

Call for applications: 2023 SAB Foundation Social Innovation Awards

The 13th annual SAB Foundation Social Innovation Awards and the eighth annual Disability Empowerment Awards have opened for applications. Prizes range from R200,000 to R1.3m in grant funding and each award winner will receive valuable business skills development coaching, mentorship, and technical support.



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The Social Innovation Awards are aimed at innovators, entrepreneurs, institutions and social enterprises with prototypes or early-stage businesses that can solve social issues in our country. These products, services, business models and processes should directly address the social challenges faced by low-income women, youth, or people living in rural areas while simultaneously creating a sustainable business model.

The Disability Empowerment Awards award entrepreneurs or social enterprises that have developed an innovation that improves access to the economy and/or provides solutions for persons with disabilities, while generating enough revenue to become sustainable over time.

Online applications open at midday on 17 February 2023 and close at midday on 27 March 2023. Only applications submitted on the SAB Foundation web portal will be accepted. Apply [here](#).

“We are excited about the 2023 applications and look forward to meeting our finalists this year,” says Itumeleng Dhlamini, social innovation and Entrepreneurship manager at the SAB Foundation. “Over the years we have been so inspired by ordinary individuals doing extraordinary things.”

“These awards give us the opportunity to support and encourage talented innovators who drive change and improve the lives of people in their communities,” says Dhlamini. “Through the funding, training and mentorship that we provide, we enable them to grow and scale their businesses and ultimately achieve self-sustainability.”



SAB Foundation's Tholoana Enterprise Programme opens for applications

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Social innovations that were awarded in 2022 included a low-cost utility vehicle that assists emerging rural farmers in performing their daily tasks. Another was a polymer-based, non-pressurised, recyclable and reusable fire extinguisher designed to combat the threat of fires in informal settlements.

In the Disability Empowerment Awards category, equally innovative solutions were awarded, such as technology that produces high-quality, affordable prosthetics and orthotics for amputees and persons with disabilities.

Through this prestigious awards programme, the SAB Foundation has invested over R90m in grant funding and business support to support 176 entrepreneurs. Between 2011 and 2021, these individuals have created 1,638 new jobs since winning an award and collectively employed 3,174 people.

“Building sustainable businesses in underserved communities is a key priority for us at the SAB Foundation because we know that each business creates employment opportunities for locals which enables them to put food on the table for their families,” concludes Dhlamini.

Applications are open to all South African citizens of 18 years or older with evidence that prior to applying, they have spent time and money developing the innovation. Early submissions are strongly encouraged. Apply [here](#).

The awards are not open to NGOs that are fully dependent on grant income.

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