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The Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies and coordinator of Government’s 4IR programme, Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, in partnership with MICT SETA, has launched a pilot skills development programme in its commitment to create one million new jobs by 2030.

President Ramaphosa has appointed the 4IR commission to address, amongst other things, the skills gaps to future proof SA’s economy and reduce youth unemployment, a challenge part due to technological disruption and structural inequalities.

The pilot phase of the project aims to train and equip 1,000 unemployed youth with the 4IR ICT skills necessary to secure learnerships, employment and ultimately, start new businesses.

The skills development programme has been segmented into seven streams: data science, digital content production, cybersecurity, cloud computing, drone piloting, 3D Printing and software development. The 3D printing and software development stream was launched at the University of Johannesburg. The core technical skills to be acquired, this intake of 259 learners from Gauteng and Mpumalanga will now be exposed to work readiness programmes and entrepreneurship skills.

FIRtech has partnered with the Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies to deliver parts of the overall 4IR Skills Programme, while other partners to the programme include the University of Johannesburg (UJ), Boston City Campus and Microsoft South Africa.

“The fourth industrial revolution has changed the way we work and interact with each other,” said FIRtech CEO Ugan Maistry.

“The soft skills of working with teams and service orientation are critical success factors and we plan to impart these skills during our work readiness programmes.”

**Caption**

Ayanda Mbolekwa, Director in the Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies