



INNOVATION AND TRADE IN KWAZULU-

NATAL

An introduction to the King Dinuzulu Innovation Valley, a pioneering initiative empowering the province of KwaZulu-Natal to become a continental leader in technology, trade, and innovation.



SPEARHEADED BY



AFRICAN. HUMANE. INSIGHTFUL.

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COMPANY **OVERVIEW**

WHO WE ARE

King Dinuzulu Innovation Valley (KDIV) is more than an innovation hub; we are a team of problem solvers dedicated to tackling real-world challenges in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. At KDIV, our approach is rooted in harnessing the power of technology to address pressing issues in fields like digital access, trade, community safety, and socio-economic equity. While we are a game-changer in IT innovation, our mission goes beyond creating digital solutions. We identify the unique challenges our communities face, whether they're infrastructure gaps, the digital divide, or economic obstacles, and deploy technology as a transformative tool to overcome them. Our team and partners are united by a commitment to innovation as a force for good, driving sustainable change, creating opportunities, and building a digitally empowered future for KwaZulu-Natal and Africa at large.

VISION

By establishing KwaZulu-Natal as a premier hub for innovation and trade, aims to drive sustainable economic growth, social progress, and inclusive development in the region.

MISSION

We aim to advance economic and social progress through cutting-edge technologies, eco-friendly solutions, community empowerment, ensuring equal opportunities for all.



Establish KZN as a premier hub for innovation and trade

Attract businesses, startups, and talent to drive economic growth technological advancement in the region



Foster digital transformation and sustainable practices

Promote the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and eco-friendly solutions to enhance competitiveness and quality of life.



Advance economic and social progress

Leverage digital transformation, sustainable development, and community empowerment to create positive impact.

Empower and drive inclusive growth

Ensure marginalised groups equal access have to skills, opportunities, and resources.

STRATEGIC GOALS

We are dedicated to reshaping KwaZulu-Natal through a comprehensive strategy that champions trade, inclusivity, innovation, and sustainability. From propelling economic growth and creating jobs to fostering social equity and advancing digital transformation, our mission is to position KZN as a gateway for global markets and a leader in innovation. By integrating sustainable practices and honoring indigenous knowledge, we aim to build resilient communities that embrace their cultural heritage while driving progress.

Trade, Economic Growth, and Job Creation

Propel KZN's economic development by creating high-quality jobs, supporting tech-driven industries, and generating investment in local and international trade. We aim to strengthen KZN's trade capabilities, making it a gateway for continental and global markets.

Social Inclusivity and Equity

Foster an inclusive environment where youth, women, and marginalized communities have equal access to skills development, entrepreneurial support, and economic opportunities.

Sustainability and Indigenous Knowledge

Integrate sustainable practices with indigenous knowledge to build resilient, eco-friendly communities that preserve cultural heritage.

Innovation and Digital Transformation

Advance digital literacy and promote cutting-edge technology adoption to make KZN a leader in digital innovation and an attractive market for tech startups.



WHY KWAZULU-NATAL?

KZN's strategic location, untapped talent pool, socioeconomic needs, and supportive government partnerships make it an ideal location for driving innovation and trade-based economic transformation in South Africa.

Addressing economic disparities

Technology-driven solutions are needed to tackle challenges like youth unemployment and skills shortages in KZN.

Trade and logistics hub

KZN's strategic location with access to major ports and strong trade linkages to international markets.

Aligned government partnerships

The KZN government is strongly aligned with and supportive of projects that drive digital and tradebased economic growth.

Young, ambitious workforce

KZN's population is relatively young, with a workforce eager for skill-building opportunities in emerging technologies.



DUBE TRADEPORT

The Epicenter of Innovation and Trade

Strategically located near King Shaka International Airport, the Dube TradePort is a globally renowned trade and logistics hub that drives economic growth in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. It is recognized as one of South Africa's top Special Economic Zones (SEZ), offering tax incentives, streamlined customs processes, and investment opportunities. It is home to state-of-the-art infrastructure, including:



Agrizone

Africa's most advanced agricultural cluster for highvalue crop production



TradeZone

Hosts key global businesses in manufacturing, logistics, and distribution.



Cargo Terminal

Handles over 100,000 tons of freight annually.



POSITIONED FOR IMPACT

Nestled within the dynamic Dube TradePort, KDIV is strategically located to drive innovation, empower entrepreneurs, and transform trade across Africa. With seamless access to international logistics and a robust ecosystem of businesses and research institutions, KDIV bridges the gap between local innovation and global opportunity. Here, we don't just cultivate ideas—we turn them into solutions that drive economic growth, create jobs, and position KwaZulu-Natal as a leader in IT, agriculture, and green technologies.



Proximity to Key Resources

- Direct access to international logistics for exports and imports.
- Seamless connectivity to global markets via air, sea, and rail.



Innovation Ecosystem

- Collaboration with world-class businesses and research institutions within the TradeZone.
- Integration with Agrizone to support tech-driven agricultural innovations.



Empowering Entrepreneurs

 Strategic location allows us to attract local and international partners, positioning KDIV as a bridge for innovation and trade across Africa.



Driving Economic Growth

- Amplifies KwaZulu-Natal's competitiveness in IT, logistics, agriculture, and green technologies.
- Fosters job creation and strengthens the local supply chain.

Harnessing strategic resources for

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

We bridge local ingenuity with global opportunity, leveraging the strategic resources of Dube TradePort to transform KwaZulu-Natal into a thriving hub of innovation, trade, and inclusive economic growth. Together, we are shaping Africa's future, one idea at a time. This is how we do that:

Technology and Innovation

- Leverage Dube TradePort's advanced infrastructure to develop cuttingedge solutions in e-Government, logistics, and agri-tech.
- Drive digitization and smart solutions to enhance trade efficiency.

Global Trade and Collaboration

- Position KZN as a key player in BRICS+ trade by using the TradePort as a gateway to international markets.
- Promote blockchain and alternative payment systems for seamless crossborder trade.

Job Creation and Skills Development

- Partner with Dube TradePort stakeholders to upskill local talent and support emerging industries.
- Use Agrizone as a base to revolutionize sustainable farming practices.



Our commitment to

TRANSFORMING TRADE

As global trade adapts to a rapidly changing world, King Dinuzulu Innovation Valley is at the forefront of exploring and implementing innovative solutions to promote seamless, secure, and inclusive trade across Africa and beyond.

Enhancing Economic Cooperation Through Innovation

With BRICS+ nations looking to enhance_ economic collaboration, KDIV is dedicated to overcoming traditional trade barriers. integrating diverse payment systems and pioneering settlement methods, we aim to streamline cross-border transactions, enabling more fluid and resilient trade. Leveraging digital currencies and blockchain, we help reduce transaction costs, boost trade security, and navigate geopolitical challenges that impact international commerce.

Advancing Resilient Trade Solutions

Our trade strategy aligns with global decentralization trends, which countries empower to explore alternative, resilient trade solutions. embracing blockchain-based settlement systems and championing cryptocurrency, we aim drive secure and efficient transactions, overcoming limitations of conventional payment infrastructure.

Building Trusted Partnerships and Engaging Local Communities

True trade transformation depends on collaboration. KDIV's approach involves close engagement with local communities, alignment with national financial strategies, and forging trusted partnerships with African banks and financial institutions. Through strategic cooperation, including initiatives like the R-Style Softlab platform, we are inclusive building financial ecosystems that can uplift millions, positioning South Africa as a central force in the BRICS+ digital trade revolution.

We're committed to harnessing cutting-edge technology and collaborative partnerships to position KwaZulu-Natal as a key player in the BRICS+ trade ecosystem, connecting South Africa to emerging global markets.



OUR ENABLING ECOSYSTEM

Our success is built on the strength of our robust ecosystem of partners, each playing a pivotal role in advancing innovation, trade, and socio-economic development. From global technology leaders like Huawei and Telkom to academic powerhouses such as Stanford University, and financial institutions like Standard Bank and the New Development Bank, our network represents a diverse array of expertise. Collaborations with industry players, government bodies, and international organizations ensure that we have the resources and support to drive transformative initiatives. Together with these partners, we are creating a thriving platform for startups, advancing agriculture and energy solutions, fostering innovation, and enabling digital transformation across KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. This ecosystem empowers us to tackle challenges, leverage opportunities, and build a sustainable, inclusive future for Africa.

KEY PILLARS & INITIATIVES

Our mission is to create a thriving ecosystem that integrates innovation, skills development, and connectivity to drive sustainable growth and empower communities across South Africa. Our focus spans transformative incubator programs, rural connectivity projects, and workforce training initiatives, each designed to tackle challenges, bridge divides, and unlock the full potential of KwaZulu-Natal's people and economy. From equipping individuals with critical digital skills to developing infrastructure that connects underserved communities, our initiatives are aligned to foster collaboration between academia, government, and industry. These efforts aim to ignite a digital revolution, create opportunities, and ensure inclusive growth that uplifts all sectors of society.



FOCUS AREAS

- AGRICULTURE
- ENERGY
- E-GOV AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT
- INNOVATION, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
- TRADE AND LOGISTICS

- MEDICINE AND HEALTH CARE
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- STARTUP INCUBATION AND JOB CREATION
- EDUCATION
- INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

By fostering innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity across these areas, we aim to build a resilient, future-ready economy that uplifts communities, promotes sustainability, and positions KwaZulu-Natal as a leader in global markets.

EDUCATION

The goal is to foster collaboration across academia, government, and industry to promote a digital skills revolution in South Africa.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1. Developing a digital skills curriculum for rural schools. 2. Implementing digital literacy programs alongside infrastructure development. 3. Launching university entrepreneurship programs to drive employment.	1. Digital Skills Development Program: Upskill individuals with essential digital competencies in software development, data analysis, and digital marketing. 2. T&E Ladder Education Program: Focused on high school students, enhancing skills in computer literacy, public speaking, and communication for career readiness.	Equip the workforce with essential digital skills, enhancing employability and fostering innovation.

E-GOVERNMENT & CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

We aim to establish eGovernment Centres to streamline government processes and enhance citizen engagement.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1.Implementing cost- effective technology solutions to improve communication and reduce wait times. 2.Leveraging technology to anticipate citizen needs and enhance transparency.`	1. Digital Transformation Fund (DTF): Provides funding to support ICT infrastructure and digital access solutions in under- resourced communities, promoting connectivity and improved government-citizen interactions.	Create a more efficient and transparent government, fostering trust and accountability.

AGRICULTURE

Position South Africa as a leading producer and processor of high-quality agricultural products.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1.Boosting the local economy through advanced agro- technologies. 2.Promoting sustainable practices and skills development in agriculture.	1. Agri-Tech and Digital Farming Support: Planned initiatives to promote sustainable farming practices and advanced agro-technologies to boost KZN's agriculture sector (Future Focus) 2. Greenfields Africa: Beef production Programme, Digital agri-trade marketplace.	Increase productivity, sustainability, and market access for local farmers, supporting food security and economic vitality.

ENERGY

Deploy clean, reliable, and affordable green energy solutions across rural and urban communities.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1. Catalysing an energy revolution across Africa with a focus on sustainability. 2. Prioritising skills development through education, training, and job creation.	1. Phemba Africa: Empower communities, promote economic self-sufficiency, and contribute to sustainable development.	Empower communities, promote economic self-sufficiency, and contribute to sustainable development.

HONIGRESTOI

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

To preserve, revitalise, and integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) with modern scientific approaches, fostering a holistic and inclusive approach to innovation, health, and sustainable development.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
 Collaborate with traditional healers to document, protect, and ethically promote indigenous knowledge. Digital and in-person platforms for sharing indigenous practices across communities. Programs to raise awareness about the value of indigenous knowledge. 	1. Collaborate With Indigenous Knowledge Systems Program: This program also aligns with Indigenous Knowledge preservation, with a focus on traditional medicine and cultural heritage integration.	Preserve cultural heritage, empower communities through ethical commercialisation, advance health with blended traditional and modern care, and foster ecofriendly, sustainable, practices rooted in indigenous wisdom.

MEDICINE AND HEALTHCARE

Build the King Langalibalele Health Precinct and The Institute for African Traditional Medicine.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1.Execute traditional medicine projects and enable AI-assisted diagnosis and therapy. 2.Catalyse 4P Medicine and empower traditional medicine practitioners globally.	1. King Langalibalele Health Precinct, which will inter alia house The Institute for African Traditional Medicine	Preserve cultural heritage, enhance service efficiency, and reduce healthcare costs.

INFRASTRUCUTRE

Roll out ICT infrastructure prioritising service delivery functions and under-resourced communities.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1. Partnering with Telkom for a province-wide initiative to ensure universal internet access. 2. Conducting awareness campaigns to enable citizens to leverage the network and its benefits.	1. Rural Connectivity and ICT Development: Initiatives within the DTF to roll out high-speed internet, ICT resources, and essential services in underserved communities to bridge the digital divide.	Bridge the digital divide, enabling equitable access to digital resources and opportunities.

INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Expand research in focus areas to integrate cutting-edge technology and bolster expertise.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1.Fostering collaboration among industry stakeholders, academia, and government agencies. 2.Promoting knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and collaborative research initiatives.	1. Al and Data Science Training Program: Provides specialised skills in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science, contributing to innovation and R&D in the region.	Drive innovation and technological advancement, positioning KZN as a leader in research and development.

TRADE AND LOGITISTICS

Optimise trade processes by leveraging advanced capabilities and integrating cutting-edge technologies.

1.Streamlining operations and developing infrastructure to enhance global connectivity.

INITIATIVES

2.Promoting sustainability and community engagement in trade practices.

PROGRAMMES

1. Toyota Efficient Manufacturing Program:

Equips professionals with sustainable and efficient manufacturing practices to boost productivity and competitiveness in KZN's manufacturing sector.

2.Co-working and Innovation Space:

Provides startups and small businesses with a collaborative work environment to foster growth and facilitate networking and trade.

IMPACT

Enhance market expansion, customer satisfaction, and economic growth through efficient trade and logistics.

STARTUP INCUBATION AND JOB CREATION

Empower aspiring entrepreneurs to launch small businesses and create employment opportunities.

INITIATIVES	PROGRAMMES	IMPACT
1.Transforming concepts into investment-ready propositions through incubator programs. 2. Addressing unemployment, particularly among youth and marginalised communities.	1. Startup Incubation Program: A 12-week intensive program offering mentorship, funding, and strategic development for aspiring entrepreneurs. 2. Innovation Challenge and Hackathon Series: Events aimed at problem-solving for niche industries and developing real-world solutions in sectors like agriculture, tourism, and tech.	Foster a vibrant startup ecosystem, driving economic growth and innovation.

How the Incubator Programmes Work

By providing tailored support and focusing on high-potential sectors, the KDIV incubator programmes are designed to nurture the next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators who will drive economic growth and trade in Kwazulu-Natal.

01	Stages of Development	Structured incubator programs for entrepreneurs at various stages - idea validation, product development, market readiness, and scaling.
02	Support Offered	Financial support, mentorship from experts, access to industry networks, and market analysis resources to refine products and services.
03	High Impact Sectors	Prioritising industries with growth potential and trade opportunities, such as agri-tech, manufacturing, health tech, and renewable energy.
04	Target Audience	Ambitious entrepreneurs, students, and innovators ready to create sustainable, scalable businesses that will contribute to KZN's economy.

DRIVING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND TRADE IN KZN



Job creation and workforce development

Estimated creation of over 5,000 new jobs in high-demand tech and business roles through KDIV's training programs and incubator initiatives.



Enable trade and investment

By supporting innovative startups and emerging industries, KDIV is positioning KZN as a destination for investors and trade partners, with a pipeline of ready for market products and services.



Empower marginalised communities

Dedicated programs and targeted funding to support women and youth entrepreneurs, ensuring marginalised groups benefit from technological advancements and trade opportunities.

KDIV is catalysing transformative economic change in Kwazulu-Natal, positioning the province as a leading innovation and trade hub in Africa.

Unlock a future of

GROWTH & INNOVATION

King Dinuzulu Innovation Valley offers a unique opportunity for forward-thinking investors to contribute to transformative projects that are reshaping KwaZulu-Natal and Africa. By partnering with KDIV, you become part of a movement driving innovation, empowering communities, and unlocking untapped economic potential.

Stro	Strategic advantages for partners		
01	PROVEN FRAMEWORK	Programs designed to bridge the digital divide, upskill local talent, and promote sustainable trade practices.	
02	PRIME LOCATION AT DUBE TRADEPORT	A globally connected logistics hub offering seamless trade access to domestic and international markets.	
03	ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS	Strong collaboration with government bodies, private enterprises, and global organizations to drive impactful results.	
04	INCLUSIVE GROWTH	A focus on supporting women-led businesses, youth empowerment, and rural development, aligning with global ESG goals.	
05	DIVERSE SECTOR FOCUS	Opportunities across key industries, including energy, agriculture, digital transformation, healthcare, and trade and logistics.	

Join us

BUILD THE FUTURE

KDIV offers targeted investment opportunities tailored to innovative and high-growth sectors. Explore how your investment can catalyze transformation in KwaZulu-Natal:



STARTUP INCUBATION PROGRAMS

Help fund high-potential startups across industries like energy, healthcare, agriculture, and technology.

Provide mentorship, resources, and access to global markets for entrepreneurs.



SUSTAINABILITY AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Invest in initiatives that preserve and promote indigenous knowledge through modern technology and innovation.

Support projects that align with sustainability and renewable energy goals.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

Invest in infrastructure to improve rural connectivity and bridge the digital divide.

Support data-driven governance platforms to enhance decision-making and public services.



TRADE AND LOGISTICS INNOVATION

Partner with KDIV to drive advancements in trade facilitation, export readiness, and supply chain optimization.

Leverage Dube TradePort's strategic location to expand trade networks.

Charting

THE PATH TO IMPACT

Our strategic roadmap outlines clear, actionable goals designed to drive sustainable growth and innovation in KwaZulu-Natal over the short, medium, and long term. Starting with foundational initiatives like launching incubator programs and pilot projects, we aim to build momentum toward medium-term objectives, including expanded support for startups and broader rural connectivity. In the long term, our vision is to position KwaZulu-Natal as Africa's leading hub for innovation and trade, creating a self-sustaining ecosystem that boosts GDP, reduces the digital divide, and sets a benchmark for inclusive growth and technological advancement across the continent.

MEDIUM-TERM

Expand incubator programs and double the number of startups supported, reach 50% of targeted rural communities with high-speed internet, and introduce Indigenous Knowledge Preservation programs.

1 - 3 years

0 - 1 year

SHORT-TERM

Launch initial incubator programs and training academies, establish partnerships with key investors and industry players, and roll out pilot rural connectivity projects.

LONG-TERM

3 - 5 years

Position KZN as Africa's top innovation hub with a significant increase in international trade activities, establish a self-sustaining ecosystem of skilled professionals and thriving startups, and achieve a measurable reduction in the digital divide and enhancement of KZN's GDP.

AREAS REQUIRING FUNDING

We are seeking strategic funding and partnerships to scale our initiatives and drive transformative impact in key focus areas. By joining hands with forward-thinking organisations, we aim to unlock opportunities that uplift communities, empower startups, and catalyse sustainable economic development.

TRADE, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND SUSTAINABILITY

AREA	PURPOSE	FUNDING NEEDS
Trade and Economic Development (Innovation and Business Incubation)	To drive regional industrial investments, support innovative projects, and enhance workforce capabilities.	 Co-financing for innovative industrial projects. Support mechanisms for startups in trade and logistics. Establishment of talent development programs to prepare a skilled workforce for emerging markets. Policy advocacy and knowledge-sharing initiatives for industrial sector growth.
Electric Vehicles (EV)	To support the evolving EV industry in KZN and position the province as a leader in green transportation.	 Infrastructure for EV charging stations in urban and rural areas. Research into sustainable EV battery technologies and localized manufacturing solutions.
Oil and Gas Industry	To innovate storage and transportation processes for oil and gas, ensuring sustainability and efficiency.	 Development of advanced storage solutions tailored to local infrastructure. Collaborative projects focusing on sustainable transportation methods in the oil and gas sector.

AREAS REQUIRING FUNDING

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

AREA	PURPOSE	FUNDING NEEDS
Al and Robotics	To optimize industrial processes, enhance operational efficiency, and provide tailored training programs for schools and industries.	 Development and deployment of AI applications tailored to local industrial challenges. Establishment of training centers equipped with advanced robotics labs to upskill the workforce.
Digital Transformation and Business Development	To implement digital tools that enhance industrial operations and drive growth across sectors.	 Integration of enterprisegrade digital tools for local businesses. Capacity-building programs to enable SMEs to adopt and leverage digital solutions effectively. Development of an innovation platform connecting digital transformation experts with businesses.
Industrial Innovation and Technology	To modernize industrial equipment and processes, ensuring higher efficiency and competitiveness.	 Collaborative research and development (R&D) projects with global industry leaders. Investment in state-of-theart machinery and technologies to improve industrial operations.

Empower Africa's future

INVEST IN INNOVATION

Partnering with King Dinuzulu Innovation Valley means joining a government-backed initiative that minimises risk and maximises potential. With connections across tech leaders, local businesses, and international investors, KDIV offers a unique networking and investment opportunity that places you at the center of a transformative ecosystem

KDIV isn't just another innovation hub—we're anchored by KZN's trade infrastructure and bolstered by government support.

Invest in a future that combines digital progress with Africa's natural strengths, unlocking exponential value for all stakeholders.



NOMONDE SHEZI
Director and co-founder
nomonde@humaninsights.africa
+27 83 361 0105



EDNA CHELULE
Director and co-founder
edna@humaninsights.africa
+27 83 617 1781

FOR ALL QUESTIONS

www.kdiv.africa info@kdiv.africa