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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EmpowaHer™ Leadership Summit 2026 Opens Nominations to Accelerate Africa's Next Generation of Women Leaders

Three-day, continent-wide leadership platform will connect 200 emerging women leaders to education, careers, entrepreneurship, capital, mentorship, executive development and board opportunities

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA | 8 SEPTEMBER 2026 - Nominations are officially open for the **EmpowaHer™ Leadership Summit 2026 | THE FUTURE IS FEMALE™**, a high-impact, three-day executive leadership and advancement experience designed to accelerate Africa's next generation of women leaders.

Taking place from **29-31 October 2026 at EmpowaWorx House in Johannesburg**, the Summit will convene **200 exceptional women aged 18-35** from corporate organisations, government institutions, universities, colleges, entrepreneurial ventures, professional bodies, civil-society organisations and communities across South Africa and the African continent.

The initiative will connect high-potential women with education, employment opportunities, capital, markets, mentorship, executive sponsorship, influential networks and decision-making platforms required to translate potential into measurable economic and social progress.

Participation in the Summit programme is funded for selected delegates. However, **travel to and from Johannesburg, accommodation and related personal expenses are not included** and will remain the responsibility of each delegate or her nominating organisation.

Turning Africa's Female Talent into Leadership, Enterprise and Economic Value

Africa has no shortage of talented, ambitious and capable young women. The greater challenge is ensuring that this talent is systematically identified, developed and connected to opportunity.

EmpowaHer™ has been purposefully structured to move beyond inspiration. It provides a practical leadership pipeline connecting emerging women leaders with senior executives, employers, investors, development-finance institutions, business schools, entrepreneurs, policymakers, mentors and professional organisations capable of advancing their careers, enterprises and leadership journeys.

The Summit will equip delegates with the commercial insight, leadership capability, institutional exposure and high-value relationships required to advance their careers, grow sustainable enterprises, strengthen their financial agency and contribute meaningfully to Africa's competitiveness.

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Building a Future-Ready Women's Leadership Pipeline

Aligned with the strategic priorities of the EmpowaHer™ Leadership Summit 2026 | THE FUTURE IS FEMALE™, the programme will advance:

- Women's leadership, representation and participation in decision-making;
- Education, employability, future skills and career mobility;
- Entrepreneurship, enterprise funding and market access;
- Digital leadership, artificial intelligence, innovation and responsible influence;
- Financial literacy, investing, ownership and wealth creation;
- Health, wellness, safety and sustainable leadership;
- Citizenship, patriotism and measurable social impact;
- Executive development, mentorship and global exposure; and
- Governance, board readiness and institutional leadership.

Through executive dialogues, practical masterclasses, leadership laboratories, curated networking exchanges and opportunity platforms, delegates will engage directly with leaders and institutions capable of supporting their professional, entrepreneurial and leadership advancement.

The Summit will culminate in a graduation finale and measurable leadership commitments designed to translate knowledge into career mobility, enterprise growth, financial independence, community impact and increased participation in executive and board leadership.

Who Should Be Nominated?

The Summit is intended for high-potential women aged 18-35 across a broad range of professional, entrepreneurial and leadership pathways, including, but not limited to:

- Graduates and Young Achievers;
- Emerging Professionals;
- Technical Specialists;
- High-Potential Managers;
- Managing Executives;
- Young C-Suite Executives;
- Venture Entrepreneurs;
- Social Impact Leaders;
- Aspiring Board Members; and
- Youth Civic Leaders.

Nominees should demonstrate leadership potential, professional ambition, entrepreneurial or technical capability, integrity, community commitment and a clear desire to contribute meaningfully to Africa's economic, institutional and social development.

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Institutional Nomination and Selection Requirements

Every candidate must be formally nominated or endorsed by an authorised senior leader, executive or recognised mentor within the nominating organisation, institution, industry or professional network.

Eligible nominators may include:

- Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
- Directors-General and Deputy Directors-General;
- Ambassadors, High Commissioners and senior diplomatic representatives;
- Chairpersons and members of boards;
- Chief Executive Officers and other C-Suite executives across industries;
- Managing Directors and Executive Directors;
- Media executives and editors;
- Established entrepreneurs and business leaders;
- Vice-Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors;
- Deans and Heads of Faculty;
- Leaders of professional, industry and civil-society organisations;
- Recognised mentors and leadership-development practitioners; and
- Other appropriately mandated senior institutional leaders.

To promote diversity, extend the opportunity across the continent and secure broad institutional representation, **only one delegate will be selected from each participating organisation or institution.**

Organisations are therefore encouraged to undertake a considered internal selection process and nominate the candidate who most strongly demonstrates leadership potential, readiness for advancement and the capacity to multiply the value of the opportunity within her institution, industry, profession or community.

All nominations will be independently assessed against the programme's eligibility requirements, leadership criteria, institutional representation objectives and available capacity. **Submission of a nomination does not guarantee selection.**

A High-Value Editorial Platform for Media Organisations

EmpowaHer™ offers media organisations a timely, commercially relevant and content-rich platform from which to examine one of Africa's most consequential economic and development priorities: how the continent identifies, develops and advances its next generation of women leaders.

The Summit will provide access to senior decision-makers, established women leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, innovators, emerging executives and young professionals whose experiences illuminate both the structural barriers women continue to face and the practical interventions capable of accelerating meaningful progress.

For media houses and their audiences, EmpowaHer™ presents compelling opportunities for:

- Exclusive interviews with senior leaders, speakers and delegates;
- Profiles of emerging women leaders, professionals and entrepreneurs;
- Expert commentary on leadership, employment and the future of work;
- Conversations about entrepreneurship, access to capital and participation in markets;



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- Reporting on artificial intelligence, digital influence and innovation;
- Features on personal finance, investing, ownership and generational wealth;
- Discussions about women's health, safety and sustainable performance;
- Analysis of executive leadership, governance and board representation;
- Human-interest stories demonstrating measurable career, enterprise and community impact; and
- Live broadcasts, panel conversations, thought-leadership features and digital-content partnerships.

The platform enables media audiences to move beyond familiar narratives about inequality and engage with the people, ideas, investments and institutional solutions shaping a more inclusive, innovative and competitive African economy.

"Africa does not have a shortage of talented, ambitious and capable young women. What remains insufficient is the infrastructure of opportunity connecting that talent to education, employment, capital, markets, mentorship, executive sponsorship and decision-making platforms.

"EmpowaHer™ has been created to close that gap. We are building an integrated leadership pipeline that moves young women from potential to power, from participation to leadership, and from leadership to legacy.

"For the media, this is an important national and continental story. It is a story about economic growth, institutional transformation and Africa's future competitiveness. By elevating the voices, ideas and achievements of emerging women leaders, the media can help shift the narrative from women as beneficiaries of development to women as investors, innovators, executives, board members and architects of Africa's future." **Simphiwe Masiza, Founder and Executive Producer of EmpowaHer™**

Nominations Now Open

Companies, government departments, diplomatic missions, educational institutions, professional bodies, entrepreneurial organisations, media organisations, civil-society organisations and community-based organisations are invited to nominate **one exceptional, high-potential woman** from their respective institutions or networks.

Self-nominations will not be considered.

Nomination process: [EmpowaHer™ Nomination Form](#)

Programme information: [EmpowaHer™ Leadership Summit 2026 | THE FUTURE IS FEMALE™](#)

About EmpowaHer™

EmpowaHer™ | THE FUTURE IS FEMALE™ is an executive leadership and advancement platform established to identify, develop, connect and accelerate Africa's next generation of exceptional women leaders aged 18-35.

The platform bridges the gap between potential and opportunity by connecting emerging women leaders with education, employment, entrepreneurship, capital, markets, mentorship, executive development, global exposure and board-readiness pathways.

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EmpowaHer™ brings together leaders from business, government, academia, civil society, media, diplomacy and the development community to build a coordinated and sustainable pipeline of women equipped to lead institutions, grow enterprises, shape public policy and contribute meaningfully to Africa's economic and social advancement.

Through immersive leadership experiences, practical learning, high-value networks and measurable opportunity commitments, EmpowaHer™ seeks to move women from participation to influence, from ambition to achievement, and from leadership to enduring legacy.

EmpowaHer™ is an initiative of **EmpowaWorx™**, an integrated strategy, communications, stakeholder-engagement, leadership-development and experiential-events company committed to developing people, enterprises, institutions and communities across Africa.

Leadership Platform Highlights

For further context on the scope, impact and architecture of EmpowaWorx™ leadership platforms, please view highlights from the recent EmpowaWomen™ Leadership Summit:

EmpowaWomen™ Leadership Summit 2026 event video: [View video](#)

3rd Annual EmpowaWomen™ Bubbles & Nibbles Leadership Awards 2026 video: [View video](#)

Media Enquiries

For interviews with EmpowaHer™ leadership, speakers, programme representatives, participating organisations and selected delegates, please contact:

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