



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING  
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

**RE: FIRM SURVEY: UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN DEVELOPMENT POLICY  
RESEARCH UNIT: UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY WITHIN THE  
MER-SECTOR WITH A FOCUS ON SMME'S**

The University of Cape Town's Development Policy Research Unit (hereafter UCT-DPRU) has been appointed by the merSETA to investigate avenues for structural transformation available within the manufacturing, engineering, and related services sector. The purpose of this research is to assess both the role and impact within frontier spaces and interrogate the ability for the sector to build economic complexity through product-level diversification and expansion opportunities (called frontier products) that would drive growth both within the MER sector, and in the broader South African economy. In addition, the identification of such opportunities within the MER sectors features as a key component of this research project, particularly skills needed to diversify into frontier products and influence skills development and industrial economic policy.

In order to proceed to the next phase of the project the merSETA in collaboration with University of Cape Town has engaged with an independent research organization to conduct a survey and collect information. Therefore, it is essential to obtain feedback from stakeholders who are actively involved in the market. In addition, inputs from key stakeholder actively involved in the MER sector, is critical to informing practical approaches to building economic complexity in the MER sector. This information will help businesses in the MER sector to broaden their capabilities, create mutually beneficial linkages with other businesses, and drive economic development and growth in the sector.

There will be two firm surveys for two projects, both of which require responses to better serve the sectors and that the researchers have tried their utmost to ensure that the survey questions are not covering the same topics or questions, if there are similarities, the questions are structured such that they are required for statistical analysis and modelling.

The following are planned dates for the survey:

- Pilot Phase: 28 June 2021
- Survey: August – October 2021

Regards,

Labour Market and Sector Skills Planning Unit