

The V&A Waterfront is calling all food entrepreneurs to join kitchen incubator programme

The V&A Waterfront has taken the next step in making the Western Cape's first inclusive kitchen incubator a reality by calling for applications.



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The kitchen incubator is one part of Makers Landing, a purpose-driven space that will open at the V&A Waterfront later this year and which will support job creation and skills development in the local food industry.

Along with the kitchen incubator programme, which will be the cornerstone of Makers Landing, the space will also include a kitchen studio and event space, that showcases and celebrates South African food heritage; as well as a Makers' Space, market stalls and eateries, which will give valuable insight into end-to-end food production while providing a variety of delicious and authentically local meals and products.

The Makers Landing Food Lab incubation programme, in partnership with the National Treasury's Jobs Fund, is now accepting applications from candidates. Applicants should have an existing food business that is actively selling or operating, and that has been in operation for less than three years.

The programme will offer opportunities to qualified business startups and existing small food businesses that can show that they will benefit significantly from affordable access to a licensed commercial kitchen space, and technical assistance and training from experts in food industry techniques and general business operations.

“We have developed a value-driven approach for Makers Landing,” explained Westleigh Wilkinson, Makers Landing Project Lead.

“ Our plan is to immerse our entrepreneurs in an inclusive and innovative space, where they will be nurtured by food industry mentors who are influential and successful in their own right. By matching natural creativity and passion for food with knowledge and new skills gained, our entrepreneurs will be better prepared for success in what is a tough and competitive industry. ”

The incubator programme, which will be run as modules of six months at a time, and will consist of two sessions a week. Sessions comprise of a combination of online modules, in-class learning and individual assignments. Here, incubatees will learn the fundamentals of building a business and gain insight into the local food industry.

The programme's content has been developed by Stellenbosch University's LaunchLab and industry experts with real life experience. Candidates will receive technical expert support, as well as bi-weekly mentor meetings. The curriculum will include modules covering a variety of topics such as food safety, product development, marketing, sales, operations and finance.

“One aspect that sets this programme apart from any existing programme is that it will also offer entrepreneurs access to a commercial kitchen, allowing them to take a product or an idea and produce it to scale. At Makers Landing there will also be a food market, so they will also be able to test these products or food ideas out with a real audience,” added David Green, CEO at the V&A Waterfront.

The programme will also give them access to transformative collaborations with partners in the food industry.

Who should apply>

Candidates interested in applying for the programme should have:

- A desire to formalise and expand their food business and a plan for how to achieve that growth.
- Experience in operating a food business, formally or informally, for at least six-months, but less than three years.
- A personal support network.
- An entrepreneurial spirit, enthusiasm and persistence.
- A vision for the business.

Admittance to the Makers Landing Food Lab programme is a competitive process that takes into account several practical factors, including limited space in the kitchen. Promising candidates will be interviewed by the Makers Landing team and an advisory committee of industry professionals. As businesses move from pre-incubation to incubation and onto graduation,

so the programme will make way for the next group of candidates to be admitted.

“The idea is that a pipeline will be created for these food businesses to get started in a supportive environment, and to eventually – with the knowledge gained – move to larger operations, and possibly even their own brick and mortar restaurants,” said Green.

Some costs will be applicable to new applicants joining the Maker Landing Food Lab programme, although these fees have been largely discounted by the Jobs Fund and the V&A Waterfront. Fees include a monthly sum to have access to the training, network and facilities provided during the incubation programme, as well as costs to cover regulatory items such as health and safety certification. Full details of costs and other requirements are available on the V&A Waterfront’s website as part of the application process.

In addition to the entrepreneurs, the programme is currently looking for partners to help them provide their incubatees with the tools and knowledge they need to create sustainable, scalable and impactful food businesses. Organisations with relevant expertise, or individuals that share a passion for food and social transformation, are encouraged to apply to some of the numerous opportunities for involvement.

Applications to participate in The Makers Landing Food Lab incubation programme are now open. To apply, interested candidates can visit the Makers Landing website at

<https://www.waterfront.co.za/the-makers-landing-food-lab-incubation-programme/>.

Applications for the first cohort close **23 October 2020**.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>