



small business
development

Department:
Small Business Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA ADVISORY

09 APRIL 2026

GOVERNMENT TO CONVENE THE 2026 NATIONAL LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED) SUMMIT

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), in partnership with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Departments of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), will host the 2026 National Local Economic Development (LED) Summit on 15–16 April 2026 in Johannesburg, under the theme:

“Re-engineering Local Economies: A Collaborative Blueprint for Small Enterprise Growth and Ease of Doing Business.”

Members of the media are invited to attend this high-level national platform that will bring together national and provincial government departments, the private sector, business chambers, academic and research institutions, development finance institutions, and professional bodies. The Summit aims to drive coordinated, practical, and impactful solutions for inclusive local economic growth and improved service delivery.

The Summit is convened at a critical juncture to reposition Local Economic Development as a central pillar of South Africa’s developmental state, and to accelerate inclusive economic growth, job creation, and economic resilience.

It builds on the Review of the White Paper & Funding Model for Local Government and the outcomes of the 2017 National LED Summit, with a renewed emphasis on implementation, coordination, and measurable impact.

Key discussions will focus on formalising Local Economic Development as a funded and mandated core function of local government, while assessing the implications of the White Paper on Immigration and the Business Licensing Bill on local economic stability. The Summit will also explore strategies to unlock infrastructure constraints through a multi-sectoral approach to service delivery and economic growth, and to address deepening spatial inequalities between metropolitan and non-metropolitan municipalities.

Deliberations will further emphasise strengthening the coordination and implementation of the District Development Model (DDM) to enhance cooperative governance, examining sustainable

financing models for LED, and unlocking strategic partnerships between development finance institutions, public investment, and energy infrastructure to drive inclusive growth.

In addition, the Summit will promote **innovation, investment facilitation, and digital transformation** as key enablers of competitive and resilient local economies, while serving as a platform to deepen intergovernmental coordination and strengthen partnerships with the private sector and development partners.

The Summit is expected to deliver a clear and measurable Local Economic Development Action Plan, improved alignment across the three spheres of government, and strengthened mechanisms to support MSME-led growth in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030.

Local Economic Development remains at the coalface of service delivery and economic transformation. The LED Summit 2026 provides a strategic opportunity to address systemic barriers facing MSMEs and co-operatives, promote innovation and digitalisation, and advance inclusive growth in townships, rural areas, and informal economies.

The engagement will bring together Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Premiers and MECs, Mayors, Municipal Managers, LED practitioners, business leaders, entrepreneurs, development partners, and academia, to build a shared implementation roadmap for sustainable local economic development.

MEDIA INVITATION DETAILS

Date: 15–16 April 2026

Time: 09:00

Venue: Birchwood Hotel & OR Tambo Conference Centre, Johannesburg

Media Opportunities:

- Ministerial keynote addresses
- SALGA President's address
- Panel discussions and expert engagements
- One-on-one interviews with leadership
- Photo and video opportunities
- Live broadcast and news inserts
- A fully serviced media center will be available on site

Expected Speakers:

- Minister of Small Business Development
- Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- The President of SALGA
- Ministers participating in panel discussions
- Director-Generals
- Senior leadership from SALGA and CoGTA
- Representatives from provincial and local government
- Private sector leaders and Entrepreneurs

A detailed programme and confirmed speaker list will be shared closer to the event.

Media Accreditation

Members of the media are requested to RSVP and accredit by contacting Noko Manyelo via email nmanyelo@dsbd.gov.za by 14 April 2026

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Issued by the Departments of Small Business Development, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as well as SALGA