

## Briefing Note 3: The APORDE programme on development economics and industrial policy

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The annual African Programme on Rethinking Development Economics (APORDE) opened in the first week of September 2023. APORDE is a high-level training programme in development economics funded by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to build capacity in Africa. It focuses on improving how we as Africans think about and implement industrial development. The programme is supported by the South African Research Chair in Industrial Development (SARChI) based at the University of Johannesburg, and administered and co-facilitated by TIPS.

APORDE 2023 is the 17th annual edition of this important intervention to improve the understanding of economic development and industrial policy in developing countries. The programme has had more than 600 participants since it started in 2007 with the aim of building capacity in industrial development across Africa. While in session, it hosts public lectures by high-level economists from across the world.

APORDE helps participants to reflect on relevant themes and country experiences with academics and practitioners from across the continent and the globe. The programme highlights that while there is complexity in implementing industrial policy and industrial development in the current era, it is achievable. Key messages include the importance of building industrial capacity, its viability, and how countries need to build an evidence base on the political and economic context. It stresses the importance of adapting, not copying, support measures to build industrial capacity.

Over the two weeks the programme includes discussions on structural change, deindustrialisation, industrialisation of freshness, trade, gender, global value chains and local production systems, inequality, taxation, anti-corruption and labour markets. The programme also looks at the experiences of economic development in the Global North and contrasts that with Africa and Latin America.

Through this training, APORDE provides insights to participants into critically evaluate the policy options facing governments using evidence-based research, and give a heterodox perspective on different approaches to industrialisation and economic development. APORDE is able to share an alternative perspective that draws on the real world experiences of development and the pitfalls of using a simplistic textbook analysis or unworkable models.

APORDE also provides an opportunity for South African officials, researchers, and academics to engage and interact with their colleagues from across the continent. An alumni network has been established to support these engagements even after the course itself is completed.

More information on APORDE, including the public lectures, is available at [www.aporde.co.za](http://www.aporde.co.za).