



GLOBAL LABOUR UNIVERSITY – UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

ENGAGE South Africa

Union Rights, Policy and Practice: Training for Global Union Activists

Short Course Training Programme Open to Trade Unionists
and Labour Activists Globally

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR 2026

Workers in both the formal and informal economies as well as trade unions are faced with rapid economic and social change. As yet, adequate regulatory and protective frameworks have not been found to meet the challenges imposed by the varying forces of globalisation. The current world economic and health crises, exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, urgently requires the development of alternative policies and rules based on universal human rights, international social justice and democratic self-determination. However, to turn these policies and rules into reality a strong voice representing the interests of workers is needed.

ENGAGE helps labour activists and trade unionists to acquire additional knowledge and tools enabling them to take an active part in public debate and the process of policy formulation and implementation. The Certificate Course, made up of six modules, constitutes the core of the activities of ENGAGE. The cause of the decade-long decline in the wage share and the requirements for a wage-led recovery path will be discussed and analysed during the training. The participants will jointly develop strategies to enforce decent work conditions along cross-national chains of production and to regulate financial markets in a way that promotes fair globalisation and inclusive societies.

The topics covered in the course may include, inter alia:

- Global Governance
- Global Wage Policy and Finance
- Labour and Development
- Society and Development
- Trade Union Capacity Building
- Power Resources Mapping Research Project

Target Group

Participation of labour activists and trade unionists from Africa, Asia, South and North America and Europe makes the ENGAGE training programme a truly unique international experience that offers new opportunities for global networking.

ENGAGE is part of the Global Labour University (GLU) network that has successfully established academic study opportunities for labour activists from Africa, Asia, South and North America and Europe. It aims to strengthen the intellectual and strategic capacity of workers and their organisations and fostering stronger working relationships among trade unions. Courses are taught by experienced teaching staff from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and other guest lecturers.

Practical Considerations, Terms and Conditions

Certification: Upon successful completion of the training programme, participants will receive a short-course certificate of competence. Participants must attend the entire course to be eligible for certification.

Classes: The course will run from **31 August to 23 October 2026** at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. For successful applicants who have been granted scholarships, arrivals at Wits University are expected on 05 September. Graduation is set for 22 October. All participants in University residence are expected to check-out on 24 October 2026.

Practical Research Project: Participants will conduct a group research project during the last two weeks of the programme.

Confirmations and liabilities: This course is subject to available funding. The University of the Witwatersrand reserves the right to cancel or postpone the delivery of this course should funding not be available and/or reduce the number of available seats which may impact on your acceptance. Any costs that that applicant incurs in relation to this application and potential attendance in the course, is for their own cost and will not be reimbursed should the course be cancelled, postponed or their seat withdrawn.

Reserved participation: Please note that only successful applicants will be allowed to attend any activities or classes forming part of the course.

Financing and Scholarships

The ENGAGE course receives support from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Trade Union Competence Centre for Sub-Saharan Africa (FES TUCC) and the Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland (SASK). There are a **limited number** of scholarships for accepted applicants from Africa, Asia and South America. Not all who are accepted can be funded. The scholarship covers the following:

- University short course administrative costs
- Accommodation
- Tuition fees at the University of the Witwatersrand

Day-to-day living and travel expenses are the **responsibility of the participants and their organisations**. Flights and/or travel costs to and from Johannesburg, South Africa have to be paid for by the participants or an organisation on their behalf.

Estimated costs*, which are subject to change, if the participant is NOT covered by the scholarship:

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|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Accommodation | R39,100.00 (for two months) |
| Tuition Fees | R9,775.00 |
| Student Expenses | R8,625.00 (per month) |

**Please note: These are estimated South African Rand (ZAR) costs for the duration of the ENGAGE course as of July 2025 and are subject to change.*

Admission requirements

- you are a trade unionist (in full-time employment, a shop steward and/or voluntary involvement) or are otherwise active in the labour movement;
- you are committed to employing your new skills in labour-related issues;
- you are motivated to pass your acquired knowledge on to others;

- you have at least a School Leaving Certificate (in exceptional circumstances we can also recognise prior learning for those who do not have school leaving certificates); those with tertiary degrees are also encouraged to apply;
- you have at least three years' labour-related work experience;
- you are responsible or will become responsible for labour-related policies in an organisation representing workers or dealing with labour issues; and
- you have a good command of English, can express yourself in writing and willing to participate actively in courses (see below).

Language requirements

A TOEFL (IBT) score of 60 points or higher or a score of 5.5 or higher in IELTS; or you have been taught in English up to your School Leaving Certificate or your tertiary degree programme.

Online application process

Please click on the following link to apply online: <https://witsplus.ac.za/c/glu-engage-call-for-applications>

Please submit your completed application (including all documents) online at the following link:

To complete the online application process, you are required to upload the following documents (in English): **(add link here)**

- **A completed Engage 2026 Online Application**
- **Your Curriculum Vitae (CV)/Resume**
- **Your Personal Motivational letter supporting your application**
- **An Official Letter of Recommendation by your Trade Union/Organisation endorsing your application**
- **Copies of your academic certificates**

Successful applicants will be subject to the terms and conditions of this course and the rules of the University and by submitting this application you confirm acceptance of these requirements, terms and conditions.

For more information, please visit us at <https://www.wits.ac.za/glu/>

Closing date for applications: Friday, 19 December 2025

Incomplete applications will NOT be processed nor considered for selection.

Please ensure all relevant documents are uploaded correctly.

Contact

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