

## Smartcall launches learnership programme

A new learnership launched by Smartcall will see 40 learners across Port Elizabeth, Nelspruit and Rustenburg provided with a scholarship to obtain a SETA-certified N1 qualification. These learners, all between the ages of 18 and 29 years old, will have their studies covered and Smartcall will be the principal employer for the learners for the 12-month duration of their N1 qualification studies.



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Andre Lombard, new business development manager for Smartcall, notes that the company is always looking for ways to empower the communities within which it operates, and education is a big focus for them in 2018.

“When looking at opportunities to invest back into communities and empower individuals this year, learnerships was something that really stood out for us as. Supporting anything related to education (particularly when financial and physical support is included) is incredibly valuable as it provides a long term solution to a big problem - especially in South Africa where so many scholars are not able to afford to further their studies beyond matric. When we chose to go ahead with the learnership programme, it was important to us that all learners who participated would have the opportunity to gain work experience and possible employment after completing their qualification. That said, when the learners complete their studies, they will have the opportunity for permanent employment by Smartcall if positions are available,” says Lombard.

The learnership (which is run by an independent and accredited agency) was advertised in community media across various parts of South Africa. Anyone between the ages of 18-29 years old with a grade 12 qualification was eligible to apply. Many applications were received, and all applicants then went through a basic numeracy, literacy test and interview process, until the final 40 were chosen.

Lombard affirms that this is only the start of Smartcall's learnership programme, and that they will be expanding the project to different towns across South Africa for the remainder of 2018 where more students will have the opportunity to apply. "We have kicked off the project assisting 40 learners, but we most definitely will be expanding this to a bigger group as the months roll on."

This is not the first time that Smartcall has invested in empowering individuals in South Africa. In 2017 the company began the roll out of numerous Smartcall distribution hubs which serve the main purpose of training and empowering local individuals and local informal businesses to generate an additional income through participation in the Smartcall offering – including: selling Vodacom starter packs, and airtime for all networks; handsets on order; RICA training; starter pack distribution; and receiving access to relevant reporting. This program has helped bring businesses and individuals into a market that is worth R6 billion a month and through Smartcall's technology allows them to generate income at any level they desire to participate in.

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