

Contractor Academy

Growing Sustainable Business



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Eskom Contractor Academy

About

Although statistics vary, on average more than half of all start-ups fail within the first two years of existence, and this is mainly due to their owners' inexperience. It was against this background that Eskom saw it fit to start the Contractor Academy.

The aim of the academy is to equip emerging contractors and suppliers with financial, legislative, management, leadership, entrepreneurial and technical skills to successfully manage, and grow sustainable businesses.

Origin

In November 2007, Eskom partnered with Edupark, a Non-profit Company, to establish the academy. Edupark facilitates the training programme and contracts other relevant training facilitators.

This programme was developed as a corporate social investment initiative in support of government's developmental priorities around job creation, poverty alleviation, skills and infrastructure development.



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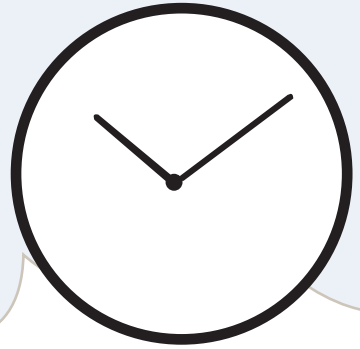


How long is the programme?

The training programme runs over eight months where students attend lessons on campus once a month for a full week.

The curriculum has been developed from a holistic management perspective and focuses on the management of finances, people, projects, tendering processes, supply chain and safe work environment. The individual modules need to comply with the unit standards and are accredited with the relevant SETAs.

Upon successful completion of the programme, students are awarded a certificate from the University of Limpopo.



Modules covered by the programme

- Business sustainability and finance
- Safety, health, environment risk and quality (SHERQ)
- Project management
- People management
- Supply chain management
- New engineering contract
- Aids in the workplace
- Safety workshop



Who is eligible for the programme?

The beneficiaries of the programme are emerging contractors and suppliers.

Applicants need to comply with the below criteria:

- Grade 12 (senior certificate or equivalent)
- South African Identity document
- Proof of registration of business
- Owner or executive in the organisation
- Business must be operational for at least 24 months
- Candidate must be computer literate

The Contractor Academy course is in high demand, however it can only accommodate 150 students per year.



Accolades

The academy has won various awards in recognition for its work. In 2013, the programme scooped the American Chambers of Commerce (AMCHAM) Stars of Africa Gold Award in the Community Development and welfare category. In the same year, it was also awarded the Socio-economic Development Award in the Oliver Tambo Empowerment Awards.

In 2016, the academy received international recognition when it won two awards in Oslo, Norway. The awards, presented by the International Partnership Network (IPN), were Africa Gold Award as well as the Overall Global Thematic Award, both for entrepreneurship and enterprise skills development. It also received the Triologue Strategic CSI Award in the same year.

How much does it cost?

All the training costs are covered for the students. This includes the venue, accommodation and meals, travelling, facilitation and materials. Eskom and Edupark visit each site and negotiate the best possible rates with providers to ensure maximum cost-effectiveness.

Testimonial

One of the academy's beneficiaries, Mikateko Jeleni from Malamulele in Limpopo, graduated from the programme in 2014, where she gained the skills that helped her grow her young enterprise.

In 2006, Mikateko registered her business, Vukona Byayena Trading, which does electrical connections. However, her company only started operating in 2009 after getting a three-year deal at Eskom as an Electrical Contractor for post connection. For a while, her business stayed stagnant and wasn't growing as she had expected but she soon found out about the Eskom Contractor Academy. After her training, Mikateko was able to grow her company from 10 to 42 employees and her turnover from R300 000 to R1.5 million per month.

"People usually don't know what they don't know and the Eskom Contractor Academy was a real eye-opener for me considering the skills I gained. I didn't know how to put together a proper bid document before going to the academy but following my training, my company started winning some good contracts and growing beyond my wildest imagination," says Mikateko.





Contact:
Programme Manager
012 4216661 or 082 808 5672

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