



S.E.T. for socio-economic growth

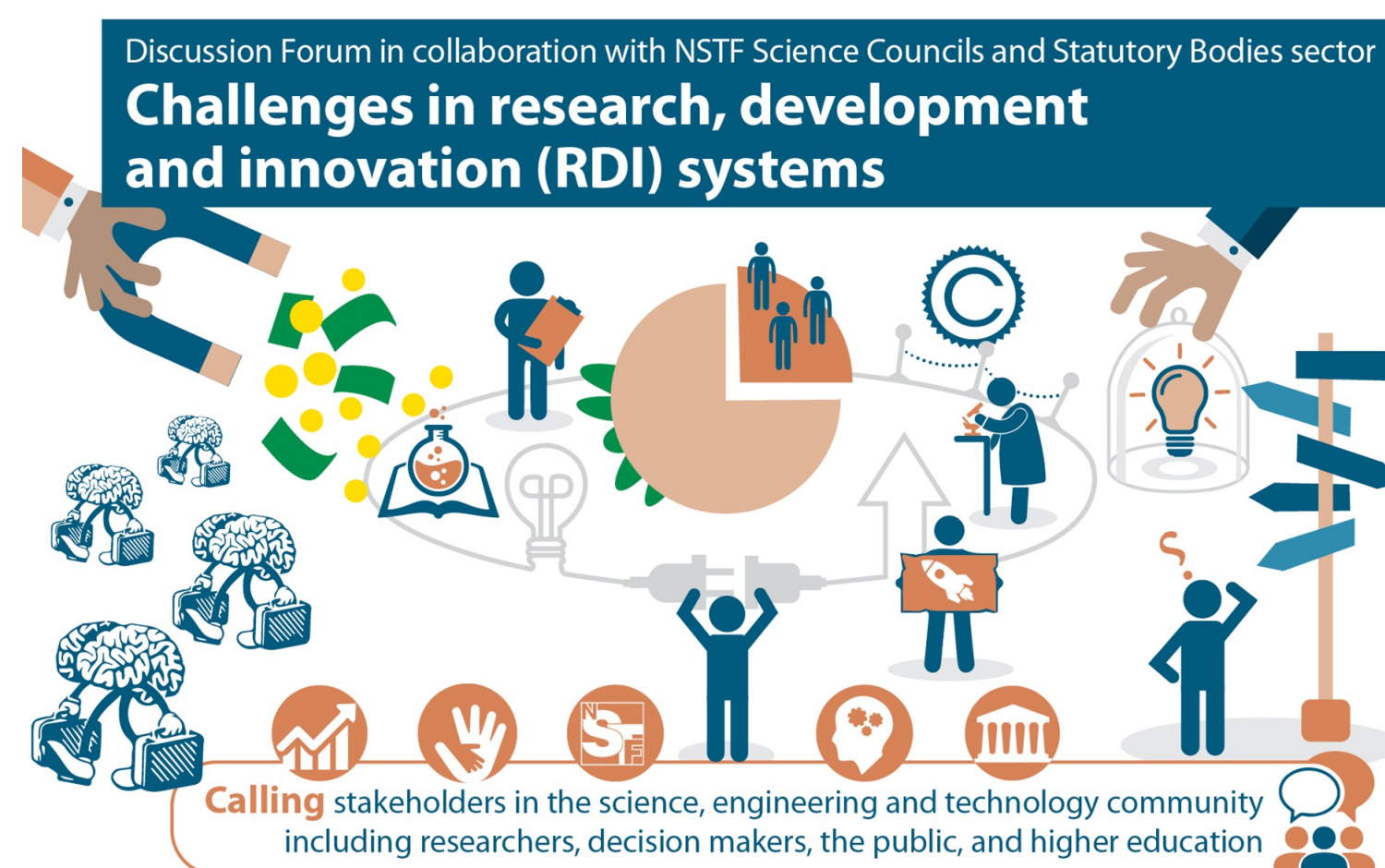
National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF)

# discussion forum

## Current challenges in research, development and innovation systems in South Africa

13 -14 August 2024

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) is hosting an online discussion forum on 'Current challenges in research, development and innovation (RDI) systems in South Africa (SA)' in collaboration with the representatives of the science councils and statutory bodies in NSTF.



Join the online conversation and make your voice heard.  
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South Africa (SA) faces significant challenges in its RDI systems, impacting its competitiveness in the global marketplace. Governance issues, resource allocation challenges, and inadequate infrastructure hinder the national system of innovation (NSI) and the development of critical innovation systems. Despite progress, SA encounters barriers such as limited mentorship opportunities for young people, funding constraints, and outdated infrastructure, which are exacerbated by shifts in government priorities and economic pressures. These challenges pose obstacles to research output and innovation, critical for driving economic growth and societal advancement. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts among stakeholders to enhance support from policymakers and create an enabling environment for RDI.

### Purpose and objectives:

The NSTF Science Councils Discussion Forum on 'Current challenges in RDI systems in SA' aims to convene stakeholders from across the science, engineering, technology (SET) and innovation sectors. This forum serves as a crucial platform to:

- **Identify critical problems:** Address the multifaceted challenges hindering the advancement of RDI in SA
- **Propose solutions:** Facilitate discussions on practical solutions and strategic interventions to overcome these challenges. This includes advocating for policy reforms, increasing investments in RDI, and fostering a supportive ecosystem for research and innovation.
- **Promote sustainability:** Explore pathways to foster sustainable innovations that contribute to economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability in SA.
- **Empower young researchers:** Discuss initiatives to inspire and support the next generation of researchers, addressing career paths, training needs, and opportunities for mentorship and development.
- **Strengthen collaboration:** Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among stakeholders, including academia, government, industry, and civil society, to leverage collective expertise and resources in advancing RDI.
- **Engage policymakers:** Raise awareness among policymakers about the critical link between research, innovation, and national development goals. Advocate for policies that prioritise and support RDI as integral to sustainable economic growth and societal progress.

### Outputs:

As is usual for NSTF Discussion Forums, a media release will be issued which summarises the most important issues and conclusions. The following outputs will also be made available on and through social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube and LinkedIn):

- Video recordings of speakers' presentations (subject to the speakers' agreement)
- Presentation slides (if available and subject to the speakers' agreement)
- Speakers' biographies
- Useful links
- NSTF will engage the media on possible interviews and/or articles, and post on social media before, during and after the event.

## Delegate registration information

**Date:** 13 -14 August 2024

**Time:** 9:00 -13h00

**Concept document:** Click [here](#)

**Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points:** CPD points will be awarded to attendees who are registered with SACNASP (South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions). For other affiliations, please contact the NSTF office at [enquiries@nstf.org.za](mailto:enquiries@nstf.org.za).

**Register (online event):** The event is held online via the NSTF Zoom platform. You will receive an email to confirm your subscription, whereafter you will be diverted to a web page with the Zoom link. Click here to [register](#)

*Attendance and participation in this NSTF Discussion Forum is FREE to all those interested.*

*Please note that if you do not register, the NSTF cannot be held responsible for any unforeseen changes or cancellations of programmes. Communications are sent only via e-mail or through notifications on the NSTF website.*

**About the NSTF:** The NSTF is a non-profit stakeholder forum representing the science, engineering, technology (SET) and innovation community in South Africa. The membership consists of more than 130 organisations, and ranges from research institutions, universities and state entities to business, professional societies (proSET) and civil society. The NSTF promotes collaboration and critical thinking among a broad range of stakeholders. NSTF Discussion Forums gather stakeholders together, across the public and private sectors, to exchange knowledge and ideas, and give feedback to government and relevant authorities.

### About the NSTF

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF), established in 1995:

- is a broadly-representative stakeholder body for all science, engineering and technology (SET) and innovation organisations in South Africa
- gathers stakeholders around burning issues of national and global interest, across the public and private sectors, including matters of public policy
- includes a network of professional societies in SET and STEM education (STEM = science, technology, engineering and mathematics) - the NSTF proSET membership sector.
- recognises, awards and profiles the outstanding contributions of individuals and groups to SET and innovation through the prestigious NSTF Awards
- runs and supports collaborative projects and youth outreach, including recognition of top performance in mathematics and science, role modelling, bursary and STEM career information
- runs and supports the STEMulator.org which attracts youth and educators to Explore>Discover>Learn the world of STEM including careers. (Established by NSTF proSET)

**For more information**  
[www.nstf.org.za](http://www.nstf.org.za)  
 E-mail: [enquiries@nstf.org.za](mailto:enquiries@nstf.org.za)

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