



SAASTA
South African Agency for Science
and Technology Advancement

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Media Release

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For immediate release:

Emerging scientists to compete for the coveted prize

Johannesburg, 13 September 2024 – FameLab South Africa is thrilled to announce the finalists who will advance to the national stage of the international FameLab “talking science” competition following a captivating series of regional heats and semi-finals.

From the miniature world of antibiotic resistance to the immensity of cosmological discovery – this year’s FameLab finalists will be unpacking the wonder and value of science – to excite and engage.

The final event will be live-streamed on the [SAASTA YouTube channel](#) at 17h00 on the 19th of September from the National Research Foundation in Pretoria. Register [here](#) to receive the link. Be inspired by 10 exciting 3-minute talks and discover which fabulous science communicator will represent South Africa in the international final in the UK.

This prestigious competition, managed by NRF-SAASTA and Jive Media Africa, celebrates the art of science communication and highlights exceptional talent in the field.

The journey to the finals was nothing short of remarkable. From an impressive pool of 16 semi-finalists, who showcased their ability to make complex scientific concepts accessible and engaging, the following individuals have emerged as the top 10 finalists:

Finalists:

Siphosethu Mgwili, Prosthetics and Orthotics, Walter Sisulu University,

Nadia Olivier, Pharmacology, North-West University,

Nonkululeko Malomane, Chemistry, University of South Africa

Tallulah Glasby, Microecology, Stellenbosch University

Havilah Nnadozie, Antibiotic resistance, Rhodes University,

Luciano Willemse, Biochemistry, North-West University,

Yolanda Mngcongco, Nanotechnology, Nelson Mandela University,

Eduard Zehrt, Food science, Stellenbosch University,

Nokuphiwa Madlala, Chemistry, University of South Africa

Luyanda Mazwi, Centre for Astro-Particle Physics (CAPP) at the University of Johannesburg (NITheCS)

These outstanding finalists will now compete in the National Final on 19 September, where they will vie for the title of FameLab South Africa Champion and the chance to represent the country at the FameLab International competition.

While we celebrate these finalists, we also extend our heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to all the semi-finalists. Their dedication and passion for science communication have set a high standard and contributed to the competition's success. Their exceptional efforts made the selection process highly competitive.

FameLab continues to be a platform that not only fosters scientific talent but also enhances public understanding of science. Congratulations to our finalists for their impressive achievements, we wish them the best of luck in the upcoming final round!

FameLab, an initiative of Cheltenham Festivals in the UK, has been running in South Africa since 2013 through a partnership between the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (NRF-SAASTA) and research engagement specialists, Jive Media Africa.

For more information, interviews, or media enquiries, please contact:

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For profiles and more information on the finalists and semi-finalists please [click here](#)

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About Jive Media Africa:

Jive Media Africa supports top researchers with innovative, cutting edge communications. They are winners of the National Science and Technology Forum Award for Science Communication and have brought the FameLab competition to South Africa in 2013. Jive Media Africa has been getting creative to connect researchers, engineers and scientists with the public. Through communication strategy, media production, training and mentorship their aim is to activate African knowledge and grow capacity for great research and innovation on the African continent. Find out more about Jive Media Africa here: <https://jivemedia.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 of "Research for a Better Society" through strengthening the science and society interface. The organisation 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

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