



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Educating our youth beyond traditional borders**

*Western Cape, 28 June 2020* - As Youth Month draws to a close, **SANRAL extends developmental support platforms for young people across South Africa, with applications for scholarships and bursaries now open.**

**Furthermore, the scope of financial support has been expanded beyond Civil Engineering, to accommodate other related disciplines within the built environment.**

“In recognising the changing landscape in our industry and the often overlooked auxiliary pipelines that feed the engineering sector, we have to look beyond a core discipline built on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to effectively consider the broader scope of science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and mathematics (STREAM),” said Heidi Harper, SANRAL’s GM for Skills Development.

Going forward, the SANRAL scholarship programme will take these factors into account. While SANRAL has a vested interest in promoting the importance of maths and science at school, the agency equally recognises the value of supporting high school learners to complete matric, irrespective of their chosen areas of further development.

#### **Scholarships cover:**

- School fees
- Books and prescribed stationery
- Winter and summer uniforms
- Hostel accommodation (where applicable)
- Extra Math and Science classes

#### **Bursaries cover:**

- Tuition and registration
- Books and equipment
- Compulsory excursions and seminars
- Accommodation and meals
- Living allowance

In his State of the Nation Address this year, President Cyril Ramaphosa recognised the challenge of youth unemployment. Of the 1.2 million young people who enter the labour market each year, approximately two-thirds are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and more than half of all young people are unemployed.

**SANRAL's support of young people therefore had to factor in that not all youth finish school, and furthermore, not all those who finish school, take up higher education. This led to the funding of learnerships on various major construction projects across the country.**

**“We are cognisant of the growing cohort of young people who turn to the road construction industry and as such we strongly support the creation of learnership opportunities that have given thousands of young people access to skills development, knowledge sharing, gainful employment and entrepreneurial support.** In addition, our procurement policies are geared to pave the way for black businesses, and particularly youth-run small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) to benefit from access to conventional construction projects as well as routine road maintenance (RRM),” continued Harper.

**At the recent Sustainable Infrastructure Development Symposium, President Ramaphosa announced that infrastructure would be the flywheel that kickstarts South Africa's economy during and post Covid-19. This puts SANRAL, as a key driver of infrastructure development, at the forefront of responding to the President's call.**

“SANRAL continues to build on our substantial investment into research and education and now more than ever we are called upon to ensure a continuous flow of skilled, qualified and highly engaged professionals, into the engineering sector and indeed the greater infrastructure development space,” concluded Harper.

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