

2023: What a year we've had!

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Johannesburg Expo Centre celebrates a massive year of events.



Crowds watching Kelly Khumalo perform at the Rand Show 2023

What a year it's been for the [Nasrec Johannesburg Expo Centre \(JEC\)](#), hosting a slew of large events, all of which have been a major success.

"We're really proud of the work we've done in 2023," says Adele Hartdegen, CEO of the JEC. "Amongst the many events we've hosted, we're particularly proud of the Brics Summit in September where we welcomed leaders from around the world. We also hosted the AGOA Forum in November, which included the excellent 'Made in Africa' exhibition."

Big names, big successes

Despite a number of challenges facing the Brics Summit this year, the JEC were prepared to step up when the event's specifics were finalised. This was the first year that South Africa hosted the Brics Summit.

"All in all – a big success. Well done South Africa for hosting a 15th Brics summit so well," said Minister of International Relations and Cooperation [Naledi Pandor](#).

It was also the first time that the AGOA Forum was hosted in South Africa. "We have just hosted a successful 20th AGOA Forum in Johannesburg where we made a case for the extension, or reauthorisation, of AGOA beyond 2025," said [President Cyril Ramaphosa](#) after the event.

More than 160 business participants and trade unions turned up to engage on trade and investment matters, with approximately 2,000 participants amongst them at the AGOA Forum.

One of the biggest highlights of the forum was the 'Made in Africa' exhibition. Around 520 firms, including services, automotive, coffee, and clothing and textiles businesses, displayed their products at the exhibition, showcasing the industrial

capability on the continent to procurement officers.

“AGOA shows what business and government have been able to accomplish to collectively grow the economy and create jobs. It has also been instrumental in establishing Africa as a promising trade destination,” said Trade, Industry and Competition Minister [Ebrahim Patel](#).



Bheki Twala, president of Township Events Business Council and Adele Hartdegen, CEO of the Rand Show at the Rand Show SMME Summit

Plenty of fun to be had

Aside from the big international events, the JEC has also hosted a range of exciting events that brought out the fun side. At the top of the list was the annual [The Rand Show](#), South Africa’s entertainment and shopping extravaganza. The Rand Show attracted tens of thousands of visitors and hosted more than 400 exhibitors and brands.

“We are thrilled with the success of this year’s Rand Show,” said Hartdegen. “The show continues to provide a fantastic platform for businesses to showcase their products and services while offering visitors a super fun and exciting experience.”

[Ultra South Africa](#) held its Johannesburg leg at the JEC in March, drawing in thousands of music lovers ready for the ultimate electronic music festival. Fans were treated to headliners like Alesso, Fisher, Adam Beyer, Joris Voorn, and more, in an unforgettable experience.

[Comic Con Africa](#) saw more than 80,000 comic, gaming, and superhero fans descend upon the JEC for one of the most spectacular events to date. This was the fourth edition of Comic Con Africa and was possibly the most well-attended to date. Three halls of the JEC were dedicated to the celebration of all things pop culture, with a kid’s zone and a gaming lounge.

The [Portuguese Festival](#) celebrated with Portuguese food, drinks, singers, dancers, and entertainment, wowing attendees with a spectacular event.



Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Buti Manamela (middle) with attendees at the Brics Future Skills Challenge held at the Johannesburg Expo Centre

Education makes its mark

The JEC also played host to a number of education-based gatherings, including the National Taxi Indaba and the Matric Indaba (Indaba is the isiZulu for meeting or gathering). The Taxi Indaba brought together leadership amongst government and the industry in order to collaborate and discuss issues facing the industry and to come up with solutions for the future. Similarly, the Matric Indaba brought together leaders in education to discuss important challenges facing the education sector.

Looking Forward to 2024

After such an exceptional year, the JEC now turns its attention to 2024, where it has another wide range of events to host. From trade shows and exhibitions to conferences, and from corporate functions to project launches, the Nasrec Johannesburg Expo Centre continues to host events of the highest calibre. [Find out more here.](#)

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Rand Show



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