

## **Empowering Youth Champions in South Africa for a sustainable future through environmental education**

- *TUI Junior Academy South Africa trains 1000 school students in environmental protection to roll out campaigns and community action projects in 200 schools*
- *The project improves environmental education skills of 320 educators, including teachers, civil society organisations and district officials*
- *Project is part of the international TUI Junior Academy programme, which empowers children to become Eco Champions through environmental education*

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[www.tuicarefoundation.com](http://www.tuicarefoundation.com)

**Berlin, 4 June 2025.** *Climate change is having a significant impact on South Africa, creating numerous challenges for its environment, economy, and society. The country's distinctive geography and varied ecosystems make it especially vulnerable to the effects of global warming such as increased frequency of droughts and irregular rainfall patterns. The implications ripple through the tourism industry, as the country's rich biodiversity is a significant attraction for both domestic and international visitors. Addressing these issues requires a strong focus on education to increase awareness about climate change and its consequences, particularly amongst younger generations as future stewards of the planet. The TUI Care Foundation has therefore launched a new TUI Junior Academy to empower children to become environmental ambassadors in their communities and inspire action.*

In partnership with masifunde Learner Development NPC, the TUI Junior Academy South Africa aims to equip young people aged 5-12 years old in South African with the knowledge and skills needed to understand and address climate change. Representatives of 40 local civil society organisations and 200 educators receive training in peer-to-peer methodology and learner activation for environmental awareness and protection. They also conduct workshops in their communities and train selected students on how to become effective leaders.

In the first year, the programme focuses on emotional and social wellbeing in school, whilst in the second phase the focus shifts to environmental training, inspiring at least 1,000 secondary school students to become eco-champions in their communities. These young ambassadors plan and roll out environmental awareness and activation campaigns in 200 schools, aiming to reach an average of 1,000 students per school - totalling 200,000 learners. Through these campaigns, the eco-champions disseminate their knowledge and motivate their peers, who together plan and implement further projects such as clean-ups, urban gardening and awareness raising activities in schools and communities. To support the learning and campaigning of the students, 40 district officials from the Department of Education also receive training in environmental awareness and protection.

The project culminates in a national learner summit in Nelson Mandela Bay, where representatives from each civil society organisation and selected students exchange successful projects and learning, receive additional training, and plan the continuation of their action projects. In partnership with local nature experts, the summit participants also join relevant nature-based excursions to experience nature firsthand. These excursions aim to deepen their appreciation for South Africa's unique biodiversity and ecosystems, reinforcing the importance of environmental conservation.

The TUI Junior Academy South Africa is part of the international TUI Junior Academy programme that empowers children to become Eco Champions through environmental education and enables learning opportunities for young people from disadvantaged communities in holiday destinations such as Jamaica, Greece, La Palma, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Zimbabwe.

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### ***About the TUI Care Foundation***

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates projects which create new opportunities and contribute to thriving communities in tourism destinations all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, it supports education and training opportunities for young people; drives the protection of natural habitats and the marine environment; and helps local communities to thrive sustainably and benefit from tourism. The TUI Care Foundation builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long-lasting impact. The independent charitable organisation was founded by TUI, one of the world's leading tourism businesses, and is based in the Netherlands. Website: [www.tuicarefoundation.com](http://www.tuicarefoundation.com)

### ***About the masifunde Learner Development NPC***

masifunde is a non-governmental organisation founded in 2004, which runs development programmes for children and youth in Nelson Mandela Bay, South Africa. masifunde's work is driven by the vision of a united society in which everyone is empowered through high-quality education to participate pro-actively and confidently in societal issues and thereby initiating positive change in their own lives and the lives of others.

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