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# Helping small businesses to **grow**

The USB launched its Small Business Academy (SBA) in May 2012. The first cohort of 23 participants from Khayelitsha, Cape Town, started with their business development programme in March 2013.

**T**he SBA's nine-month business development programme for small business owners includes training in financial management, business plan writing, personal development, mentoring, coaching and workshops.

Marietjie Wepener, deputy director: Business Development, Marketing and Communication at the USB who heads up the initiative, says with the SBA the USB has an opportunity to make a real difference to the lives and businesses of small business owners in Khayelitsha and other communities.

"For years, the USB has been working with small business people in Khayelitsha on various projects. It was only natural for us to start there."

Wepener says without the corporate sponsors, the SBA would not have turned into a reality.

"Our large corporate sponsors – ABSA and Distell Foundation at this stage – sponsor among other things, the curriculum development, training programme, learning material and mentorship training."

The application process for the first cohort of participants started in December 2012. Edith Kennedy, manager of the SBA office, says criteria for the SBA programme includes that applicants have to be older

than 25 and that their businesses in Khayelitsha must be at least 12 months old.

After shortlisting, EQ-i testing by JVR Consulting, interviews by the selection committee and a second round of evaluations by the SBA Academic Committee, a first group was chosen. JVR Consulting sponsors the psychometric tests for this programme.

The final 23 participants represent small businesses from industries such as food retail, clothing manufacturing, education, beauty and grooming, waste removal and music. Seven participants are female and sixteen are male.

USB alumni are instrumental in the SBA programme by volunteering to be mentors for the participants. Based on EQ-i tests and interviews, 23 SBA mentors were chosen.

Says Kennedy: "Because the mentors are experienced business people who have either done a degree with USB or a comprehensive course with USB-ED, they are there to advise the participants on how to grow their businesses."

Wepener says the USB hopes that more corporate sponsors will see the value of this small business development programme and will work with the USB. "With more funding, the USB will be able to expand the programme to other communities and to add a research leg to the SBA."

– **Cherice Smith**

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## PARTICIPANTS

WHY DID YOU APPLY FOR THE USB'S SMALL BUSINESS ACADEMY?



"I do not know how to market my business and how to save money. I want to grow my business and I need help with that." – **Norma Mokharinyane, Sizophandela Clothing (clothing retail business)**



– **Nkumbuzo Nkonyana, Heavenly Quartez (music entertainment business)**

"I want to grow our music group, Heavenly Quartez, into an event management business. I want to learn how to market the group as a brand, manage the finances and manage the group as a business."

## MENTORS

WHY DID YOU VOLUNTEER TO BE AN SBA MENTOR?



"To contribute to the development of the country and to apply the knowledge I obtained in the MBA to help small business owners." – **Karen Louw, senior audit specialist, Actuarial, Old Mutual Group Internal Audit**



coach." – **Phumudzo Baloyi, technical director and regional manager at Goba Consulting Engineers**

"With my experience and the knowledge gained during my MBA studies, I can make a difference to people's lives and assist them to become successful. I also hope to grow my own ability as a business