

MQA SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

**2025 – 2026 &
2026-2027
FINANCIAL YEARS**



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APP	Annual Performance Plan
DDM	District Development Plan
ERRP	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMS	Mining and Minerals Sector
MQA	Mining Qualification Authority
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non- Profit Organisation
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan
SDP	Skills Development Provider
SIHIP	SETA Integrated High Impact Projects
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SLA	Service Level Agreement
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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This document is to be read in conjunction with the approved MQA funding policy for 2026-2027 financial year.

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this framework is to provide a clear guideline that can be applied to the MQA special projects and partnerships that will enable allocation and disbursement of funds that would best support the mining and minerals sector skills needs.

The framework is in support of national and sectoral policies and initiatives without prejudice or preference to either.

2. DEFINITIONS

a. Special Projects

A Special Project refers to a unique, innovative, and distinct intervention that falls outside the scope of existing MQA programmes.

It is designed to address specific skills gaps, target groups, or sectoral challenges that are not adequately covered by current initiatives.

Such projects introduce new ideas, approaches, or technologies that enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, or impact of skills development.

They often test alternative models or creative solutions that promote employability, transformation, and sustainable growth within the mining and minerals sector.

Each Special Project is characterised by a clearly defined purpose, scope, and set of outcomes, and is directly or indirectly aligned with the MQA's mandate to advance skills development and capacity building within the sector or targeted communities.

Special Projects funded and supported by the MQA will relate to initiatives strictly aimed at responding to interventions:

- i. Aligned to national, ministerial and sectoral priorities
- ii. Recommended through research conducted by the MQA

b. PARTNERSHIP

A partnership refers to any collaborative arrangement entered into with one or more partners to address identified (skills) needs within the sector, community, or broader society. Partnerships are established to conceptualise, design, implement, monitor, and evaluate targeted interventions

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that are relevant, responsive, effective and sustainable (impactful) in achieving the desired skills development outcomes of the MMS.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Maximise impact of skills development initiatives in the MMS.
- 3.2 Improve on mobilising resources and efforts of ERRP initiatives.
- 3.3 Improve technological and innovation capability of the workforce to enhance their competitiveness in the global economy.
- 3.4 Improve on responding to challenges that are impacting on the ability to our economy to expand and provide increased employment opportunities as dictated in the NSDP.
- 3.5 Intensify promotion of sustainable employment; entrepreneurship and reduce unemployment.
- 3.6 Strengthen collaborations through research findings

4. FOCUS AREAS FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Special Projects will have a specific or niche focus and is directly or indirectly aligned with the MQA's skills development mandate, aiming to address a particular need or gap through skilling, reskilling, upskilling and cross skilling within the sector or community.

Below are the key focus areas for special projects and any other emerging trends:

FOCUS AREAS	DEFINITION
Green Skills - Alternative energy sources (green hydrogen, solar, wind etc). - Just Energy Transition (community empowerment)	According to the MQA study on green skill, green skills are defined as competencies and abilities required to predict (identify and qualify) prevent, detect, mitigate, and monitor any environmental impact during exploration, exploitation (extracting and processing) and beneficiation processes to ensure sustainability of operations and environmental compliance
Mineral Beneficiation skills (including critical minerals)	Beneficiation entails the transformation of a mineral (or a combination of minerals) to a

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	higher value product, which can either be consumed locally or exported. A beneficiation strategy for the Minerals Industry of South Africa identifies several instruments that constitute an enabling environment for beneficiation (policies, legislation, incentives etc.). Furthermore, it illuminates prevailing constraints to the effective implementation of beneficiation that require an integrated approach to mitigate. These include, amongst others the shortage of required critical skills. The strategy recommends the following interventions that can be implemented by government to mitigate the skills shortage issues: Align the beneficiation skills pipeline to the National Skills Development Strategy and the Sector Skills Plans for required skills.
Technological advancement skills	The MQA's 4IR study revealed that different subsectors have embraced technological innovation to different extents. For example, coal and diamond mining subsectors have enough or unlimited headroom and have made significant strides in technological innovation. On the other hand, conventional narrow reef gold and PGM subsectors have limited headroom and have been relatively stagnant when it comes to the introduction of new technologies. As a result of innovation, the skills requirements will change. There will be a decline or increase in demand for certain

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	roles and new roles will emerge. Thus, it is important for companies to align their human capital development strategies to their innovation strategies. This could include re-skilling, upskilling, and continuous training of employees on the emerging skills. Furthermore, the adoption of autonomous operations could have associated implications on skills requirements as the future of work now require high tech competencies on the part of the employees.
Rural economic development	Rural development aims at improving the quality of life of people living in rural areas, often relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. It focuses on the action for the development of areas that are lagging behind in the overall development of the rural economy.
Research	Identified and implemented projects that are not covered by the research agenda as and when the need arises.
Infrastructure development	Support infrastructure development but not limited to equipment.
Emergencies	Refers to urgent, unforeseen, unavoidable circumstances that - Require immediate action - Causes widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community to cope using its own resources.

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SIHIP	Refers to the collaboration between SETAs to address critical skills gaps within the country.
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5. FOCUS AREAS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are grounded in a clear understanding of the core problems, their root causes, and the desired long-term impacts. They therefore focus on ensuring that:

- a. Inputs and resources are effectively mobilised (human, physical, technological, financial, and intellectual).
- b. Activities and outputs are aligned with addressing identified root causes of skills shortages, gaps and mismatches.
- c. Outcomes contribute to sustainable skills development, employability, and transformation in the sector; and
- d. Impact is measurable in terms of improved capacity, productivity, and socio-economic advancement within the MMS and its communities.

Partnerships are characterised by:

- e. A clear niche focus aligned with the MQA's skills development mandate.
- f. Clearly defined objectives, outputs, outcomes, and deliverables informed by evidence-based needs analysis; and
- g. A shared commitment among all partners to contribute resources, expertise, and effort toward achieving mutually beneficial, measurable change for the sector and its stakeholders.

5.1.1 The MQA seeks to collaborate or partner on initiatives that demonstrate:

5.1.1.1 Shared vision and values

5.1.1.2 Complementarity of purpose and value added complimentary or supplementary funding models.

5.1.1.3 Transparent and mutual accountable.

5.1.1.4 Commitment to flexibility and responsive to sector needs.

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6. WHO CAN APPLY AND WHO CAN THE MQA PARTNER WITH?

6.1 The MQA will consider applications from MQA's levy paying organisations, employers exempted from paying levies, SETAs, government departments, NGOs, NPOs, accredited skills development providers (SDP), TVET colleges, universities, service providers and other relevant stakeholders who qualify to access MQA's special projects and partnerships.

7. FINANCING

The financing of special projects is to be administered in accordance with the MQA finance policy and follow the Discretionary grants process as outlined in Section 8 of the MQA Funding Policy.

8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDING

Funding shall be implemented in tranches in line with the Milestones set in the Service Level Agreement that will be signed with awarded entities upon approval of the projects by the MQA.

In some instances, the special projects and partnerships will be implemented using a co-funding model.

9. CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

9.1 Other than the Presidential and Ministerial directives as well as emergencies, the MQA will follow the approved SOP for call for applications.

9.2 Not all partnerships will arise from call for applications, the MQA may solicit partnerships to fulfil its mandate in line with the approved SOP.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

10.1 Special projects and partnerships shall be subjected to the normal monitoring and evaluation in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

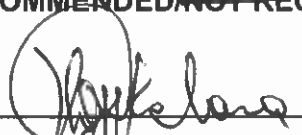
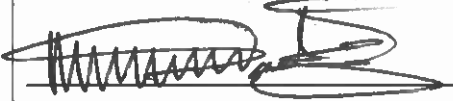
Special projects and partnerships shall be subjected to the normal risk management in line with the Risk Management Policy.

All projects under this framework may be subjected to a pre-audit prior to awarding.

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12. AUDIT PROCESSES

All projects under this framework shall be subjected internal and external audit as it applies to all other MQA funded projects.

~~RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED~~  Mr Xolisa Njikelana Chief Operations Officer Date: 05/05/2026	~~RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED~~  Ms Carol Maila Executive Manager: Stakeholder Relations Date: 05/05/2026
~~RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED~~  Ms Elaine Brass Chief Financial Officer Date: 6/5/26	~~RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED~~  Mr Mashudu Mavhungu Executive Manager: Corporate Services Date: 06/05/2026
~~RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED~~  Ms Jacqweline Modiba Chief Risk Officer (Acting) Date: 6/05/26	~~APPROVED/NOT APPROVED~~  Dr Thabo Mashongoane Chief Executive Officer Date: 13 May2025