educonnect media

empowerment beyond the classroom



POST-EVENT REPORT

# FUTURE ECONOMY

## CONFERENCE & CAREER EXPO 2026

*Where learners connect to tomorrow's careers*

**28 September 2026 | UJ JBS Park, 69 Kingsway Avenue, Auckland Park**

Organised by Educonnect Media SA NPC | Host venue: University of Johannesburg

info@educonnectmedia.co.za | Report issued 1 October 2026

# 1. Executive Summary

The **Future Economy Conference & Career Expo 2026** was organised by Educonnect Media SA and held on 28 September 2026 at the UJ's Johannesburg Business School (JBS Park) in Auckland Park. The event gave Grade 11–12 learners, educators and parents direct access to universities, colleges, corporate employers and opportunity providers, alongside a programme of masterclasses and institutional presentations focused on the skills and careers of the future economy.

The day concluded successfully. Fifty-eight schools were recorded at the event, and 30 institutions, companies and organisations exhibited or presented. The programme delivered 13 content sessions, including five masterclasses on artificial intelligence, hybrid education, creative industries, advanced manufacturing and design, together with a wellness session and employability workshop for learners.

| 58 | 30 | 5 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Schools recorded | Exhibitors & partners | Masterclasses | Content sessions |

## Highlights

- **Broad exhibitor base:** 30 exhibitors and partners across public universities, private institutions, corporates, science and technology bodies, and student support providers.
- **Strong school participation:** 58 schools recorded, spanning high schools, secondary schools, independent and international schools, and homeschooling providers.
- **Future-focused content:** five masterclasses and seven institutional presentations aligned to seven sector themes.
- **Learner wellbeing and employability:** a dedicated wellness session and a workplace-readiness workshop complemented the career content.

# 2. Background and Objectives

Educonnect Media SA is a South African education-focused non-profit organisation. The Future Economy Conference & Career Expo was designed to help learners make informed decisions about their post-school futures by connecting them with the institutions, employers and opportunities shaping the economy they will enter.

The event was organised under the guiding principle "Prepare. Connect. Empower." and was structured around seven sector themes: Future Skills; Digital & Technology; Fintech & Banking; Retail; Logistics & Supply Chain; Media & AI; and Entrepreneurship & Innovation.

### Objectives

- Expose learners, parents and educators to study and career pathways in the future economy.
- Connect schools directly with higher education institutions, employers and opportunity providers.
- Deliver practical, future-focused content through masterclasses and institutional presentations.
- Support learner wellbeing and employability alongside career exploration.

## 3. Event Overview

| Item | Detail |
|---|---|
| **Event** | Future Economy Conference & Career Expo 2026 (#FutureEconomy2026) |
| **Organiser** | Educonnect Media SA NPC |
| **Host venue** | University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg Business School (JBS Park), 69 Kingsway Avenue, Auckland Park, Johannesburg |
| **Date** | 28 September 2026 |
| **Programme hours** | 09:00 – 15:00 |
| **Target audience** | Grade 11–12 learners, parents and educators |
| **Format** | Plenary opening, parallel masterclasses and institutional presentations, exhibition and networking |

The University of Johannesburg served as host venue. Educonnect Media SA NPC was the organiser and bears responsibility for the event.

## 4. Programme and Content Delivery

The programme opened with registration, a welcome and an exhibitor introduction. From 10:00, masterclasses ran in Lecture Hall LG 011 while institutional presentations ran in parallel in Lecture Halls LG 015 and LG 016, allowing learners to choose sessions suited to their interests. The day closed with a wellness session, the closing address and a vote of thanks.

| Time | Masterclasses and Main Programme (LG 011) | Parallel Institutional Sessions |
|---|---|---|
| **08:00–09:00** | Registration | — |
| **09:00–09:30** | Opening Remarks & Welcome | — |
| **09:20–10:00** | Meet the Exhibitors Introduction | — |
| **10:00–10:20** | UJ Digital – The Future of Hybrid Education | University of the Free State (LG 015) |
| **10:25–10:45** | Wray Castle Africa – AI & Digital Transformation | SAE Institute (LG 015) |
| **10:50–11:10** | AAA School of Advertising – Thriving in the Creative Industry in the Age of AI | Wits University (LG 016) |

| Time | Masterclasses and Main Programme (LG 011) | Parallel Institutional Sessions |
|---|---|---|
| **11:15–11:40** | CSIR – Advanced Manufacturing & Future of Manufacturing | North-West University (LG 015) |
| **11:45–12:10** | Inscape Education – Building a Career in Design for the Future Economy | Academy of Sound Engineering (LG 015) |
| **12:15–13:00** | — | Abalobi Solutions – Future Skills, Employability & Workplace Readiness (LG 016) |
| **13:00–14:00** | Lunch & Networking | — |
| **14:05–14:30** | Wellness: South African College of Applied Psychology | SAE Institute (LG 015) |
| **14:30–15:00** | Closing Address & Vote of Thanks | — |

*Table 1: Programme at a glance*

### Masterclass themes

The five masterclasses were delivered by exhibiting partners and addressed the central themes of the future economy: ***hybrid and digital learning, artificial intelligence and digital transformation, creative careers in the age of AI, advanced manufacturing, and design careers***. Together with seven institutional presentations and a wellness session, the programme delivered 13 content sessions.

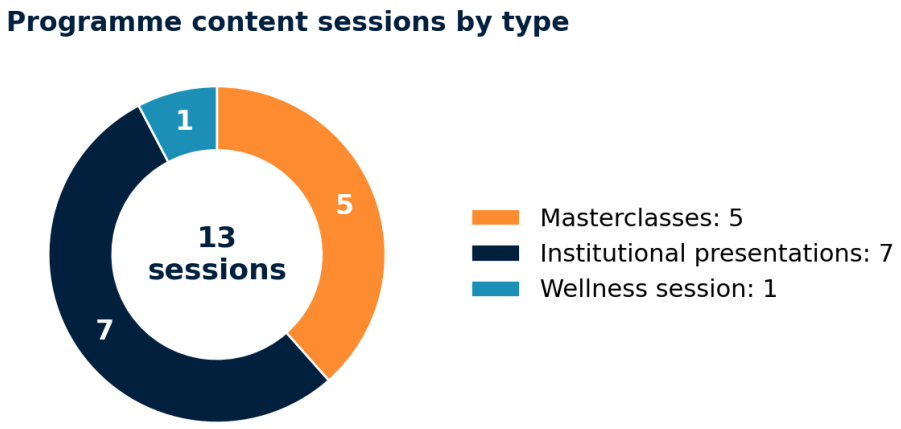



*Figure 1: Content sessions by type*

## 5. Exhibitors and Partners

Thirty institutions, companies and organisations participated as exhibitors and partners. They are grouped below by organisation type. Higher education institutions made up just over half of the exhibitor base (16 of 30), giving learners a wide range of study options, while corporate partners and opportunity providers broadened the conversation to funding, employment and experience beyond the classroom.

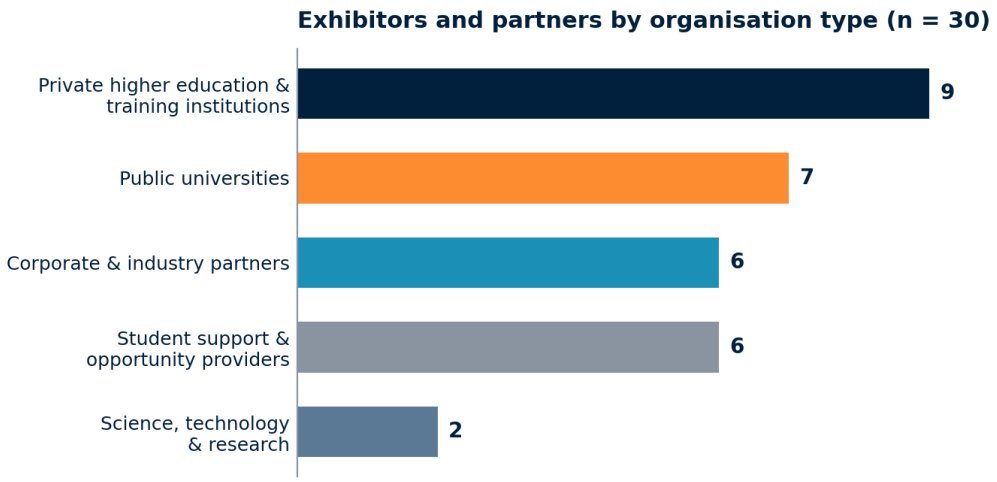



*Figure 2: Exhibitors and partners by organisation type*

| Organisation type | Participating organisations | Total |
|---|---|---|
| **Public universities** | University of Johannesburg; University of the Witwatersrand (Wits); University of the Free State; Rhodes University; Tshwane University of Technology; Vaal University of Technology; North-West University | 7 |
| **Private higher education & training institutions** | AAA School of Advertising; Rosebank International; Richfield Graduate Institute; Academy of Sound Engineering; Boston City Campus; Inscape Education Group; SAE Institute; Open Window; South African College of Applied Psychology (SACAP) | 9 |
| **Corporate & industry partners** | SNG Grant Thornton; FNB; Nedbank; Discovery; Virgin Active; Kia | 6 |
| **Student support & opportunity providers** | Mathematics Solved; Moshal Program; Abalobi Solutions; Cultural Care Au Pair; OVC Marketing; South Point Student Accommodation | 6 |
| **Science, technology & research** | CSIR / NMMF; Wray Castle Africa | 2 |
| **Total** | | 30 |

*Table 2: Exhibitor and partner register by organisation type*

## Participating Exhibitors and Partners

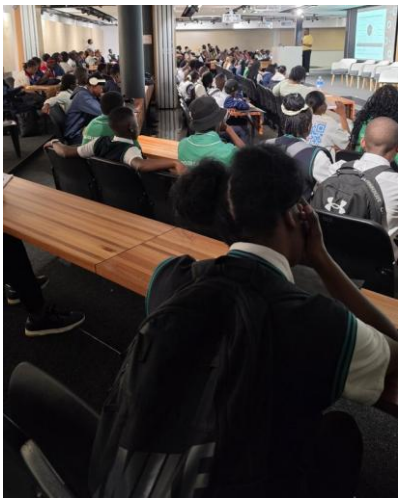
The institutions, companies and organisations that exhibited at the Future Economy Conference & Career Expo 2026.




*Figure 3: Exhibitors and partners*

## Event Photo Gallery

Scenes from the Future Economy Conference & Career Expo 2026, held on 28 September 2026 at UJ JBS Park.



*Learners attending a session in the lecture hall*




*Wray Castle Africa: AI & Digital Transformation*




*SAE Institute presentation*




*CSIR: Advanced Manufacturing & Future of Manufacturing*




*North-West University session*



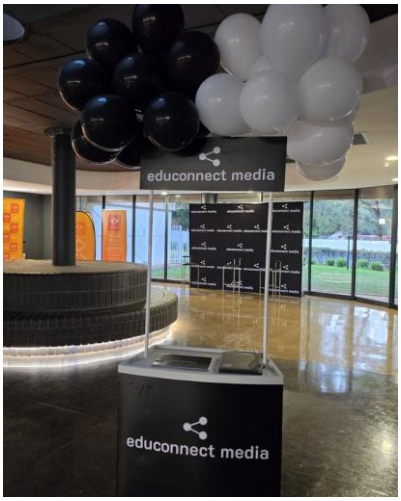
*Exhibitor introduction at the opening*




*Inscape Education exhibition stand*



*Learners exploring the exhibition floor*




*Educonnect Media Booth*

# 6. School Participation

Fifty-eight distinct schools attended, as recorded on the attendance sign-in sheets and supplementary records. Schools are classified by the designation recorded, and schools that signed in more than once are counted once.

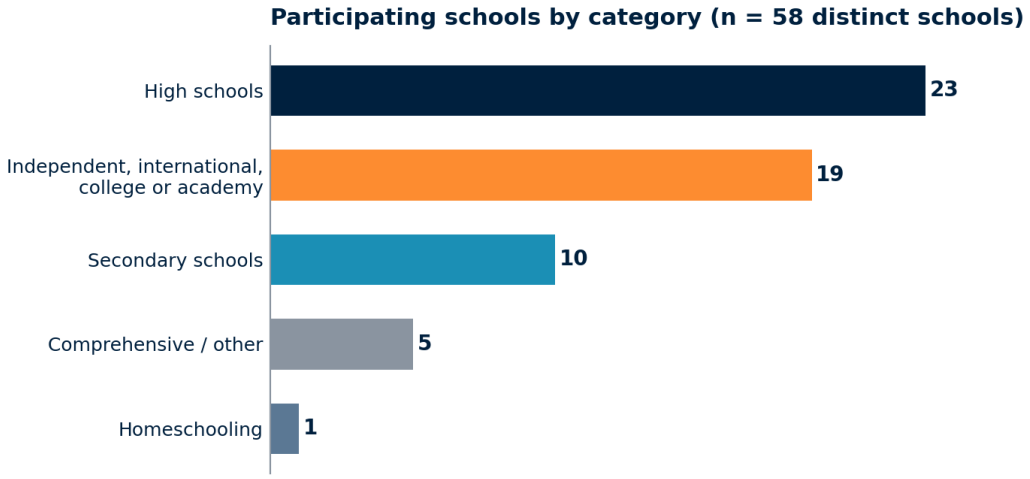



*Figure 4: Participating schools by category*

| School category | Schools | Share | Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| **High schools** | 23 | 39.7% | Mondeor High; Parktown Boys High; Benoni High |
| **Independent, international, college or academy** | 19 | 32.8% | Ashbury College; Covenant College; Curro Clayville |
| **Secondary schools** | 10 | 17.2% | Namedi Secondary; Kibler Park Secondary; Edenridge Secondary |
| **Comprehensive / other** | 5 | 8.6% | Lethulwazi Comprehensive; Mpilisweni School of Specialization |
| **Homeschooling** | 1 | 1.7% | Impaq Homeschooling / Optimi |
| **Total** | 58 | 100% | |

*Table 3: Participating schools by category*

### Observations

- Eight schools brought multiple learners, among them Lofentse Girls High School, Allen Glen High School, Namedi Secondary School, Hoerskool President and Lethulwazi Comprehensive School.
- Single-sex schools identified by name include five girls' schools (Lofentse Girls High School for Girls, Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, Athlone Girls High, Aurora Girls High and Jeppe High School for Girls) and three boys' schools (Parktown Boys High, Springs Boys High and Jeppe High School for Boys).
- The mix of public, independent, international and homeschooling participants shows the event reached learners across a wide range of school environments. The full sign-in register appears in Appendix A.

## 7. Key Outcomes

- **Access to pathways:** learners engaged directly with 16 higher education institutions, six corporate partners and a range of opportunity providers in a single venue.
- **Relevant content:** masterclasses were aligned to the seven sector themes, with particular emphasis on AI, digital transformation and creative industries.
- **Whole-learner support:** the SACAP wellness session and the Abalobi Solutions employability workshop addressed readiness and wellbeing alongside career choice.
- **Institutional collaboration:** organisations from the university, private education, corporate and science sectors shared a single platform, strengthening Educonnect Media's partner network for future events.

## 8. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### Registration and data capture

Pre-registration and digital check-in were done via the **Quicket Booking System**, capturing school name, learner numbers, educators, and parents for reliable headcounts and support impact reporting.

### Media accreditation and access control

Educonnect Media SA, as the organiser, was the sole authority for media accreditation. No media were accredited without a formal request and approval. UJ Social Media was granted permission to interview guests. Parents and learners consented to media coverage and agreed to have their photographs published on the Educonnect Media platforms and those of its partners.

### Measuring impact

A post-event survey on customer experience for learners, educators and parents was done via Quicket together with session-level attendance counts to measure the impact of individual masterclasses and exhibitors.

### Broadening participation

We will consider widening representation of TVET colleges (previously invited but did not get commitment), SETAs and employers in additional sectors, and continue the parallel-session format, which allowed learners to tailor their day.

## 9. Conclusion and Acknowledgements

The Future Economy Conference & Career Expo 2026 achieved its aim of connecting learners with tomorrow's careers. Educonnect Media SA NPC thanks all participating schools, exhibitors and partners, the masterclass presenters, and the University of Johannesburg for hosting the event at JBS Park. We look forward to building on this foundation in 2027.

**Craig Davidson**
Executive Director & Education Relationship Strategist
Educonnect Media SA NPC

# Appendix A: School Sign-in Register

Distinct schools recorded at the event, listed alphabetically. Schools that signed in more than once appear once.

| No. | School | Category | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Africa House College | Independent / international / college | Multiple learners |
| 2 | Al Aqsa High School | High school | |
| 3 | Allen Glen High | High school | Multiple learners |
| 4 | Ashbury College | Independent / international / college | |
| 5 | Athlone Girls High School | High school | Girls' school |
| 6 | Aurora Girls High | High school | Girls' school |
| 7 | Benoni High School | High school | |
| 8 | Central Islamic School | Independent / international / college | |
| 9 | Centurion College | Independent / international / college | |
| 10 | Covenant College | Independent / international / college | |
| 11 | Crawford International Lonehill | Independent / international / college | |
| 12 | Curro Clayville | Independent / international / college | |
| 13 | Curro Serengeti | Independent / international / college | |
| 14 | Curtis Nkondo School of Specialization | Comprehensive / other | |
| 15 | David Makubo Secondary School | Secondary school | |
| 16 | Dinwiddie High | High school | Multiple learners |
| 17 | Dowerglen High School | High school | |
| 18 | Edenridge Secondary | Secondary school | |
| 19 | Forest High School | High school | |
| 20 | FR Smangaliso Mkhatshwa Secondary School | Secondary school | |
| 21 | Glenista High School | High school | |
| 22 | Greenside High School | High school | |
| 23 | Hoerskool President | High school | Multiple learners |
| 24 | Horizon International High School | Independent / international / college | |
| 25 | Impaq Homeschooling / Optimi | Homeschooling | |
| 26 | Iva Global School | Independent / international / college | |
| 27 | Jiyana Secondary School | Secondary school | Multiple learners |
| 28 | Jeppe High School for Boys | High school | Boys' school |
| 29 | Jeppe High School for Girls | High school | Girls' school |
| 30 | Kibler Park Secondary | Secondary school | |
| 31 | Kingswood Academy | Independent / international / college | |
| 32 | Lenasia Muslim School | Independent / international / college | |
| 33 | Lethulwazi Comprehensive School | Comprehensive / other | Multiple learners |
| 34 | Lofentse Girls High School | High school | Girls' school; multiple learners |
| 35 | Maharishi Invincibility School | Independent / international / college | |

| No. | School | Category | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 36 | Masithwalisane Secondary School | Secondary school | |
| 37 | Mel International High School | Independent / international / college | |
| 38 | Midrand High School | High school | |
| 39 | Mokgome Secondary School | Secondary school | |
| 40 | Mondeor High School | High school | Multiple learners |
| 41 | Morris Isaacson High School | High school | |
| 42 | Mpilisweni School of Specialization | Comprehensive / other | Multiple learners |
| 43 | Namedi Secondary School | Secondary school | Multiple learners |
| 44 | Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls | Independent / international / college | Girls' school |
| 45 | Parklands High School | High school | |
| 46 | Parktown Boys High School | High school | Boys' school |
| 47 | Phoenix College | Independent / international / college | |
| 48 | Providence Academy | Independent / international / college | |
| 49 | Queens High School | High school | |
| 50 | Randfontein High School | High school | |
| 51 | Sir John Adamson High | Comprehensive / other | |
| 52 | Springs Boys High School | High school | Boys' school |
| 53 | St Enda's Secondary School | Comprehensive / other | |
| 54 | St Martin High School | High school | |
| 55 | St Matthew Private Secondary School | Independent / international / college | |
| 56 | Thuto Lesedi Secondary School | Secondary school | |
| 57 | UJ Metropolitan Academy | Independent / international / college | |
| 58 | Vuwani Secondary School | Secondary school | |

*Table A1: Schools recorded at the event (n = 58)*