



Media Story

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TIA launches Women Technology and Innovation Programme to drive gender-responsive innovation

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), an entity of the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI), has officially launched the Women Technology and Innovation Programme (WTIP).

This initiative aims to address systemic challenges in funding, support, and development for women entrepreneurs in the technology and innovation sector. While South Africa has made progress in fostering women's entrepreneurship, access to funding remains a major hurdle.

Many women-owned businesses struggle to secure the financial resources needed to launch and scale their ventures, limiting their potential to contribute to economic and community development.

"The TIA Women Technology and Innovation Programme is designed to offer tailored, gender-responsive interventions through the agency's various instruments. Today is also about mobilising our stakeholders and inviting them to partner with us on this exciting journey. Over the years, TIA has funded and supported women innovators, gaining valuable insights. This programme is a more intentional and strategic initiative." says Patrick Krappie, Executive Innovation Enabling at TIA.

The launch event also served as a platform to celebrate and empower women innovators who are driving technological advancements across various sectors. To showcase TIA's impact, three women innovators supported by the agency presented their groundbreaking products and technologies some of which have already entered the market and begun generating revenue.

- Jacqueline Rogers – My Pregnancy App: A locally developed maternal health app providing women with quality digital healthcare, expert guidance, community support, and essential resources.
- Linah Mapanga – GrooveTech: Uses recycled plastic waste to create durable, climate-resilient roads, reducing potholes while supporting informal waste workers and cutting road maintenance costs.
- Sibongile Nkala – Eco Enterprise: Developed mushroom-based products such as baby food, patties, spreads, sauces, and yoghurt using a TIA-funded Mushroom Dome project.

The launch is well-timed, following Minister Professor Blade Nzimande's first Transformation Summit just two weeks ago, which focused on evaluating 30 years of democratic progress.

Dr Rakeshnie Ramoutar Prieschl, Acting Deputy Director-General of Technology Innovation at DSTI, highlighted the programme's alignment with national policies, particularly the White Paper on Science and Technology and the Decadal Plan.

The White Paper advocates for an inclusive National System of Innovation (NSI) by improving the representation of previously disadvantaged groups and women in science, technology, and innovation. Additionally, DSTI has committed to investing in women-led innovations, particularly those contributing to the green economy.

The WTIP will be implemented through an Implementation Delivery Partner Model, where TIA, in collaboration with other funders, will issue a call for delivery partners with strong execution capabilities, including investment management, networking, and fundraising expertise. By increasing market awareness, fostering industry-wide investment, and advancing gender-responsive innovation, the WTIP represents a crucial step toward South Africa's vision for inclusive and transformative economic growth.

The Women Technology and Innovation Programme (WTIP) launch was a success, bringing together industry leaders, innovators, and policymakers to drive meaningful discussions on advancing women in technology.

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The event featured inspiring keynote addresses, engaging panel discussions, and live showcases of groundbreaking innovations by women entrepreneurs, highlighting the programme's potential to transform the sector.

As part of the launch, TIA announced a Call for Proposals targeting critical challenges faced by women, including maternal health, menstrual health, gender-based violence, and reproductive health along with other women-specific challenges that can be addressed through innovative solutions. The Agency recognized 12 women leaders within its portfolio of infrastructure facilities at Living Labs, Technology Stations, Technology Platforms and Centres for Innovation & Entrepreneurship supporting the development of SMME's and researchers and creating new businesses.

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About the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA)

- The TIA is a national public entity that serves as the key institutional intervention to bridge the innovation chasm between research and development from higher education institutions, science councils, public entities, and private sector, and commercialisation.
- Read more at <https://www.tia.org.za/who-we-are/>

Issued by Alkemi Collective on behalf of the Technology Innovation Agency.

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