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## Latest news

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### Angela Derks named board advisor for SWAA

BY JANE KITCHEN



*Derks says that a key aspect of her role will be to implement best practice guidelines along with internationally recognised educational frameworks and benchmarks*

**Africa is a fast-growing spa and wellness market, and according to Australian wellness advocate and course developer Angela Derks, a quality education framework is the key to optimising the continent's immense potential.**

Derks, founder and CEO of the Australasian Sustainable Wellness Academy (ASWA), has been appointed as a board advisor for the Spa and Wellness Association of Africa (SWAA), to oversee and facilitate their next generation of wellness education programmes.

"SWAA is a not-for-profit association that unites national spa and wellness societies, businesses, educators and members to develop, share and maintain internationally recognised standards," Derks said. "The African spa and wellness industry is rapidly growing and it has so much to offer the global billion dollar wellness industry."

Derks said that a key aspect of her role will be to implement best practice guidelines along with internationally recognised educational frameworks and benchmarks, with a view to empowering the spa and wellness industry of Africa for future generations.

She also said that Australia's reputation for a high standard and delivery of education and training, along with its proximity to Asia, have helped fuel a boom in the exportation of Australian education.

"Australia has benefited from its proximity to Asia; however, Africa is virtually untapped in the area of education exportation, so this is a very exciting opportunity," she explained. "Africa has a lot to offer the world globally in the wellness and spa area and it is integral that a high standard of education is initiated early in growth phase and becomes the benchmark. I see my contribution to the African spa and wellness industry being mutually rewarding for both the African wellness industry and for Australia in terms of tourism and the export of education."

Derks has lead spa and wellness initiatives in companies including Six Senses Spas, Soneva Resorts, Ritz-Carlton, Madinat Jumeirah, Palazzo Versace, Kempinski, Westin, Qantas First Lounges, Christina O yacht, Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat and Aurora Spa.

She is also the course developer of the [Australian Accredited Diploma of Wellness Leadership Program](#), designed to equip students with the qualifications and personal wellness skills required to successfully lead wellness initiatives in any industry.

"Growing up in Papua New Guinea, I have a deep respect for multicultural communities, authentic healing traditions and culture," said Derks. "For centuries, Africans have used rituals and ceremonies aimed at honouring the body and mind and restoring the body's natural healing properties by using the elements of nature. I'm looking forward to honouring Africa's culture and traditions with a quality education framework and standards that support the local communities with employability skills and contribute to economic growth and development."

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