S.E.T. for socio-economic growth

National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF)

eNews

Global South universities' role in the Just Transition can't be about divestment

Opinion piece by Prof Imraan Valodia, Pro Vice-Chancellor: Climate, Sustainability and Inequality, and Director: Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)
Reprinted with permission. First published in Daily Maverick

This opinion piece argues that universities in the Global South should play an active role in achieving a Just Transition rather than simply divesting from fossil fuel companies. While institutional independence and accountability must be protected, universities have a broader responsibility to generate knowledge, develop technologies, educate future leaders and engage critically with government, industry and civil society to help transform carbon-intensive economies. Read more…

NSTF News

Brilliants at LIYSF 2026: A journey of discovery, science and inspiration

Eight students participating in the 2026 NSTF Brilliants Programme for top performers in maths and science, along with one student from the 2025 Brilliants Programme, were among approximately 500 of the world's top young science students from more than 90 countries who attended the London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF). The 2026 LIYSF took place in the United Kingdom (UK) from 19 July to 1 August 2026. This 14-day programme explored future developments in the sciences through lectures, demonstrations, specialist seminars, and debates led by a team of renowned scientists and experts, as well as visits to scientific sites in the UK.

Their participation was proudly sponsored by the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DST&I) and the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP). In the spirit of National Science Month, the Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr Nomalungela Gina, engaged with these students online on 29 July 2026. The students also had the opportunity to share their amazing LIYSF experiences with the Deputy Minister and thanked the NSTF and DST&I for both the London and South African tours, and for facilitating the encounter. Deputy Minister Gina pledged that the department would continue to support the programme. Meet the Brilliants students who attended the 2026 LIYSF and explore the photo gallery capturing their unforgettable experience.

For our future STEM professionals

NSTF Discussion Forum news

Artificial intelligence in STEM education
The presentations delivered at the online discussion forum on Artificial intelligence in STEM education, are now available! The discussions and engagement are very relevant at this time. The event was held in collaboration with pro*SET*, the professional bodies and learned societies sector of the NSTF (representing a third of the NSTF's membership), on 18-19 August 2026. Find the presentations with the speakers' biographies on the event page**. Look out for the media release!**

Upcoming discussions forums in 2026

- Research software as enabler and research output, in collaboration with the Science Councils and Statutory Bodies sector of NSTF: 7-8 October 2026
- Healthy ageing (the NSTF theme for 2026, aligned to the United Nations Decade of Healthy ageing): 11-12 November 2026

Watch your email inbox for further details on the discussion forums.

Make your voice heard and participate

Inspiring the next generation: NSTF Award winners share SET career journeys with the youth

The NSTF Share 'n Dare programme provides a platform for NSTF-South32 Award winners to act as role models and ambassadors for science, engineering, technology (SET) and innovation. The winners share knowledge with youth and communities, inspiring young people to pursue studies and careers in SET and innovation. The programme produces career talk videos that are shared on all its social media platforms (TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, X, Instagram).

The NSTF Share 'n Dare programme was in full swing during National Science Month. **Ms Claire Blanckenberg**, founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Reel Life Food Security Programme, Reel Life NPC, delivered a talk at the Johannesburg Botanical Gardens on 28 July 2026, at an event organised by Johannesburg City Parks.

During the impactful career motivation talk, she reached 300 learners from five schools and 11 educators. View the photo gallery.

Reel Life Food Security Programme, Reel Life NPC, is the recipient of the NSTF-Agricultural Research Council (ARC) Award at the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards, known as the 'Science Oscars' of South Africa (SA).

Prof Usisipho Feleni addressed learners during a webinar titled 'Speak to a Scientist', organised by the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre on 30 July 2026. Prof Feleni, Associate Professor and Thematic Area Leader of Applied Electrochemistry at the Institute for Nanotechnology and Water Sustainability, University of South Africa (UNISA), and recipient of the TW Kambule-NSTF Award: Emerging Researcher at the 2023 NSTF-South32 Awards, shared her experiences and challenges in making the right career choice while growing up.

"During my time in high school, it was either you wanted to become a nurse, a police officer, a pharmacist, or something similar. We were not very knowledgeable about what these careers entailed. Learners today are much more privileged because everything is much easier and more accessible compared with our time."

Watch Prof Feleni's talk on YouTube to learn more about career opportunities in electrochemistry.

SET for life!

Meet our 2026 Researcher Award winner

Meet our 2026 Researcher Award winner

Prof Tjaart Krüger won the TW Kambule-NSTF Researcher Award (one of two recipients this year) at the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards. He received this prestigious award for his contribution to the development of ultra-sensitive single-molecule instruments that reveal nature's quantum blueprint for converting sunlight into cleaner, smarter energy. Prof Krüger is a Full Professor in the Department of Physics, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, University of Pretoria (UP). Read the Mail & Guardian article.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

Prof Musa Manzi won the TW Kambule-NSTF Researcher Award (one of two recipients this year) at the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards. He received this prestigious award for his contribution to developing novel, cost-saving surface and in-mine seismic techniques to explore resources, mitigate geohazards, and improve infrastructure development. Prof Manzi is an Associate Professor and Director of the Seismic Research Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). Read his award-winning story here produced by media sponsor, Mail & Guardian.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

STEMulator.org brings STEM learning to learners during National Science Month

One of our greatest joys as the STEMulator.org team was being able to participate in National Science Month (NSM) in July. It was a great opportunity to connect directly with learners and showcase the platform to its fullest. The extension of this period from the usual week, to a month, has meant more interaction and greater impact.

During NSM, STEMulator.org reached learners across Gauteng and the North West provinces. Although these provinces are diverse, an interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) brought learners together through their shared curiosity. The turnout at the different NSM events highlighted the continued interest among learners in STEM subjects and the value that these fields continue to hold.

The STEMulator.org team shared its resources with learners and teachers at the following NSM events:

- National Science Month launch, Vaal University of Technology, Gauteng, 4 July 2026
- South African Nuclear Energy Corporation (NECSA), Pelindaba, North West, 3-7 July 2026
- Johannesburg City Parks, Gauteng, 28 July 2026
- Sci-Bono Discovery Centre, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 29 July 2026

We would like to thank the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DST&I) and the organising partners for leading and coordinating National Science Month.

The STEMulator platform is available for free at https://www.stemulator.org/ or for download on both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

For more information or queries, feel free to contact Mr Karabo Ramodike.

#ExploreandScore!

STEMulator

Celebrating World Entrepreneurs' Day, and the award-winning work of the Innovation and Commercialisation Unit at Stellenbosch University (SU)

As the world celebrates World Entrepreneurs' Day on 21 August, the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) celebrates organisations that are empowering innovators and entrepreneurs to transform research into impact. The NSTF proudly profiled the Innovation and Commercialisation Unit at Stellenbosch University (SU), comprising the Innovus Technology Transfer Office (TTO), LaunchLab and University of Stellenbosch Enterprises (USE), recipient of the Innovation Award: Corporate Organisation, at the 2025 NSTF-South32 Awards, known as the 'Science Oscars' of South Africa (SA). Read the media release about their work.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

Meet a future medical doctor: Jurie Blignaut

Jurie is a 2025 NSTF Brilliants Programme student recognised for his top marks in maths and science in the North West province. He is studying medicine (2nd year) at the University of the Free State (UFS). He matriculated at Hoërskool Rustenburg in the North West. Jurie would like to see a world where people are empowered to live healthier lives and prevent chronic disease. Read his story and see his self-recorded video of inspiration.

"When competing at the top, you face many fellow challengers of equal intellect."

SET for our future professionals!

Bursaries available

Visit the NSTF Bursary Directory for the latest available bursaries in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Undergraduate bursaries:

- Citrus Academy Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- CSIR-SASOL Foundation Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- Institute of Municipal Engineering Southern Africa (IMESA) Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- Amazon Web Services (AWS) Skills Development Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Department of Land Reform and Rural Development (DLRRD) Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Investec Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Sappi Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- Tomorrow Trust Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)

Postgraduate bursaries:

- CSIR Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- Poliomyelitis Research Foundation (PRF) Bursary (Deadline: 15 September 2026)
- DWS Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)

- South African National Seed Organization (SANSOR) (Deadline: 30 September 2026)
- South African National Space Agency (SANSA) Bursary (Deadline: 30 September 2026)

To enquire or apply for any of the bursaries, *contact the bursary providers directly.*

(**Bursary providers**: Notify Ms Seipati Moleleki of any STEM-related bursaries that you provide, to feature free of charge on the popular NSTF Bursary Directory, here in the NSTF eNews and on all NSTF social media platforms!

Investing in South Africa's future through STEM education

Every contribution to the **NSTF Bursary Fund** is an investment in South Africa (SA)'s future. By supporting talented students pursuing studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), you are helping to empower the next generation of innovators, researchers and problem-solvers.

Your contribution can help unlock opportunities for young people who will drive scientific advancement, economic growth and sustainable development, while contributing to solutions for some of SA's most pressing challenges.

Partner with us – **contribute** to the NSTF Bursary Fund and help turn promise into impact.

SET for our future professionals!

pro*SET* (Professionals in science, engineering and technology) is a sector of the NSTF currently representing at least **52 professional and learned societies**. This section shares news about current members and introduces new members of the pro*SET* sector. Know who the pro*SET* members are and find out more about who to network with in the 'SET Professionals Who's Who' booklet.

- **5th EAPASA SADC Regional Conference:** The Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA). Regional Conference is an annual event that brings together environmental professionals from across the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This year, the conference will be held from 21-23 October 2026. Read more.
- **IITPSA SIGCyber experts call for governance-first approach as Shadow AI becomes business reality:** Organisations should move beyond trying to eliminate Shadow Artificial Intelligence (AI) and instead focus on governance, visibility and employee education to reduce cyber risk while enabling responsible AI adoption. This is according to experts from the Institute of Information Technology Professionals South Africa Special Interest Group for Cyber Security (IITPSA SIGCyber). Read more.
- **National Water Action Plan must prioritise technical skills, says CESA:** In the wake of the release last month of the National Water Action Plan (NWAP) by President Cyril Ramaphosa, Consulting Engineers South Africa (CESA) has warned that infrastructure investment and institutional reform will only deliver results if South Africa (SA) urgently closes the technical skills gap in its water and wastewater sector. Read more.
- **SA has the knowledge to tackle its water crisis, but implementation is needed for real impact:** SA's water crisis cannot be solved by multi-billion-rand infrastructure projects alone if municipalities lack the certified, qualified professionals required to run and maintain them. Water Institute of Southern Africa (WISA) CEO Dr Lester Goldman warned at the WISA 2026 Biennial Conference and Exhibition, in Cape Town, that while aging pipes and funding shortfalls dominate headlines, a widespread lack of awareness around mandatory professional standards is quietly sabotaging long-term water security. Read more.
- **University of Mpumalanga hosts 31st annual AMESA national congress:** More than 1,500 education experts and researchers gathered in Mbombela for the 31st annual national congress of the Association for Mathematics Education of South Africa (AMESA). Hosted at the University of Mpumalanga (UMP) from July 13 to 17, the five-day event brought together leading local and international academics, curriculum specialists, policymakers and representatives of educational organisations to address critical teaching challenges. Read more.
- **Women engineers driving SA's infrastructure inspire next generation:** As SA marks Women's Month, the Institute of Municipal Engineering of Southern Africa (IMESA) is highlighting the achievements of women engineers leading infrastructure projects across the country while encouraging more young women to enter the profession. Read more.

SET-related policies currently open for public comment

Keep informed and have your say!

- South Africa's (SA's) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2026-20235 (draft NBSAP) (Comment by 4 September 2026)
- Draft Regulations on the National Education Information Systems, 2026 (Comment by 10 September 2026)
- Draft General (Mining) Laws Amendment Bill (Comment by 11 September 2026)
- Electronic Communications Amendment Bill (Comment by 21 September 2026)

SET-related policy news

Some articles included in the section below are opinion pieces. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSTF Executive Committee, Directors, Secretariat or Members.

4IR and information technologies

- All about the frequency: ICASA's 2026 spectrum overhaul explained (infrastructurenews.co.za)
- Radical rethink for South Africa's national AI policy (techcentral.co.za)
- Why the EU's new AI law matters for South African newsrooms (issafrica.org)

Agriculture

- Agriculture's road to 2050 depends on exports, resilience, partnerships (farmersweekly.co.za)
- Closing SA's gender gap in commercial farming success (foodformzansi.co.za)

Basic education

- Basic Education Department stands firm against Mathematical Literacy abolition (iol.co.za)

Energy

- Committee on electricity hears views on the Gas Bill (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Draft electricity pricing policy outlines support for industry, poor households (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Executives share insights from energy turnaround (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Ramokgopa lauds outcomes of South Africa-China energy mission (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Switchgear system aligns with masterplan implementation (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Tariff increases might hinder SAREM (engineeringnews.co.za)

Environment and climate change

- SA's captive lion industry remains legal despite years of promises to phase it out, say animal welfare groups (mg.co.za)
- South Africa's top court blocks Shell's Wild Coast exploration plans (engineeringnews.co.za)

Health

- Ramaphosa doubles down on the NHI in South Africa (businesstech.co.za)

Higher education

- South Africa's universities: A global story of excellence and impact (sanews.gov.za)

Innovation

- Newly launched Innovation Ecosystem Policy Hub launched (engineeringnews.co.za)

Mining

- AI can modernise SA mining, but policy delays threaten progress (cnbcafrica.com)

Water

- South African delegation heads to Stockholm World Water Week 2026 (sanews.gov.za)

The events posted below are correct as far as we could establish at the time of preparing this newsletter. Please check the relevant websites for changes to dates and venues.

- IITPSA in partnership with Leaderex - Career Summit 2026, Sandton, Gauteng, 31 August 2026
- 2026 SAICE National Awards, Sandton, Gauteng, 3 September 2026
- GSSA - Professionalism and code of ethics, Online, 3 September 2026
- SANBI - South African Bird Fair 2026, Pretoria, Gauteng, 5 September 2026
- Electra Mining Africa 2026, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 7-11 September 2026
- Animal Feed Manufacturers Association - AFMA Forum 2026, Sun City, North West, 8-10 September 2026
- SACAP Education Conference 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 10-11 September 2026
- HSRC Annual Conference 2026, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 15-16 September 2026
- Africa Critical Minerals Conference 2026, Zambia, Lusaka, 15-16 September 2026
- The 54th Annual Conference of the Operations Research Society of South Africa, Stellenbosch, Western Cape, 27 September 2026
- ITWeb Cloud Summit 2026, Bryanston, Gauteng, 29 September 2026
- GSSA - Carrying capacity in complex wildlife systems, Online, 30 September 2026
- Southern Centre for Inequality Studies - Identifying Industrial Pathways in South African Cities, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, 9 October 2026
- SACAC Workshop: Observer Design For Dynamic Systems, Pretoria, Gauteng, 12-13 October 2026
- SAGA Conference 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 12-16 October 2026
- In collaboration with Old Mutual Metaverse partner - Singularity Summit SA, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 20-21 October 2026
- 5th EAPASA SADC Regional Conference, Jeffreys Bay, Eastern Cape, 21 October 2026
- SARA Rail Conference & Exhibition 2026, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 20-23 October 2026
- SAASA - Student Symposium in the Natural Sciences, Pretoria, Gauteng, 29-30 October 2026
- The IITPSA Workforce Intelligence Conference and IITPSA President's Awards 2026, Kempton Park, Gauteng, 30 October 2026
- 31st Commonwealth Agriculture Conference, Cape Town, Western Cape, 1-5 November 2026
- International Fresh Produce Association - IFPA Sustainability Summit 2026, Somerset West, Western Cape, 11 November 2026
- The African Network for Sensory Evaluation Research (ANSWER), in collaboration with the South African Association for Food Science and Technology (SAAFoST) - AfroSense2026, Pretoria, Gauteng, 25-26 November 2026
- Science Forum South Africa 2026, Pretoria, Gauteng, 2-4 December 2026

Some articles included in the section below are opinion pieces. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSTF Executive Committee, Directors, Secretariat or Members.

Science Councils and Statutory Bodies

- **ARC:** Protecting crops and farmers: Inside ARC's plant virology bank (foodformzansi.co.za)
- **ASSAf:** Women's Month 2026: Empowered women empower the nation (assaf.org.za)
- **CGS:** Council for Geoscience's Analytical Services achieves internationally recognised ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation (geoscience.org.za)
- **CSIR**: PortOps tool to aid Port of Cape Town's wind woes (csir.co.za)
- **HSRC:** WATCH: Her Research, Our Future: Women shaping knowledge at the HSRC (hsrc.ac.za)

- **Mintek:** Cabinet appoints new Mintek board (miningreview.com)
- **NERSA:** GMM clarifies implementation of NERSA-approved electricity tariffs (citizen.co.za)
- **NERSA:** SA registers 124 new renewable energy sites worth R20bn in 3 months (news24.com)
- **NRF:** Botswana university students get hands-on with NRF-iThemba LABS' particle accelerator (nrf.ac.za)
- **NRF:** NRF data insights (nrf.ac.za)
- **SAMRC:** SAMRC and UCT launch AI Unit built around African health data, targeting cancer, diabetes, TB and HIV (iafrica.com)
- **SAMRC:** STAR project awarded new funding (samrc.ac.za)
- **SANBI:** South African Tree Symposium 2026 to celebrate the vital role of trees in building a sustainable future (sanbi.org)
- **SANSA:** SANSA launches high school design competition for national space mascot (sansa.org.za)
- **SANSA:** SANSA CEO calls for stronger university and industry collaboration to drive South Africa's innovation agenda (techreviewafrica.com)
- **USAf:** Building scalable and sustainable businesses through equipping women with the necessary skills (usaf.ac.za)
- **TIA:** Building on strength: TIA and Wits chart a shared innovation future (wits.ac.za)
- **WRC:** South Africa urged to embrace water-wise farming as climate pressures mount (kasiconnectnews.co.za)

Higher Education Institutions

- 'Dynamics of Humanisation' explored at Learning and Teaching Week (news.mandela.ac.za)
- DVC calls for women reseachers to redefine Africa's knowledge future (wsu.ac.za)
- FEBE receives continued ECSA accreditation for engineering programmes (tut.ac.za)
- Future Witsies get a glimpse of campus life (wits.ac.za)
- From taxi ranks to tech: How a UWC student is rethinking the taxi business (uwc.ac.za)
- How Unisa's Ekurhuleni Centre is building a stronger student community (unisa.ac.za)
- Initiative empowers students in fight against human trafficking (news.uct.ac.za)
- National STEM education dialogue 'critical', says vice-chancellor of North-West University (researchprofessionalnews.com)
- Postgraduates sell weed, wigs and vetkoek to beat student funding gaps (msn.com)
- South Africa's universities: A global story of excellence and impact (sanews.gov.za)
- Undergrads power up global recognition (wits.ac.za)
- University of Pretoria breaking barriers to empower women (sabcnews.com)
- UWC study uncovers barriers delaying early access to child support grant (uwc.ac.za)

4IR and information technologies

- AI search 'firmly' part of customer experience (itweb.co.za)
- Governments shouldn't rely on AI to decide who gets a social grant: inside a South African court case (theconversation.com)
- Minister advocates for more women in sci-tech (itweb.co.za)
- South Africa is building a prototype for a Digital ID system (mybroadband.co.za)
- Top ICT tenders: DPSA targets info security officer training (itweb.co.za)

Agriculture and food security

- How big food sues governments to keep unhealthy products on shelves (msn.com)
- How S'busisiwe Sithebe is transforming SA's agriculture with insights from China (iol.co.za)
- Small-scale biogas bolsters food security, circular economy goals (engineeringnews.co.za)
- SA may have planted the smallest wheat area in nearly a hundred years (wandile.substack.com)

Basic education

- AI-powered robot brings new hope to rural schools in Dundee area (citizen.co.za)
- A proven solution to SA's high school STEAM gaps is already reaching 2 050 learners (polity.org.za)
- KZN schools urged to make mental health awareness part of school culture (insideeducation.co.za)
- Mohono replaces Motsumi as North West education MEC (insideeducation.co.za)
- SA's mathematics crisis demands urgent focus on teacher development (impactsa.co.za)
- Team SA finishes 4th place at World Spelling Bee Champs in China (sabcnews.com)
- Tech4Tomorrow Winter School inspires future innovators in Hammarsdale (instrumentation.co.za)
- What happened when a South African school switched from English to bilingual science tests (theconversation.com)
- What if the scientist who solves SA's biggest problem never becomes a scientist? (themercury.co.za)

Defence and security

- As the adversary learns: Security systems must learn faster (defenceweb.co.za)
- Militaries lag in counter-drone technology (defenceweb.co.za)

Earth sciences and geology

- Earth's molten core suddenly reversed direction — and scientists don't know why (sciencedaily.com)
- Metal deposits reveal how ice ages reshaped oxygen levels across Earth's oceans (phys.org)
- Trapped gases in ancient rocks challenge global explanation for 2-billion-year-old carbon anomaly (phys.org)
- Unlocking Gondwana's 120-million-year archive: Karoo record refines timing of extinctions and climate upheavals (phys.org)

Energy

- Conflating power and gas cliffs will lead to sub-optimal outcomes, energy specialist warns (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Ramaphosa outlines next Eskom restructuring objectives, highlights grid industrialisation potential (engineeringnews.co.za)
- SA bets on renewables, but its power grid is not ready (engineeringnews.co.za)

Engineering

- SA's young award-winning engineer shares 10 practical tips to build a successful engineering career (iol.co.za)

Environment, water and climate change

- DFFE, Agriculture and DPWI to celebrate women in the environment, agriculture and built environment sectors (dffe.gov.za)
- Government demands urgent action over escalating water pollution (ewn.co.za)
- New governance model proposed to secure gauteng's water future (infrastructurenews.co.za)
- PHV detected in sardines as investigation into mass mortality continues (sanews.gov.za)
- SAHRC calls for action following wastewater pollution finding (sanews.gov.za)
- SA urged to adopt climate-ready wastewater monitoring (engineeringnews.co.za)

Health and medicine

- Bhekisisa analysed SA's First LEN roll-out data. Here's what they found (allafrica.com)
- Gauteng adds seven new mobile clinics to boost healthcare access (sabcnews.com)
- UP professor calls for plant-based medicine to tackle Africa's health crisis (citizen.co.za)
- Women are the 'backbone' of South African healthcare (sanews.gov.za)

Infrastructure

- Infrastructure investment must rebuild South African industry: President Ramaphosa (sanews.gov.za)
- Recent structural collapses point to recurring weaknesses in the built environment sector – Macpherson (engineeringnews.co.za)

Innovation

- DST&I puts women at the centre of science and technology (sanews.gov.za)

Mining

- Electra Mining Africa 2026 gears up for biggest edition yet (miningweekly.com)
- Mantashe, Mahlobo conduct on-site inspection of Samancor tailings facility following sidewall collapse (engineeringnews.co.za)

Oceangraphy

- Chikunga calls for maritime skills revolution to open ocean economy to women (sanews.gov.za)

Palaeontology and Archaeology

- Archaeology has evolved: Four eras of understanding Africa's past (theconversation.com)
- Bony labyrinth morphology reveals deep population history and isolation among *Homo sapiens* in prehistoric northeastern Africa (44–3 ka) (nature.com)
- Cape Town to hosts the world's palaeontology elite when they gather for the first International Palaeontological Congress (IPC7) in Africa (eurekalert.org)
- Homo antecessor Skull Fragments Examined - Archaeology Magazine (archaeology.org)
- Tiny 1.7-billion-year-old fossils could reveal how complex life began (sciencedaily.com)
- Why the UK's fossil capital is the perfect seaside getaway (nationalgeographic.com)

Quantum science and technology

- Physicists watch a material's electrons assemble, and reassemble, into coexisting phases (news.mit.edu)
- World's first superconducting quantum heat engine could help unlock massive quantum computers (sciencedaily.com)

Skills for the economy

- Empowering women through knowledge, skills and opportunity (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Industry challenged to create more employment pathways for youth (sanews.gov.za)
- South African learners graduate from the 2026 Pathways to Space STEM education initiative (engineeringnews.co.za)

Space science and Astronomy

- Small Karoo village frozen in time helping return astronauts to the Moon (mybroadband.co.za)
- Space storms could put airline passengers at radiation risk, scientists warn (msn.com)
- Team SA wins at global space engineering competition (mybroadband.co.za)

Transport

- Joburg to conduct public participation process for International Transport Interchange in Sept, Oct (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Rail initiatives target stronger pipeline of women (engineeringnews.co.za)

- **Call for Nomination of Candidates for the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Board:** The Minister of Science, Technology & Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande, hereby invites interested parties to nominate candidates for appointment to the board of the CSIR, which is being reconstituted in terms of the Scientific Research Council Act, 1988 (Act No. 46 of 1988) (the Act). Nominations should be submitted to the Minister by no later than 31 August 2026. For more information click here.
- **Call for session proposals – Africa Science Diplomacy Conference (ASDC) 2026:** The Science Diplomacy Capital for Africa (SDCfA) is pleased to announce that the call for proposals is now open for the inaugural ASDC 2026. The conference is proudly co-hosted by the Department of Science, Technology & Innovation (DST&I) through the SDCfA initiative. Taking place from 30 November to 1 December 2026 in Pretoria, ASDC 2026 will bring together policymakers, diplomats, scientists, researchers, industry leaders and international partners to explore the role of science diplomacy in strengthening international cooperation and addressing shared global challenges. The submission deadline is 31 August 2026. For more details click here.

- **Call for abstracts | 2026 Africa Unity for Renaissance Conference:** The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), with its partner, the Walter Sisulu University (WSU), will hold its 11th Africa Unity for Renaissance Conference (AURC) on 19-20 November 2026 in the Eastern Cape. The 2026 conference coincides with the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of SA (1996), a landmark in Africa's democratic history and one of the world's most progressive constitutional frameworks. Over the past three decades, the Constitution has provided the foundation for democratic Governance, the protection of human rights, the rule of law, accountable government, and regular, free, and fair elections. This anniversary presents an important opportunity not only to reflect on SA's constitutional journey, but also to examine the broader trajectory of constitutional Democracy and electoral Governance across Africa. The abstract submission deadline is 1 September 2026. For more details click here.
- **Design the Official SANSA Mascot:** Calling all Grade 8–11 learners across SA. Create an original mascot that celebrates space science, Earth observation, innovation, creativity and our country's future in space. The SANSA Mascot Design Challenge gives school learners an opportunity to be creative while learning about space science and the work of the South African National Space Agency. Entries close on 14 September 2026. For more details click here.
- **SGCI–STISA 2034 Multilateral Research Call:** The National Research Foundation (NRF) is pleased to announce a new multilateral research funding call and invites eligible South African researchers to apply. The call forms part of the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI), a multilateral initiative launched in 2015 to enhance the capacities of Science Granting Councils across sub-Saharan Africa to support research and evidence-informed policy making that contributes to economic and social development. South African researchers are invited to form or join multi-country African research consortia that address the priorities of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2034 (STISA-2034). Application deadline: 25 September 2026. For more details click here.
- **2026 SA MedTech Innovation Challenge:** If you have built a medical technology in SA, applications are now open for the 2026 SA MedTech Innovation Challenge. R3 million in prize money. Six awards. The Challenge is looking for technologies that transform traditional diagnostic, therapeutic and assistive tools into intelligent, connected solutions – using AI to accelerate diagnosis, guide treatment decisions and improve outcomes in resource-constrained healthcare settings. Closing 25 September 2026. For more information click here.
- **New Frontiers Research Award:** The Oppenheimer Memorial Trust New Frontiers Research Award recognises the efforts of visionary early-to-mid-career researchers determined to build high-performance research teams and the South African academy. The award is intended to provide leading researchers with the freedom and flexibility to pursue their research, without bureaucratic constraints. Helping them produce significant work and gain international recognition. It is a five-year award, with a monetary value of R1.5 million per annum.We are looking to back forward-thinking innovative individuals with a clearly defined research vision, who want to build a team around them to perform cutting-edge research. 2026 Concept note submissions: close 30 September 2026. For more information click here.
- **SAMRC Early Investigators Programme:** The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)'s Division of Research Capacity Development (RCD) is pleased to request applications from early investigators in health/medical research. The overarching objective of the SAMRC's Division of RCD is to enhance the long-term sustainability of health research in SA by providing funding for the next generation of researchers. The SAMRC Early Investigators Programme is an opportunity for South African academic institutions to support future health research leaders to establish their own research teams and make the transition to mid-career scientists and independent researchers. The closing date for applications is 9 October 2026. For more details click here.
- **Call for Abstracts – XXI World Congress of Sociology:** The XXI ISA World Congress of Sociology will take place as a fully in-person event from 4 to 10 July 2027 in Gwangju, a city marked by South Koreans' historic struggle for democracy. The Congress theme "Global Sociology in Turbulent Times" calls attention to the experiences of those most affected by crises and to their role in the production of knowledge. Sociologists working in contexts of war, genocide, extreme inequality, or environmental devastation linked to extractivist capitalism demonstrate that sociology remains not only possible but essential under such difficult conditions. They remind us that societies are shaped not only by crises, but also by resistance, creativity, and the pursuit of alternatives. The abstract submission deadline is 14 October 2026. For more information click here.
- **WCSJ2027 Travel Fellowship:** The WCSJ2027 Travel Fellowships support journalists (journalism may be their primary or secondary profession), journalism students, or students in related fields, who would otherwise be unable to attend the World Conference of Science Journalists 2027 (WCSJ2027) in London on 6–9 September 2027. These fellowships aim to broaden international participation, increase diversity, and improve access for professionals who have limited funding opportunities in their own countries or organisations. The deadline for applications is 23 October 2026. For more information click here.
- **WCSJ 2027 – Call for Proposals:** The World Conference of Science Journalists 2027 (WCSJ 2027) will take place at Central Hall Westminster, London, United Kingdom (UK) from 6-9 September 2027, with the theme "Strengthening science journalism through global networks". Hosted by the Association of British Science Writers (ABSW) and the World Federation of Science Journalists (WFSJ), WCSJ2027 London wants your proposals for content from workshops to fireside chats and panels. Deadline for submissions: 30 November 2026. For more details click here.

- **Lerato Letsoalo:** From e-Tutor to Adjunct Academic: Lerato Letsoalo's journey into academia at Unisa (unisa.ac.za)
- **Prof Monwabisi Knowledge Ralarala:** From rural village to three PhDs: Prof Ralarala eyes new era of higher education leadership (uwc.ac.za)
- **Grace Molomo:** From Geology to Rock Engineering: Unisa alumnus graduates cum laude while championing safer mining (unisa.ac.za)
- South Africa announces winners of 2026 Women in Science Awards (techreviewafrica.com)
- **Prof Liesl Zühlke**: South African women breaking barriers in science and technology (sanews.gov.za)
- **Prof Rhiyaad Mohamed**: UCT researcher earns prestigious global science grant (news.uct.ac.za)

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 pro*SET* 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 pro*SET)*

For more information
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Non Profit Company Registration Number: 2007/029165/08
NPO Registration Number: 92042
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