

'Meating' the needs – AMIE Academy goes from strength to strength

When you cook your chicken tonight or enjoy your ribs, does it ever occur to you how the meat got from where the animal was raised and cared for to where it landed on your plate? The process is longer and more intricate than most consumers realise.

Issued by AMIE 1 Jul 2025



What consumers do feel is a rise in prices, the scarcity of certain products, or simply the contentment that meat is available in the shop, and they can just go and buy it.

The Association for Meat Importers and Exporters (AMIE) is the industry's voice, ensuring that consumers have access to affordable, quality meat products. AMIE understands how crucial the sustainable transformation of the meat import and export industry is to South Africa's sustainable economic growth and food security.

One of AMIE's main strategic goals is to expand global access, which includes emerging producers ready to scale. As part of the National Development Plan 2030, the growth and development of value chains beyond commodities are emphasised, and AMIE aims to work towards achieving a sustainable sector.

AMIE Academy

To that end, the Association launched the AMIE Academy in 2023 as part of its industry transformation initiative.

The AMIE Academy partnered with Tushiyah Xchange to design a 12-month development programme for entrepreneurs in the meat import and export industry. It began with five carefully selected candidates who experienced and tested the pilot programme. This group celebrated their completion at a showcase event on 19 June 2025 in Sandton. Gary Joseph, CEO of the South African Supplier Diversity Council (SASDC) and keynote speaker, underscored the importance of inclusive supply chains and how programmes like these foster a healthy economy.

Imameleng Mothebe, CEO of AMIE, confirmed that the second cohort started its programme in November 2024 and is currently halfway through. Applications for the third cohort are already open. [Apply here.](#)

According to the Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (SAJESBM), South African entrepreneurs face a myriad of challenges, with 70% to 80% failing within the first five years.

Despite the South African government's efforts to promote entrepreneurship, challenges such as an unfavourable financial climate for expansion or growth, high labour expenses, lack of funding, limited market access, regulatory hurdles, and socio-economic inequalities persist. Some of these issues were discussed by a distinguished panel including Gary Joseph, Thina Mohlamme (Masisizane Fund, Old Mutual), Grant Hendricks (AMIE exco member and entrepreneur), and Marisa Truter (director at Tushiyah Xchange).



Panel discussion: Marisa Truter (Tushiyah Xchange) | Grant Hendricks (AMIE exco member) | Thina Mohlamme (Masisizane Fund, Old Mutual) | Gary Joseph (SASDC)

Academy development programme

These challenges necessitate a stronger skills foundation and a critical analysis of businesses seeking growth. That is why the AMIE Academy offers a 12-month programme that includes these key phases:

1. **Selection and Onboarding:** To ensure the most suitable candidates are chosen for the programme, maximise retention, and increase success rates. During this phase, businesses are also assessed to confirm their maturity levels and identify any gaps they need to fill to become investment-ready.
2. **Business Bootcamp:** An entrepreneurial curriculum that covers the essentials of running a business in South Africa, including finance, HR, sales, and pricing.
3. **Industry-Specific Know-How:** A specialised curriculum focusing on the import and export of meat in South Africa, including the landscape, regulations, and critical processes and requirements.
4. **Industry Immersion:** A series of activities designed to put industry know-how into practice, including webinars, site visits, Q&A sessions, and more.

The success of this curriculum's content, methodology, and approach is evident in the academy's growth. It began with five candidates in the pilot group and now has fourteen candidates in the second cohort, with a waiting list for the third.



Certificates to the successful pilot programme candidates: Marisa Truter (Tushiyah Xchange) | Seymour Talpert (chairman, AME) | Ncumisa Mcata-Mhlaui (chief director of Agro-processing and Forestry-Based Industries at the dtic) with successful AME Academy Pilot Candidates: Poppy Malebane | Lwazi Makhaye | Charlotte Pieters | Alan Ndovu | Inrameleng Mthebe, CEO of AME

Development programme now publicly available

Up to now, the programme has been limited to a set number of candidates because it is funded by a statutory levy. The Academy launched a [publicly available programme](#) at their event on 19 June, offering a programme elements. It not only aligns well with the development programmes of organisations in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector but also provides a stand-alone, online, self-paced Industry Know How course. This is ideal for onboarding or refresher training for employees and suppliers in the FMCG space.

The AMIE Academy and its rollout partner, Tushiyah Xchange, continuously seek innovations to benefit candidates, SMEs, and companies investing in Enterprise and Supplier Development programmes. Participants have access to a state-of-the-art online training platform with various features, including a For Page for industry news and relevant information, and a profile page showcasing participating SMEs.

AMIE Academy Fund

At the showcase event on 19 June, the AMIE Academy Fund was launched. This innovative funding mechanism supports entrepreneurial development. It is open to companies seeking governance assistance from an Enterprise Supplier Development perspective, as well as entrepreneurs wishing to invest in their own growth. The third-party fund benefits investing entrepreneurs by providing specialised business development skills and promoting the growth and expansion of the AMIE Academy.

Companies needing expert advice on governance will be guided through the process and provided with the necessary advice and documentation to ensure good governance and achieve the desired BBBEE level.

The fund is innovative in two ways:

It provides for a mechanism where SMEs can invest in their own growth. These SMEs will be businesses that have already been through the Development Programme and a rigorous business assessment. They

work closely with business coaches and know exactly where the gaps in their businesses lie and what kind of assistance they need, whether technical or investment capital. This mechanism ensures committed SMEs and ongoing support, significantly increasing the success rate of entrepreneurs.

Enterprise supplier development and skills development account for the largest score on the BBBEE scorecard. When done correctly, they are also among the best ways to reinvest in your industry. When a company invests its spending with the AMIE Academy Fund, we design a tailored solution that benefits the company with tangible reports and certificates, while channelling the spend towards the growth of the Academy and supporting SMEs. Essentially, this transforms a compliance overhead into a growth opportunity, allowing the company to meet governance standards while knowing that its money is used for entrepreneur development.

Meat imports and exports remain a challenging industry to break into, with high barriers to entry. Through the AMIE Academy, not only meat traders but also service providers in related sectors, such as freight forwarding and customs, are developed, fostering a more inclusive and resilient industry.

Disease outbreaks, climate change, global macroeconomic impacts, and trade policies all directly affect the livelihoods of meat importers and exporters. Any changes in this value chain impact producers, manufacturers, hospitality, retail, and ultimately the end consumer. Ensuring a healthy import and export trade environment promotes a robust industry that can better mitigate risks and minimise supply chain disruptions, thereby contributing to food security.

Any enquiries regarding the Programme of Fund can be directed to Surisa Nel, stakeholder engagement and transformation lead at AMIE: surisa@amiesa.co.za.

- **Tipping the scales: The importance of balanced meat imports and exports for food security in SA** 31 Mar 2026
- **From reactive to strategic - Partnering and collaborating for a sustainable future in the meat trade** 15 Dec 2025
- **Meat, markets and money: Empowering SA entrepreneurs for a food-secure future** 7 Oct 2025
- **Fuel the future: AMIE Academy Fund** 9 Sep 2025
- **'Meating' the needs – AMIE Academy goes from strength to strength** 1 Jul 2025

AMIE



AMIE is an industry organisation representing meat and poultry import and export sector in South Africa. Recognised locally and abroad, driving global access, pursuing fair trade and facilitating industry dialogue.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)