S.E.T. for socio-economic growth

National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF)

eNews

Nuclear power can meet Africa's and AI's energy demands

Opinion piece by Prof Bismark Tyobeka, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the North-West University (NWU)

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Africa's growing artificial intelligence (AI) and digital ambitions will require vast amounts of reliable, clean and secure electricity, highlighting the potential role of nuclear power. Prof Tyobeka argues that AI and nuclear energy could work together to address Africa's energy challenges. AI could also help to improve the safety, efficiency and operation of nuclear power. Read more…

NSTF News

Strengthening SET and innovation partnerships in the Eastern Cape

From 31 August to 4 September, NSTF Executive Director Ms Jansie Niehaus and Chief Operations Officer (COO) Ms Wilna Eksteen undertook a stakeholder engagement tour across the Eastern Cape (EC), meeting with people at more than 11 different institutes/organisations. The roadshow aimed to strengthen existing relationships, establish new partnerships and meet with NSTF-South32 Award winners among the province's science, engineering and technology (SET) and innovation community.

The visits included higher education institutions, research institutes, business incubators and science centres as follows:

- iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu (IWS) in Mthatha, and award winner, Prof Fortune Ganda
- South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB) in Makhanda (Grahamstown)
- Institute for Water Research, Rhodes University (RU), Makhanda
- Institute for Nanotechnology Innovation, RU
- Propella Business Incubator, Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth)
- South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON) Elwandle Coastal Node, Nelson Mandela University (NMU), Gqeberha
- eNtsa (Innovation through Engineering)
- Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (CMR), NMU, and the visit included meeting the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI)
- Nelson Mandela Science Centre, NMU and award winner, Prof Darelle van Greunen
- NRF Awards Gala Dinner
- University of Fort Hare (UFH), in Dikeni (Alice)

These areas of work align closely with the NSTF's mandate to promote SET and innovation, recognise excellence, encourage knowledge exchange and connect stakeholders across sectors. Through these engagements, the NSTF sought to identify opportunities for collaboration that could expand the impact of research, strengthen skills and innovation pipelines, support the translation of knowledge into practical solutions and contribute to socio-economic development in the Eastern Cape. Click here for the gallery of photos…

SET for socio-economic growth!

NSTF Discussion Forum news

Research software as enabler and research output

This online discussion forum on Research software as enabler and research output takes place on 7-8 October 2026. Held in partnership with the NSTF Science Councils and Statutory Bodies Sector (SciCom) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) eResearch Centre, the NSTF invites you to join this conversation, be better informed and make your voice heard. See the invitation for more information and register now. CPD points awarded to qualifying science, engineering and technology professionals where possible. Participation is free and open to all.

Artificial intelligence in STEM education

Videos from the online discussion forum on Artificial intelligence (AI) in STEM education are now available! The discussions and engagement are particularly relevant at this time. The event, held on 18-19 August 2026, was presented in collaboration with pro*SET*, the NSTF's Professional Bodies and Learned Societies Sector, which represents a third of the NSTF's membership. Find the videos and speakers' biographies on the event page. **Look out for the media release!**

Deepen your insight and make your voice heard!

Upcoming discussions forums

- **Healthy ageing** (the NSTF theme for 2026, aligned to the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing): 11-12 November 2026
- **Translating science into solutions for social justice** (panel session during the in-person Science Forum South Africa, 2026, in Pretoria)

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

Make your voice heard and participate

Celebrating South Africa's SET and innovation leaders

Since 2009, the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) and *Business Report*, media sponsor of the NSTF-South32 Awards, have worked together to shine a spotlight on this prestigious event and, more importantly, on the winners and the far-reaching significance of their work for South Africa.

See the list of award winners shaping SA's future in the **Business Report feature** on the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards.

The NSTF extends its sincere appreciation to the advertisers who made this feature possible, including iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu (IWS) and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DST&I).

#NSTFawards2026

Observing African Traditional Medicine Day and the award-winning work of Prof Namrita Lall

As the continent commemorated African Traditional Medicine Day on 31 August, the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) proudly honoured Prof Namrita Lall, recipient of the Innovation Award: Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) of the 2025 NSTF-South32 Awards, known as the "Science Oscars" of South Africa (SA). Read the media release about her work.

Celebrating International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies and the award-winning work of AirSynQ Systems (Pty) Ltd

The International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, observed annually on 7 September, provided an opportunity for the NSTF to honour AIrSynQ Systems (Pty) Ltd, winner of the Innovation Award: SMME of the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards, known as the 'Science Oscars' of SA. Prof Bruce Mellado is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AIrSynQ Systems and Executive Director of the South African Consortium of Air Quality Monitoring (SACAQM). Read the media release about their work.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

Meet our 2026 Researcher Award winner

Dr Edith Phalane is one of two winners of the TW Kambule-NSTF Emerging Researcher Award at the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards. She received it for her role in generating public health evidence to understand local epidemics and inform future pandemics, improving health outcomes across populations. Dr Phalane is the Manager of the Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research (PACER) in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). Read the story of her award-winning work, produced by the Mail & Guardian.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

Meet our 2026 Researcher Award winner

Prof Topside Mathonsi is also the winner of the TW Kambule-NSTF Emerging Researcher Award (one of only two awards) at the 2026 NSTF-South32 Awards. He received it for his contribution to the development of intelligent technologies that use artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT) to protect critical resources such as water, agriculture, and essential infrastructure. Prof Mathonsi is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Information Technology at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). Read the story of his award-winning work, produced by media sponsor, Mail & Guardian.

Today's research … tomorrow's innovation

STEMulator.org's next big step

At STEMulator.org, we are thrilled to announce our official partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), a milestone that brings us one step closer to reaching learners and educators across South Africa (SA).

What begins in one province has the potential to grow into a national movement. Our hope is to see this partnership open doors to all nine provinces, allowing more learners to discover the exciting world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Beyond a partnership, this is an opportunity to connect learners with knowledge, career possibilities, and the confidence to imagine futures they may not have considered before.

Partnerships like this also reinforce the importance of the STEMulator.org platform, and its potential to make a meaningful difference in education and skills development. With the right support, the platform can reach more communities, inspire greater STEM participation, and contribute to a stronger pipeline of future STEM enthusiasts. Most importantly, these opportunities allow us to contribute back into the communities that need accessible educational resources the most.

To partner with us, do not hesitate to contact Mr Karabo Ramodike. In the meantime, explore, discover, and learn by downloading STEMulator.org on either the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, and let the app keep track of your journey, rewarding you with points as you learn where STEM is applied in the 'real world'.

#ExploreandScore!

STEMulator

Meet a future medical doctor: Emma Caroline Booyens

Emma is a 2026 NSTF Brilliants Programme student recognised for her top marks in maths and science in the Eastern Cape (EC) province. She is studying medicine at Stellenbosch University (SU). She matriculated at Clarendon High School for Girls in East London (KuGompo). Emma would like to see a world with less inequality, where everyone has equal access to basic services such as quality education and healthcare. Read her story and see her self-recorded video of inspiration.

"You can achieve whatever you put your mind to despite your circumstances."

SET for our future professionals!

Meet a future computer and data professional: Nyakallo Junior Hlakoane

Nyakallo is a 2026 NSTF Brilliants Programme student recognised for his top marks in maths and science in the Free State (FS) province. He is studying for a BSc (Computer Science, Data Science and Statistics) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). He matriculated at Teto Secondary School, Thabong, Welkom (Matjhabeng), in the FS. Nyakallo would like to see a world where there are improvements in service provision and less inefficiencies. Read his story and see his self-recorded video of inspiration.

*"Don't wait for opportunities to come to you; **create them**."*

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:

- 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)
- Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA) Bursary (Deadline: 5 October 2026)
- Energy Mobility Education Trust Scholarship (Deadline: 30 October 2026)
- SAAFoST Bursary South Africa (Deadline: 30 October 2026)
- ISFAP Bursary South Africa (Deadline: 31 October 2026)

Postgraduate bursaries:

- 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!

Invest in South Africa's next generation of STEM leaders

A contribution to the **NSTF Bursary Fund** does more than support a student – it strengthens South Africa (SA)'s future. By helping talented young people pursue studies in STEM, you equip a new generation of innovators, researchers and problem-solvers to fulfil their potential.

Your support opens doors to education and opportunity and helps build the skilled talent SA needs to advance science, grow the economy, drive sustainable development and tackle its most pressing challenges.

Partner with us. **Contribute to the NSTF Bursary Fund** and turn potential into progress.

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.

- **Redefining mine ventilation – MVSSA 2026:** RACA Journal was on the ground at the Mine Ventilation Society of Southern Africa (MVSSA) 2026 conference, where it was clear from the outset that mine ventilation is no longer just a technical support discipline in the background. Read more.
- **Meet the engineers shaping South Africa's (SA's) infrastructure future:** At its 2026 National Awards, the South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE) put the spotlight on the people driving excellence across the profession as infrastructure returns to the centre of the country's economic growth, service delivery and job-creation agenda. Read more.
- **SA university students excel in national and international mathematics competitions:** South African university students have delivered strong performances both at home and on the international stage, with SAMF announcing the top performers in the 2026 Standard Bank South African Tertiary Mathematics Olympiad (SATMO). A total of 460 students from 20 tertiary institutions participated in the 2026 SATMO on 15 August, at universities across the country. Read more.
- **GEPF funding will support mathematics teacher development:** The Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) formally handed over funding to the South African Mathematics Foundation (SAMF) during an event held at the NRF-SAASTA offices in Pretoria on 1 September 2026. The event was attended by representatives of the GEPF and SAMF, including Mr Musa Mabesa, the GEPF's principal executive officer and Prof Seithuti Moshokoa, SAMF's executive director. Read more.
- **South African scientists could face year in prison unless registered with national standards body, under proposed law:** A South African government proposal would make it compulsory for practising scientists to register with the country's scientific council, or face up to a year in prison. However, many scientists are not currently registered and are unaware of the proposed legislation. The South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP), which was set up in 2003, requires practising natural scientists to register with the council. Read more.
- **Young engineers chart solutions for SA infrastructure challenges at Imbizo:** SA needs to rethink how it approaches infrastructure delivery if it is to achieve better public value, stronger economic outcomes and more resilient infrastructure, according to Inba Thumbiran, Head of Supply Chain Management at the National Research Foundation (NRF). Speaking at the 14th Consulting Engineers SA's (CESA) Young Professionals Sustainability Imbizo, recently held in Midrand, Thumbiran challenged young professionals and the wider engineering community to move beyond established ways of working. Read more.

SET-related policies currently open for public comment

Keep informed and have your say!

- Draft Regulations on the National Education Information Systems (Comment by 10 October 2026)
- Draft Strategic Framework for Water and Sanitation (Comment by 30 October 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

- Credibility is the real challenge facing South Africa's AI policy (dailymaverick.co.za)

Agriculture

- Three years on, and this book remains critical to South Africa's agricultural policy discourse (wandile.substack.com)

Basic education

- New rules for schools in South Africa (businesstech.co.za)

Energy

- Electricity traders say reform roadmap remains a priority amid some progress (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Windaba 2026 to focus the industry conversation on implementation with new two-day programme (esi-africa.com)

Environment and climate change

- As Europe retreats on pesticides, South Africa has a choice (mg.co.za)

Health

- Govt backs traditional medicine's role in South Africa's NHI rollout (bizcommunity.com)

Higher education

- HE launches position paper on international academics (universityworldnews.com)

Mining

- Strengthening mining laws to save people, the environment and South Africa's economy (ewn.co.za)

Water

- South Africa has good water laws but bad services. What's stopping fair access (polity.org.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.

- 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
- Creamer Media's webinar on Renewable Energy, 30 September 2026
- GSSA: Carrying capacity in complex wildlife systems, Online, 30 September 2026
- 2026 Mintek SCi- (Science Convention for Innovators in Science, Engineering and Technology), Randburg, Gauteng, 1-2 October 2026
- 52nd Annual Congress of the Physiological Society of Southern Africa, Hybrid (Online and in-person), Pretoria, Gauteng, 4-6 October 2026
- South African Wind Energy Association (SAWEA) – Windaba 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 6-7 October 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
- African Energy Week 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 12-16 October 2026
- Fak'ugesi African Digital Innovation Festival 2026, Johannesburg, Gauteng, 13-17 October 2026
- Hosted by the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM), International Mineral Processing Congress (IMPC) 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 18-22 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
- Africa Tech Festival 2026, Cape Town, Western Cape, 17–19 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:** Farmers and state clash over response to cattle disease (groundup.org.za)
- **ASSAf:** Committee Chairperson to Deliver Keynote Address at ASSAf Annual Young Scientist Conference (parliament.gov.za)
- **CGS:** CGS provides expert insights on critical minerals (engineeringnews.co.za)
- **CSIR**: Biomanufacturing training hub for Southern Africa to be established with EU grant – CSIR (engineeringnews.co.za)
- **HSRC:** South Africa does not need another GBV plan; it needs a system that works (mg.co.za)
- **NERSA:** NERSA extends consultation on electricity trading rules (energize.co.za)
- **NERSA:** Transforming South Africa's power grid through wind energy (iol.co.za)
- **NRF:** The NRF honours the country's leading researchers (engineeringnews.co.za)
- **SAMRC:** Using cardiovascular magnetic resonance technology to strengthen health systems (samrc.ac.za)
- **SANBI:** 20 years of biodiversity stewardship benefits people and nature (sanbi.org)
- **SANSA:** South Africa's space programme needs one learner to make space history (iol.co.za)
- **SARAO:** Evolving radio astronomy and its impact on Africa (itu.int)
- **USAf:** USAf unveils forward-looking theme for 2026 higher education conference (usaf.ac.za)

Higher Education Institutions

- Department of Information Science honoured with prestigious SASA Golden Presidential Award (unisa.ac.za)
- 18 aspiring doctors selected for Gauteng's Cuba medical programme (insideeducation.co.za)
- Excellence and credibility in higher education (news.uct.ac.za)
- Excellence takes centre stage at the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment awards (tut.ac.za)
- FEBE launches new Mechatronics Engineering degree (wits.ac.za)

- Mandela women encouraged to nurture The Well Within (news.mandela.ac.za)
- MPA and Nelson Mandela University announce landmark collaboration to advance research on piracy in Africa (southafricanculturalobservatory.org.za)
- New science centre inspires learners as UJ and Barloworld partner to transform STEM education (news.uj.ac.za)
- NWU leaders shape the future of higher-education technology (citizen.co.za)
- Solar PV boost for Nelson Mandela University (news.mandela.ac.za)
- SU celebrates five standout companies in its growing spinout portfolio (su.ac.za)
- UCT and Strathmore University strengthen African ties (news.uct.ac.za)
- Unisa takes Global South debate to the heart of internationalisation (unisa.ac.za)
- Universities should turn regional cooperation into action (wits.ac.za)
- Wits Disability Rights Unit marks 40 years of breaking barriers (citizen.co.za)
- Wits researchers recognised with NRF awards, ratings (wits.ac.za)

4IR and information technologies

- Africa's AI strategy should focus on what matters most (bizcommunity.com)
- AI and new digital technologies must not leave SA's workforce behind: Ramokgopa (sanews.gov.za)
- Call for inclusive approach to AI revolution (sanews.gov.za)
- Civil rights groups urge a halt to South Africa data centers boom amid water and power fears (apnews.com)
- Diversity and digitalisation reshape opportunities for women in construction (engineeringnews.co.za)
- SA SMBs face rising cybersecurity risk as social engineering tops incidents (bizcommunity.com)

Agriculture and food security

- Agriculture department warns farmers about the emerging El Niño event (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Aucamp assures farmers of support as El Niño raises drought concerns (sanews.gov.za)
- South African cherries gain first-time access to China (bizcommunity.com)
- We must embrace science in order to boost our agricultural progress in South Africa (wandile.substack.com)

Basic education

- The weight of a single page: Reimagining Grade 9 subject choices and youth mental health (iol.co.za)

Defence and security

- Africa's defence innovation challenge is no longer about ideas, it is about the ecosystem (defenceweb.co.za/)

Earth sciences and geology

- Earth may have lost the Sun's protective shield millions of years ago (sciencedaily.com)
- What a geotechnical report can reveal about the ground beneath a property (bizcommunity.com)

Energy

- African Energy Week (AEW) 2026 to Explore carbon capture and storage to extract value from oil and gas (energize.co.za)
- Eskom RT&D Centre positioned as engine for energy innovation, industrialisation (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Light bulb moment: The electric decarbonisation opportunity (bizcommunity.com)
- SA seeks advisers for Eskom transmission unit's spin-off (news24.com)
- Who is building South Africa's next power system? (energize.co.za)

Engineering

- Stronger enforcement and collaboration signal shift in South Africa's Civil Engineering Sector (engineeringnews.co.za)

Environment, water and climate change

- Africa braces for severe weather as El Niño strengthens (iol.co.za)
- Africa gets only 23% of the climate finance it needs – and pays too much for it (theconversation.com)
- Authorities probe reports of sardine deaths in Gqeberha (sanews.gov.za)
- Bontebok National Park reopens to the public after May floods (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Call to use water responsibly amid Spring Day celebration concerns (sanews.gov.za)
- Cape Town's 2026 wildflower season peaks at Strandfontein (iol.co.za)
- Deliberately burning our landscapes could help protect communities from wildfire (su.ac.za)
- DFFE encourages dust management reform (engineeringnews.co.za)
- How Onderstepoort's Gold-accredited cat clinic is training future vets (iol.co.za)
- Rand Water assures no water impact after cybersecurity incident (engineeringnews.co.za)
- What a world above 1.5°C could mean for South Africa: heat, drought and food pressure (iol.co.za)

Health and medicine

- Achieve equity in health data systems (news.uct.ac.za)
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Research shows we must stop blaming women (su.ac.za)
- Health department says new-look medicines are safe and effective (timeslive.co.za)
- Medicine is not enough - 'Medicine alone cannot deliver sustained treatment success' (allafrica.com)
- Over 55k vulnerable SAns start long-acting anti-HIV jab (bizcommunity.com)
- Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro could "fuel the fire" of mental illness, warns psychiatrist (bizcommunity.com)
- SA is one step closer to a new TB vaccine, but there is a lot of work ahead (spotlightnsp.co.za)

- Seeing the patient benefit is what matters – Pioneer (universityworldnews.com)
- The future of malaria control is … more mosquitoes? (wits.ac.za)
- Vaccinate your children to prevent diseases (sanews.gov.za)
- With over 3 600 Western Cape users, lenacapavir is "cool" (spotlightnsp.co.za)

Infrastructure

- Municipal infrastructure and mining: critical and interdependent (engineeringnews.co.za)

Innovation

- 'Innovation without access is pointless' (news.uct.ac.za)
- Minister Blade Nzimande leads South Africa's participation at 19th Pujiang Innovation Forum in China (gov.za)
- SA needs stronger science, innovation pipeline (itweb.co.za)

Mining

- Africa's biggest opportunity is not its minerals but the leverage they create (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Lubricants, tech keep mines running (miningweekly.com)
- MEMSA #MindShift 2026: Innovation, AI and industrial resilience (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Mine tyre life extension that protects environment outlined at Electra Mining Africa (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Real-time tyre data cuts costs in African mines (miningweekly.com)

Oceangraphy

- The ocean's hidden climate engine, South Africa's investment in understanding carbon at sea (sanews.gov.za)

Palaeontology and Archaeology

- Discovery of ancient DNA from antelope fossils in South Africa opens a new window on the past (theconversation.com)
- Early mammals weren't all loners, as scientists thought – some already lived in pairs alongside the dinosaurs (theconversation.com)
- Discovery of ancient DNA from antelope fossils in SA opens new window on past (timeslive.co.za)

Quantum science and technology

- From MIT to IBM, expediting AI and quantum deployment (news.mit.edu)
- New research shows a neutrino laser is impossible (news.mit.edu)
- New qubit architecture enables faster, more accurate operations (news.mit.edu)

Skills for the economy

- Electric mobility drive to create jobs and build South Africa's battery industry (news.mandela.ac.za)
- Nelson Mandela Bay faces critical technical skills shortage (engineeringnews)
- Top artisans celebrated at the South African National Artisan Awards (SANAA) 2026 (engineeringnews.co.za)

Space science and Astronomy

- Before MeerKAT, South Africa's Karoo telescope had its own ways of reading the stars (thebrighterside.news)

Transport

- Integrated transport systems can help meet sector challenges (engineeringnews.co.za)
- Road Safety Practitioners Colloquium (transport.gov.za)

- **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.
- **Call for Applications - UCT Enabling Grant Seeker Excellence Awards:** The Research Office announces the opening of the 2026 call for applications for the University of Cape Town (UCT) Enabling Grant Seeker Excellence Awards. In the context of an unpredictable national research funding environment, the purpose of this intervention is to encourage applications to external - particularly international – funders as well as multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research collaborations by ensuring fractional funding based on grant submission, without waiting for the successful outcome, thereby providing seed funding on application enabling immediate progress. The application deadline is 15 October 2026. For more details click here.
- **Radio Astronomy Advancement Programme (RAAP):** The RAAP 2027 supports workshops designed to develop scarce skills in radio astronomy science and engineering across SA and participating Square Kilometre Array (SKA) partner countries in Africa. The programme provides up to R750,000 per workshop for targeted training and capacity-building activities in technical areas critical to radio astronomy. The deadline for applications is 15 October 2026. For more details click here.
- **Project 1% for Africa session:** The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) invites you to participate in Project 1% for Africa, a special session organised for Africans. Its aim is to provide at least 1% of Africa's youth population with foundational knowledge of intellectual property by 2030. The deadline for applications is 15 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.
- **Raymond Ackerman Academy of Entrepreneurial Development Programme (RAA-ED):** The RAA-ED is inviting applications from young individuals residing in SA and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). RAA-ED offers a national online programme, complemented by practical workshops that enable participants to apply their knowledge in early-stage businesses. The application closing date is 16 November 2026. For more details 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.
- **WorldSkills SA 2027:** Applications for the 2027 WorldSkills South Africa (WSZA) National Competition, inviting eligible students to enter for an opportunity to showcase their talent, innovation, skills and creativity in 34 skills areas. The closing date for applications is 30 April 2027. For more information click here.

- **Dr Janaïs Delport:** Dr Janaïs Delport on a mission to protect SA's honey from fraud (news.uct.ac.za)
- **Prof Attie Jonker:** From childhood garage to the forefront of sailplane engineering (engineeringnews.co.za) – (Jonker Sailplanes (Pty) Ltd is the recipient of the Innovation Award: Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise at the 2024 NSTF-South32 Awards)
- **Nobuhle Ndandani:** From passion to profession: How TVET shaped Nobuhle Ndandani's automotive spray-painting career (unisa.ac.za)
- **Joy van Deventer:** Joy van Deventer makes history as Agri North West's First Female Young Farmer of the Year (farmersmag.co.za)
- **Jessica Ellen Ringshaw:** Maternal anaemia may shape infant brain development (news.uct.ac.za)
- **Prof Trevor Moodley:** "Teaching Is My Calling" The Journey of Prof Trevor Moodley (uwc.ac.za)
- **Hennie Hamilton:** "This one was brought by God himself" – the doctor helping people see again in rural KZN (spotlightnsp.co.za)
- **Sister Hazel Moagi:** This specialist forensic nurse in Germiston helped put a serial rapist behind bars (spotlightnsp.co.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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