



SAASTA
South African Agency for Science
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Media Release

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For Immediate Release:

SAASTA to Host STEMI Olympiads and Competitions Community of Practice Conference

The South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA), in collaboration with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and the Association for Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Innovation (STEMI) Olympiads and Competitions (ASTEMI), will be hosting a Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Innovation (STEMI) Olympiads and Competitions Community of Practice (CoP) biennial conference virtually for the first time. Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Mr. Buti Manamela, will open the conference on 20 July 2021.

The theme of the conference is titled “Strengthening the impact of Olympiads and Competitions through collaborations, partnerships, and cooperative opportunities” and it will be held virtually for three days from 20 July to 22 July 2021.

The STEMI Olympiads and Competitions CoP biennial conference aims to foster collaboration and conversations among stakeholders from all levels of the STEMI community, including government departments, science councils, science centres, professional bodies, NGOs, Olympiad and competitions organisers and educators.

SAASTA’s Science Education Division Manager, Mr Moloko Matlala, says the purpose of the STEMI CoP conference is to further promote the advancement of STEMI Olympiads and Competitions in South Africa by creating a community of practice where the best practices are identified and benchmarked.

The conference will provide a platform for diverse voices and multiple perspectives to engage in dialogue that will produce a wide range of innovative ideas. Such ideas are intended to facilitate the development of tools to improve the connection between science and society, as well as to positively contribute towards problem-solving around issues concerning STEMI education in South Africa.

Education does not only happen in formal classroom settings. Consequently this conference explores the experiences of Olympiads and competition as part of informal learning for the learners. The ASTEMI community seeks to inculcate this culture of learning.

Some of the speakers will present research papers that will facilitate dialogue, and the sharing of knowledge and expertise, and promote best practices for more meaningful informal educational experiences for all South African learners.

The panelists for the conference include the following speakers: Dr Kristof Fenyvesi (Researcher of STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths and founder of Global STEAM network, Finnish Institute of Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, Finland); Dr Derek Fish (Director, UniZulu Science Centre); Dr David Johnson (Adjunct Senior Lecturer, ICT4D, Computer Science Department, University of Cape Town) and Dr Mmaki Jantjies (Head of Innovation Telkom, previously from University of Western Cape).

To view the programme click on the link below:

<https://bit.ly/3hDk8qU>

To register for the conference click on the link below:

<https://bit.ly/3B0EIJu>

Ends

Date: 20 - 22 July 2021

Time: 09:00

Venue: Zoom

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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.

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 programmes within the NRF please visit 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