



**SAASTA**

South African Agency for Science  
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## **Media Release**

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### **For immediate release:**

### **International hydrogen and fuel cells scientists to convene in South Africa**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) in collaboration with the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement will be hosting the 30<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Partnerships of Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE) steering committee meeting and events tomorrow (4 December) until 7 December 2018 at the University of Pretoria and The Capital Menlyn Maine Hotel and Apartments in Pretoria.

Hydrogen and fuel cell technologies (HFCT) have received considerable attention in the country. South Africa has more than 75% of the world's known platinum reserve, which is a key catalytic material in most fuel cells. Furthermore, the primary source of energy in South Africa is coal which is not environmentally friendly and sustainable in the long run.

The shift towards a less carbon-intensive energy sources is not unique to South Africa, but is a global phenomenon. Hydrogen and fuel cell technologies presents a great potential for platinum mining as well as providing clean energy for the country.

“We look forward to an excellent conference with a group of great scientists, industry partners and policy makers within our country and from different countries around the world, to share new and exciting developments in the fuel cell industry,” said Dr Cosmas Chiteme, DST Director: Hydrogen and Energy, and Chair of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the 30th IPHE steering committee meeting.

“The International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE) presents an excellent platform for South Africa to form and strengthen collaborations that will drive the local development of the fuel cell market. The nineteen members of this partnership meet twice a year in a series of events comprising of the IPHE steering committee meeting and related events to discuss and deliberate on current and new developments and trends in the industry. South Africa has been a member of IPHE since 2010 and successfully hosted the 17th IPHE steering committee meeting and related events in May 2012 in Cape Town,” added Dr Chiteme.

International scientists from countries such as Japan, Germany and USA will share the best international practices and new research in this field, which will benefit the HySA Centres of

Competence (HySA Systems, HySA Catalysis and HySA Infrastructure) and South Africa as a whole, including industry, and promote hydrogen and fuel cell technologies in the country.

The LOC, in collaboration with the IPHE steering committee, has identified three specific and themed meetings – (1) R&D Outreach Event or Education and Outreach Meeting, (2) Industry Forum and (3) Steering Committee meeting. In addition, an Inter-Governmental Roundtable meeting has been organised where selected IPHE delegates will meet with senior officials from various government officials (Director Generals and Deputy Director Generals from Departments of Trade and Industry, Energy, Mineral Resources etc.) to discuss their department's involvement in the development of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. The IPHE delegates will meet the Minister of Science and Technology, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, for a breakfast meeting to discuss the progress of this technology and the key role that South Africa will play in driving this technology globally.

The IPHE delegation will visit different hydrogen and fuel cell technology research facilities, infrastructure and pilot projects. Masters and PhD candidates will present posters on their hydrogen fuel cell and clean and renewable energy research in South Africa. This will promote discussions as well as collaborations with local and international experts.

The IPHE is an international inter-governmental partnership currently consisting of 18 member countries and the European Commission. South Africa is the only member from the African continent.

The main objective is to facilitate and accelerate the transition to clean and efficient energy and mobility systems using hydrogen and fuel cell technologies across applications and sectors. It also aims to inform broad stakeholder groups, including policy makers and the public, on the benefits of, and challenges to, establishing widespread commercial hydrogen and fuel cell technologies in the economy.

The IPHE conference provides a forum for sharing information on initiatives, policies and technology status, as well as on safety, regulations, codes, and standards to accelerate the cost-effective transition to the use of hydrogen and fuel cells in the economy.

The IPHE purpose and mission is to serve as a mechanism to organise and implement effective, efficient, and focused international research, development, demonstration and deployment activities related to hydrogen and fuel cell technologies.

The organisation also provides a forum for sharing information, lessons learned and best practices among member countries on initiatives, programs, and policies, as well as safety, codes and standards, to accelerate the widespread deployment of hydrogen and fuel cells in the economy and enable energy, economic and environmental security worldwide.

**Ends**

Date: Tuesday, 4 December 2018

Time: 13:00 for 14:00

Venue: Sanlam Auditorium, University of Pretoria, Hatfield Campus.

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**ABOUT THE HYDROGEN SOUTH AFRICA PUBLIC AWARENESS,  
DEMONSTRATION AND EDUCATION PLATFORM**

Hydrogen South Africa Public Awareness, Demonstration and Education Platform (HySA PADEP) is hosted at the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement and funded by the Department of Science and Technology.

HySA PADEP was created to market hydrogen technology locally and internationally. The main aim of HySA PADEP is to create awareness, visibility and acceptance amongst the public, industries, entrepreneurs and key decision makers in South Africa about the challenges, benefits and safety of using hydrogen fuel cell technology in the alternative energy industry.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has a mandate to achieve mastery of technological change in South Africa's economy and society. In the process of achieving the mandate, the DST identified Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies (HFCT) as a "frontier science and technology" platform that would allow proactive innovation and knowledge generation to benefit from South Africa's natural resources.

Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology is a technology which uses both hydrogen and fuel cells to generate electrical energy. Hydrogen is an energy carrier which stores and delivers energy in a usable form. For more information on HySA PADEP visit <https://www.hysa-padep.co.za/>

**ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
ADVANCEMENT (SAASTA)**

SAASTA is a business unit of the National Research Foundation (NRF) with the mandate to advance public awareness, appreciation and engagement of science, engineering and technology in South Africa.

SAASTA's contribution to the NRF's vision is to grow the pool of quality learners today who will become the scientists and innovators of tomorrow.

It aims to be the leading science advancement agency in the country by promoting and communicating the value and impact of science, technology and innovation in a dynamic knowledge economy. It also intends to contribute significantly towards building a science, engineering and technology (SET) human resource base. For more information on the operations and programs within the NRF please visit [www.saasta.ac.za](http://www.saasta.ac.za)

#### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION (NRF):**

The National Research Foundation (NRF) was established on 1 April 1999 as an independent statutory body in accordance with the National Research Foundation Act. The NRF is a key public entity responsible for supporting the development of human resources for research and innovation in all fields of science and technology. The organisation is one of the major players in educating and training a new generation of scientists able to deal with South African and African needs. The organisation encourages public awareness and appreciation of science, engineering and technology, and facilitates dialogue between science and society. Its vision is to contribute to a prosperous South Africa based on a knowledge economy. For more information on the operations and programs within the NRF please visit [www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)