

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

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South Africa – New Digital Visa Scheme Launched for Film and Creative Industry

On 10 November 2025, the South Africa Department of Home Affairs gazetted (officially announced) the Screen Talent and Global Entertainment Scheme (STAGES), an invitation to film and production companies to submit an expression of interest for admission to the new digital visa initiative aimed at streamlining the entry of international film and creative production companies into South Africa.

STAGES is supported by an online platform intended to accelerate visa processing and is governed by agreements between participating companies and the Department of Home Affairs.¹

WHY THIS MATTERS

The introduction of STAGES is likely to have significant implications for companies in the creative sector. By simplifying and accelerating visa processing through a dedicated digital platform, the scheme addresses longstanding administrative bottlenecks that previously delayed or deterred foreign productions.

Human resource leaders and global mobility managers may find that STAGES enables more predictable planning for cross-border assignments, enhances compliance with local immigration requirements, and offers a competitive advantage for companies seeking to locate productions in South Africa.

For mobile employees, the new process may ease travel and entry procedures, supporting a smoother relocation experience.

Background

Previously, international film and creative production companies faced lengthy and unpredictable visa processes when seeking to operate in South Africa. These inefficiencies reportedly led to lost investment opportunities. The Department of Home Affairs has sought to address these challenges through technological reforms, drawing on lessons from other digital schemes such as the Trusted Employer Scheme (TES) and Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS).

Key Highlights

- Eligibility and Agreements: Only companies with a demonstrated track record in film and creative production may apply. Approved participants must enter into formal agreements with the Department of Home Affairs.
- Closing Date: 30 calendar days from the date of publication of the scheme, any application received after the closing date will not be considered.
- Digital Visa Application Platform: Companies can submit visa applications online via the TTOS portal, avoiding traditional paper-based processes and queues.
- Accelerated Turnaround: Visa decisions may be issued within 24 hours, significantly faster than previous processing times.
- Governance and Oversight: A specialized team is responsible for evaluating applications, ensuring timely decisions, and managing stakeholder enquiries.
- Economic Impact: The reform aims to reposition South Africa as a leading destination for creative productions, supporting national economic growth and job creation.

KPMG INSIGHTS

In the light of upcoming changes, organizations affected by the update should consider the following actions:

- Organizations may wish to review eligibility criteria and consider expressing interest via the TTOS portal.²
- HR and mobility managers may also wish to update internal procedures to reflect the new digital process and engage proactively with the STAGES governance team to manage queries.

If assignees and/or their programme managers have any questions or concerns about the scope of the update, its application and potential impacts, and appropriate next steps, they should consult with their qualified immigration professional or a member of the GMS immigration team with KPMG in South Africa (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Department of Home Affairs, Republic of South Africa, "[Home Affairs turbocharges film and creative industry with new digital visa scheme](#)," published on 13 November 2025. Also see [53654-10-11-2025-DHA-STAGES](#), Vol. 725, No. 53654, Government Gazette, Republic of South Africa, published on 11 November 2025.

2 Department of Home Affairs, Republic of South Africa TTOS portal, [Expression of interest in the schemes](#).

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Contact Us

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