

# How an arts residency led to a marketing bursary (North West)

By [Ben Rycroft](#), issued by [The Social Employment Fund](#)

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In the small village of Maile Extension in Rustenburg, North West province, 23-year-old Semakaleng Masemola couldn't find work after completing her matric. Raised by her aunt, the path ahead seemed unclear, with no direction or plan.

## A turning point

In 2021, Semakaleng's life took a positive turn when she crossed paths with Thapelo Pule, the North West Provincial Coordinator for [ASSITEJ](#) and the founder of [Sistaboss Academy and Company](#). Thapelo offered her a job as a PA, setting the stage for a transformative journey.



## The Sistaboss incubation programme

In 2022 through ASSITEJ's association with SEF, Semakaleng had the opportunity to join the Sistaboss incubation programme, an entry level arts residency offered to young artists between the ages of 18 and 35. The programme runs for 12 months every year in Rustenburg where 10 aspiring artists learn about administration, digital marketing, dramatic arts, dance, television and film production.

## Empowered by SEF

As a SEF team leader Semakaleng's tasks include presenting attendance registers, writing up feedback reports for every workshop or event attended, keeping records of hours worked, liaising with the provincial coordinator and participating fully in all scheduled online and in-person trainings.

## A journey to confidence and success

Through her involvement with SEF, Semakaleng has discovered a passion for theatre and the Arts and plans to land a career in theatre production management. Earning her own money has given her confidence, security, and motivation. "I am forever grateful for the opportunities that SEF has opened for me", says Semakaleng, "I can now make a financial contribution to the household and I can see through my aunt's eyes that she is really proud of me".

## Marketing bursary!

Earning a SEF stipend has helped her to contribute financially to her household, attend auditions in Johannesburg and pay for an acting workshop at the Joburg Theatre. And her hard work has paid off! Semakaleng was recently selected to be part of a women's writer programme in Limpopo, where she wrote a short story that will be published. But that's not all. Her new confidence enabled her to write a motivational letter to Boston College detailing her newly acquired skills from the incubation programme. This resulted in her being awarded a bursary to study Marketing!

With her journey from uncertainty to empowerment, Semakaleng embodies the transformative power of SEF and its commitment to empowering lives. Her story is a testament to the potential that emerges when young talents are given a few opportunities and support to thrive.

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