



ORANGE SPORTS HUB CAPE TOWN GATEWAY TO A VIBRANT SPORTS-LOVING SOUTH AFRICA

Sports: the economic driver for South Africa

On October 13, Orange Sports Forum (OSF) officially launched the Orange Sports Hub South Africa (OSH SA) in Bellville, Cape Town – a major step in strengthening the economic and sporting ties between the Netherlands and South Africa. A second office will open in Sandton, Johannesburg in early 2026, expanding the Dutch sports network across the region.



The festive launch took place at Damen Shipyards' impressive headquarters in the port of Cape Town. Mark Agterdenbosch, Managing Partner of OSH SA, announced the opening in the presence of Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister of Economic Development, Tourism and Agriculture of the Western Cape, and Johan van de Hoef, Deputy Consul General of the Netherlands. Over 70 distinguished guests attended, among them a business delegation from the Johan Cruyff Foundation, led by Edwin van der Sar.

A day before the event, the Cruyff Foundation celebrated the opening of a new Cruyff Court in George, about 300 km from Cape Town. This symbolized the shared vision between the Foundation and the new Hub: using sport to create social impact and long-term opportunity. Guests from both countries—entrepreneurs, policy makers, sports federations (rugby, hockey, football), knowledge institutions like Stellenbosch University, and private companies—met to explore future cooperation, hosted jointly by OSF and Damen Shipyards.

Strong economic and social significance

In his keynote address, Minister Meyer emphasized the enduring relationship between the Netherlands and the Western Cape. He welcomed the Hub as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth, mutual trade and innovation, and a partner in improving vitality and well-being through sport. The provincial government will work closely with OSH SA to align sport with economic development policies.

Earlier that day, OSF and the Department of Sport & Culture of the Western Cape Government hosted a Sports Round Table with around 30 key stakeholders. Representing Minister Ricardo Mackenzie, Chief Director Dr Lyndon Bouah opened the session. The Cruyff Foundation presented its South Africa 2030 strategy, highlighting the positive community impact of the 12 existing Courts and future plans to expand across the country. Quoting Johan Cruyff – *"You can't do anything alone; you have to do it together"* – Dr Bouah underlined the essence of collaboration that the Hub now embodies.

Participants discussed how Dutch and South African partners can jointly strengthen grassroots development, sport innovation, and entrepreneurship.

A milestone for Dutch-South African sports cooperation

The Orange Sports Hub Cape Town marks a new phase of structured, long-term engagement between the two nations. Built on a formal partnership with CapeBPO, the Hub continuously monitors sports policy, investment flows and business opportunities across South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

This enables OSF members to access real-time market intelligence, support trade missions, and identify innovation opportunities in digital sports, infrastructure, and social programs. Early founding members include Lumosa and Infosys, represented by Hans Sanders and David van der Merwe respectively. More OSF partners are expected to join soon.

Local leadership with international reach

Heading the Hub, Mark Agterdenbosch combines experience in economic diplomacy and a strong network across public and private sectors. Under his leadership, OSH SA functions as a gateway for Dutch sports organizations seeking lasting partnerships and visibility in the region.

"South Africa and the Netherlands are natural partners in developing sports ecosystems that create growth, health, and prosperity,"

Agterdenbosch noted. *"The country faces challenges, but also enormous potential. Emerging trends—from sports tech to social inclusion—are paving the way for sustainable progress."*

Five strategic pillars

The Hub operates through five strategic pillars, tailored to the local context:

1. Market access & visibility – Linking Dutch innovation to South African ecosystems through trade facilitation, joint showcases and events.
2. Local presence & support – Offering flexible workspace and local representation for sustainable business growth.
3. Knowledge & community – Organizing workshops, CEO sessions and innovation rounds to connect experts.
4. Support for startups and tech programs – Building the Innovation Sport Valley concept in South Africa.
5. Social impact through sport – Developing community programs that promote inclusion and vitality.

These pillars directly align with OSF's International Strategy 2034, which prioritizes digital sports technology, sports medical innovation, high-tech facilities, sustainable infrastructure and sport-for-all initiatives.





South Africa's vibrant sports economy

Sport is a major economic driver for South Africa, contributing to job creation, tourism and local identity. The country's sportswear market alone reached around USD 888 million in 2024, growing at an annual rate of 3.8%. This growth is powered by a young population, urban fashion trends and rising health awareness.

Beyond apparel, the broader sports industry—including equipment, events, media, and licensed products—continues to expand. Digitalization and social media amplify fan engagement and open new commercial channels, even as funding and talent development remain structural challenges.

The most popular sports—football, rugby and cricket—are joined by fast-growing interest in athletics, hockey, basketball, golf, cycling, swimming, tennis, and netball. The Western Cape and Gauteng provinces serve as national hubs for sports infrastructure, education and innovation.

Driving sustainable cooperation

The creation of the Orange Sports Hub South Africa represents a strategic shift from short-term trade missions to permanent collaboration. The Hub ensures that relationships evolve into mutual investment, research partnerships, and local impact programs. It strengthens both nations' ambitions for inclusive growth and healthier societies through sport.

By facilitating knowledge exchange, public-private partnerships, and joint innovation projects, OSH SA contributes to a resilient sports economy that benefits communities on both sides.

Looking ahead, the Hub aims to play a central role in supporting South Africa's participation in global sporting events, as well as in preparing for future continental competitions. It will serve as a testbed for sustainable sports solutions, from renewable energy lighting and smart venues to community health initiatives.

A shared vision for the future

The opening of OSH SA demonstrates how sport can bridge continents and drive both economic and social transformation. It provides Dutch and South African companies, knowledge institutions and governments with a permanent platform for cooperation.

With its focus on innovation, sustainability and inclusion, the Hub is set to become a model for international collaboration in sport—empowering the next generation of athletes, entrepreneurs and changemakers across Africa.



Contact

Orange Sports Forum
www.orangesportsforum.com

Orange Sports Hub South Africa
42 Bloemhof Road, Amber CL, Bellville,
Cape Town 7530, South Africa

E-mail Mark Agterdenbosch (Managing
Partner Orange Sports Hub Kaapstad):
mark.agterdenbosch@sabacentre.com