

SA's furniture industry to unveil its master plan by 2020

The South Africa Furniture Initiative (Safi) has indicated that the proposed Furniture Industry Master Plan (FIMP) will be completed by 2020. The FIMP will focus on the development and support of the local industry.



Industry specialists and government representatives discussed the creation of a Furniture Industry Master Plan (FIMP) at the recent Furniture Sector Forum, held in Johannesburg.

The plan is intended to set clear guidelines and targets for the furniture manufacturing industry while guiding public sector procurement as part of the government's efforts to support and stimulate the industry.

Industry-wide consultation

"At the recent Furniture Sector Forum, the industry agreed to work with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to create the master plan before the end of March 2020. This process will include industry-wide consultation with manufacturers, labour unions, government, raw material suppliers and buyers – ranging from the retail sector to architects, interior designers and property developers," says Bernadette Isaacs, chief operating officer of Safi.

Isaacs explains that many large manufacturing industries, including the textile and automotive manufacturing industries, have a master plan that was co-created by the DTI and industry representatives. The furniture manufacturing industry contributes approximately 1% to the country's gross domestic product and it employs more than 26,000 people.

"A master plan brings together all the policy instruments and government incentives that are available to a manufacturer and it combines that with clear manufacturing targets and timelines. This, in turn, creates a stable environment for manufacturers to invest in their plants and equipment and plan for future export contracts."

Driving government procurement

Safi, the DTI and Proudly South African also agreed to combine their resources and initiatives to drive and monitor local government procurement towards South African furniture manufacturers.

“By our estimates, there is between R5bn and R8bn available annually – if the retail, corporate, government departments, state-owned enterprises and institutions such as hospitals, schools and libraries purchase their furniture from South African suppliers. We believe that the political will exists and we will do everything in our power to assist with the facilitation of translating the buy local commitments made by the public and private sector into tangible orders for the local manufacturing industry,” says Isaacs.

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