



DRAFT 2:  
NOCSOBI INVESTOR PROPOSAL



**NOCSOBI**

NORTHERN CAPE SOLAR  
BUSINESS INCUBATOR

## **NOC SOBI INVESTOR PROPOSAL**

***Catalysing Renewable Innovation, Job Creation, and Economic Growth in South Africa***

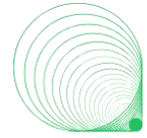
### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Northern Cape Solar and Renewable Energy Business Incubator (NOC SOBI) is a catalytic platform created to harness South Africa's renewable energy potential through inclusive entrepreneurship, strategic innovation, and market access. Situated in the globally significant solar belt of the Northern Cape, NOC SOBI responds to both national energy resilience goals and international climate adaptation mandates by building a pipeline of investable, technically skilled, and market-ready renewable energy entrepreneurs.

As the country navigates critical challenges, energy insecurity, structural unemployment, and a skills mismatch in the green economy, NOC SOBI presents a scalable and deeply transformative intervention. Our model ensures that local communities are not only beneficiaries of infrastructure investments but become producers, service providers, and IP holders within the renewable energy value chain. We fill the systemic gaps that prevent small businesses from entering and competing in a complex, compliance-heavy energy ecosystem. We identify promising entrepreneurs, equip them with technical and business skills, ensure policy compliance, secure market linkages, and prepare them for sustainable growth. Our long-term vision is to anchor local economic development and contribute to South Africa's Just Energy Transition by building an inclusive, competitive green economy that leaves no one behind.

NOC SOBI is seeking **R20 million** in funding to expand its incubation infrastructure, provide catalytic post-incubation capital, and establish advanced business development support mechanisms. These funds will support the establishment of regional innovation nodes, digital learning platforms, equipment procurement, and post-incubation funding pipelines to ensure entrepreneurs are supported through the critical scale-up phase. With this investment, NOC SOBI aims to catalyse over 300 jobs, launch 50 viable renewable energy enterprises, and integrate local SMEs into multi-billion-rand procurement opportunities in both public and private sectors.

We invite local and international funders, development finance institutions, and corporate investors to support this high-impact, high-leverage platform. With NOC SOBI, funders are not merely financing individual entrepreneurs, they are building the next generation of African energy leaders, enabling inclusive growth, and positioning South Africa as a continental model for green entrepreneurship and economic transformation.



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## THE GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSITION

We are standing at a historic crossroads. The global imperative to achieve net-zero emissions is not just a technical challenge, it is the economic moon-shot of our era. As countries strive to meet net-zero targets, investment in renewable energy has surged. Solar and wind are now the lowest-cost sources of new power in over two-thirds of the world. However, in developing countries like South Africa, the transition risks deepening inequality if local communities are not active participants. The current model tends to concentrate capital, technology, and benefits within large firms and urban centres, excluding rural entrepreneurs, youth, and women. Inclusive enterprise development is therefore not a secondary consideration, it is a fundamental requirement for a just transition.

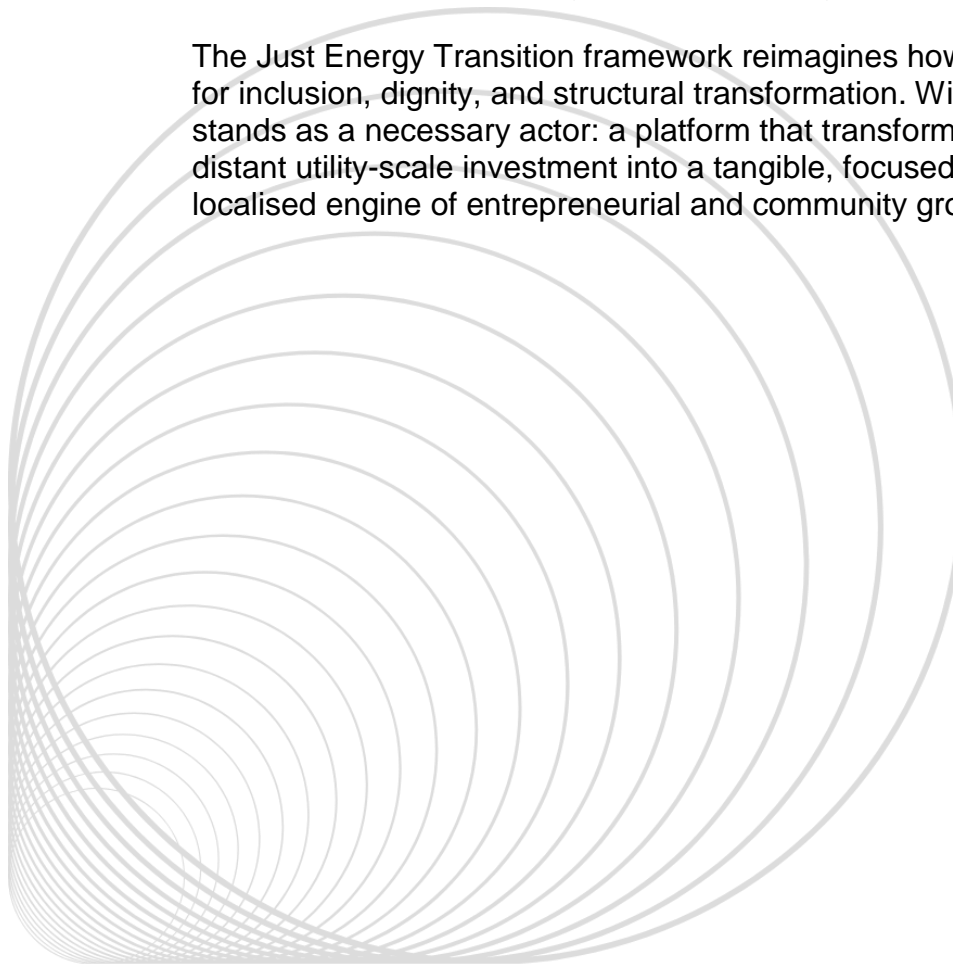
While the global north rapidly adopts new energy models, many emerging economies risk being left behind. Developing countries often lack the capital, human resources, and institutional infrastructure to ensure that the benefits of this energy

transition are equitably distributed. In this context, South Africa, one of the most industrialized economies in Africa faces both a critical challenge and an opportunity. The Just Energy Transition is more than a policy it is a socio-economic imperative that must address historic injustices while building resilient, locally owned energy systems.

In South Africa, a dual crisis of energy insecurity and youth unemployment creates a unique moment in history. The renewable energy sector represents a transformative pathway to tackle both. Yet without targeted, inclusive entrepreneurship support, the renewable revolution may simply reinforce existing inequities, marginalizing small businesses, youth, women, and rural communities. NOCSOBI exists precisely to prevent this from happening.

The International Energy Agency predicts that by 2050, renewable sources will supply over two-thirds of global electricity demand. Global economies are transitioning from fossil fuel dependence to clean, sustainable energy systems. This is more than a technological shift; it is a social transformation. But this revolution risks becoming another chapter in the story of exclusion if deliberate action is not taken to ensure access for the historically underserved. As billions flow into green infrastructure, an uncomfortable truth persists: many of the people most vulnerable to climate change - youth, rural communities, and women in the global South, remain side-lined from participating in and benefitting from the transition.

The Just Energy Transition framework reimagines how clean energy can be a lever for inclusion, dignity, and structural transformation. Within this vision, NOCSOBI stands as a necessary actor: a platform that transforms renewable energy from a distant utility-scale investment into a tangible, focused, inclusive, and deeply localised engine of entrepreneurial and community growth.



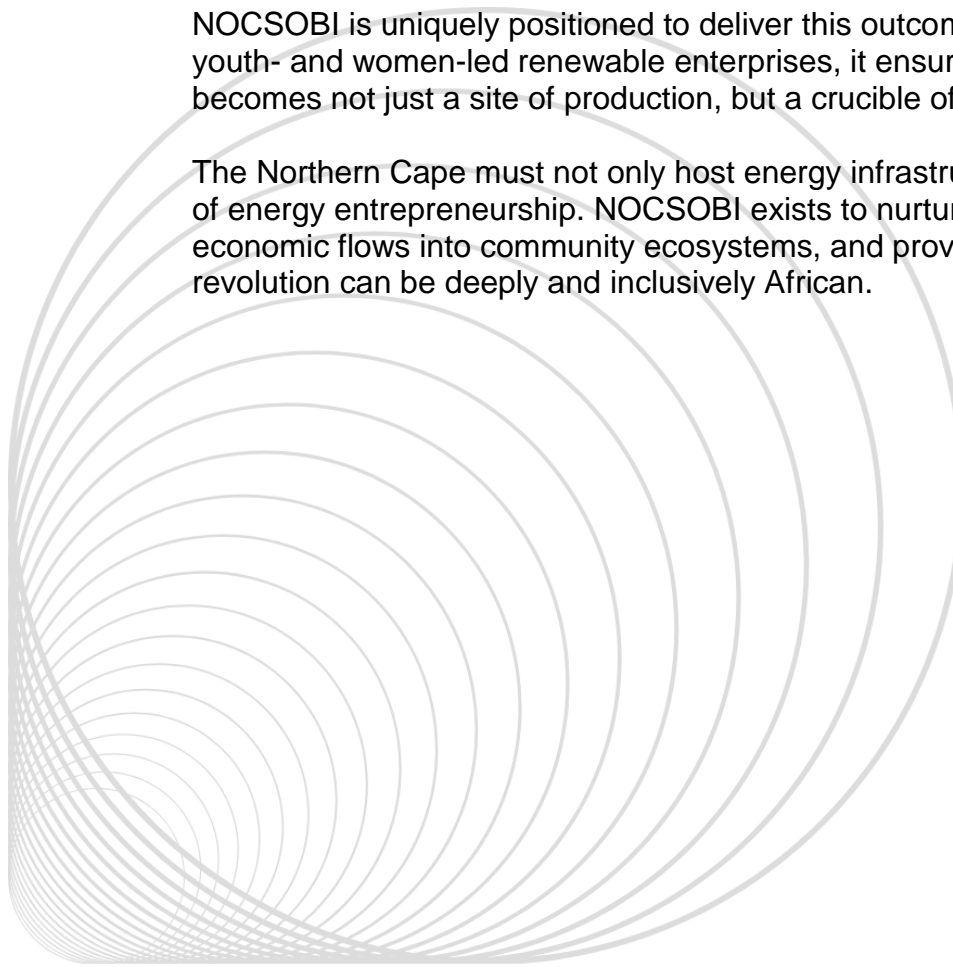
## THE NORTHERN CAPE OPPORTUNITY

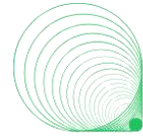
The Northern Cape Province represents both a paradox and a promise. With the highest solar irradiance levels in the Southern Hemisphere and significant wind potential, it has already become a magnet for renewable energy projects under South Africa's REIPPPP. Yet, in these very communities, unemployment can exceed 45%, and skills mismatches prevent local participation in the green economy.

This is a territory blessed with natural abundance but trapped in systemic underdevelopment. The opportunity and the obligation is to localise the economic value of these projects, embedding energy entrepreneurship directly into the communities that host national energy infrastructure. The Northern Cape Province boasts some of the highest solar irradiation levels in the world, making it one of the most viable regions for solar energy deployment. Flagship projects like the Kathu Solar Park, the Upington Solar Corridor, and the Redstone Concentrated Solar Power Project have put the province on the global renewable energy map. However, these large-scale projects have done little to enable inclusive local participation. The current gap lies in developing a pipeline of local renewable energy entrepreneurs who can service, maintain, innovate, and grow within this booming sector. NOCSOBI was created to address this structural gap, ensuring that the province's natural advantage is matched by human, technical, and entrepreneurial development.

NOCSOBI is uniquely positioned to deliver this outcome: by building a pipeline of youth- and women-led renewable enterprises, it ensures that the Northern Cape becomes not just a site of production, but a crucible of innovation.

The Northern Cape must not only host energy infrastructure, it must own the future of energy entrepreneurship. NOCSOBI exists to nurture local talent, redirect economic flows into community ecosystems, and prove that the clean energy revolution can be deeply and inclusively African.





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## NOCSOBI'S ROLE

NOCSOBI (Northern Cape Solar and Renewable Energy Business Incubator) is not just an incubator, it is a developmental intervention designed to democratise the green economy, a catalytic platform built to transform the landscape of renewable energy enterprise development in South Africa. It does not merely teach, it cultivates capability, creates opportunity and engineers' pathways to capital and markets. Our incubator identifies high-potential individuals from underrepresented backgrounds and offers a deeply integrated support model that takes them from ideation through incubation to market entry and

scale.

Through a holistic model that integrates skills development, enterprise incubation, and market access, NOCSOBI provides the connective tissue between opportunity and preparedness. We do not operate in abstraction. We embed our work in the practical: technical training aligned to PV GreenCard standards, business development services customised to the REIPPPP supplier database, and real-time market pilots linked to university rooftops, municipal buildings, and regional commercial nodes.

Our model is evidence-based, context-aware, and performance-driven. From township rooftops to rural off-grid installations, our entrepreneurs are already delivering value—proving that with the right support, local business can thrive in even the most technical and regulated sectors. We work at the intersection of community development, industrial policy, and climate action, ensuring that inclusive growth is not just a rhetorical ambition, but a measurable outcome.

## VISION, MISSION, AND MANDATE

**Vision: To drive innovation and create opportunities within the solar energy sector.** To establish the Northern Cape as Africa's leading hub for inclusive, community-anchored renewable energy entrepreneurship.

**Mission: NOCSOBI is dedicated to fostering a vibrant solar business ecosystem. Our mission is to support local entrepreneurs in harnessing solar energy for sustainable development.** To incubate and accelerate high-potential renewable energy businesses that are rooted in underrepresented communities and poised to scale across South Africa and the African continent.

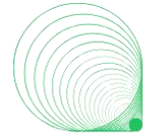
### **Mandate:**

- Serve as a sector-specific incubator delivering technical, compliance, and business training for renewable energy entrepreneurs.
- Facilitate access to capital, contracts, and mentorship for post-incubation graduates.
- Act as a regional catalyst for equitable participation in the national energy landscape.

We were founded with a singular goal: to democratize the energy transition by empowering local entrepreneurs to participate meaningfully in the renewable energy value chain.

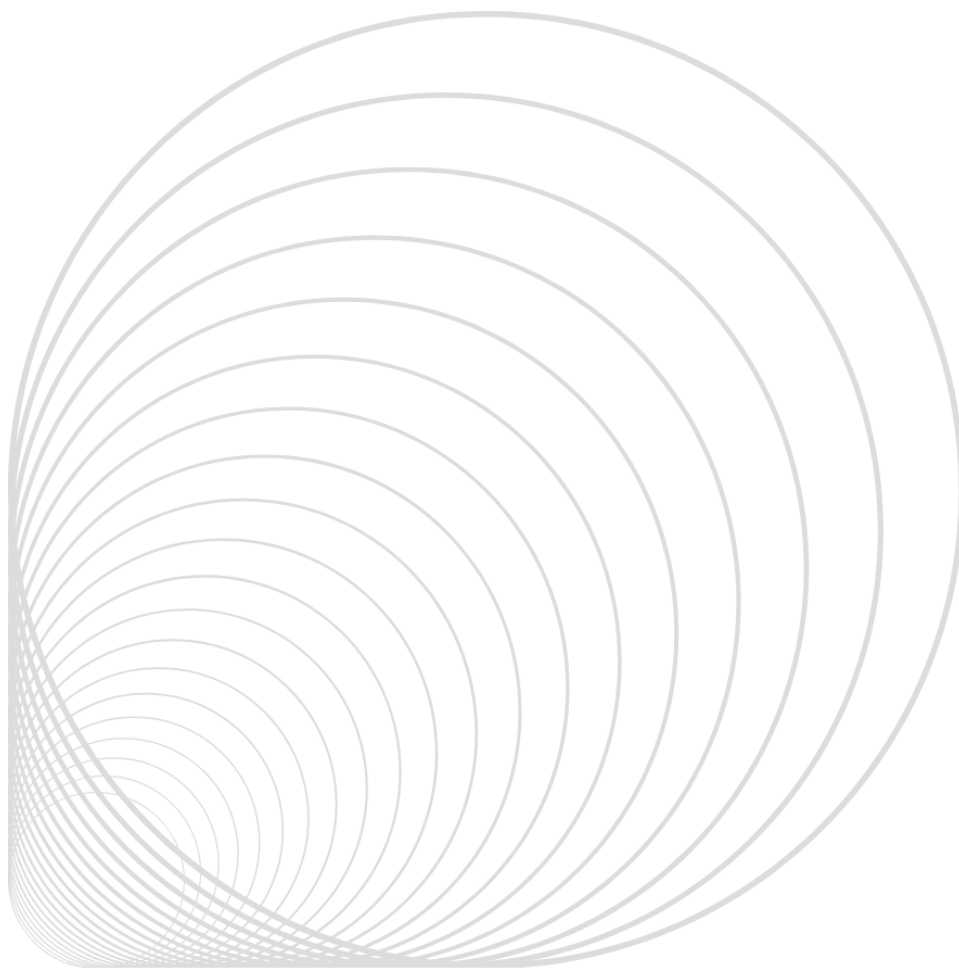
Our theory of change is premised on the belief that true transformation requires more than training. It requires access to opportunity, finance, mentorship, and a support ecosystem that spans from ideation to scale. As such, NOCSOBI's core objectives are to:

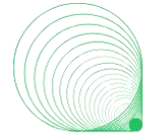
- **Democratize access** to the renewable energy economy by identifying and developing high-potential entrepreneurs from historically marginalized communities.
- **Generate long-term employment** by fostering sustainable business models that absorb and train local workers, particularly youth and women.
- **Drive inclusive GDP growth** by embedding SMEs into procurement pipelines, from REIPPPP to commercial and municipal solar rollouts.
- **Support the Just Energy Transition** by ensuring that climate mitigation strategies are also engines of social equity, economic opportunity, and local empowerment.



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NOCSOBI is not simply a training centre or accelerator. It is a platform for systems change, a regional anchor institution designed to help South Africa not only meet its climate goals but to do so in a way that is economically just, locally owned, and globally competitive





## CASE STUDIES: PROVING THE MODEL

### **SAREBI (Western Cape):**

SAREBI's success proves the power of tailored incubation. Over 60 energy and energy-efficiency businesses have been launched, creating more than 500 jobs. Its focus on compliance readiness, supplier development, and early-stage capital provision aligns closely with NOCSOBI's ambitions in a more rural and underdeveloped context.



SAREBI is a public-private initiative established in 2013 to provide targeted support to small businesses in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors. Headquartered in Cape Town, SAREBI delivers high-impact enterprise development services, including market access facilitation, technical mentorship, and funding readiness support. Their clients have been able to scale to national supplier status, build strategic partnerships with global OEMs, and secure REIPPPP-aligned contracts.

SAREBI's success is instructive for NOCSOBI. It proves the effectiveness of targeted, sector-specific incubation. Their focus on post-incubation investment readiness and long-term business sustainability informs NOCSOBI's model, particularly the structured support post-graduation. Through partnerships with corporates like Eskom and public financiers like the IDC, SAREBI has built a replicable blueprint for sector-based job creation and SME scale-up.

**Galeshewe SMME Village:** In partnership with the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development, NOCSOBI delivered a capacity-building programme to formalise five solar entrepreneurs. All five are now registered suppliers on the municipal procurement system, with two securing tenders valued at R1.2 million.

Located in the heart of Kimberley, Galeshewe SMME Village was developed as a multipurpose business support hub serving historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs. NOCSOBI's partnership with the Village focused on renewable energy start-up

development in a community with high unemployment and limited industrial exposure. Through this collaboration, NOCSOBI piloted a modular solar business bootcamp, providing technical orientation and compliance preparation.

The partnership helped transition informal energy-related hustles (such as solar light sales) into formal micro-enterprises, three of which are now registered, compliant, and accessing basic enterprise support funding. The model proved the importance of proximity, cultural relevance, and low-barrier entry points for early-stage incubation in underserved communities.

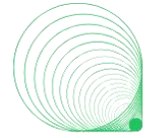
**Sol Plaatje University Rooftop Solar Pilot:** A flagship example of applied training. NOCSOBI-trained youth designed and installed the rooftop PV system at the university's administration block. Post-project, five graduates established their own businesses and now service municipal clients in Kuruman, Kimberley, and Springbok.

Sol Plaatje University in Kimberley was one of NOCSOBI's earliest proof-of-concept partners. The university commissioned a rooftop solar pilot and collaborated with NOCSOBI to ensure that the installation was led by graduates of the pre-incubation programme. This project had three outcomes:

- Five businesses were formed from the graduating cohort.
- A micro-consortium of the graduates secured the rooftop installation and maintenance contract.
- The university embedded entrepreneurship and renewable energy into its continuing education offerings.

The project is now part of a broader city-wide energy transition vision and positions Sol Plaatje University as a knowledge partner for future NOCSOBI cohorts.

These case studies collectively demonstrate that a structured, locally embedded, and technically competent incubation programme can drive systemic change. Whether through municipal partnerships, academic collaborations, or enterprise development, the NOCSOBI model delivers impact and is ready to scale.



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## **OPERATING MODEL AND THE R20 MILLION INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY**

### **The NOCSOBI Incubation Model: From Potential to Prosperity**

NOCSOBI's incubation framework is anchored in a five-phase model designed to support entrepreneurs across the full lifecycle of enterprise development, from idea generation to sustainable operations. Each phase is tailored to meet the unique needs of entrepreneurs operating within the highly technical and regulated renewable energy sector. Our methodology integrates contextual training, compliance acceleration, access to finance, and market integration, creating a full-value chain approach to inclusive economic participation.

### **Phase 1: Selection (1 month)**

A rigorous selection process that prioritises not only technical potential but community anchoring and social capital. Entrepreneurs are evaluated on innovation, resilience, and the potential to scale. Special attention is paid to ensuring the inclusion of youth, women, and rural residents. This critical entry phase ensures the right candidates are on boarded. NOC SOBI uses a multi-criteria matrix to evaluate:

- Technical knowledge and prior exposure to the energy sector
- Entrepreneurial drive and leadership potential
- Impact vision, especially in underserved communities
- Compliance and financial readiness (including tax clearance, B-BBEE status)

Shortlisted applicants undergo interviews and pitch evaluations by a panel that includes technical experts, business mentors, and funders. This rigorous process results in a curated cohort of high-potential entrepreneurs with strong alignment to NOC SOBI's mission.

### **Phase 2: Pre-Incubation (6 months)**

This phase focuses on foundational business literacy, basic solar PV training, entrepreneurial mind-set development, and market readiness assessments. Participants receive training in governance, business compliance, and introduction to procurement systems. This phase is designed to build core competencies. It focuses on:

- Business literacy: Cash flow, business models, budgeting
- Technical upskilling: Solar design, safety protocols, installation standards
- Ecosystem orientation: REIPPPP policies, compliance needs, procurement systems
- Customer discovery and product validation

Entrepreneurs are assigned mentors and complete modular learning delivered in-person and digitally. By the end of this phase, participants should have a registered entity, a validated market need, and a draft business plan.

### **Phase 3: Incubation (18 months)**

Entrepreneurs receive bespoke support including regulatory training (e.g. PV Green Card certification), advanced financial modelling, proposal development, and pilot deployment. Key interventions include mentorship from sector experts, facilitated access to buyers, and technical support from the CSIR. This is the core of our incubation offering. Entrepreneurs receive:

- Industry-compliant certifications (PV Green Card, COC standards)
- Legal and IP support
- Business plan refinement
- Access to technical labs and fabrication tools
- Assistance in bid development for local and provincial contracts

Each entrepreneur must pilot their product or service, demonstrate early traction, and present at investor readiness forums.

### **Phase 4: Graduation (6 months)**

Entrepreneurs are supported with investor pitch training, bid preparation, and market expansion. We facilitate direct linkages with procurement officers and public sector buyers in local municipalities, Eskom, and private REIPPPP projects. During this transitional phase, entrepreneurs receive support to:

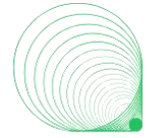
- Formalize partnerships and supplier agreements
- Access procurement pipelines from municipalities, utilities, and private firms
- Develop marketing and branding collateral
- Prepare investor decks and loan applications

NOC SOBI offers soft landing services that bridge entrepreneurs from supported incubation into independently functioning businesses with commercial contracts.

### **Phase 5: Post-Incubation (6 months)**

This final phase focuses on scaling. Support includes assistance with export-readiness, international quality certification, cross-border distribution, and growth capital facilitation. We work with DFIs, equity partners, and trade platforms to help businesses expand beyond the province. After graduation, NOC SOBI maintains a robust alumni network and light-touch support model. Post-incubation includes:

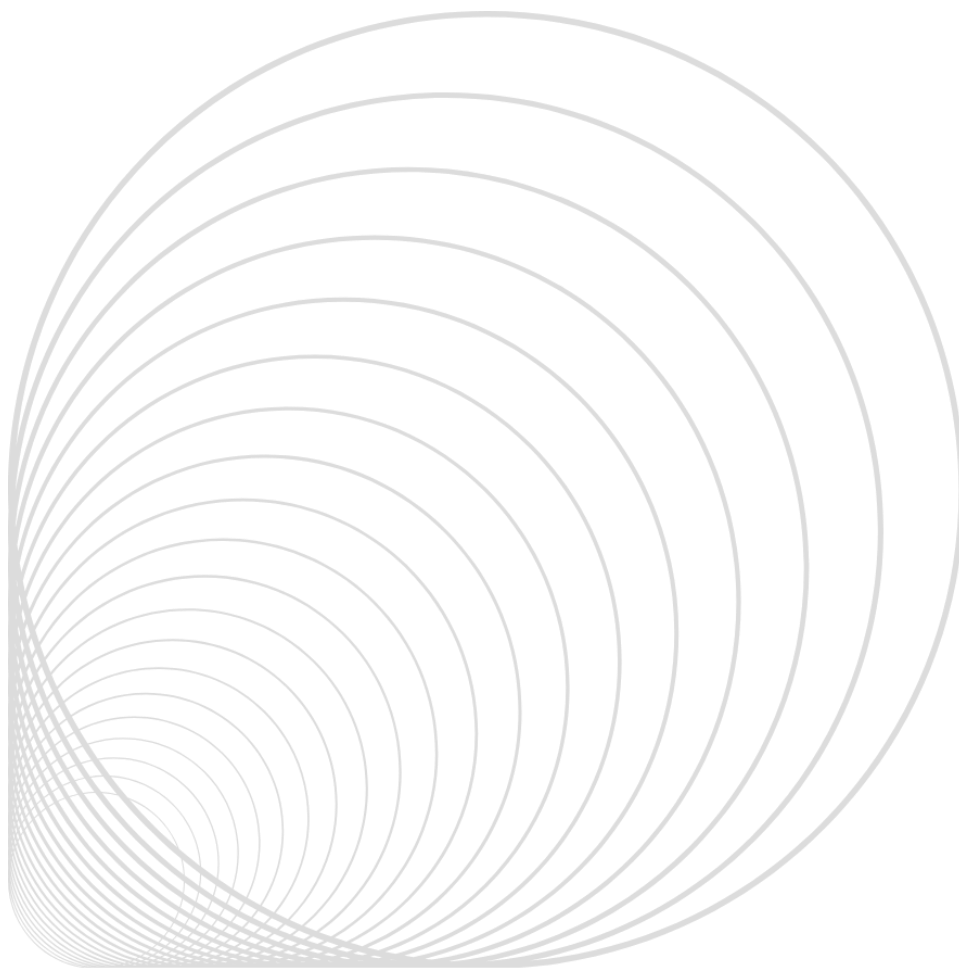
- Follow-on capital advisory and co-investment introductions
- Export readiness and global certification for hardware providers

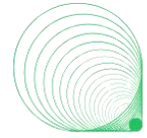


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- Participation in domestic and international trade missions
- Inclusion in NOCSOBI's performance dashboard and case library

This phase is critical to avoid the common post-acceleration drop-off, ensuring long-term business survival and scale.





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## Performance to Date: A Foundation for Scale

Over the past 24 months, NOCSOBI has incubated 60 entrepreneurs, resulting in:

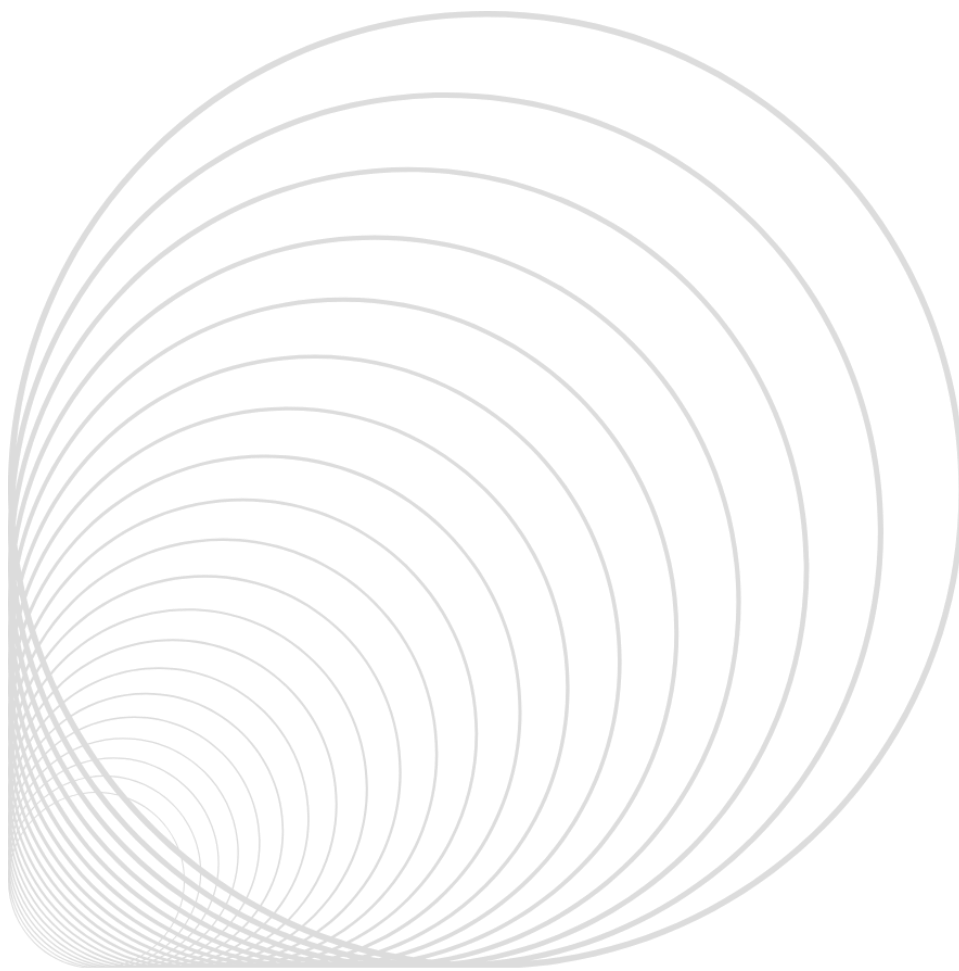
- 10 commercially viable renewable energy businesses
- Over 40 permanent jobs created
- 3 cross-border trading partners identified (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho)
- Rooftop and off-grid pilots in 7 Northern Cape communities
- R5 million in leveraged private and public capital

Our impact-to-date demonstrates both proof of concept and the urgent need for catalytic capital to expand our reach.

## Funding Gaps: Constraints to Growth

Despite clear demand and demonstrated success, NOC SOBI faces three critical constraints:

1. **Infrastructure Deficit:** Rural and peri-urban entrepreneurs lack access to high-quality training and incubation infrastructure within their own regions.
2. **Post-Incubation Capital Gap:** Even the most promising graduates face structural exclusion from mainstream capital markets, due to credit profiling, compliance costs, and collateral requirements.
3. **Market Integration and Visibility:** Graduates are often invisible to supply chains, procurement officers, and global trading platforms due to branding, scale, and compliance limitations.



## R20 MILLION INVESTMENT STRATEGY: A 3-PILLAR DEPLOYMENT PLAN

NOCSOBI seeks to raise R20 million in catalytic capital, deployed across three interdependent pillars:

### 1. Infrastructure & Systems (R5 million)

- Establish two regional incubation hubs
- Launch an online training platform for remote access
- Develop a shared services lab for prototyping and compliance support



### 2. Direct Enterprise Support (R10 million)

- Post-incubation grants and procurement bridging loans
- Support with product certification, insurance, legal fees
- Enable job creation and working capital for scale

### 3. Market Expansion (R5 million)

- Position SMEs in national REIPPPP pipelines
- Facilitate participation in African energy trade expos and procurement conferences
- Develop export channels to SADC markets for solar lighting, mini-grid tech, and consultancy services

### 18-Month Execution Plan

Timeline	Key Activities
Months 1–6	Launch infrastructure, recruit new cohorts, roll out remote learning
Months 7–12	Full incubation cycle, deploy first 10 pilots, launch certification pathways
Months 13–18	Scale-up support, trade missions, and capital deployment to 40 graduates

## Projected Outcomes and Multiplier Effects

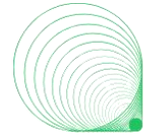
- 80 new enterprises incubated
- Over 300 sustainable jobs created
- 10 MW of locally deployed renewable energy
- Over R200 million in local economic value unlocked through procurement
- Model replication potential for Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and SADC

## Strategic Value, Global Relevance, and Funder Returns

### A Strategic Asset for Global and Local Funders

NOCSOBI is more than a project, it is an investable vehicle for national transformation, regional leadership, and global climate equity. Its structure is designed to offer high-impact funders a rare triple-bottom-line opportunity: social return, economic growth, and measurable climate benefit.

- **For Philanthropic Foundations:** NOCSOBI offers a platform to deliver high-leverage social return by funding job creation, youth development, women-owned enterprises, and rural inclusion, all within the green economy. Funds are directed toward visible, measurable, and reportable outcomes.
- **For Development Finance Institutions:** The incubator's proven model and partnership with local and provincial government de-risk its investment appeal. Its structure lends itself to blended finance, concessional loans, and technical assistance grants. NOCSOBI is a pipeline generator for renewable SMEs, supporting localization requirements and upstream industrialisation.
- **For Corporate ESG Investors:** With growing pressure to localise supply chains and deliver on Sustainable Development Goals, NOCSOBI provides a meaningful opportunity to deliver shared value. Corporates can benefit from supplier development, enterprise and supplier development (ESD) points, and integration into future REIPPPP projects.



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## GLOBAL RELEVANCE AND SOUTH-SOUTH SCALABILITY

NOCSOBI's model is not only replicable but scalable across energy-endowed emerging markets:

- **SADC Trade Region:** South Africa is part of a 16-member regional economic bloc increasingly focused on regional energy security and integration. NOCSOBI-trained entrepreneurs will be positioned as exporters and service providers across Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and beyond.
- **Global South Knowledge Exchange:** As a best practice case, NOCSOBI can be a focal point for knowledge transfer, offering curriculum licensing,

digital training packages, and incubator franchising across similar regions in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and West Africa.

## Sustainability and Long-Term Business Model

NOCSOBI is strategically structured to avoid dependency on grants in the long term. Our five-part sustainability model includes:

1. **Fee-for-service:** Entrepreneurs pay subsidised fees for advanced compliance training, proposal development, and due diligence support.
2. **Equity Stakes:** NOCSOBI holds minority equity in high-growth alumni businesses, recycling returns into the next generation of entrepreneurs.
3. **Curriculum Licensing:** Digital training modules can be licensed to other institutions in SADC, creating a revenue stream and widening reach.
4. **Bespoke Consulting:** Providing ESD advisory and compliance design for corporate and municipal renewable projects.
5. **Strategic Partnerships:** Continued co-investment with government and private sector stakeholders to embed NOCSOBI into broader development ecosystems.

## The Unique Value Proposition

- **Deep Localisation:** NOCSOBI is the only incubator operating at the intersection of rural inclusion, renewable energy, and enterprise development in the Northern Cape.
- **Policy Alignment:** Its mandate aligns with South Africa's Just Energy Transition, Green Hydrogen strategy, and National Development Plan 2030.
- **Track Record:** Pilot projects are live, partners are committed, and graduates are already trading.
- **Inclusive Innovation:** The model integrates traditional skills with modern systems, ensuring grassroots communities are not just participants, but leaders in the green economy.

## The Multiplier Effect

- **For every R1 million invested:** At least 12 jobs created, 2 businesses funded, and R10 million unlocked in procurement value.
- **For every 10 entrepreneurs scaled:** An estimated 300kW of renewable capacity is deployed in townships and rural zones.
- **For South Africa:** A measurable boost to GDP, employment equity, and energy security, positioning the country as a model of inclusive climate innovation

## CONCLUSION

NOC SOBI represents more than an incubator, it is a transformative platform that combines inclusive entrepreneurship, green innovation, and systemic economic change. With a proven track record, strategic alignment to South Africa's Just Energy Transition, and a scalable model, NOC SOBI offers funders a unique opportunity to deliver measurable climate, social, and economic returns. An investment of R20 million will not only catalyse renewable energy businesses but also create jobs, unlock procurement value, and establish the Northern Cape as Africa's hub for renewable energy entrepreneurship. This is a call to partners who want to invest in resilience, inclusivity, and the future of energy. Together, we can ensure that South Africa becomes a continental model for equitable green growth.

