

The rising cost of tertiary education will impact the future of SA's workforce

The Matric Class of 2022 - who achieved a [pass rate of 80.1%](#) - will soon be entering tertiary institutions, looking to gain knowledge, skills, and a foothold in South Africa's rapidly evolving job market. But for many, the rising costs of education may deter the future of South Africa's workforce.



Image by [Ihsan Aditya](#) from [Pixabay](#)

School-leavers looking to proceed to colleges and universities face the challenges and barriers of a highly unequal society. These include the challenges of ongoing load shedding, crime, and GBV, and not forgetting the escalating costs of living, transport, and education.

"Though tuition fees have risen by about 5%, (to around R65,000 for a typical first year), a range of opportunities for support exists for prospective students in 2023," explains Cara Jean-Petersen, CEO of Feenix, a public benefit student crowdfunding and bursary management organisation premised on the overarching principle that access to education should not be dependent on an individual's wealth.



De Lille to award built environment bursaries

25 Jan 2023

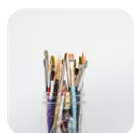


Feenix is a non-profit organisation with an intuitive online platform that connects students with both corporate and individual

donors and mentors, simplifying the arduous process of seeking and applying for funding.

The young, diverse, passionate team's vision is to empower as many youths as possible with the entrepreneurial skillset and leadership qualities needed to succeed in business as well as in life – and to collectively drive massive economic growth.

Having launched in response to the #FeesMustFall movement that shook SA campuses in 2015 and 2016, Feenix's work has highlighted the high cost of tertiary education, and the toll that financial stress takes on student success rates in SA.



Act's Nyoloha Scholarship Programme opens call for entries

27 Jan 2023



"Our goal is to establish inclusive tertiary education in SA, leaving no student behind," Petersen says.

Feenix has to date raised over R160m and provided bursary management services to over 3,000 students. Last year the organisation raised over R48 million, covering 546 students' fees at institutions across the country.

Feenix aims to grow its impact to reach many more students over the next five years.

Corporates can help close the skills gap

"We see the immense potential of today's youth to close the critical skills gaps and bring about a prosperous, thriving economic future. We want to equip them to participate in the economy and contribute to a skilled workforce," she says.

These skills shortages (especially prevalent within the STEM fields, but being felt by industries across the board) have been attributed to emigration, as well as the high price of education in SA.

Corporate contributions of skills development funding towards tertiary education for SA's students is a high-impact, direct intervention to ensure companies' future resilience, as well as a sure-fire solution to including as many young people into the formal economy as we can. "Corporate donations also help companies reach BBBEE goals, she adds.

"In addition to our call to students seeking funding, we'd like to reach out to individuals as well as corporates – including our thriving SME sector - and invite them to invest in the future of South Africa's workforce."

To get involved, go to [\[\[https://feenix.org/\]\]](https://feenix.org/)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>