

**SCI-BONO DISCOVERY CENTRE NPC**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The [Sci-Bono Discovery Centre](#), in partnership with the **Gauteng Department of Social Development (GDSD)**, has recorded an unprecedented interest for its second **2026 Digital Skills Development Programme for Youth**. Following the opening of online registrations, the platform received a total of **5, 085 applications** within a matter of hours, far exceeding the **150 available face-to-face training slots**.

This overwhelming response underscores the critical demand for specialised digital skills among unemployed youth in the City of Johannesburg, highlighting Sci-Bono's pivotal role in bridging the local digital divide.

Key Enrolment Insights & Data Breakdown

The intake metrics reflect a substantial mobilisation of youth seeking to future-proof their careers, with a particularly historic turnout from young women in technology.

- **Total Applications Received:** 5,085 submissions within hours of launch.
- **Strong Female Representation:** **3,649 applications** were submitted by females, compared to **1,436 applications** from males, showcasing an inspiring shift toward tech sector participation among young women, capturing nearly 72% of the total application pool.
- **High-Demand Learning Tracks:**
 - **Networking Specialist:** 2,019 applications (Highest demand track)
 - **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) & Data Analytics Essentials:** 1,922 applications
 - **Fundamentals of Employability Skills:** 1,144 applications

Strategic Impact for Stakeholders

For corporate partners, government stakeholders, and community leaders, these figures provide crucial market indicators:

- **Verified Demand:** The rapid intake confirms that Johannesburg's youth are highly motivated and ready to transition into the digital economy when seamless, high-quality pathways are provided.
- **Gender Equity in Action:** The immense female turnout proves that targeted digital outreach is successfully engaging young women, laying a strong foundation for diverse tech talent pipelines and directly addressing gender disparity in STEM.
- **Market Alignment:** The massive demand for the *Networking Specialist* and *Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) & Data Analytics Essentials* tracks, shows that youth are actively seeking high-growth sectors with immediate employment potential.

Next Steps in Selection

Sci-Bono's admissions team has begun processing applications on the communicated first-come, first-served basis. Applicants who submitted early and meet all the baseline criteria including South African citizenship, JHB residency, unemployment status, and with an age limit (18–35) will be contacted directly via official channels regarding their acceptance and way forward.

The GDSD and Sci-Bono extend their gratitude to all stakeholders for their continued interest and support in championing youth empowerment. The sheer volume of applicants highlights a clear opportunity for expanding future cohorts through additional public and private sector collaborations.

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About Sci-Bono Discovery Centre:

Based in Newtown, Johannesburg, Sci-Bono Discovery Centre is Africa's largest science and technology centre. It supports education and skills development through

interactive learning, specialised Science, Technology, Research, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STREAM) programmes.

Media & Stakeholder Enquiries:

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