UK South Africa Tech HUB

British High Commission Pretoria

LAUNCH League

2022

HUBS SURVEY

How can South African hubs train and support young South Africans to earn an income in the New Economy?

MAY 2022

DESIGNED & DELIVERED BY
VIRIDIAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LAUNCH
League

ABOUT LAUNCH LEAGUE

Launch League was established by Viridian and the UK-South Africa Tech Hub in early 2020 to create opportunities for teams from South Africa's hubs and entrepreneur support organisations (ESOs) to grow their skills, access quality resources, and connect with each other as a community of practice. By connecting and capacitating these organisations, Launch League enables the development of local entrepreneurial ecosystems, creating more opportunities for South Africans to start or grow a business and earn an income.

Over the past two years, Launch League has trained over 120 hub and entrepreneur support professionals, and engaged more than 250 at online events. The open licence toolkits that the project has created have been leveraged by hubs across the country to train and support young emerging entrepreneurs.

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FOREWORD

It is essential that people have opportunities that see them becoming increasingly economically active. The UK-South Africa Tech Hub is open-minded about how these journeys might happen – although we are certain it will involve at least some degree of digital literacy and access. We therefore support a variety of skills development, capacity-building and competency-growing initiatives that help people both find and create opportunities for themselves to earn an income.

One of these initiatives is the UK-South African Tech Hub Launch League. Launch League is a knowledge centre and community of practice for more than 100 entrepreneurial, tech and skills hubs and organisations around South Africa. By developing, sharing and amplifying best practice in the "pathways to income" sector, Launch League aims to scale and connect the country's most effective models for opportunity creation. The extensive network of practitioners who engage with Launch League can reach thousands of entrepreneurs and workseekers in every corner of the country. They can give young people hope. More than that, they can give them the skills, resilience and constructive safe spaces that will enable them to chart their own journeys to making an income and building a life.

This, the second UK-South African Tech Hub Launch League survey, starts to paint a picture of what skills hubs are offering, which offerings they believe are most effective in leading participants to an income, and what competencies they'd want to offer young people in the future. The findings show that in a context where there are no smooth highways for young people to travel on, equipping them to forge their own paths is essential. It is also exciting.

We wish all young South Africans
all the best on their journey.

The UK-South Africa Tech Hub
An initiative of the British High Commission

UK South Africa Tech HUB | British High Commission Pretoria

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE SURVEY

In 2020, the UK-South Africa Tech Hub Launch League initiative undertook a research project to understand the key activities undertaken by South African digital entrepreneurship hubs and the key challenges they face.

The research highlighted that the South African hub network is "critical in the process of creating thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems, buzzing with economic opportunity". Hubs are a place where like-minded young people can connect, where they have access to skilled guides who care about their success, where they can discover opportunities. The research also showed that hubs that are well financed and well capacitated can have a catalytic effect in communities. They make a meaningful difference in the lives of emerging business people and send strong signals that entrepreneurial activity is valued and supported.

In 2022, as we face even more extreme levels of unemployment among young South Africans, Launch League undertook the next phase of this research. We asked leading organisations providing skills and entrepreneurial training for young South Africans help shed some light on how hubs are equipping South Africans to be economically active and find pathways to income in the New Economy.

Visit www.launchleague.co.za to download the survey.

new e·con·o·my

New Economy describes an economy that is producing, or intensely using, innovative or new technologies, and is a largely service-based economy with an increase in entrepreneurship and gig-based employment.

We surveyed and interviewed senior hub team members from approximately 50 organisations across the country, to understand the skills and training offered by South Africa's entrepreneurship and digital skills hub network.

By revisiting the role of hubs and understanding their approach to skills development for the New Economy, we wanted to identify:

• What skills training is currently being offered?

• What is working?

• Where are the challenges?

• Where are the possible gaps or opportunities for how offerings and support by hubs, entrepreneur support organisations and skills trainers could be strengthened?

Through this research we ultimately wanted to understand how South African hubs can train and support young South Africans to find pathways to income in a changing economic landscape.

We hope it will be a valuable resource for the ecosystem and spark important conversations about how entrepreneurship and digital hub programmes can support youth development and unemployment alleviation; as well as amplify the amazing work of the hub network in South Africa!

77%

In a recent mobile survey sent to young entrepreneurs who had participated in the structured UK-South Africa Tech Hub Launch League Idea-stage programme, 77% said that the host hubs had "supported me with skills and encouragement" beyond the programme itself.

path·ways to in·come

Pathways to income are opportunities for people to become economically active in a way that can build their skills and competencies for ongoing income generation – this may involve employment, entrepreneurship or a combination of the two.

SETTING THE SCENE

We are familiar with the all-too-common narrative that the situation for youth in South Africa is desperate. Data released by Stats SA in Q4: 2021 showed that 45% of young persons aged 15-34 years were not in employment, education or training (NEET). This meant that more than four in every ten young males and females were unemployed and not receiving skills training. In 2022, predictions for the South Africa youth unemployment rate are projected to be as high as 64%.

Globally we are experiencing the "double disruption" of the economic impacts of the pandemic and the increasing automation of jobs. The World Economic Forum estimates that by 2025, 85 million jobs worldwide may be displaced by technological disruption. However, as many as 97 million new jobs may emerge.

Massive youth unemployment remains a critical challenge for South Africa as many young people struggle to participate meaningfully in the economy. It is becoming increasingly clear that most South Africans will not get stable jobs in the formal industries as we know them. Yet with technological disruption, we have the opportunity to upskill and reskill young people with the appropriate skills and work-related capabilities that orientate them towards new opportunities to earn an income.

Hubs, incubators, digital skills trainers and entrepreneur support organisations play a critical role in preparing people for the New Economy reality. By developing skills in entrepreneurship, digital technologies and gig work, they can provide youth a bridge to help them transition to these pathways to income.

> **"The very technological disruption that is transforming jobs can also provide the key to creating them."**
>
> –World Economic Forum

THE ROLE OF HUBS IN PREPARING PEOPLE FOR THE NEW ECONOMY REALITY

The hub ecosystem in South Africa is an important and dynamic community committed to promoting economic development and innovation, and growing the tech and small business sectors. In recognition of the vital role they play, the South African government has set a target of establishing a further 100 incubation hubs across the country by 2024.

Hubs play a crucial role in upskilling people to be able to take up opportunities to earn an income through the digital economy, gig work and entrepreneurship. They specifically:

- Build and support collaborative communities that foster both economic change and social connectivity

- Strengthen local entrepreneurial capabilities and culture, and support the diversification of local economies

- Help tackle digital competency gaps and support the development of digital skills

- Provide the opportunity for individuals and businesses/entrepreneurs to learn and engage with digital technology

- (Re)skill people to manage and engage the gig economy

In addition to these themes, we can anticipate that hubs will focus more attention on developing the skills that research and development organisations describe as essential for navigating the New Economy.

The **Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)** currently supports 72 incubators that each run a three-year programme designed to strengthen technology commercialisation and harness the entrepreneurial talent within the technology community in South Africa.

As 86% of all South African incubators are currently located in urban areas, with very few existing in townships and rural areas, SEDA is also focusing on establishing more township tech hubs in underserviced provinces.

www.seda.org.za

As hubs adapt their activities to the pandemic reality and to prepare people for the New Economy, we can expect to see:

- **Virtual and hybrid programming:** Creating opportunities for participants to learn online and access knowledge resources digitally; and connect in person for networking and collaboration

- **Ecosystem engagement and collaboration** both regionally and across Africa to share best practice, programming and mentor networks

- **More personalised support and mentorship:** Programming that includes strengthening self-efficacy, self-awareness and resilience, and offers support for entrepreneurial wellbeing

- **Contextually relevant programming** designed according to the needs of communities and the market; that help individuals access pathways to income in gig work, entrepreneurship and the digital economy

" Digital is a skill. It's no longer just a sector. We need to be thinking of cross-skilling and ensuring that these skills are both demand-led, and that young people are able to access these jobs with the skill that is going to be the skill of the future of work in the 21st century: digital.

There needs to be a real reconceptualisation of what it means to access work and for young people to be visible in the labour market. Because, in many ways, Africa is almost a prototype for what we probably will see in the rest of the world."

–Sharmi Surianarain, Chief Impact Officer at Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, Voices of Africa podcast (March 2022)

self-ef·fi·ca·cy

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their capacity to achieve goals and meet challenges, having the confidence that they are able to influence their own motivation, behaviour and social environment.

THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR THE NEW ECONOMY

As digital technology changes the way people work and live, individuals need a complex variety of skills in order to adapt to the requirements of the digital era. Both specialised and cross-cutting skills are needed for the jobs of tomorrow, and to access new opportunities to earn an income. The World Economic Forum's Future of Work report defines these skills in four broad categories:

PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Analytical thinking and innovation
- Complex problem solving
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Creativity, originality and initiative
- Reasoning and ideation

WORKING WITH PEOPLE:

- Leadership and social influence

SELF-MANAGEMENT:

- Resilience, stress tolerance, flexibility
- Active learning and learning strategies

TECHNOLOGY USE AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Technology use, monitoring and control
- Technology design and programming

Critical thinking and problem solving, as well as skills the World Economic Forum refers to as "**self-management**" (active learning, resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility) are widely viewed as the top skills that are needed for the New Economy.

In addition to this skill set, a **mindset that embraces change** will be essential to adapting to the new ways of working and earning an income. According to the Harvard Business Review, the greatest "employment" skill that should be taught to young people is adaptability:

> *"Whether through entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship, young people with the skills to adapt will have more doors open to them." Harvard Business Review, June 2020*

While resilience and adaptability skills are necessary, they are not entirely sufficient. Equipping youth with financial capabilities will be essential to navigating the New Economy. As financial responsibility increases, **financial literacy** is essential to building financial health and making informed financial decisions. A lack of financial literacy can leave people unprepared for financial volatility, as is typical of entrepreneurship and gig work.

Improvements in financial literacy will have a significant impact on people and their ability to provide for their future. Therefore developing the attitudes, behaviours, and self-efficacy for managing finances in a gig and entrepreneurial economy will be critical.

Within this broad range of skills, development of specific digital, gig and entrepreneurship skills will be necessary to access new income opportunities.

fi·nan·cial li·ter·a·cy

Financial literacy is the knowledge and application of various financial skills, including the ability to budget, manage day-to-day expenses, invest, and facilitate personal financial management decisions.

DIGITAL SKILLS AND ICT SELF-EFFICACY

Digital technologies are increasingly integral to economic activity and can be used by individuals to earn an income through entrepreneurship, the gig economy and by securing jobs requiring digital skills.

A recent Harambee report highlighted that digital skills and services had the potential to create over 66 000 jobs in SA's ICT sector in 2021. In the South African context of high unemployment, upskilling in digital skills therefore provides a solid opportunity to access work and earn an income.

According to the International Finance Corporation's Digital Skills in Sub-Saharan Africa (2019) report, 230 million jobs in sub-Saharan Africa will require digital skills by 2030, and digital skills will play a critical role in enabling the sharing of the prosperity promised by the digital economy. However, to be able to participate fully in the digital economy, simply accessing digital technology and searching for information is not enough. Individuals need to know how to use a broad range of digital technologies and require a range of non-technical abilities and foundational skills to be able to use digital resources effectively.

> " African economies require both a digitally competent workforce as well as digitally literate citizens who could reap the benefits that the digital society brings."
>
> –World Bank, Digital Skills: Frameworks and Programs, 2020

The Digital Skills in South Africa report, released by the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) in 2021, groups these digital skills into the following five categories:

In addition, opportunities also exist for talented individuals to develop specialised digital skills to access digital-first careers, with a growing demand for jobs such as:

DIGITAL SKILLS

- **Information and data literacy** (ability to comprehend digital information)

- **Communication and collaboration** (connect and share in a digital environment)

- **Digital content creation** (create and edit content using digital artefacts)

- **Online safety** (protect information, ensure privacy and stay safe in the digital world)

- **Problem solving** (identify digital resources to solve and make decisions for problems and opportunities)

DIGITAL CAREERS

- **Data analysts and scientists**

- **AI and machine learning specialists**

- **Big data specialists**

- **Digital marketing and strategy specialists**

- **Software and applications developers**

- **Internet of Things specialists**

ICT self-efficacy (an individual's ability to successfully complete tasks using ICT) will however be an essential foundation to access and sustainably take advantage of any New Economy opportunities.

A lack of basic digital literacy is one of the key barriers to the development of the digital economy. The Digital Skills in SA report findings state that only 58.8% of the SA survey population believe they can complete tasks using ICT. This points to a need for more digital skills training interventions that improve capabilities in ICT, which also encourage more critical and cognitive thinking using digital technologies. These interventions could be targeted at the unemployed, whose levels of ICT, self-efficacy were reported as low as 50%, or the employed, of which only 62.6% felt confident using digital technologies (creating a potential barrier to the digitisation of the companies that employ them).

From a gender perspective, encouraging findings from the data suggest that the digital behaviours (using technology to undertake activities related to work, information gathering and entertainment) of men and women are generally the same and that digital technologies appear to be leveling the gender divide in employment, income and socioeconomic opportunities. However, location and context matter.

NEMISA data showed that individuals in urban areas have higher levels of digital usage and their digital behaviours are more developed than those in rural and township areas. Access to digital technologies remains a challenge in peri-urban areas. The report therefore suggests a differentiated approach to digital skills interventions by province, area and population group.

To prepare people for the future of work in South Africa, "Digital skills pathways will need to be customised by region and designed in close partnerships with organisations in every sector," according to Professor H Twinomurinzi, 4IR Applied Information Systems Department, University of Johannesburg.

Digital skills development through an extensive South African hub network will therefore continue to play a crucial role in upskilling people and creating pathways for full-time and gig work in the New Economy.

The Digital Skills in SA report findings state that only

58.8%

of the SA survey population believe they can complete tasks using ICT.

SKILLS FOR MANAGING GIG WORK

Entrepreneurship and gig work have both been trumpeted as South Africa's solution to alleviating extreme levels of unemployment. While entrepreneurship interventions have been prioritised in South Africa for some time, gig work readiness is increasingly acknowledged as an essential area for skills development.

The global growth in gigs – flexible, short-term, freelance work that often involves connecting clients or customers via apps and websites – is changing the course of individuals' careers and redefining the way companies hire. While it isn't a new phenomenon, technology advances are making gig work more accessible to larger numbers of people. More people are selling their labour as "gigs", and companies are seeking out contract workers not only to save costs, but to create a flexible workforce that includes outsourced talent from across the world.

In the South African context, gig work is an opportunity for more people to participate in temporary work and earn an income rather than remain unemployed while permanent jobs remain scarce. This also means that opportunities to earn an income are no longer limited to employment offered within South Africa for those with digital skills.

" Instead of thinking about a career in a particular craft that you have for 30 years, you need to think about being multiskilled, independent and massively flexible in as many different working environments as possible."

–Investec, Focus Insights 2021

While it is a promising pathway to income, gig work does have its downsides (including overwork, social isolation, employment insecurity and lack of regulation regarding benefits). Preparing for, and managing, the gig environment does therefore require a specific set of skills.

For gig work to provide a sustainable pathway to income, "gig work readiness" will become essential. This includes:

- **Continuously learning new skills** as old skills (and technologies) become redundant

- **Experience and skills in a wide range of applications**

- **Ability to work independently, or as part of a virtual team**

- **Self-direction and assertiveness**

- **Abilities in self-promotion and branding**

- **Financial astuteness and capabilities**, enabling individuals to negotiate fees, create financial safeguards (e.g. taking out their own insurance) and manage "gig-to-gig" income

- **Self-awareness** to manage personal wellness

- **Entrepreneurial thinking**

Well-managed gig work can be useful to younger people in terms of skills development and providing vital experience to make them more "attractive" for future jobs. Best practice examples of this include programmes such as Andela, a global job placement network for software developers that focuses on sustainable careers, connecting technologists with long-term engagements, access to international roles, competitive compensation and career coaching through a learning community.

Fairwork is a collaboration between the University of Oxford, the University of Cape Town and other education institutions that is committed to highlighting best and worst practices in the emerging gig economy. To understand the state of gig work in South Africa, Fairwork assessed twelve of the country's largest digital labour platforms against five principles of fairness: fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation – giving each a fairness rating out of ten.

For the 2021 results, visit: https://fair.work/en/fw/publications/fairwork-south-africa-ratings-2021-labour-standards-in-the-gig-economy/#continue

However, for gig work to be seen as an opportunity for unemployment alleviation in an environment of limited jobs, it will become increasingly important for skills providers to teach gig work readiness and develop a mindset that sees the "gig economy" as a phenomenon that's here to stay rather than only a stop-gap while waiting for a permanent job in a big company. Entrepreneurial skills development will therefore be a vital component of any digital skills training, as it is highly likely that individuals will be managing themselves and their business activities as "solopreneurs" for much of their careers.

Entrepreneurial thinking will also be essential to gig work; the ability to see oneself as a business offering a range of capabilities. To get gig-work ready, solopreneurs will need to develop an entrepreneurial mindset that includes:

- Belief and confidence in one's own capacity and competency to be entrepreneurial;

- Desire, motivation and intention to practice entrepreneurship and behave entrepreneurially;

- Taking initiative and personal responsibility for actions;

- Exhibiting goal-directed behaviours;

- Recognising opportunities and taking creative approaches to problem solving;

- Resilience to adversity and perseverance in the face of challenges;

- Cultivating optimism;

- Taking risks that lead to learning, growth and value creation;

- Tolerance for and engagement in a complex and uncertain world;

- Recognising opportunities and business models to profitably sell to others;

- Adaptive skills learned through experience, including critical thinking, decision making, teamwork and, ultimately, leadership.

so·lo·pre·neur

A solopreneur is a person who sets up and runs a business on their own; they are distinguishable from a freelancer in that they are intentionally building a profitable sole proprietorship where they perform a variety of business functions, rather than only selling their time for money in an ad hoc manner.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS

Entrepreneurship has long been promoted as a strategy for job creation in South Africa. Yet as the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor indicates, South Africa has persistently low levels of entrepreneurial activity and intention, especially among 18-24-year-olds.

Hubs play a central role in stimulating more entrepreneurship and nurturing aspiring entrepreneurs. To do so, programming that combines entrepreneurship, business skills and personal development is key. Skills in financial literacy and identifying business ideas that can be tested and translated into an income quickly (using social commerce for example) are also becoming more essential.

Expanding opportunities in entrepreneurship: Social commerce

Expected to grow into a $1.2 trillion industry by 2025, social commerce is a significant entrepreneurial opportunity and pathway to income within the digital economy.

By using social media to sell products and services any individual can monetise their network and reach a market directly, allowing millions of individuals and smaller businesses to sell to one another within a vast social commerce ecosystem.

A 2019 Social Commerce in Emerging Markets report from GMSA suggests that social commerce is significantly impacting underserved user segments. Low-income, rural and price-sensitive customers can benefit from better bargaining power through features such as group buying. Social reselling platforms enable people to earn a side income by promoting and selling products to their social network (and beyond). And, for small business owners and entrepreneurs, social commerce offers increased online presence, tools and solutions that address the major needs of digitising businesses, as well as the ability to reach markets that were simply not available to them before.

It therefore has the potential to improve economic livelihoods for a large portion of the population—including within the informal sector. Hubs can play a key role in supporting more young people to take up this pathway to income, through upskilling "influencers and online sellers" with the knowledge, skills and tools to unlock the social commerce potential.

"Social commerce is set to democratise and revolutionise the way we shop: affording new opportunities for people to participate in the global economy as consumers, creators, influencers and sellers, resulting in a power shift from big to small."

– Accenture, The Social Commerce Revolution, 2022

so·cial com·merce

Social commerce is providing new opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs, who leverage social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook Marketplace to increase influence and sell products and services.
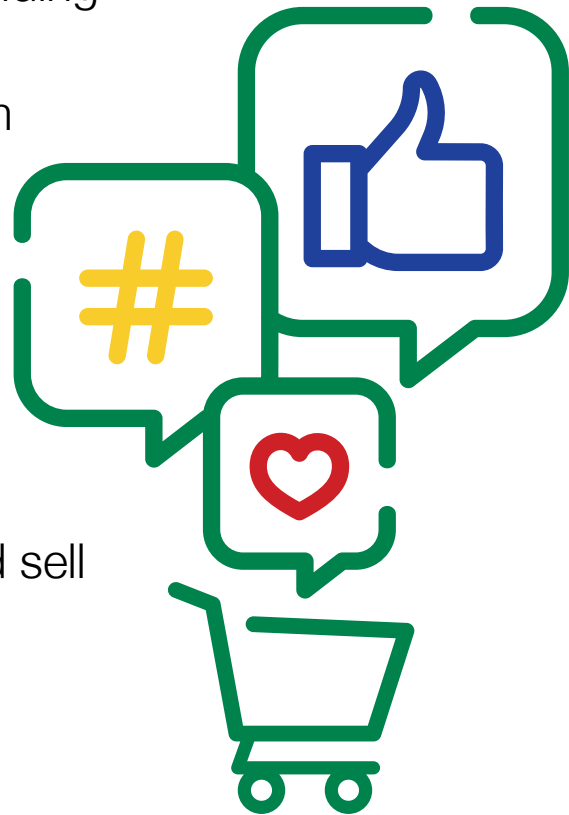
"Soft skills" considerations in entrepreneurial skills training

Entrepreneurship is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Considerations should be given for the socio-economic context of entrepreneurs and social factors such as entrepreneurial role models and mentors, social capital and access to community networks and markets. Research suggests that incorporating entrepreneurial wellbeing is also becoming increasingly important and developing emotional skills and emotional intelligence would enhance the entrepreneurial journey and ultimately the success of the entrepreneur.

>> Entrepreneurial mindset and mentorship

In preparation for the New Economy, programmes should also broadly focus on developing an entrepreneurial mindset, that is, skills including opportunity recognition, innovation, critical thinking, optimism, creativity, flexibility, resilience, and leadership. With the expanding definition of entrepreneurs to include individuals using social commerce and solopreneurs participating in gig work, developing an entrepreneurial mindset will also serve to improve employability and gig work skills, which will enable young people to access various opportunities to make an income.

>> Mentorship

Mentorship is well recognised for the important role it plays in entrepreneurial development. Research has shown that over 90% of startups say that mentorship is instrumental to success and 70% of mentored early-stage businesses survive longer than five years.

In the South African environment, the Department of Trade and Industry (dti), SEDA and University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB) suggest that there continues to be a significant need among SMEs for the transfer of skills and business acumen through mentorship."The Contribution of Coaching and Mentoring to the Development of Participants in Entrepreneurial Development Programmes" report outlined how mentoring contributes to the development of people, enhances relationships, supports more effective problem-solving and increases awareness and insight into the mentee's own behaviour.

Selection of mentors is, however, crucial. It's important for the growth of an entrepreneur and individual to have mentors who can give them a fresh perspective on problem solving. Hubs developing mentor programmes should consider creating a cohort of mentors from varying contexts, experiences, industries and even countries to add to the richness and diversity of mentor/mentee relationships.

The USB research also showed that the development of mentoring skills and techniques should be included during mentor onboarding. Manuals on mentorship are also great tools for supporting these mentor-mentee relationships.

" Quality mentorship has a powerful positive effect on young entrepreneurs. Having someone who practically guides you and shares your worries with you – often placating your fears with their years of experience – keeps you reassured that you'll be successful."

–Entrepreneur.com

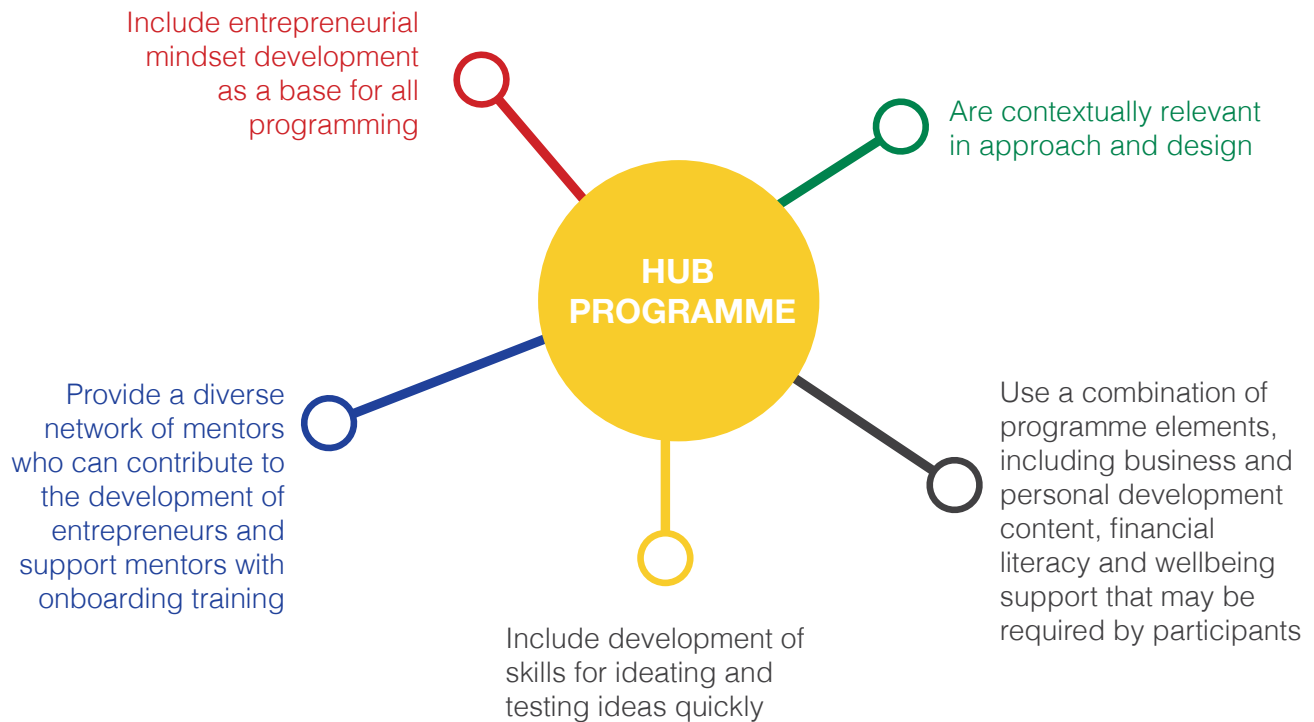### Making the Most of your Mentor

Visit the Launch League website for open licence mentoring resources that you can use in your own mentorship programme, including a template mentor briefing deck, a professionally developed SLA template and a booklet that you can print or send to entrepreneurs receiving support.

www.launchleague.co.za

>> Holistic approach by skilled practitioners

For hubs developing entrepreneurial skills, best practice suggests that it is important that programmes:

Include entrepreneurial mindset development as a base for all programming

Are contextually relevant in approach and design

HUB PROGRAMME

Provide a diverse network of mentors who can contribute to the development of entrepreneurs and support mentors with onboarding training

Use a combination of programme elements, including business and personal development content, financial literacy and wellbeing support that may be required by participants

Include development of skills for ideating and testing ideas quickly

This requires multi-discipline hub teams and supporting ecosystems, able to draw on technical skills, emotional intelligence and design capabilities, with a strong administrative and co-ordination thread to pull it all together.

This review of skills needed for the New Economy provides insight into what is, and will become, important for hubs to include in programmes that focus on entrepreneurship, digital skills and the gig economy. The skills discussed here are largely foundational and cross-cutting, equipping individuals with the essential skills to navigate the most suitable or promising pathway to income for them.

The findings from the survey which follow, highlight how these skills align to, and have been incorporated into, current hub programming, as well the what hubs see as the opportunities for skills development for the future.

FURTHER READING

To deep-dive into research on digital skills and the associated New Economy opportunities, explore these key in-depth resources, which can easily be found by conducting an online search.

Digital Skills in South Africa at the Citizen Level National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (2021)

Digital Skills in Sub-Saharan Africa: Spotlight on Ghana International Finance Corporation (2019)

Digital Skills: Frameworks and Programs (lessons from the Digital Economy for Africa (DE4A) initiative) World Bank (2020)

PART 2

SURVEY
FINDINGS

SNAPSHOT OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The Launch League skills survey was sent to over 100 leading South African organisations providing skills and/or entrepreneur training for people in their surrounding communities and online. The survey took place over four weeks from mid-February to mid-March 2022.

The sample size was broader than that of the 2020 Launch League survey, which only included self-defined "tech hubs" with physical premises outside of Cape Town and Johannesburg. Over the past year, the Launch League community has widened to include all skills training organisations across the country that are supporting people to earn an income in an economy that is increasingly digital.
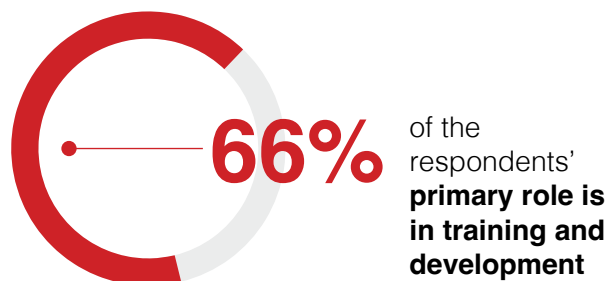
WHO RESPONDED?

47 responses received

* see a full list of organisations on page 57

RESPONDENTS ARE WELL EXPERIENCED IN THE HUB SPACE

51% 51% of respondents had been **working in the hub environment for between three and 10 years,** the largest proportion of respondents had been working for 5-10 years (34%)

RESPONDENTS' ROLES

66% of the respondents' **primary role is in training and development**
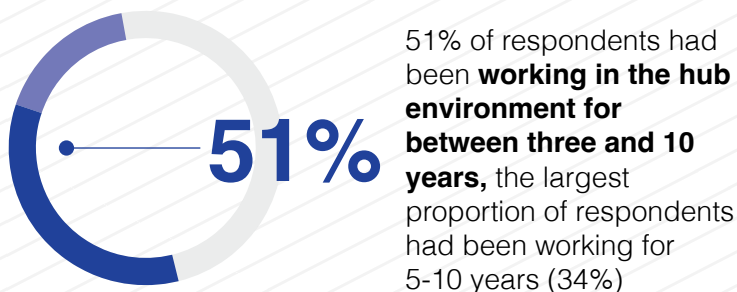
On average **respondents play three roles at their hubs,** most commonly including programme co-ordination, facilitation and mentorship

GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD
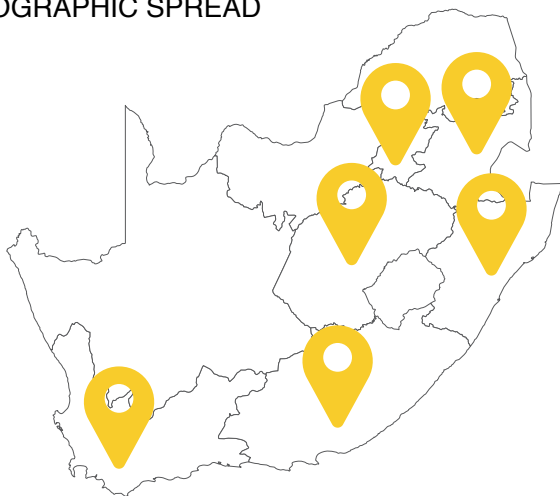
Hubs in the sample span six provinces:
Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal,
Gauteng, Western Cape and Free State.

URBAN/RURAL SPREAD*

60% urban

24% peri-urban

13% rural

PHYSICAL VS VIRTUAL

60% physical hub spaces

40% virtual only

EDUCATION LEVELS OF HUB PARTICIPANTS

36% matric

32% post-matric

60% high school

2% postgraduate degree

19% undergraduate degree

AGE OF HUB PARTICIPANTS

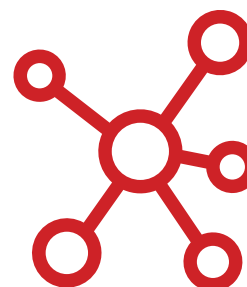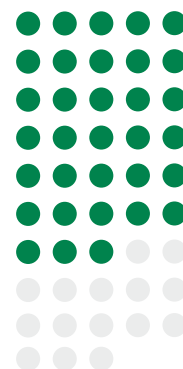**21-35 years old**

Average age of participants who complete hub programmes

GENDER OF HUB PARTICIPANTS

70% of hubs in the survey have **at least 50% women participants** in their programmes
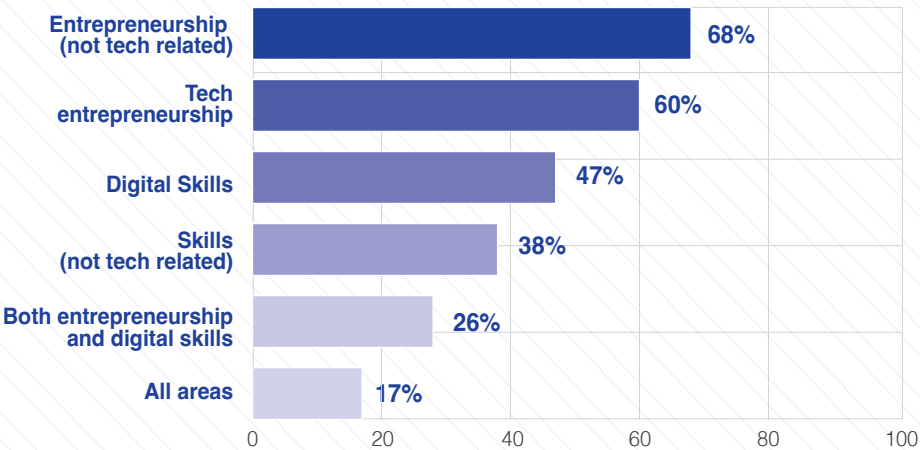
* see glossary for definition

SKILLS AND TRAINING – WHAT IS CURRENTLY BEING OFFERED AND MEASURED?

There is a dynamic ecosystem of hubs that are skilling, upskilling and reskilling young South Africans, both in the entrepreneurial and digital skills space. Hubs are already preparing young people for the New Economy opportunities. To understand and map the current hub landscape we wanted to understand their primary focus areas, what skills training is currently being offered and how hubs are measuring programme outcomes.

HUB FOCUS AREAS

Entrepreneurship is the main focus for the majority of hubs in the survey, with non-tech related entrepreneurship being the most common development area.

Focus Area	Percentage
Entrepreneurship (not tech related)	68%
Tech entrepreneurship	60%
Digital Skills	47%
Skills (not tech related)	38%
Both entrepreneurship and digital skills	26%
All areas	17%

> " Digital literacy is a no brainer. You can't succeed in the local workspace if you are just not digitally ready. That is something that we place a lot of emphasis on because it's the door to the global world. I think the opportunity lies where you are in a position to work from anywhere in the world, using technology to service the needs of global clientele."
>
> – Darryl Dennis, CEO Nelson Mandela Bay iHub

THE MOST COMMON PATHWAYS TO INCOME AFTER PARTICIPATING IN A HUB PROGRAMME

The majority of hub programmes successfully enabe people to earn an income by applying entrepreneurial skills to starting (87%) or growing a business (96%). The least likely source of income for a person exiting a programme was getting a job (53%).

According to hubs that offer specific skills training, these participants are:

90%
very likely/likely to **start or grow a business**

73%
very likely/likely to lead to **gig work**

59%
very likely/likely to lead to a **job**

It is also possible that hubs attract more entrepreneurial and risk-comfortable people, as this is what differentiates their offering from other training institutions.

! Where hubs offered digital skills training, the data showed that the likelihood of participants starting or growing a business was higher than getting a job or gig work. Digital skills are a necessity in running a business or freelancing, but aren't in themselves a sufficient condition to compete for scarce jobs.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

Hubs have moved beyond simply reporting on outputs and are using multiple indicators, including personal development measures, to determine the impact of programmes.

4

On average hubs use four indicators to measure success

Number of people trained (70% of hubs)

Change in personal income/ turnover of participants or their businesses (70% of hubs)

Number of jobs created by businesses in the programmes (68% of hubs)

Number of businesses created (66% of hubs)

Number of women and/or youth trained (64% of hubs)

Personal development and self-efficacy of participants (57% of hubs)

Other interesting outcome measures mentioned by respondents include:

- Growth in financial acumen;
- Long-term household impact;
- Increase in gender-forward business practices implemented;
- Impact of the business in the community.

WHAT ABOUT DIGITAL SKILLS?

42%

of hubs in the survey offered digital literacy and specialised digital skills

BUT ONLY

27%

of hubs whose primary developmental focus area was digital skills development also included freelance/gig work readiness in their service offering
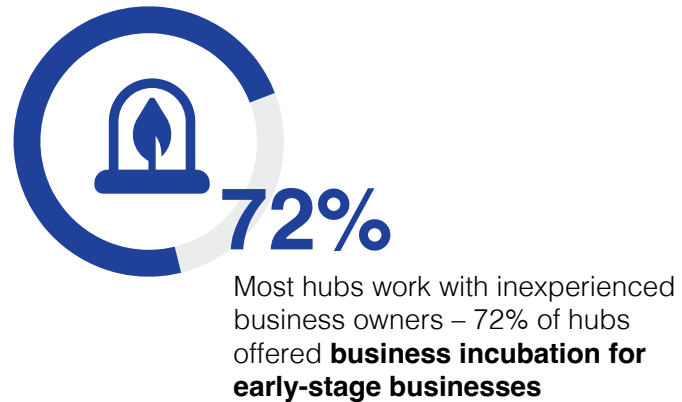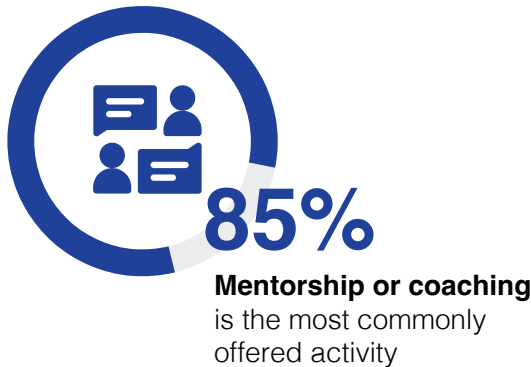
Global digital freelance platform **Upwork** has listed skills such as mobile application development, video production, data analysis and search engine optimisation (SEO) as the ones currently most in demand, with cloud computing and machine learning skills becoming increasingly importa.nt

https://www.upwork.com/resour ces/in-demand-jobs-and-skills

HUB PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

We provided a list of 14 programmes and activities in the survey: on average hubs offered seven of these, showing the broad range of training these organisations typically provide.

The two activities most commonly offered by hubs are:

85%
Mentorship or coaching is the most commonly offered activity

72%
Most hubs work with inexperienced business owners – 72% of hubs offered **business incubation for early-stage businesses**

Other activities offered by more than half the hubs include:

60%
Idea generation and development

60%
Business acceleration (later or growth stage)

60%
Personal development programmes

55%
Ad hoc business workshops and business support
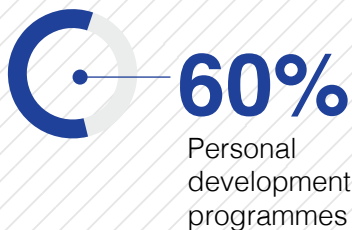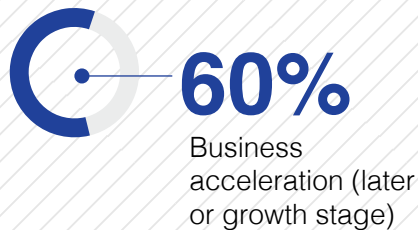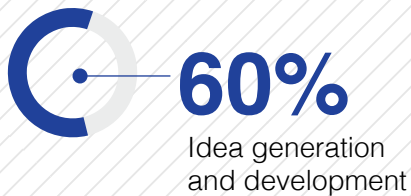
" We try to equip our students with a basket of skills, teaching them principles so that they can apply those to changing circumstances."

– Nicki Koorbanally, CEO, mLab

FACTORS FOR HUB PROGRAMME SUCCESS – WHAT IS CURRENTLY WORKING?

We know that hubs play a crucial role in upskilling people to be able to take up opportunities to earn a living through entrepreneurship, the digital economy and gig work. We took a closer look at what aspects of hub programming and activities respondents thought were the most successful in terms of preparing participants to earn an income.

The three most important success factors in an effective programme were identified as:
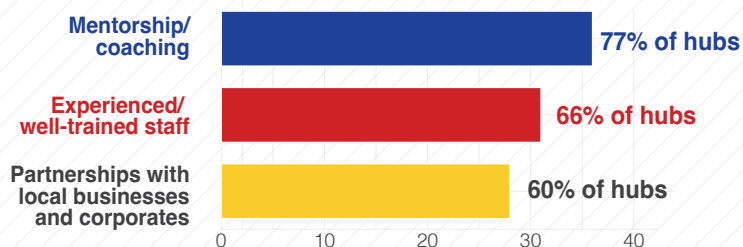
Mentorship/coaching	77% of hubs
Experienced/well-trained staff	66% of hubs
Partnerships with local businesses and corporates	60% of hubs

The first two – mentorship and experienced staff – can be two sides of the same coin. Our 2020 research showed that, on average, hubs have seven staff members. A well-equipped group of mentors can "make the circle bigger" by allowing a small, stretched hub team to bring more expertise and experience into their programmes. That said, a 2019 Afrilabs survey of 87 ESOs across the continent found that two-thirds of them had less than 20 people in their mentorship pool, indicating the necessity of growing these networks.

Partnerships with businesses create pipelines into and out of hubs, highlighting the importance of ecosystem building to create pathways for participants, as well as ensure the ongoing relevance and sustainability of hubs.

> **I think our success today really stems from the fact that we have strategic relationships with the private sector, public sector and academia."**
>
> –Darryl Dennis,
> CEO, Nelson Mandela Bay iHub

According to survey respondents, mentorship is also the post-programme support that participants most asked for… more than funding!

"Our staff have come through the programmes we offer, which means that they come from the communities. They understand the context of our beneficiaries. I think the beneficiaries really connect with the staff, so the staff also then take ownership around seeing their success."
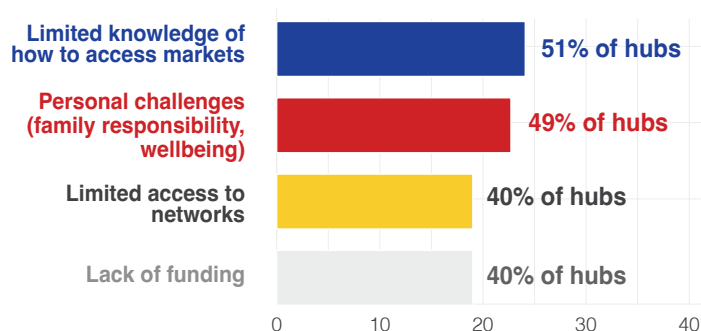
–Nicki Koorbanally,
CEO, mLab

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO FINDING PATHWAYS TO INCOME?

Hubs have supported hundreds of thousands of people through their programmes, and therefore have first-hand insight and experience into what the biggest challenges are that participants face when trying to find opportunities to earn an income after they finish a programme. Based on this extensive experience and continued engagement with participants, hub staff also know what continued support they most often need.

INCOME CHALLENGES

The most common reasons why participants are not able to earn an income* after completing hub programmes:

Challenge	% of hubs
Limited knowledge of how to access markets	51% of hubs
Personal challenges (family responsibility, wellbeing)	49% of hubs
Limited access to networks	40% of hubs
Lack of funding	40% of hubs

through a job, gig or business

> " **Business financing is still very much a challenge – especially for female entrepreneurs, of which many are building lifestyle businesses (not seen as fundable businesses)."**
>
> – Sasha Zakharova, New Markets Programme Manager, Future Females

FUNDING CHALLENGES

Hubs identified the following funding challenges for participants:

- Stipends and earn-while-you-learn models for youth
- Financing for early-stage entrepreneurs, including working capital and purchase order funding
- Funding for prototypes
- Growth capital for the "missing middle" (small businesses; too big for micro-loans, too small for formal loans)

ACCESS TO THE JOB MARKET

mLab offers an example of how hubs can help entrepreneurs connect to the job market:

mLabs understands the challenges that participants experience in accessing markets and supportive first work opportunities, and have factored this into the design across hub programmes. Where possible they connect participants from their digital programmes with SMMEs and entrepreneurs in their accelerator who need digital work done, creating an opportunity to learn and gain some experience, apply their skills and earn an income.

> " I think hubs have a role to play in giving our beneficiaries the contact for the first contract, their first chance at income."
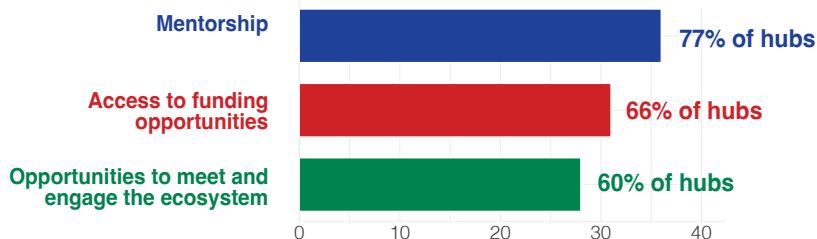>
> –Nicki Koorbanally,
> CEO, mLab

Let's Talk Financing!

Securing investment or grant funding is a perennial preoccupation for entrepreneurs, unfortunately perpetuated by programmes that focus on pitch decks rather than sales skills and financial management. Launch League has developed a simple and effective process that hub facilitators can lead entrepreneurs through that helps them understand the various types of financing realistically available to them, based on their business stage and revenue models, and their own risk appetite and growth aspirations. This toolkit is called Let's Talk Financing and is available through the Launch League website.

www.launchleague.co.za

POST PROGRAMME SUPPORT – WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS ASK FOR MOST?

Mentorship	**77% of hubs**
Access to funding opportunities	**66% of hubs**
Opportunities to meet and engage the ecosystem	**60% of hubs**

Surprisingly **"Access to physical space"** and **"Access to WiFi"** was mentioned by less than half of hubs** that actually had space and services to offer. This could be due to a variety of factors: either people are comfortably set up at home and have better access to WiFi than previously, or the cost of travelling to the hub every day is too high or the benefits of co-working are not compelling enough.
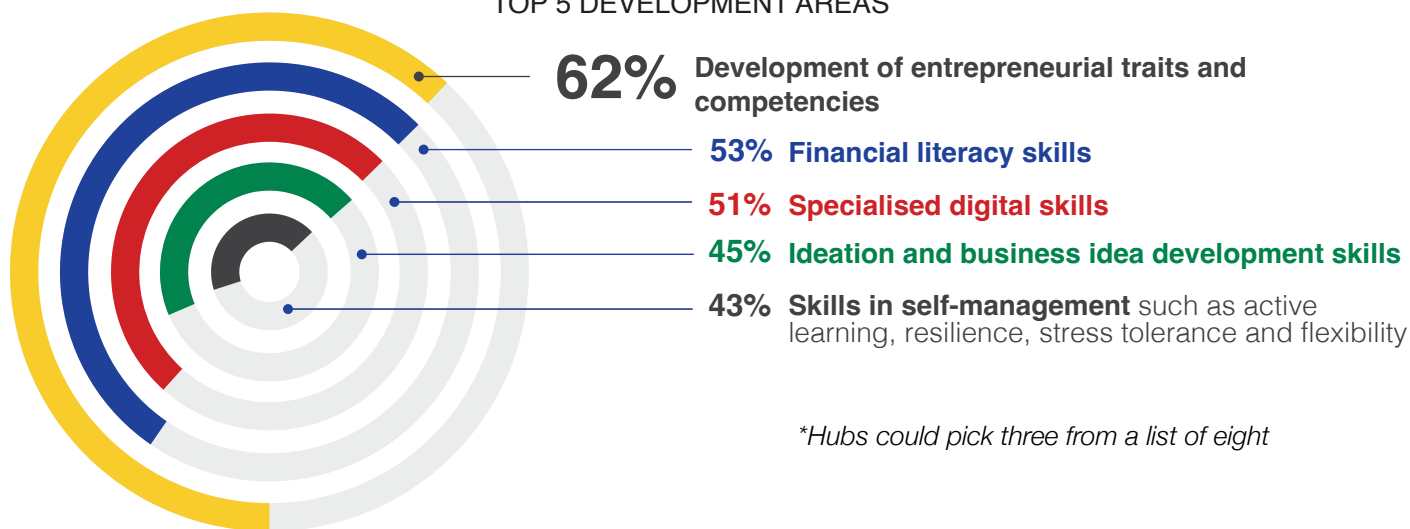
WHICH NEW ECONOMY SKILLS SHOULD HUBS BE FOCUSING ON?

Hubs are typically flexible and responsive in their programming, but are also influenced by the resources that they have to execute and the objectives of their funders.

What do hubs think they should be focusing on in their programming, in order to better enable young South Africans to earn an income in the New Economy?

TOP 5 DEVELOPMENT AREAS

62% Development of entrepreneurial traits and competencies

53% Financial literacy skills

51% Specialised digital skills

45% Ideation and business idea development skills

43% Skills in self-management such as active learning, resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility

Hubs could pick three from a list of eight

69% We asked young entrepreneurs who had participated in the UK-South Africa Tech Hub Launch League Idea-stage programme what skill they wanted to learn next: **69% asked for support in financial planning and management.**

"To enable young South Africans to earn an income in the New Economy we need to support not only tech-focused businesses, but tech-enabled businesses and market-driven businesses. The township entrepreneurship ecosystem is booming – however those businesses are focused less on building the next big app, and rather on solving a local problem or finding a solution to fill a gap in the market. We need to teach the youth how to be problem solvers but also to be multi-skilled in order to maximise these opportunities."

– Sasha Zakharova,
New Markets Programme Manager,
Future Females

"It's important for hubs to bring in new things that are enticing and exciting that encourage young people to follow new opportunities, but at the same time do it in a way that's market related. For example, we are exploring training in drone technology, which is relevant for our wine and tourism industries."

– Darryl Dennis, CEO,
Nelson Mandela Bay iHub

RECOMMENDATIONS

How can South African hubs train and support young
South Africans to earn an income in the New Economy?

SKILLS AND TRAINING PROGRAMME DESIGN

ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAITS AND COMPETENCIES:

- Entrepreneurial traits and competencies will be critical for navigating New Economy opportunities and demands; include entrepreneurial mindset development as a component of all hub programmes and for all profiles of participants, whether aspirant business owners or workseekers.

- Entrepreneurial wellbeing should be considered an integral component of entrepreneurial development training to help entrepreneurs develop the skills to cope in the long term. Design hub programming to incorporate entrepreneurial wellbeing support in either formal or ad hoc ways, guiding young people as they strengthen their resilience.

- Skilling participants in sales is a neglected aspect of entrepreneurial training: while entrepreneurial traits such as opportunity recognition and grit can be encouraged, there are in fact well-documented techniques and processes that can turn these strengths into financial results. Essential sales skills such as understanding ideal customers, pricing strategies and buying signals, and building up negotiation skills are useful for anybody entering the working world.

- Social commerce is a growing opportunity and a potentially short-term pathway to income; design and provide more training in this area.

DIGITAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY:

✓ Digital and financial literacy are critical skills for all hub participants: include these as foundational components of all programmes (digital, gig work readiness and entrepreneurship).

✓ Hubs that offer digital skills training should assess the needs and opportunities in the local (and global) environment and consider increasing programmes in specialised digital skills that cater to these specific needs. Partner with local or international companies to provide internship or "soft landing" projects that help with first-time project work.

✓ As market needs evolve, hubs should continue to review basic digital literacy needs and update programming regularly. Slightly more advanced digital literacy skills such as file and cloud storage management, spreadsheet use, image manipulation and cyber security basics are fundamental for any working person. With foundational digital literacy in place, hubs can introduce young people to more specific, in-demand tech tools and focus areas, from data to drones to gig work classics like social media management and WordPress development.

✓ For micro businesses and solopreneurs, developing personal financial management is foundational, including helping participants delineate between personal and business finances. Hubs can consider partnering with banks to bring in their well-designed (often online) personal finance programmes and then layer on training and support in pricing, sales, business budgeting, tax compliance, cost reduction and cash flow forecasting.

GIG WORK AND FREELANCE READINESS:

✓ Incorporate gig work readiness in hub programming to help young people navigate and succeed at freelance and gig work, as opportunities for earning an income for digitally-enabled workseekers will be largely based in the gig economy rather than traditional jobs.

✓ Develop more specialised and cross-cutting skills to prepare young people for managing as "solopreneurs", for both starting and growing a solo business and managing one's own ability to access and manage work in the gig economy.

✓ Work with local partners to provide opportunities/internships/learnerships for participants to gain experience in gig work (while still being mentored and supported). Or fundraise to design programmes where your hub supports young people while they develop skills and find work on international platforms.

ADDITIONAL THEMES

The following areas of development apply to the ecosystem as a whole and how we can improve our practice.

MEASURING PROGRAMME OUTCOMES:

- With the rise in importance of New Economy skills such problem solving and self-management, as well as digital and financial literacy, include measurement of these areas in programme outcomes.

- Encourage funders to accept a more flexible and holistic approach to measuring outcomes, with outcomes designed to be contextually relevant to the environment in which a programme operates. This may involve reporting on additional metrics based on your own organisation's or programme's theory of change (over and above the output metrics typically requested by funders) in order to influence the conversation.

ADDRESSING PARTICIPANT CHALLENGES:

Access to market, funding and personal challenges impact participants' ability to earn an income after participating in hub programmes. These challenges are massive structural and societal problems that cannot be solved by ESOs and skills development organisations alone, but they do impact programme success and cannot be ignored. Some ideas for approaches that could fall within hubs' influence include:

- Advocate for stipends, earn-as-you-learn, data bursaries and other appropriate financial support for early-stage entrepreneurs and young people new to digital and gig work.

- Where possible, hubs should set up a referral network and provide contacts or mentorship for personal wellbeing support.

- Hubs can encourage and facilitate an engaged alumni network that can also support new recruits and help to connect to funding, financing and market opportunities.

- Map the incubation and entrepreneurship support ecosystems across the country to ensure that entrepreneurs and hubs understand the support available at various stages of business development. Use the hub network/ecosystem to collectively support entrepreneurs to find access to opportunities.

STRENGTHENING THE SUSTAINABILITY, EFFECTIVENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS OF THE HUB ECOSYSTEM:

- Encourage ecosystem engagement and collaboration both regionally and across Africa to share best practice, programming and mentor networks.

- Continue to support and train staff and connect staff to other hub networks.

- Support staff who develop programme content through initiatives such as the Launch League and peer group networks who can share best practice and (forward-looking) content ideas.

- Encourage staff to write up their thought leadership experience to share needs with ecosystem, private sector and government.

- Make business development a core hub function in order to diversify revenue streams.

- Develop partnerships with local businesses to understand market needs and opportunities for internships, procurement, mentorship and seed funding.

- Learn how to emphasise the benefits of partnering with a hub to meet either enterprise development or CSI objectives, encouraging more private sector involvement.

- Work together as a hub ecosystem to build partnerships – tapping into bigger sources of funding, such as international grants.

LET'S HEAR IDEAS FROM THE HUBS THEMSELVES:

We asked: **"How can hubs be better supported to support their programme participants?"**

And hubs responded:

> Financial support to kick-start most of the youth entrepreneur businesses

> Opportunities to scale our personal development and entrepreneurial programmes

> Access to industry with the opportunity to develop business relationships

> Access to expertise in specialised sectors to assist in the development of content and material

> Digital platforms for engagement with alumni to track post-programme impact

> Funders that understand the environment and agree to holistic approaches

> Market access, agility in responsiveness, and committed and patient staff

> Access to zero-rated seed debt for SMMEs

> Integration of digital technology into our own operations

Hubs that continue to support **staff development** and enhance programming that is based on **entrepreneurial traits and competencies** and that provide for **skills in digital and financial literacy** will equip participants to **better navigate pathways to income** in the New Economy.

PART 4

CASE
STUDIES

Embedded mentorship – The Royal Academy of Engineering's Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation

The Royal Academy of Engineering's Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation programme awards commercialisation support to African innovators who are developing scalable engineering solutions to local challenges. Viridian and ViKtoria Ventures deliver the investment-readiness stream of the eight-month programme, which guides the 16 shortlisted entrepreneurs through a structured but adaptable learning journey, driven and supported by mentors and subject matter experts.

Viridian have woven three types of mentorship into the programme:

Experts: Each participant has a basket of credits (10 one hour sessions per entrepreneur) which they can use to tap into a panel of more than 20 subject-matter and technical experts from all over Africa, covering topics like sales, marketing, financial modelling, IP, legal, HR, organisational design, leadership and resilience. They can access the experts as needed to support strategy, or tackle problems as they arise.

Programme and peer group mentors: The cohort is broken into groups of four (formed around sector, region and/or business stage) with each group allocated an experienced mentor. These mentors facilitate monthly peer group sessions, where the group shares wins, challenges and upcoming goals. The also offers a space for the group members to share contacts and resources, and engage in peer-to-peer learning.

Each participant also meets with their group mentor on a 1:1 basis to receive guidance and feedback on building out their due diligence folders. These quarterly mentorship sessions encourage the finalists to take a holistic view of their business and are also a chance to check in on their personal wellness during the intense programme.

Additional peer mentoring: Cohort members are encouraged to form relationships with each other, APEI alumni and APEI experts and mentors beyond the facilitated programme activities. Cohort members are given the opportunity to meet other members of the APEI community during virtual networking events, and masterclasses where experts and alumni are often invited to participate in fireside chats and panel discussions.

In addition, the Royal Academy of Engineering assigns product mentors to each shortlisted entrepreneur – this experienced engineer gives tips on technical development and production of their product.

Upon completion of the programme, participants are given tips to manage a relationship with any of the mentors or experts they've met on the programme who they would like to continue to work with.

Mentors are provided training as part of their onboarding process by both the Royal Academy of Engineering and Viridian, using some Launch League materials. Launch League has developed a mentorship guide for entrepreneurs, available on the website, www.launchleague.co.za.

Supporting entrepreneurial wellbeing – RESTORE and SAB Foundation

To support and build the emotional resilience of the entrepreneurs in their programmes, the SAB Foundation, together with their ESO partner FURTHER, have invested in the RESTORE programme.

RESTORE is an initiative that provides support and counselling to entrepreneurs who have been part of the SAB Foundation programmes, initially to counsel those grappling with the impact and after-effects of the pandemic.

The programme is designed to provide support in the form of virtual group workshops, run by a clinical psychologist. These equip entrepreneurs with the skills and processes to manage their mental health and ensure success in their personal and entrepreneurial journey.

> *"The RESTORE Programme has proven to be essential support for the mental and emotional wellbeing of the participating entrepreneurs," says Lindsay Cilliers, co-founder of implementation partners FURTHER. "The programme monitoring, evaluation and learning confirmed that levels of confidence, relaxation, energy, coping, cognitive clarity, self-esteem, cheerfulness, belonging and social support all improved after the group workshops."*

SAB Foundation and FURTHER also offer one-on-one counselling through Syked, a virtual private counselling platform that connects individuals to a network of qualified therapists via video call, text and telephonic support. Syked was one of the winners in the SAB Foundation's 2020 Social Innovation and Disability Empowerment Awards.

SAB Foundation and FURTHER believe that high and widespread incidences of emotional stress among entrepreneurs is not only a personal matter, but will have a direct bearing on the performance of the whole startup ecosystem. It is therefore essential to create good support systems not just now, but also in the long term to help entrepreneurs effectively cope in a complex and challenging environment.

To date 50 entrepreneurs across SAB Foundation programmes have signed up for the initiative.

https://www.furtherimpact.co/

"RESTORE has illustrated that higher levels of wellbeing can recharge entrepreneurs' psychological resources, enabling them to continue persisting in challenging tasks that others often consider extremely difficult, if not impossible."

– Lindsay Cilliers, co-founder of FURTHER

From digital skills to coding – Digital Gen programme by mLab

mLab South Africa (SA) is a mobile solutions laboratory, skills and startup accelerator that provides entrepreneurs and mobile developers with a range of programmes to support new skills development, solutions development and enterprise development.

To help build and support the hub ecosystem, and create excitement about the digital economy, mLab launched Digital Gen, a youth engagement initiative that exposes participants to the ICT sector and builds digital awareness and literacy.

Digital Gen aims to identify and build a pipeline of talent within surrounding communities to feed into the mLab core programmes. The intervention can be tailored in length and intensity, from a one-month boot camp to a six-month programme dependent on client requirements, and is designed for people who are interested in ICT but with a limited IT background and minimal experience in building digital solutions. Modules include how to become a super-user of Microsoft Outlook and LinkedIn, "no-code" platforms (like WordPress), AI chatbots, and fundamentals of CSS, Java and HTML, among others.

"We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from boot camp participants," says Nicki Koorbanally, mLab CEO. "Digital Gen helps participants to learn, fail fast, and fail forward."

A key objective of Digital Gen is to bridge the gap from basic digital literacy to coding, up-skilling participants with the necessary, more advanced, computing skills prior to entry to the mLab CodeTribe Academy, thus reducing the drop-out rate in the academy once the work starts becoming technical. It also ensures all students are at the same skills level once the programme starts, allowing for students to progress at a similar pace. Digital Gen is also a platform to trial new material, identify talent and build a community.

A regular version of the programme is the one-month Digital Gen boot camp, which is run once a year at mLab offices (Limpopo, Kimberley and Gauteng) prior to the year's CodeTribe Academy intake. Sessions are held online for two hours per week, with weekly assignments and projects. Every week students come together in person to connect, and access support and guidance from the Skills Accelerator facilitators.

"Students who complete the boot camp gain a good understanding of whether this path is really for them or not, before committing to the longer coding programme or a career in digital technologies."

– Veronica Mahlangu, Skills Accelerator Facilitator at mLab

GLOSSARY

Beneficiary: An individual who participates directly in a project and who will derive benefit from taking part in the project.

Business incubation: A programme designed to help early-stage businesses succeed by providing resources including workspace, seed funding, mentoring and training. Typically a dedicated and ongoing offering for at least six months.

Business acceleration: Intensive and fixed-term business support for later or growth-stage businesses, that generally includes mentorship and educational components with the aim to get them ready for scale and/or investment. Typically shorter; a few weeks.

Digital economy: An economy that uses digital computing technologies intensively, conducting business through markets, software platforms and services based on the internet and other digital communication technologies.

Digital literacy: An individual's ability to find, evaluate, and clearly communicate information through various digital technologies including internet platforms, social media and mobile devices.

Digital skills: A range of skills and abilities to safely and effectively find, evaluate, use, share, create digital content and solve problems using digital technologies.

Digital technologies: Electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data.

Ecosystem: A community or network of organisations interacting with each other, and their common environments, to create and share in collective value for a common set of beneficiaries.

Economically active: People in employment, self-employment or own business, who are able to contribute labour to the economy for the production of economic goods and services and earn an income.

Entrepreneur: An individual who sets up a business or businesses based on an innovative idea, and creates a product or service that creates value for a specific target market.

Entrepreneurship: The process whereby individuals become aware of the self-employment career option, develop ideas, take and manage risks, learn the process and take the initiative in developing and owning a business.

Entrepreneur Support Organisation (ESO): Broadly defined as organisations that support, train, and sometimes fund entrepreneurs. ESOs aim is to help current or aspiring entrepreneurs move closer to starting or growing a viable business.

Financial literacy: The set of skills and knowledge that allows an individual to make informed and effective decisions with all of their financial resources.

Financial capability: The combination of attitude, knowledge, skills and self-efficacy needed to make and exercise money management decisions that best fit the circumstances of one's life.

Freelancer: Self-employed individual who is hired to work for different companies on particular assignments.

Gig: Single projects or tasks for which a worker is hired for a specified time.

Gig economy: A labour market characterised by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs.

Gig work readiness: The process of equipping oneself with all the skills, self-sufficiency, reliability and resources needed to secure and manage multiple small jobs (gigs), usually mediated through digital marketplaces, such as Upwork or Uber.

Hub: A central place for entrepreneurial or digital skills development and activity. It can be a physical space, virtual organisation or hybrid. A hub empowers entrepreneurs and SMME owners with relevant skills and networks, and provides a platform for participants to improve or develop a new set of skills in trending tools and technologies for the digital economy.

Ideation: The formation of ideas or concepts.

Launch League: Launch League is a capacity-building programme for South African entrepreneurship and skills hubs. It is a community of practice and training initiative, supporting hubs, incubators, ESOs and skills development organisations to improve their service delivery in order to better prepare entrepreneurs to launch and run businesses, workseekers to skill up appropriately and generally increase access to digital services and the digital economy.

New Economy: An economy that is producing or intensely using innovative or new technologies. It is a largely service-based economy with an increase in entrepreneurship and "gig-based employment" (single projects or tasks for which a worker is hired).

Participant: A person who takes part in a programme.

Pathways to income: New career pathways and opportunities to engage in income-generating activities.

Peri-urban: Located in an area immediately adjacent to a city or urban area.

Practical technical skills: Abilities and knowledge needed to execute specific, practical tasks. Often related to mechanical or information technology tasks that include knowledge of programming languages, design programmes, mechanical equipment or tools (e.g. 3D printing).

Psychosocial support: Support that addresses both the psychological and social needs of individuals by understanding the combined influence that psychological factors and the surrounding social environment have on their physical and mental wellness and their ability to practise self-efficacy.

Programme indicators: Specific measures of what a programme is to do, achieve or accomplish in the short-, medium- and long-term.

Rural: Located outside of a town or city.

SMME: Small, medium and micro enterprises.

Self-efficacy: A person's particular set of beliefs in themselves that determine how well they can execute a plan of action in particular situations.

Self-management: Ability to adapt to situations as they arise, and manage workflow and productivity independently.

Specialised digital skills: Advanced digital skills and abilities that allow individuals to make use of digital technologies in professions such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, big data analytics, data science and coding.

Tech-entrepreneurship: Technology-enabled business ideas and business models.

Work readiness: Possessing the foundational skills needed to be minimally qualified for a specific occupation.

Work readiness skills: A set of skills and behaviours that are necessary to access and maintain employment. Includes personal qualities, people skills, and professional traits.

Work readiness training: Capacity-building and skills development training (including interpersonal skills, career management, high digital confidence) that equips an individual with the necessary professional skills to enter the world of work.

World of work: Concepts associated with working in formal employment e.g. remuneration and benefits, professional conduct, communication, contracting, ongoing learning, etc.

UK-South Africa Tech Hub: An initiative of the British High Commission to catalyse inclusive, affordable, safe and secure digital access for excluded or underserved populations in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil and Indonesia. The programme uses digital inclusion as a basis for a more thriving digital ecosystem that stimulates innovations for local development challenges, creates local skilled jobs and generates opportunities for business partnerships.

Urban: Located in a town or city.

Launch League is a flagship programme of the UK-South Africa Tech Hub. The UK-South Africa Tech Hub forms part of the International Tech Hub network delivered by DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport), under a UK government initiative designed to promote digital inclusion and inclusive growth of the digital ecosystems in partner countries. The International Tech Hubs are expert teams which work to stimulate local digital economies, build high-end digital skills, and forge innovation partnerships between local tech sectors and international businesses. Alongside South Africa, there are hubs operating in Nigeria, Kenya, India, Indonesia and Brazil. Through the hubs' activities, entrepreneurs and founders acquire the skills, resources and support needed to turbocharge their entrepreneurial journey.

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UK-South Africa Tech Hub

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LAUNCH League

To find out more about Launch League and to become a Launch League hub, go to www.launchleague.co.za