme is dedicated to enhancing entrepreneurship development within South Africa's public universities, including the development of student entrepreneurship; entrepreneurship teaching, learning and research; and entrepreneurial universities.

As part of this mission, EDHE has partnered with Standard Bank in collaborating with an initial ten universities in establishing EAOs. These offices are envisioned to play a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurship and innovation while facilitating collaboration, coordination, and knowledge sharing among various stakeholders within university ecosystems. A second group of ten universities will now be selected to host EAOs, based on the anticipated Expressions of Interest called for herein.

The Role of EAOs in a university

EAOs are envisioned as catalysts for entrepreneurship and innovation within a university community. Their primary responsibilities include:

- **Facilitation and coordination:** EAOs facilitate collaboration among university leadership, faculty, support staff, and students, ensuring alignment of entrepreneurship goals and objectives with the university's strategy and vision in terms of entrepreneurship.
- **Networking:** EAOs foster connections with technology transfer offices, business incubators, centres for entrepreneurship, faculties, student affairs and careers service entities, and executive leadership, both within and outside the university.
- **Information Hub:** EAOs is positioned to serve as a central point of information for all entrepreneurship-related inquiries, opportunities, and resources within the university.
- **Community and knowledge building:** EAOs are encouraged to actively promote the establishment of Communities of Practice (CoPs) aligned with the national EDHE CoPs, fostering the exchange of knowledge, best practices and innovative ideas. They could also play an important role in establishing internal CoPs aligned with the national EDHE CoPs to encourage the institutionalization of entrepreneurship development.

Progress thus far

Much has been learnt from this pilot phase of the EAO initiative, resulting in the diverse approaches to the EAO concept, based on the unique character and needs of each institution. In the process, the participating universities' EAO leaders have elected to establish a dedicated Community of Practice for EAOs, focused on sharing good practices and learnings.

Grant funding

Standard Bank, a key partner in this initiative, has generously contributed an initial R2.5 million over two years towards the establishment of EAOs. Their support enables us to provide an initial grant of R100 000.00 to selected universities to set up an EAO desk or office. Based on the first years track record, an Yahoo is likely to receive a next round of funding from.

EDHE is working towards securing additional funding for this initiative to allow cross and to better capacitate and to accelerate our entrepreneurship efforts.

How You Can Get Involved:

We encourage all members of our university community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, to participate actively in this initiative. Your input and engagement are crucial to the success of our EAO.

Workshop and Guidebook:

To support this initiative, we have scheduled a workshop for March 2024. During this workshop, we will collaborate with colleagues from other universities to create an EAO guidebook. This guidebook will serve as a manual for universities seeking to establish similar offices and will provide insights into best practices for their operation.

Join Us in Shaping the Future:

This is a unique opportunity for our university to be at the forefront of entrepreneurship and innovation development. By hosting an EAO, we can create a more vibrant and collaborative entrepreneurial ecosystem within our institution. We invite you to be a part of this exciting journey.

Submission of Proposals:

If you are interested in hosting the EDHE Economic Activation Office within our university, please submit your proposals in PDF format to lerato@usaf.ac.za no later than **Monday 30 October 2023**. Proposals should outline your vision, strategies, and commitment to entrepreneurship development.

Let's work together to empower our students and drive economic growth through entrepreneurship. For inquiries or further information, please contact lerato@usaf.ac.za.