

Sapics Conference 2025 focuses on building future-ready youth talent in supply chain

As South Africa grapples with a pressing skills shortage and rising youth unemployment, the upcoming 47th annual SAPICS Conference aims to address these challenges by spotlighting the development of young talent in the supply chain sector. The conference, Africa's premier event for supply chain professionals, will run from 8 to 11 June 2025 in Cape Town.



Source: Drazen Zigic via [Freepik](#)

Recognising the urgent need to nurture a new generation of supply chain experts, the event will feature presentations, panel discussions, and initiatives dedicated to growing a pipeline of skilled young professionals.

A key panel discussion will delve into strategies to empower youth through mentorship, industry partnerships, and targeted skills development programmes.

According to Sapics, the session will explore “how collaboration between academia, government and the private sector can build a resilient, future-ready workforce.”

The panel will be moderated by Yaseen Ahmid, CEO and founder of the Circular Economy Institute of Africa, and include experts such as Professor PJ Kilbourn, associate professor at the University of Johannesburg; Asekhona Ngeno, corporate supply chain director at Procter and Gamble; Azel van der Westhuizen, head of Logistics IMEA at Maersk; and Nicole Petersen, programme manager at the South African Graduate Employers Association (SAGEA).

Innovation in training

Innovation in supply chain learning will also take centre stage, with a presentation by Laurent Vigouroux, a

France-based supply chain expert and b2wise brand ambassador. Vigouroux, winner of the prestigious French "King of Supply Chain" award, will highlight how AI and gamification are revolutionising training.

“Traditional supply chain training often struggles to engage participants and drive real-world results. Gamification and AI are transforming the learning experience, with serious games like DDBrix simplifying complex concepts, fostering collaboration and boosting retention,” he says. Attendees will learn how AI can personalise training, identify skill gaps, and enhance decision-making.

Another critical topic will be the Demand Driven Skills Model (DDSM), presented by international supply chain management expert and author Caroline Mondon. The DDSM “allows organisations to locate and size skill buffers to protect the operational flow in a supply chain,” helping to prevent bottlenecks, stockouts, and delivery delays caused by missing skills.

In a bid to support youth career development, Sapics has partnered with Industrial Logistics Systems (ILS) and Bertling to sponsor 20 students from institutions such as Stellenbosch University and the University of South Africa (UNISA) to attend the conference.

This initiative is part of the Sapics youth development programme aimed at upskilling young graduates and professionals, addressing the sector’s skills gap, and combating South Africa’s high youth unemployment rate.

The 2025 Sapics Conference promises to be a pivotal platform for knowledge sharing, networking, and fostering the next generation of supply chain leaders.

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