

## **EThekweni Metro cultural and creative industries will never be the same again**

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An initiative by visionary individuals within the eThekweni Municipality to establish a self-regulated body promoting policy awareness for all artists in the creative arts industry is finally becoming a reality.

The vision has been realised through the formation of a structure called the Cultural and Creative Industry Federation of South Africa (CCIFSA). It was inspired by a clarion call by the current State President Jacob Zuma, Minister of Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa, KZN MEC, N. Sibhidla-Saphetha and His Worship the Mayor of EThekweni Municipality Councillor James Nxumalo, all urging the industry to organise and formalise itself so that artists are recognised as a formal businesses and their industry is recognised, but rather seen as an unregulated and inferior craft.

“One of the challenges facing the arts sector is fragmentation and lack of organised and effective structure which represents all the artists in the province. This has resulted in a communication breakdown between the Department and the Artists. In an effort to bridge this gap, the department facilitated the establishment of an Interim Committee for Cultural and Creative Industries to consult, engage and deliver a provincial conference where industry leadership will be elected and the provincial Federation will be launched. We are pleased to announce that to date we have, through this structure, reached out to about 260 artists across the various art disciplines. This Federation will ensure that the cultural and creative industries speak with one voice. It will also be instrumental in unlocking the economic potential of the sector”, said KZN MEC of Arts and Culture, N. Sibhidla-Sephetha on her budget speech on the 14 May 2015.

CCFISA EThekweni Metro is establishing itself as the voice and umbrella body for all role players and stakeholders in the creative industry, within the eThekweni Metro area of operation. Its aim, among many, is to unite the artists and other role players and transform the cultural and creative arts industry, this include ensuring that artists are benefiting through medical aid, insurance, saving, investment, hospital pan, pension fund, burial cover and other benefits.

In addition to advising the EtheKweni Municipality in cultural and creative industry related matters, the CCFISA EThekweni Metro will also be instrumental in identifying and developing talent within the Metro. The process of identifying and developing talent will be done through the Bhodloza Nzimande Foundation.

“What was merely a dream not so long ago, is now becoming a reality, which gives one hope for the future and the sustainability of the creative industry within our municipality”, says one of the creative thinker Romeo “Mawawa”Qetsimani, who is the team leader of the federation until the local Inaugural elective conference .”

Romeo said it is high time that artists take control of their industry and protect what is theirs, to leave a legacy for future generations.

“We need to unite and move forward; leaving behind our differences. We should not sit and wait to be spoon fed; we need to monitor our own programmes, protect and transform what it ours through CCIFSA EThekweni Metro Federation,” he said.

CCIFSA – eThekweni Metro is currently holding meetings and consultative workshops almost every week in an attempt to create a directory of all eThekweni creative arts workers, organizations, companies and other stakeholders. As a vehicle for transformation, leadership development, strategic planning, research, artist's protection, mediation and arbitration, CCIFSA-eThekweni Metro believes holding such meetings at this infant stage will help in building a strong foundation with inputs of strategic role-players. CCIFSA EThekweni Metro Inaugural Elective Conference is planned for 30 September 2015, in Durban.

CCIFSA EtheKweni Metro will report to CCIFSA KZN Province and the province reporting to CCIFSA nationally. Other KZN Districts are requested to follow on the footsteps of EtheKweni Metro. Interim Committee appointed by the MEC of Arts and Culture Ntombikayise Sibhidla – Saphetha last year is working together with the members of National General Council in preparation of KZN CCIFSA Provincial Inaugural Elective Conference from 14-15 October 2015, in Durban.

**The Cultural and Creative Industry incorporates different disciplines (Sectors and sub-sectors) such as:**

Performing arts (music, dance, theatre, comedy. Poetry, puppetry, storytelling), visual arts, technical and production services, design, fashion, graphic design, electronic media, film, video production, radio and television, craft, publishing, cultural groups, cultural heritage, arts administrators, education and training.

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