

OUR MISSION

**SIGNIFICANT
AND
SUSTAINABLE
SOCIAL IMPACT**



THE INNOVATION HUB AFRICA

IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Innovation Hub Africa, or [iHub Africa](#), is a 10-month digital training program that's offered free of charge to young applicants from communities experiencing poverty in South Africa. The unemployment rate for South African youth is a national crisis. A shortage of jobs isn't the only problem. Many young people lack the means to obtain qualifications for existing job opportunities. In the iHub class or cohort of 2024, two-thirds of students came from households that survive on less than R1000 (around 50 USD or 80 AUD) per month, usually income from social grants, informal business ventures, or casual work.

The iHub was launched in 2019 to equip these young people to gain access to the economy. Most of the funding has come through the Hillsong SA Trust. iHub covers the cost of R100 000 (about 5 500 USD and 8 500 AUD) per student to complete the program. The majority of students are between the ages of 22–27. They're provided with one meal per day and helped with transport costs to the iHub workspace in the Media Mill, a media complex in central Johannesburg. All training materials and equipment are provided on-site.

For young people trapped in generational cycles of poverty, iHub offers a life-changing opportunity. Once students qualify, they become the financial hope for their families. "I'm excited to enter a future where I'm able to take care of my family with the skills I'm learning at iHub and use them to break into the Tech industry," says Itumelang, who is in the current cohort of 2025.

The 2025 intake of students received 3,675 applications for the 58 spots available in the program.



THE 10-MONTH PROGRAM

The year of training is rigorous and comprehensive. Given that most students haven't been employed or in educational settings for months or years beforehand, the adjustment is huge and the learning curve steep. "As hectic and different as everything was," says Motheo, a 2024 graduate, "stepping into the iHub reality did wonders for my growth, my perspective and my confidence."

Graduates learn industry-level digital marketing skills – including managing email campaigns, social media management across all major platforms, Search Engine Optimisation, building excellent landing pages, and content creation. This equips them for entry-level positions or starting their own freelance careers.

The technical curriculum is scaffolded by a core soft-skills program. Most students haven't had the opportunity to build up the store of internal and interpersonal soft skills that are taken for granted in more privileged environments. At iHub, they learn critical thinking, professional communication, leadership, problem-solving, collaboration, as well as project and time management. This further equips them to secure and maintain jobs, and advance their careers in healthy and fruitful ways.





IT TAKES A VILLAGE ...

There's an African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child". Community is highly valued at iHub, and students have a strong support system. A third stream of the curriculum is a coaching program that pairs individual students with working professionals. Coaches guide students through their learning journey and help them integrate soft skills into how they approach work and life.

Since the start of 2024, iHub has employed a full-time social worker to help students navigate challenges and stay focused on their goals. Students also have access to an external referral network of professional counsellors if they require additional support.

This commitment to care is felt by the students and key to their success. "Before I became a student at iHub, I was just going through life," says Edwin, a 2024 graduate. "I didn't care much, didn't have direction. I could say I didn't really understand who I was either. As a student, it started funny cause I just wanted to learn and move from the current automation I was in. But then the community at the Hub has this thing of making people seen, and I felt they saw me and that gave me the space I needed to heal and actually start growing. My coach made sure that I understood that I have value to give and potential."



FROM LEARNING TO EARNING

The program prioritises equipping students for the working world in practical ways. The iHub workspace simulates a real-world, open-plan working environment that is ideal for collaboration and soft-skills development. Students are required to complete job-shadowing hours with companies across industries. In the weeks leading up to graduation, they attend work-readiness workshops. Days before graduation, iHub hosts an "Opportunities Showcase", where companies with vacancies pitch opportunities to graduates, who are invited to apply.

EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

By May of this year, 65% of the class of 2024 had entered full-time employment, started their own businesses, or successfully secured work as freelancers. (This percentage is still rising.) An additional 9% of the class had enrolled for further education or training.





TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

INTRODUCING [IHDA] AGENCY

In January 2024, iHub Africa launched [\[ihda\]](#) (pronounced eye-duh), a full-service digital agency and education consulting firm that has its offices in the same media complex as iHub. [ihda] helps to fund iHub, while also creating work opportunities.

The top achiever from the class of 2024, Rethabile Nkoko, now works at [ihda] as a graphic and web

designer with a special interest in “Learning Experience” design. “One of the standout aspects of this journey has been the unwavering support provided by the program,” she writes in a LinkedIn article. “From the facilitators to the masterclasses and even my dedicated coach Josepha Kato Fula, I’ve felt guided every step of the way.”



HEARING FROM THE COHORT OF 2025



SHAUN

“I love sound and tech. I plan on using the skills I’m learning at iHub to build my business around sound engineering. I see myself working with big brands like Red Bull and MultiChoice. I’m excited to see how these two worlds are going to come together.”



LELEGO

“I’m excited to venture into social media and content creation. I was aware of this field and had practised it before, but I was only familiar with the posting side of it. Being here has opened my eyes to see how much more there is to social media, like analytics and so forth. I’m excited to see myself in the social media world.”



XOLO

“I’m excited to see myself as an entrepreneur. iHub is equipping me with not only digital skills but also how to show up in ways that I never knew. I see myself owning a business in the digital and media industry (Tech, Talent Management and Photography/ Videography), excited to see how things turn out. Shoutout iHub!”