

31^{of} 100Joy Lekgau
Mawela

Here to be Connecting

Turning creative talent into economic opportunity: Joy's on a mission to get industry exposure and access our youth needs.

For many young people, talent is not the problem. The challenge is finding the doorway into an industry where opportunity can often depend on who you know, where you come from and whether someone is willing to give you that first chance.

Joy Lekgau Mawela is working to change that. With a career spanning more than two decades across film, television, broadcasting and content strategy, Joy has developed a deep understanding of both the creative industries and the barriers that can limit participation. Today, she is using that experience to help young people access and build successful careers within the evolving creative economy.

Her approach goes beyond conventional skills training. Joy believes young people need more than certificates. They need industry exposure, mentors, professional networks, access to technology, opportunities to build portfolios and platforms to demonstrate their capabilities. By connecting emerging talent to industry, she helps aspiring creators understand how ideas become products, creative skills become services, and talent can generate income.

Her work places particular emphasis on young people from underserved communities and young women, creating opportunities into fields that can often seem inaccessible, including gaming, animation, film, digital content and extended reality (XR). The aim is to develop confident creators, freelancers, entrepreneurs and professionals who can participate actively in the digital economy.

Joy's own career gives her a unique perspective on what it takes to build a future in the sector. She began her journey in film and television at the Sithengi Film and TV Market, working as a researcher and festival programmer. She moved into production at Urban Brew Studios, where she became Production Manager, before joining the South African Broadcasting Corporation as Project Manager for SABC Africa, DTT and SABC 3.

Her experience has shaped her belief that creative industries can generate far more than entertainment. They can create jobs, businesses, opportunities and a sense of identity.

In a country where youth unemployment remains a significant challenge, Joy is helping demonstrate that the creativity of young people a powerful

economic asset. With the right support, networks and access, creativity can become more than a passion; it can become a profession, a business and a pathway to financial independence.

Your
story
matters

