



Work4Progress

Unlocking pathways to employment for youth.

Action Volunteers Africa (AVA) embraces volunteering as a tool to unlock the potential of unemployed youth (**18-25 years**) by **recruiting, training and placing** them in full time positions in a variety of contexts. Through these sustained opportunities, **enriched by a unique personal development programme**, the youth gain **on-the-job experience** and are **empowered** to become economically independent and socially responsible citizens.

Youth unemployment is a national **crisis** with **over 50%** of those between the ages of 18 and 25 years not in education, employment or training (**NEETS**). Work experience is an invaluable way to access employment, especially for youth with little or no post-school education. However, corporates and SMMEs are reluctant to take on entry level youth who often do not have the soft skills prerequisite for survival in the private sector. This reluctance is due to a lack of time and capacity required to mentor inexperienced entrants, and the risk associated with taking on new employees with little or no track record.

Work4Progress (W4P): The aim of this programme is to enable corporates and Small, Medium and Micro-Sized Enterprises (SMMEs), through training, support, and supervision, to provide a 10 to 12-month work experience opportunity to out-of-school youth who are struggling to access employment or further education. The model caters for young people with no Matric, who would otherwise not have had the opportunity, to access valuable work experience. This differentiates it from many other programmes.

"I joined (W4P) only because I wanted to stay off the streets and earn money. However, the experience I've had with the programme really helped me improve my skills and my purpose in life. I'm now more positive and I know my worth. I now have networks. I now know that opportunities are always there." W4P participant

THE WORK4PROGRESS MODEL

Over the past 3 years, AVA has developed an orientation, training, and support programme for young people to access work experience through placements at SMMEs. The host company/organisation is supported and capacitated to provide meaningful work experience for the young person. What is unique about the AVA model is that it:

- a) mitigates the perceived risk for employers by having the contract be between AVA and the youth, thereby giving young people a foot in the door;
- b) recruits and carefully prepares youth for the opportunity; and
- c) provides a variety of ongoing, carefully designed training sessions and psychosocial support throughout the duration of the work experience.

W4P provides an appealing opportunity for the private sector to assist in tackling the many obstacles to youth unemployment, improve their BBB-EE scorecards, and potentially find prospective employees.



Katy expressed how she has seen the growth and benefits of the W4P programme over the years and feels strongly that it is a way for them to give back. The hospitality industry is a real luxury for people and through W4P she feels that they are able to provide employment and upskill someone who otherwise would not have had such an opportunity. She says that it's a real benefit all round as it is a way to give back and it gives them the extra hand that they need.
- Business Partner

BECOME A PARTNER IN WORK4PROGRESS

AVA is looking for business partners who will host a W4P participant for 10-12 months in an entry level position.

What is expected of the W4P business partner:

- To share the vision for W4P and have the motivation to make a difference in the youth employment sector
- Provide details (job description) of position(s) available in business/organisation
- Be part of the recruitment (interview) and orientation process
- Groom youth and provide necessary on-the-job training for the role the youth must fulfil
- Provide a supervisor who will also be the link with AVA for progress reports and attending meetings at AVA
- Pay the subsidised placement fee for the volunteer to enable AVA to continue with this programme
- Help develop the network of AVAs business and support partners for the W4P programme
- Become an active partner and ambassador for AVA that will contribute to the growth of the programme

You can contact AVA to discuss any aspect of the programme or your involvement. Details at bottom of page.

