

# Media Release

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## Namibia Welcomes First Digital Nomads

Namibia officially recorded her first digital nomads just five months after the official launch of the country's Digital Nomad Visa (DNV) on 11 October 2022. The programme was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration and Security (MHAISS) and the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), with the aim of enhancing economic activity in the country. The first two digital nomad visa applications were approved on 14 February 2023.

The DNV program aims to capitalise on the growing global remote workforce by offering location-independent foreign professionals the chance to live, work, and experience Namibia for up to six months. These digital nomads contribute towards the country's economy by injecting foreign currency in the ecosystem, but without usurping jobs meant for Namibians.

Early results are encouraging, with over 121 enquiries about the programme recorded so far. Of this number a total of 20 applications were received, out of which nine were approved, with five rejections. The reasons for rejection include applicants who do not meet the income requirements of USD2000 per month, and are thus unable to prove that they can effectively sustain themselves while in Namibia. Other applications were rejected because they were submitted while the applicants were already in Namibia on a different legal status such as a Tourist Visa, or they arrived in the country before approval of their application.

The launch of the DNV earned Namibia international praise, from Cape Town to Germany and as far as Australia. Following the launch, Namibia appeared in over 1,100 social media posts and articles online, across the world. Interest in the DNV primarily originates from Germany, South Africa, and the United States of America, as interested location

independent workers search for qualities such as "fresh air," "different culture," and "best holiday destination". Additionally, we have witnessed a surge in queries and applications for the DNV through our website, further demonstrating the growing global interest. This demonstrates Namibia's potential to harness the digital nomad trend and create new opportunities for local businesses in the tourism and information and communication technologies support sectors.

As an effective marketing tool for Namibia, the DNV program has also created visibility through digital nomads documenting and sharing their experiences on social media and other mass media platforms, showcasing the nation's natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and hospitality. This increased visibility has the potential to help attract more tourists, investors, and talent, further stimulating the nation's economic growth and development.

While speaking about her experience as a digital nomad, Carolyn Boston, blogger at 'Nomad Girl' said this about Namibia: "When living in Namibia as a digital nomad, you will be rewarded with breathtaking landscape views, making it an ideal place for nomads who want to work surrounded by nature. Stretching across 300,000 square miles, Namibia has an incredibly diverse landscape consisting of mighty dunes, rolling hills, and magnificent coastal deserts. It's home to a fascinating array of desert-adapted plants and animals and breathtaking natural wonders."

By design, the DNV complements, rather than competes with, the local workforce, ensuring digital nomads bring their own remote jobs or freelance projects to Namibia. This approach benefits the Namibian economy and its people while creating an environment for local entrepreneurs and professionals to expand their networks, learn from their international counterparts, and explore new avenues for collaboration.

With the global shift towards remote work over the past three (3) years, approximately 47 countries have developed digital nomad visa programs, according to the Harvard School of Business. Namibia is one of only five (5) African countries that offer a Digital Nomad Visa. The other four (4) countries are Seychelles, Cape Verde, Rwanda and Mauritius. The launch of Namibia's Digital Nomad Visa program is a bold and strategic move that positions the country as a prime destination for remote workers from around the world. By embracing this



global trend and offering a world-class visa program, Namibia stands to reap substantial economic, social, and cultural benefits.

In order to increase the number of approvals, the NIPDB will be rolling marketing campaigns specifically targeted at the digital nomad community. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheets will also be produced to ensure that applicants have access to relevant information pertaining to the qualifying criteria as this will enable the submission of complete applications, thus increasing the approval rates.

**Contact Person:** Catherine Shipushu  
Senior Manager: Marketing, Branding and Communications  
Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board  
Telephone: +264 83 333 8636  
Mobile: +264 81 143 3051 / +264 81 127 9069  
Email: [catherine.shipushu@nipdb.com](mailto:catherine.shipushu@nipdb.com)

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