

Nedbank launches new R10m fund to assist 100 startups

Nedbank has launched the Green Economy Fund with an initial capital of R10m. This was announced at the recent Nedbank Green Indaba by Poovi Pillay, executive head of corporate social investment at Nedbank.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

Pillay said the fund is intended to provide funding for up to 100 startups in the waste, water, energy and agricultural sectors – the four sectors targeted by Nedbank's Green Economy Strategy to create sustainable jobs and build wealth while furthering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

"Too many startups fail to last more than a year, and one of the main reasons is that they are not eligible to receive finance via conventional funding models. Our fund has been created specifically to provide this vital lifeline to enable more green-economy SMEs to survive until they are ready for conventional funding," Pillay said.

Held on Thursday, 30 November 2023, the Nedbank Green Indaba celebrated Nedbank's Green Economy Strategy, which was announced as the centrepiece of its corporate social investment (CSI) programme at the end of 2021.

Pillay stressed that Nedbank's Green Economy Strategy aims to make substantial changes to the way in which the bank seeks to drive positive change in South Africa. He said Nedbank aimed to create sustainable jobs with a focus on the youth and rural communities, two groups that are marginalised.

"South Africa faces many challenges, but each one of them is a potential set of opportunities for those with the vision to see them. One of our key success levers is that we believe that green businesses have to create wealth and grow the total economy; the green economy has the potential to kick-start the economy,' Pillay said. 'We also believe very strongly that the green economy has to be inclusive, opening up more opportunities for those who are currently excluded."

Financing was the theme of the keynote speech at the event, delivered by Dr Frank Aswani, CEO of the African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (AVPA). Dr Aswani argued that innovative financing approaches have the potential to increase the flow of investment capital towards making an impact on Africa's challenges.

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