

Preparations for the 2023 Top Empowerment Conference in full swing

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Conference returns to in-person event mode for the first time since the pandemic as Nedbank unveiled as naming rights partner.



Ever wondered how the top black-owned businesses made it? Wonder what it takes to win industry awards or big corporate contracts? Maybe you want to know how to get the funding and team to bring your vision to reality?

The Nedbank Top Empowerment Conference will be a two-day event showcasing empowered black businesses and their makers. An array of 'global' thinkers will take the stage to redress how we create better success, inclusivity and resilience in our workplaces.

Almost thirty years into democracy, driving purpose-led transformation continues to be at the top of the agenda for many businesses across the country. The Nedbank Top Empowerment Conference is an opportunity to celebrate the organisations which are leading the way in empowering black businesses and transforming the workforce. Through panel discussions, workshops and keynote addresses, this two-day conference, which will be held in Johannesburg from 19 to 20 July, will bring together organisations and businesses from a wide range of sectors.

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– Khensani Nobanda

After several years of partnering with the Top Empowerment Conference, organised by Topco Media, Nedbank has claimed the naming rights to the Conference, which is now known as the Nedbank Top Empowerment Conference. This important event will see prominent business leaders, public sector decision-makers and entrepreneurs interacting through networking opportunities, fireside chats and case studies, which will provide all participants with actionable insights on how individuals and organisations can empower others.

“As an organisation that is committed to purpose-led transformation, the Top Empowerment Conference provides Nedbank with the platform to participate in critical conversations that have the potential to drive the action needed to create a more equitable society,” says Khensani Nobanda, Group executive for Marketing and Corporate Affairs at Nedbank. “As a

platinum sponsor, we have the opportunity to continue leading the conversation, we look forward to sharing best-practice models and challenging each other to ensure we effect real change.

Day one highlights

Investing in Africa's knowledge economy for an empowered society

The key themes throughout the event will explore how big thinkers envision socio-economic factors shifting for transformational good. A panel discussion reflecting one such shift will explore the impact had by Merchants and Youth Employment Services, who gave more than 200 young people a foothold in a career. The learnings behind such a strategic partnership will demonstrate how youth-focused skills development can dispel the swarm of unemployment.

Dr Felleng Yende, CEO of FPM SETA will also present a case study on designing effective public-private partnerships for youth empowerment.

How to Strategically Respond to Changing Skills Demands is another must-see fireside chat, which explores how globalisation and rapid digital change has caused a swift ascent in skills demand. Skills development professionals will take the stage to discuss how citizens and businesses can reap the benefits of upskilling – not only to remain buoyant – but competitive.

Ensuring that no entrepreneur is left behind, *Removing the barriers to accessing capital* is a must-see panel discussion, as well as *Is BBBEE still relevant*.

Day one discussions will also pivot into leadership themes, where celebrated African leaders discuss preparing the next generation for purpose-driven leadership.

Day two highlights

Diversity and inclusion revolution

Attendees will hear more about how workspaces could improve inclusivity and accessibility at work. Join a fireside chat with Caroline Nelson, country manager at H&M South Africa; and managing director of Modern Centric Holdings, Zakhele Mgobhozi, as they discuss the concept of new parents being able to benefit from a gender-neutral leave policy, one that allows employees to take four months of paid parental leave regardless of their gender.

Diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity are the fabric of South Africa – yet why is it still so controversial on social media? Hear from prominent social media mavens like Katlego Tulare, brand specialist and author; Renaldo Schwarp, award-winning author and filmmaker; Asha Singh, *One Over One* Social Media manager; and Luzuko Tena, *M&G Top 200 Young South Africans 2022*. Together they'll investigate the reasons behind the controversy, and the critical role social media could have in fostering long-term strategies that win back cultural appreciation, language sensitivity and representation.

The home run for accessibility continues, where discussions ensue as to why audio descriptions are a top priority on Netflix's agenda, and how differently-abled employees can have career advancement minus the obstacles.

The future of company culture

Understanding generational diversity in the workplace, and navigating the differences in how each shares knowledge is vital for companies wanting to build on culture. Dr Mavis Mazhura, an Adult Development and Leadership psychologist; and Lushia van Buuren, founding director at Luelle Consulting will lead this insightful fireside chat.

The event will be held in Johannesburg from the 19 to 20 July 2023.

- **Nedbank returns as Platinum Partner for the Top Empowerment Conference marking 30 years of democracy** 21 May 2024
- **Top innovators shine at the 6th Annual Africa Tech Week Awards** 17 May 2024
- **Calling women entrepreneurs! Pitch your business at the EmpowHER Entrepreneur Development Series 2024** 30 Apr 2024
- **Celebrating 30 years of democracy with the 23rd edition of *Impumelelo: Top empowerment*** 30 Apr 2024
- **Sentech Africa Tech Week 2024: Shaping Africa's tech future** 17 Apr 2024

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