

Christel House SA launches initiative to support unemployed youth

Non-profit school, Christel House South Africa met with social transformation experts and changemakers recently for the inaugural think tank of Youth Bridge, a new Christel House SA employment initiative.



Photo by Ron Lach via www.pexels.com

Youth Bridge is aimed at supporting unemployed youth (15 to 35-year-olds) and helping them bridge the gap between their undiscovered ambitions, abilities and the career opportunities that await them. It draws on lessons learnt from Christel House SA's successful efforts over the past 22-years to support vulnerable youth to secure gainful employment.

Key to the programme's success is addressing the barriers to stable, successful employment through a character-based, career-focused readiness programme and then continuing to support candidates through their first periods of placement. Given the backdrop of South Africa's high youth unemployment rate, the school engaged with experts on how to create sustainable and viable solutions around their new Youth Bridge Initiative.

Adding value to the underserved

Key themes that were discussed included the perceived disconnect and mismatch of expectations between the youth and the South African industry, potential strategies that businesses and entrepreneurs can implement to generate new employment opportunities, how youth who come from vulnerable communities can be better supported and, most importantly, how a character-based, career-focused approach will support young work-seekers in their career journey.

“Christel House SA develops children from underserved communities on more than an IQ level – they understand that EQ is just as important, if not more so. I’m so excited about the Youth Bridge programme and I think the character-based and career-focused element is key,” says Nikki Joshua, a representative from Leelyn Management, the implementation partner for the Jobs Connect programme, run by the City of Cape Town.



Can education help to address some of the systemic challenges in informal settlements?

Bushra Razack and Axolile Notywala 23 Mar 2023



“The Youth Bridge programme offers an opportunity to add real value and prepare our youth to find and keep jobs. While it’s wonderful to do good for our youth, doing what’s right is even more meaningful. With the appropriate guidance and support, our youth can achieve their full potential,” adds Lance Bouwers, a representative from T3 Telecoms SA.

The Youth Bridge programme offers unemployed youth the opportunity to engage in a 6-month programme that includes full-time 1.5-month intensive contact sessions, bolstered by 4.5 months of longitudinal support and mentorship.

Participants receive character development lessons, computer training, financial literacy education, career etiquette, establishing a career path and a psychometric assessment to assist in finding their passion. Thereafter, mentors connect graduates to further education opportunities to improve their skills and employability and eventually match them with potential employers.

The launch of the Youth Bridge Programme is particularly timely given the results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for Q4: 2022 by [Statistics South Africa](#), which shows another drop to 45,3% in South Africa’s youth (aged 15-34 years) unemployment rate.

“The unemployment crisis highlights the urgent need to implement effective solutions that empower our youth to become active and productive members of society,” said Ayanda Mvandaba, Managing Partner: 10X. “Youth Bridge recognises the challenges that the emerging workforce faces in not only securing employment opportunities but also in maintaining positions that offer growth potential for career advancement. Our role is to act as the unifying force, which brings our partners and youth together for a common purpose – to make a meaningful impact in the lives of the next generation.”

For more, go to sa.christelhouse.org/our-programs/10X

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