

Treasury allocates R120m to bring more business events to SA

By [Linda Ensor](#)

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The Treasury has allocated R120m for a new bidding fund to enable the Department of Tourism to attract more business events such as conferences to SA. Allocations are R20m for 2017-18 and R90m for the next three years to the fund, which Tourism Minister Derek Hanekom said on Tuesday would act as a catalyst to the business events industry to a higher league.



[Image Source: WTMAfrica 2016](#)

"It will enable our National Convention Bureau, and our provincial and city convention bureaus, to support bidding processes, and will greatly enhance our chances of winning the rights to host business events.

"We have already identified African regional meetings and conferences as potential quick wins, and the bidding fund will give us the muscle to attract them," Hanekom said in opening the Meetings Africa 2017 conference.

He said the bidding fund would focus on business events aligned with the priority economic sectors government has identified for development, including manufacturing, mining and metals, business process outsourcing, creative industries, life sciences and ICT.

A study by the National Convention Bureau said the estimated total direct spend of business tourists in SA was R42.4bn in 2015. Hanekom said it was estimated that meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions supported about 280,000 direct and indirect jobs in SA in 2015.

The US is SA's largest source market for business events delegates, making up 12.5% of the total in 2015. The UK, Turkey, Nigeria, India and Australia also feature strongly in hosting business events in SA. "Of all the business delegates coming to SA, about one-third travel around the country to experience some of our many attractions. This trend boosts our leisure tourism industry.

"Most business delegates (about 40%) are aged between 35 and 44 years. The likelihood of a return visit with family and friends is very high," the minister said.

"More business events are being held outside the major centres. This is an encouraging trend because we want to spread tourism geographically across all regions of our country, so that venues and communities in some of our lesser-known areas also benefit from tourism."

The department was allocated an extra R494m to promote tourism over the next three years.

Source: BDpro

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