

Pathways to funding for (social) entrepreneurs Do exist

Issued by [UCT Graduate School of Business](#)

28 Jul 2017

Bringing together entrepreneurs, startups, finance and legal experts from across the South African entrepreneurship ecosystem, the Bertha Centre's Do-ference is designed to help early-stage entrepreneurs access the tools and connections they need to take their (social) enterprises to the next level. The Do-ference is for all early-stage entrepreneurs, but is especially tailored to social entrepreneurs and township-based entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship are but some of the keys to growth and employment opportunities in our country. At the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship's (a specialised Centre at UCT's Graduate School of Business) annual Pathways to Funding Do-ference entrepreneurs will get a better understanding of how to raise funding directly from investors and peers who have walked the journey before them. These investors and peers are invited to the Do-ference from the local ecosystems across the country, in order to establish and hopefully build lasting relationships.

"The Do-ference helps entrepreneurs find out how, when, and where to access the right funding. It enables entrepreneurs to design their own programme by following either an ideation, incubation or growth track," says Francois Bonnici, Director of the Bertha Centre.

The Bertha Centre is partnering with the Flexible Workspace @ 8 Morrison Street, in Durban; the Impact Hub in Johannesburg; and Bandwidth Barn in Woodstock, Cape Town to host the Do-ference across South Africa.

The two-day event gives delegates the tools they need to raise funding, through practical interactive mini-workshops, inspirational TED-style talks, and free one-on-one sessions with experts.

Topics will cover:

1. Understanding your business: What, when and where are my funding options?
2. Social finance: How can impact investing and innovative finance work for your business?
3. Reaching your goal: The tools and experts that can support your entrepreneurial journey.
4. Inspiring inclusive and sustainable business models: What works well in delivering impact and achieving growth.

"At the Do-ference attendees can choose which talks to attend based on their needs – as we run about three to five workshops simultaneously," says Tine Fisker Henriksen, Impact Investing Project Manager at the Bertha Centre. "The Do-ference is designed to help you 'do' - to go out and raise funding. Whether your business is in the ideation, incubation, implementation or scale phase, our mix of content and speakers will help answer your exact needs and questions."

For the 2017 Do-ference, the Bertha Centre, in partnership with Community Chest, is launching a six-month support programme for a cohort of peer-nominated Pathways to Funding entrepreneurs. The Pathways Programme is designed to help (social) entrepreneurs grow their business by opening the right doors. During the six months, the entrepreneurs will be able to access the expert services they need to get their businesses investment ready. The Bertha Centre will act as a gateway to an ecosystem of support organisations as well guide the entrepreneurs on an innovative finance journey, such as how to monetise their social and environmental impact, how to blend grants, loans and equity investments, etc.

Additionally, one entrepreneur from this group will also be awarded a radio advertising campaign of R150,000 from

LeadSA.

"At LeadSA our continued support and celebration of the young minds in business is part of our ongoing commitment to making the world a better place. The medium of radio has proven to be powerful in building brands and businesses and we look forward to aiding the success of an entrepreneur, a future leader of tomorrow through a radio marketing campaign, flighted on one of the radio stations within the Primedia Broadcasting group" said Primedia Broadcasting Group Head of Strategy and LeadSA champion, Karl Gostner.

The Do-ference will take place on 7 and 8 September in Durban. Speakers include: [Bathabile Mpopu](#) (Managing Director of Nkazimulo Applied Sciences), [Elvis Sekhaolelo](#) (Founding Executive Director of eKasi Entrepreneurs) and [Darlene Menzies](#) (CEO of FinFind) to name a few.

The Do-ference will also be taking place in Johannesburg on 15 and 16 September and Cape Town on 28 and 29 September.

For more information and to purchase tickets visit www.pathwaystofunding.co.za questions can be directed to innovativefinance@gsb.uct.ac.za.

About the Do-ference roadshow

The Do-ference roadshow has connected and reached over 650 early-stage entrepreneurs with successful (social) entrepreneurs, investors, business development experts, lawyers, etc. across the country over the last two years, and hopes to take that to over 1,000 this year.

About the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship is a specialised unit at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business (GSB). Established in 2011 in partnership with the Bertha Foundation, a family foundation that works with inspiring leaders who are catalysts for social and economic change and human rights, the centre has become a leading academic centre in Africa. Its mission is to pursue social impact towards social justice in Africa, through teaching, knowledge-building, convening and catalytic projects with a systems lens on social innovation. In collaboration with the GSB, the centre has integrated social innovation into the business school curriculum, established a wide community of practitioners and awarded over R6 million in scholarships to students from across Africa. The Bertha Centre offers scholarships to UCT GSB applicants only, who would like to complete either the UCT GSB MBA or MPhil in Inclusive Innovation, for more information on this please visit their [website](#).

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