



## Vision:

To establish, develop and expand world-class Autism-specific facilities and processes to provide our adult beneficiaries with an opportunity to find their unique place in an Autism friendly labour environment, where they can fulfil their life dreams and live out their passions.

## Mission:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for adults with Autism where their full potential can be identified;
- To channel them into a vocational direction that corresponds with their abilities and passions;
- To respect the rights, strengths, passions and differences of each stakeholder by all involved during our processes;
- To treat all applicants with dignity, using proven approaches and practices to enhance their financial sustainability, self-sufficiency, their self-esteem and quality of life experiences.

## Background:



Even though Schalk and Cathy van Zyl's youngest son Dawid is Autistic and does not have any academic achievements, he was able to obtain certificates in *Advanced JavaScript Programming* and *Advanced C++ Programming*, all through self-study and with very little guidance. Dawid, as many other adults with Autism, has high levels of potential that, if properly explored and developed, might become extremely valuable to our society. (*Albert Einstein was Autistic...*)

Unfortunately, there is a massive need of proper facilities and opportunities for adults with Autism, especially amongst the borderline and higher functional group, to allow them to achieve their full potential.

At *Autism Step-Up* we aspire to fill that gap by providing our candidates with the opportunity to identify their individual abilities, strengths and passions, and based on these, guide them into a suitable occupational direction or industry where they can become financially active and as self-sustaining as what is possible for them to be.

## **Objectives:**

At *Autism Step-Up* we aspire to achieve the following objectives:

- To provide professional vocational guidance to adults with Autism;
- To provide an environment where adults with Autism engage in defined activities in order to identify the full potential of each individual;
- To foster and develop awareness for Autism and acceptance of people with Autism in the workplace in general;
- To guide our trainees into an employment direction that is aligned with their abilities and passions;
- To become a voice for adults with Autism in the workplace and the community.



## **Our Target Group:**

Our main target group is adults (approximately 20 + years of age) with ASD (borderline and higher).

## **Our Process:**

***The Evaluation Process of 5 days will be performed at the Autism Step-Up centres.***

During this process the candidates will be professionally evaluated on various levels and exposed to different situations and scenarios in order to obtain a holistic picture of the candidates' personalities and abilities. A large portion of these evaluation sessions are individual sessions, in line with our individual approach.



Aspects that will be covered, are personality traits, specific interests, strengths and weaknesses, stress coping skills, likes and dislikes, abilities, sensory challenges, etc.

Based on the outcome of the above process, professional recommendations will be made regarding an occupational direction or industry that should be a suitable fit for any candidate.

There will be a waiting period of approximately three months before the candidates will progress to the Training Phase in order to allow us to optimally provide for each candidate's individual needs. During this period research will be done to establish suitable safe placements for

the candidates that will be utilised within the Training Phase.

The Training Phase is approximately a two-year process and will be managed separately from the Evaluation Phase.

## **Specialists Involved at the Centre:**

Our Team includes the following specialists in their field:

- Occupational Therapist
- Integrated Learning Therapist
- Bio-Feedback Consultant
- Bio Kineticist
- Dietician
- IT Specialists
- Additional specialists will be available on request (costs not included)



***More information can be obtained from our website***

## **Our Team:**



**Cathy van Zyl**  
Co-ordinator and Research  
Bio-Feedback Consultant  
Safety and Lay Counsellor



**Schalk van Zyl**  
Communication and Technical Aspects  
Project Co-ordinator



**Dawid van Zyl**  
Assistant IT Co-ordinator



**Kerstin van der Neut**  
Occupational Therapist

## **Contact us:**

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