

Message from NSTF Executive Director: SET topics of celebration/commemoration in 2017 & thoughts on decolonising university education

Welcome back to all members of the [National Science and Technology Forum \(NSTF\)](#) and readers. At the beginning of another year it seems appropriate to take stock of some of the topics the international science, engineering and technology (SET) community will be commemorating or celebrating this year. I also want to share some news and suggest possible reading on the topic of decolonising university education. [Read more](#)



NSTF News

Update on 2016/2017 NSTF-South32 Awards

The 19th Awards [gala dinner](#) during which the winners will be announced will take place on 29 June 2017, with the Minister of Science and Technology in attendance as the patron of the awards. This year's theme is [Sustainable Tourism for Development](#) #IY2017. Two new categories have been included focusing on SET and innovative contributions in the water sector, as well as data management. The new [NSTF-WRC Award](#), jointly established by the Water Research Commission (WRC) and the NSTF, seeks to give recognition to *inter alia*, leadership in water research, development and knowledge generation, and exceptional contributions towards informing and shaping the national water landscape through policy, decision-making and legislative enhancements. The new [Data for Research](#) category will recognise contributions advancing the availability, management and use of data for research.

Note the date for submission of completed nomination form/s is 3 March 2017. [Click here](#) for more information on the post-nomination process.

New sponsors: Share 'n Dare programme & Bursary Directory

We are grateful and excited to announce that both these initiatives are currently co-sponsored by the [Carl & Emily Fuchs Foundation](#). The [NSTF Share 'n Dare programme](#) forms part of the [NSTF-South32 Awards](#) and provides a platform for [award winners](#) to act as role models and ambassadors for SET and innovation. The [Bursary Directory](#) provides information on SET-related bursaries and careers, as well as a database of bursary providers, details of currently available bursaries and lists and descriptions of about 70 SET-related careers. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the Foundation for its much-valued support.

2nd Global Pulse Day celebrations highlight importance of pulses

The second global Pulse Day on 18 January 2017 celebrated the importance of pulses. The NSTF Discussion Forum on [Pulses and Food Security](#) highlighted several issues in this regard, including the need to invest in the monitoring and evaluation of farming activities and provide training and assistance on an ongoing basis to ensure the country's food security. Other recommendations include sharing the [proceedings of the forum](#) with other government departments and establishing centres of excellence around the country to deal with technologies in IKS and biodiversity. Read the [media release](#) for the highlights.

Upcoming Discussion Forums

NSTF [Discussion Forums](#) are high-level platforms that provide constructive interaction and discussion with government and stakeholders on key priority areas of concern to the SET community. Topics for discussion in the NSTF programme for 2017 are planned as follows:

- Sustainable Tourism for Development Discussion Forum, April/May 2017 (aligned with #IY2017)
- New Science and Technology Policy Discussion Forum, June 2017
- Science Councils Discussion Forum (topic to be announced), September 2017
- Language and Education Discussion Forum, October 2017

Bursary Directory

Learners, students and young people interested in SET-related studies – do you need a bursary?

Visit the [NSTF Bursary Directory](#) to view the type of bursaries made available each year, such as the bursaries offered by Johannesburg Water (SOC) Ltd; the NRF's iThemba LABS and the Council for Geoscience. While applications for 2017 bursaries have already closed in most cases, students interested in joining the exciting world of SET are encouraged to start applying early for 2018 bursaries.

[Click here](#) for updates on available bursaries and to read [inspiring stories](#) of bright individuals in SET.

Getting to know the work of the 2015/2016 NSTF-South32 Award winners: Prof. Peter Dunsby

[Winner](#) of the award for [research capacity development](#) over the last 5-10 years, Prof Dunsby is Professor of Cosmology and co-director of the Astrophysics, Cosmology and Gravity Centre at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Recently appointed head of mathematics and applied mathematics at UCT, Prof Dunsby believes that "any research is far more productive and successful when you involve other people, whether they're post grad or post-doctoral students". Read a [Mail & Guardian article](#) about Prof Dunsby's work.



SET Policy News

Featured SET policy: Draft Integrated Energy Plan Report & draft Integrated Resource Plan Update

The purpose of the Integrated Energy Plan is to provide a roadmap of the future energy landscape for South Africa, which guides future energy infrastructure investments and policy development. Key in the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) base case update process are changing assumptions, such as technology costs, electricity demand projections, new installed capacity and existing plant performance. Criticism of the IRP base case has focused mainly on the constraints placed on the amount of renewable energy that should be introduced yearly on the basis of possible negative consequences for grid stability. The period for public comment on both documents has been extended until 31 March. [Read more](#)

Other SET-related policies currently open for public comment

- [Project and Construction Management Professions Act: Continuing Professional Development Policy Amendment: Draft](#) (Comments by 17 Feb 2017)

SET-related policy news

- [Ministers to meet in mid-Feb to seek answer to Eskom, IPP deadlock](#) (Engineering News)
- [New amendment to Higher Education Act is an ideological pivot](#) (Daily Maverick)
- [New ICT policy could throw industry into tailspin, warns analyst](#) (Engineering News)
- [SA at electricity crossroads](#) (Engineering News)
- [DST looking to increase funding for PhD students](#) (htxt.co.za)
- [Pandor eyes foreign investments for R&D](#) (IT Web)
- [Zuma signs Higher Education Amendment Act](#) (News24)
- [Cross-border cooperation in R&D on the rise, speeding growth of science/business networks](#) (finance.yahoo.com)

Upcoming SET Events

- [4th International Symposium on Process Mineralogy, Cape Town, 20-22 March 2017](#)
- [Power and Electricity World Africa 2017, Johannesburg, 28-29 March 2017](#)
- [6th International Conference on Engineering, Mathematics and Physics \(ICEMP 2017\), Cape Town, 10-12 April 2017](#)
- [2017 Manufacturing Indaba: Ekurhuleni, 27-28 June 2017](#)

proSET News

- [Screening of bacteria isolated from the environment for the capability to control mosquito larva](#) (academicjournals.org)
- [Should Africa prioritise maths and science education over arts?](#) (theafricareport.com)
- [Technology key to gear SA pupils into 4th industrial revolution](#) (itnewsafrika.com)

Engineering

- [Mathematical modeling, simulation and analysis of rice grain movement for design and fabrication of low-cost winnowing machine](#) (academicjournals.org)
- [Chemical engineers focus on investing in the planet at COP22](#) (icheme.org)
- [PwC Construction Report 2016](#) (saice.org.za)

SET Community News

Community News

- [Davos boosts platinum fuel-cell outlook with hydrogen council launch](#) (Polity.org)
- [CSIR responds to Eskom claim of R9bn renewables-related economic loss in 2016](#) (Engineering News)
- [Boost for NMMU Ocean Sciences](#) (News24)
- [UP develops new app to detect hearing loss](#) (702.co.za)
- [2016: The year in space and astronomy](#) (phys.org)
- [280 million-year-old fossil reveals origins of chimaeroid fishes](#) (eurekalert.com)
- [World-class lab in Cape Town joins global war on HIV](#) (timeslive)

Environment, Climate Change and Energy

- [Ground-breaking waste-to-energy plant opens in Cape Town](#) (Engineering News)
- [Opinion: Billions can be saved by building gas turbines ahead of solar and wind](#) (Engineering News)
- [Next four years critical to meeting Paris agreement targets](#) (infrastructurenews.ws)
- [SA scientists take part in climate-change expedition in the Antarctic](#) (ewn.co.za)
- [SA scientists find Agulhas-current cyclone swirling in the ocean](#) (africatimes.com)
- [SA launches website for improved citrus black-spot infection management](#) (freshfruitportal.com)
- [What alternative energy can do for Africa](#) (themarketmogul.com)
- [Drought leads to food-security crisis in southern Africa](#) (aljazeera.com)

People in SET

- [Nersa gets new boss](#) (Engineering News)
- [CSIR heeds call for more young people in photonics industry](#) (Engineering News)

Send us your news

The NSTF invites all our members, as well as all SET and innovation role players, to send us information on meetings, conferences and activities of interest to the broader SET community. Please send us your news by the 20th of the month, for distribution at the beginning of the following month, to [enquiries@nstf.co.za](#)

Feedback

If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve this newsletter, please e-mail the NSTF Secretariat at [enquiries@nstf.co.za](#).

About the NSTF

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF), established in 1995, is a broadly-representative stakeholder body for all SET and innovation organisations in South Africa, which seeks to influence policy formulation and delivery.

The [NSTF-South32 Awards](#) are unique in SA, recognising the outstanding contributions of individuals and groups to SET and innovation.

The [science bursaries](#) page provides information on bursaries and bursary providers for science, engineering and related studies.

Disclaimer

The NSTF has taken all practical measures to ensure that the material contained in this newsletter is correct. The NSTF reserves the right to make changes as it deems necessary.

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