



Pupils listened eagerly as Science and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor launched a job creation initiative for young people at National Science Week. b b

Pandor: Use your brain

By MISHECK MAKORA

SCIENCE and Technology Minister Naledi Pandor has launched an initiative called NextGen 100, which aims to assist young people turn innovative ideas into business ventures.

The minister made the announcement at the University of Western Cape in Cape Town, where over 3 000 pupils gathered on Friday for National Science Week.

Pandor was accompanied by Premier of the Western Cape Helen Zille and Professor Tyrone Pretorius, the university's rector.

Pandor said: "We need to harness the innovative spirit of young people when we address our development challenges.

"In South Africa, small and medium-size companies account for 60% of all employment, and contribute 40% to the total goods and

services produced every year.

"This is where our focus should be. The future of Africa is on your shoulders and you have to appreciate that."

The minister warned young people not to destroy their brains with drugs.

Andisiwe Mthimukhulu (17), a pupil from the Centre of Science and Technology in Khayelitsha, said: "The opportunity we have at the science week is amazing.

"We meet big companies and some are in line with what I need to pursue as a career."

The young pupil said she wants to be a geologist and thanked Mintek, a mining company that was at the exhibition, for opening her eyes.

Pandor urged members of the public to visit National Science Week sites, which operate across the country from 6 to 13 August.