

UK-South Africa Tech Hub partners with Future Females Business School

[Future Females Business School](#)

Overview

Challenge

10% TEA rate for South African women

Solution

- Future Females Business School in partnership with the UK-South Africa Tech Hub
- 3 month virtual incubator
- 12 month post-programme support

Impact

- Total of 320 women supported
- 120 part of FFBS
- 200 part of FF online membership programme
- 35 newly registered businesses (and counting)

Background

Local networks have found the biggest challenges that female entrepreneurs face when starting and growing a business are access to support structures and role models, and lack of funding, according to an informal 2018 survey conducted across Future Females and Startup Grind communities.

With the Total Early Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate for South African women at [just 9%](#), there is a critical need to improve gender inclusion and increase available skills in the market. Historically, despite

high volumes of applications to the Future Females Business School, only 64% of applicants could afford to join the programme.

Programme

The UK-South Africa Tech Hub partnered with [Future Females](#) in March 2019 to launch a twelve week virtual programme, as part of its greater mission to support gender inclusion in digital spaces.

The programme equips local female entrepreneurs with the skills needed to start and grow successful and sustainable tech-led businesses. By deploying tech to tackle local issues these startups drive positive change in their communities, as well as generate wealth for their female founders.

Tumelo and Pheladi at the Future Females Business School

In the first cohort, 50 female entrepreneurs with tech-enabled businesses were selected through an online application followed by a one to one consultation to validate their business plan. Successful participants joined the three month virtual incubator programme which offers various skills-development seminars (ranging from writing an effective business plan to building an online presence).

The programme features guest experts, including serial entrepreneurs, executives and coaches, who cover important personal development topics (including how to overcome fear of failure and how to uncover your true passion).

One of the goals of our UK-South Africa Tech Hub is to strengthen and enrich existing value chains in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. It's been exciting seeing the growth of the Future Female programme in the market and how it has positively impacted so many female entrepreneurs, equipping them with the skills needed to run successful, tech enabled businesses.

Shirley Gilbey, Director of the UK-South Africa Tech Hub

Tech Hub Leadership

The UK-South Africa Tech Hub provided full and partial bursaries for both the Future Females Business School and membership programmes (which offer access to offline content).

Through supporting local female entrepreneurs to scale and grow, the Hub

promotes inclusive growth of the digital ecosystem in South Africa. In this way, together with other Prosperity Fund interventions with a marked focus on gender and social inclusion, the Hub is supporting underserved communities to gain meaningful employment and/or embark on their own entrepreneurial journey.

Looking to the future

Upon completion of the programme, 70% of participants had successfully registered their business. This percentage is likely to increase thanks to post-programme support, which consists of twelve months access to the programme content, inclusion in the Facebook private member community, and monthly goal setting and accountability workshops.

Following the success of the first cohort, the UK-South Africa Tech Hub scaled up the partnership, funding a mix of full and partial bursaries to support a further 70 women for the Future Females Business School and a further 200 women through the Future Females online membership programmes. This second cohort graduated on 13 December 2019.

For more information

Read local media coverage of the partnership:

[Future Females, UK-SA Tech Hub partner to train 50 SA women tech entrepreneurs](#)

[WATCH: UK-SA Tech Hub to launch a future females business school](#)

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Local media reports on the graduating cohort:

[Aspiring female entrepreneurs graduate from UK-SA tech hub](#)

[‘Future Females online course gave my business strategic direction’](#)

[50 Female Tech Entrepreneurs Graduate From Future Females Business School](#)

More about Future Females Business School and the UK-South Africa Tech Hub

To learn more about Future Females Business School and the UK-South Africa Tech Hub please contact: info@uksatechhub.com

The UK Government’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) is building a global network of Tech Hubs. The International Tech Hub Network aims to forge innovation partnerships between the UK and international tech sectors, stimulate local digital economies; and build high-end digital skills to drive sustainable jobs and growth.

Contact the network at: international-tech-hub-network@culture.gov.uk