



GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKERS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS ADVISING

We are grateful to all who have shown interest or have already confirmed that they will be speaking at the inaugural International Conference on Business Advising (ICBA 2017). With a growing number of key players in the field of business advising now coming on board, the conference is shaping up to be an important forum for conversation on this important business support measure for entrepreneurs and small businesses worldwide. This quote illustrates the importance of business advising:

“Many entrepreneurs are good at going it alone, but the growth and development of small and medium-sized enterprises often rely on the guidance and support of external practitioners or advisers with specific expertise, knowledge, and skills that entrepreneurs may not have. These people make a difference, and research has shown they improve the longer-term viability of new ventures, helping them get past those critical first five years...The use of external advice has been strongly linked to successful business growth...” - [Keystones in Entrepreneurship Knowledge, 2005](#).

We have developed the following guidelines to aid speakers as we edge closer to ICBA 2017.

1. NATURE AND FOCUS OF THE CONFERENCE

As is evident from its theme: **Business Advising – Policy, Profession, Practice, Performance**, this conference will focus on and examine the profession of business advising itself. It is not a general small business conference and will therefore not address general small business issues. The central question in mind is how the profession of business advising can and should be enhanced in order to increase its relevance to and impact on entrepreneurs and small businesses.

2. CONFERENCE AUDIENCE

Flowing from the above, the conference will draw together policymakers in government, various business advising professional bodies and their business advisor members, entrepreneurship and SME development agencies, users of business advising such as financiers, SME associations and large corporates delivering developmental support programmes to SMEs, and institutions involved in delivering training and professional development programmes on various aspects of business advising.

3. ENVISAGED CONFERENCE OUTCOME

It is envisaged that the conference will provide important information that will provide guidance to all actors in the business advising field on what policies and other measures are best suited to ensuring the ongoing development and enhancement of the profession, so as to increase its positive impact on entrepreneurs and SMEs.

4. CONFERENCE FORMAT

The first two days of the conference will take the form of talks by policymakers and other invited guests, PowerPoint presentations by speakers, and panel discussions with the audience. The third day will be divided into a **Policy Forum** (for a focused discussion on policies and support measures to enhance the profession of business advising), **Professional Development Workshop** (practical training on various aspects of business advising, aimed at practising business advisors), and a possible **Coaching Café** (20-minute speed coaching sessions aimed at any interested registered conference attendee – [still subject to confirmation](#)). All speaker presentations will be 20-30 minutes in duration, followed by interaction with the audience.

5. REQUESTED SPEAKER ACTION

1. Select a topic under the conference theme you plan to speak on – [policy](#), [profession](#), [practice](#), [performance](#). (For more guidance on issues to be covered under each topic please see the Draft Programme). Presentations that do not address these topics can unfortunately not be accommodated.
2. Submit a brief (no longer than half a page) synopsis of your conference input, covering the main thrust of what your presentation will focus on. Please send this to the Conference Secretariat by [Friday 27 October 2017](#), latest.
3. Confirmed speakers are requested to submit their PowerPoint presentations to the Conference Secretariat by no later than [Friday 17 November](#).

The **Conference Secretariat** can be reached via email, as follows:

Conference Manager: Asanda@osiba.co.za

Coordinating Assistants: Gugu@osiba.co.za and Kagiso@osiba.co.za

We look forward to welcoming you all to ICBA 2017.

With best regards,

Septi M Bukula, Conference Director