

President Cyril Ramaphosa visits *Project Panda*

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday, 17 March 2022, visited *Project Panda* - the working title for Netflix's live-action anime series, *One Piece*, which is currently shooting on location at the Cape Town Film Studios.



Image supplied: President Cyril Ramaphosa with the *Project Panda* production team

The visit by the President allowed Netflix and its local partners Film Afrika to showcase the *Project Panda* production and its contribution to South Africa's creative industry.

The President was guided on an interactive tour that included visual effects, stunt demonstrations and a conversation with four (of the more than 30) trainees who are part of the massive project.

The aim was to give President Ramaphosa a deeper understanding of the impact of Netflix's investments in the creative industries and adjacent industries, including tourism, small business, and supply chain economies.



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Daniel Dercksen 16 Mar 2022



The President was hosted by the Netflix team and Film Afrika during the hour-long set tour.

"Job creation, especially for young people, is setting the frontline locally and internationally. Hearing about investments like this in South Africa is something we cherish. The creative industry is the perfect sector to create jobs", said President Ramaphosa.

One Piece is Netflix's biggest production project in Africa to date - both in terms of scale and budget, covering South African labour, infrastructure and suppliers.

The production involves more than 50 South African cast members; more than 1,000 crew member jobs (consisting of 67% previously disadvantaged individuals and 46% youth employees), as well an Academy of Creative Excellence (ACE) mentorship programme for more than 30 young creatives and technicians in collaboration with the SA Film Academy during 2022.



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The visit follows the announcement by Netflix six months ago of funding that will go towards film and television scholarships and cancelling student debts and will support the Independent Black Filmmakers Collective.

In September 2021, Netflix announced a commitment of \$400,000 (approximately R5.5m) to support black creatives in the South African film and television industry.

The Netflix Black Creatives Empowerment Fund will be implemented in a two-pronged approach: the first being a grant of around R1.4m to the Independent Black Filmmakers Collective and the second of more than R4m designated for fully-funded scholarships and student debt relief at higher education institutions in South Africa.

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