



PRESS RELEASE

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by MAP and SAGDA to address lack of skills in manufacturing industry in SA

South Africa, Johannesburg, 25 November 2014 - Manufacturing Accelerator Programme (MAP) and the South African Graduates Development Association (SAGDA) have signed an MOU in order to jointly address the severe lack of skills in the manufacturing industry in South Africa. The aim of the MOU is to create funding for at least 500 graduates to be placed in industry, where they will work under the guidance of the host companies who are implementing the MAP initiative.

The Pre-Launch information session was held at Canteen@Arts on Main on 12 November in order to offer various role-players and stakeholders a chance to participate and contribute meaningfully to this initiative. The launch of this concept and relationship's intentions will be officially marked early in 2015, when we will present examples of graduates placed in MAP companies and show the progress so far as a proof of concept.

MAP was developed and launched with the sole purpose of revitalising the South African manufacturing industry and thereby creating a substantial number of new job opportunities in the country. The South African Graduates Development Association (SAGDA) was established in 1997 by a team of graduates who sought solutions to the challenges of unemployment and under-employment.

Ian Huntly, CEO of Rifle-Shot Performance Holdings, one of the MAP founding organisations, said there is an overwhelming percentage of unemployed graduates (30%), and an even smaller percentage of graduates being absorbed into jobs.

“Internship programmes (26.8%) seem to be relatively large, however we need to consider what happens to those interns after completion of the internship programmes,” said Huntly.

One of SAGDA’s goals is to promote scarce and critical skills. This is a much-needed element as skill shortages are one the major reasons the South African economy is on the down turn.

Huntly commented that if we are to be a globally competitive country, we desperately need to harness the potential for growth and make it work for us in a knowledge based economy. “And this would include ensuring the next generation was equipped with the best practices, attitudes and mind sets instilled in them,” he said.

“It was really of no consequence if these individuals remained within the companies that hosted and trained them or whether they started their own businesses and operated them successfully and sustainably with the information they had learned. The main crux was to keep these successful graduates within the country,” he said.

There is an urgent need to get manufacturing back on a sustainable growth path not only in South Africa but across the entire continent in order for wealth creation to occur. “And without the correct and constant nurturing of graduates, that we desperately need to replace in a dying work force, both goals will be impossible. Only by working together towards this end result, will we be able to thrive,” concluded Huntly.

In the MAP programme, suitable tools for the company are proposed and recommended from an extensive knowledge base of trusted partners with specific industry focus, track records of innovation and delivery over at least two decades, and who are recognised leaders in their specific manufacturing industries. MAP, in conjunction with various other co-operations and initiatives across the globe, has been instrumental in uplifting the manufacturing sector and making it a vibrant industry marked by innovation, competitiveness, efficiency and profitability.

SAGDA has been at the forefront of graduate development for the past 16 years and has helped over 200 000 students/graduates through job readiness programmes.

The founding members of MAP are ISAH, Rifle-Shot Performance Holdings and SANEC. ISAH is an international software company, whilst Rifle-Shot Performance Holdings is a specialist solutions provider and distributor. SANEC is the Southern African Netherlands Chamber of Commerce and is the key intermediary agency for companies, organisations and entrepreneurs doing business or seeking to do business in and between the Netherlands, South Africa, the Benelux and the southern African region (SADC).

About Rifle-Shot Performance Holdings

Rifle-Shot Performance Holdings, established in 2001, is a business consulting, distributor, reseller and implementer of leading business and operational management software systems for large and medium businesses. 100% South African owned Rifle-Shot is a Level 4 BBBEE compliant organisation headquartered in Sandton, South Africa.

About Isah

Isah is an international software provider to the make-to-order industries. The company has been a market leader in the Benelux area for over 25 years, has a distribution in 20 countries, more than 600 customers and a track record of more than 25 years.

About SANEC

SANEC is the Southern African Netherlands Chamber of Commerce and over the last 20 years has seen active growth in commercial co-operation between SA and the Netherlands grow to the point that the Netherlands is one of SA's leading trading partners

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