

TWIMS set to boost SA manufacturing

The launch of the newly established Toyota Wessels Institute for Manufacturing Studies (TWIMS) is set to boost South Africa's manufacturing sector.



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The R56 million TWIMS, launched by Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies on Monday, is set to develop world class capabilities and drive African industrialisation.

“We are looking forward to this institution contributing to the manufacturing sector as a whole. We expressed our support on the programme because we can see a need for a much more strategic thinking about manufacturing institutions. We also urge the institution not to confine itself to the auto sector, but be much more about manufacturing in general,” said Davies.

TWIMS was established in partnership with the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) to deliver an MBA specialising in manufacturing.

TWIMS is also an independent, not for profit initiative, established through grant funding from the Toyota South Africa Education Trust.

While TWIMS carries the name of both Toyota and the Wessels family, which founded Toyota South Africa, the institution is a public body dedicated to the development of manufacturing and manufacturing-related executives, managers and government officials in Africa.

Speaking at the launch in Kloof, Durban, Davies said TWIMS will accelerate the building of a deep manufacturing culture that South Africa is in need of to drive its domestic demands, while also producing value added products in different sectors of the economy.

He said the launch of TWIMS takes place at a time when the rest of the manufacturing world is wrestling with disruptions and new opportunities brought about by the digital industrial revolution.

It is essential for South Africa to adequately have the capacity to take advantage of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

“Most importantly, will be the role played by the government in providing conducive transitional support to industry during the adaptation period. TWIMS also speaks to another reality that if we want to deepened manufacturing and industrialisation in South Africa we need to move up the value chain and develop as a country,” he said.

Chief Executive Officer and President of Toyota South Africa Motors, Andrew Kirby, said Toyota SA has been looking forward to the opportunities, contribution and potential that the institution will make to South Africa and Africa.

“The establishment of TWIMS, with the GIBS partnership and MBA programme, will be a pinnacle in education offerings and will form an integral component of career path development.

“We also need to equip our youth with the necessary skills to occupy these managerial roles in the future and provide the leadership required to keep manufacturing in South Africa competitive with global industries around the world,” said Kirby.

The Dean of GIBS, Professor Nicola Kleyn, said the opening of TWIMS marks a milestone for the manufacturing sector, as it is a key contributor to the local and national economy, mainly because of its high employment multipliers, driver of technology and the growth of skills capacity and capabilities.

“Over our 16-year relationship with the Durban Automotive Cluster, it has proved an effective platform to support firms to remain globally competitive and a responsible custodian of State resources in supporting government to achieve its goals and develop the manufacturing sector,” Kleyn said.

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