

Bryllon Petersen

From Kaizer Chiefs
Goalposts to Engineering
Mastery, PG 04

Honorary doctorate
ceremony, PG 06

Contents

Editor's Note	03
Brylon Petersen : Engineering Dreams and Football Goals	04
Honorary Doctorate : Prof Phuti Ngoepe	06
Youth Month Feature : Dr Beauty Shibiri	07
UNIVEN and SAIP Science Skills Workshop	08
SAIP Partners with Eskom Expo for Young Scientists	09
SA MeerKAT Joins the European VLBI Network	10
WiPiSA Webinars	11
CHPC Team Secures Second Place at the International Student Cluster Competition	12
Professor Makaiko Chithambo : Elected Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences	13
Dr Brian Masara : NSTF-South32 Awards Finalist for Management Excellence	14
Comments and Advice for Presenters at Future SAIP Conferences	15
Calls	16
Physics series	17

EDITOR'S NOTE



Rebecca Letsoalo
Editor Assistant



Dr. Edwin Mapasha
Chief Editor

We welcome you to this vibrant edition of the SAIP Physics Comment magazine, we are thrilled to spotlight the incredible energy, achievement, and collaboration shaping the South African physics landscape and beyond. This issue opens with an inspiring feature on Brylon Petersen, who beautifully balances his engineering ambitions with a passion for football, demonstrating the diverse potential of young South African talent. In the spirit of Youth Month, we proudly profile Dr. Beauty Shibiri, a shining example of leadership, resilience, and scientific excellence.

We celebrate giants in our community, such as Professor Phuti Ngoepe, who recently received an honorary doctorate for his pioneering work and lifelong contributions to science. Congratulations also go to Professor Makaiko Chithambo, newly elected Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences, and Dr. Brian Masara, a finalist for the prestigious NSTF-South32 Awards.

Our community continues to expand its impact globally. The CHPC student team impressed on the international stage, and South Africa's MeerKAT telescope is now integrated into the European VLBI Network, elevating our role in cutting-edge astronomy. This issue also highlights powerful partnerships in action—SAIP's collaboration with UNIVEN for the Science Skills Workshop and our joint efforts with Eskom Expo for Young Scientists—all geared toward nurturing the next generation of physicists and innovators. Finally, we include thoughtful advice for presenters at future SAIP conferences, calls for contributions to our Physics Series, and more community updates.

As the term of the current SAIP Council is near the end, we take this opportunity to acknowledge their impactful leadership and service to the physics community. Throughout their term, they have navigated challenges, championed transformation, and promoted collaboration across institutions and disciplines. Their vision and dedication have not only sustained the momentum of existing programs but have also opened new avenues for growth and innovation. We thank them for their invaluable contributions and look forward to the continued evolution of SAIP under the new leadership.

As always, thank you for your support and engagement. Let us continue to advance science together—across generations, disciplines, and borders.

Brylon Petersen: Engineering Dreams and Football Goals

In a world where most young people are asked to choose between sport and academics, Brylon Petersen defies the odds. Born in Pietermaritzburg, He grew up in a football-loving family—both his grandfathers were known football players. This inspired him to love the sport from a young age. At the same time, his father's interest in fixing cars made Brylon curious about how things work, which led to his passion for engineering.

In 2014, Brylon enrolled at Wits University to pursue a degree in engineering. At the same time, he joined Bidvest Football Club, competing in the Varsity Football tournament. His performance caught the eye of Kaizer Chiefs scouts, and by 2016, he had signed a professional contract with one of South Africa's biggest football clubs. While his peers balanced lectures with student life, Brylon was juggling university, professional training, and match schedules. *"I looked at life as a triangle—most students balance academics and social life. I added football. That meant I had to sacrifice my social life to succeed."*

As he progressed, Brylon developed a passion for thermodynamics and fluid mechanics. His love for engines met its match in the laws of physics. *"If I didn't understand the physical principles, I wouldn't understand the engineering principles."* That's what gave me the edge. Brylon didn't just study theory—he applied it to football.

For his engineering project, Brylon designed a rapid recovery wrap inspired by air-conditioning systems. Unlike traditional hot-to-cold recovery (like hot tubs to ice baths), his invention allowed stationary athletes—especially those injured—to benefit from rapid heating and cooling without needing to move.

Today, Brylon is a mechanical engineer at Peterson Industries, applying his knowledge to the design and repair of above-ground storage tanks and heavy-duty trailers. He ensures that fluid flow, mechanical loads, and structural integrity all align—a real-world application of the same system thinking he developed through sports and academics.

His advice to younger student athletes? *"Embrace the challenge, embrace the hard times, because through those hard times, you learn more about yourself."*





Wardrobe credit:
brand name @ Vicsion Couture, and shoes by Vuctas



A Multi-Talented Game Changer

In a heartfelt and empowering conversation with Vukosi Mashele (SAIP media liaison), Brylon reflects on his unique journey as both a professional footballer and mechanical engineer. He credits his academic perseverance to the strong encouragement from his mother and father, who emphasized the importance of education alongside his football career. He holds no regrets about his path, stating that every challenge contributed to his growth.

To youth struggling with balancing education and passion, his advice is to embrace challenges, as these moments reveal inner strength and resilience. He emphasizes focusing on what you want, despite the obstacles.

Brylon is most grateful for the pivotal people in his life—family, mentors, and especially his wife, who supported him unwaveringly. Married in 2023 after 11 years of companionship, he describes their relationship as a foundational pillar in his success. Reflecting on his calling and purpose, Brylon believes he was destined to be a “dynamic game changer,” challenging limiting beliefs and proving that it's possible to excel in multiple demanding fields. His story is one of inspiration for those who are told they can't. In a powerful moment, Brylon shares a message to students struggling with self-worth: ***“You determine your value. Your work is determined by you and what you set out to achieve. Block out the noise, focus on yourself, and focus on the people around you that are pushing you to be better and do better, because they believe in you. So why wouldn't you believe in yourself.”***

Source: Vukosi Mashele

SMU Makes History with First-Ever Honorary Doctorate to Esteemed Physicist Prof Phuti Ngoepe



In a landmark moment that marked a new chapter in the university's legacy, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU) awarded its first-ever honorary doctorate to world-renowned physicist **Professor Phuti Esrom Ngoepe**. The historic conferment took place on 23 May 2025 during SMU's Autumn Graduation Ceremony, where the atmosphere was one of pride, celebration, and reverence for academic excellence.

This momentous decision by the School of Science and Technology recognized Prof. Ngoepe's lifelong contribution to science, particularly in the field of computational modeling of materials, a discipline that has transformed how scientists predict and design new materials for energy, healthcare, and space technologies. Professor Ngoepe, a trailblazer in materials modeling, is celebrated globally for being the first African scientist to establish a dedicated research group in this advanced field. For over five decades, he has driven scientific discovery through cutting-edge simulations, paving the way for material innovations critical to both industry and academia.

His academic footprint is extraordinary:

- Supervised 61 Master's, 34 PhDs and mentored 16 postdoctoral researchers
- Delivered over 1,000 scientific presentations
- Published extensively in high-impact journals

- Published extensively in high-impact journals
- Served on key national boards such as MINTEK, the Council for Geosciences, and the South African Nanotechnology Initiative.

Acknowledging the many students and colleagues who have journeyed with him, he added, "I value and appreciate the efforts and dedication of all students and co-workers over many decades. Their potential, ingenuity, and talent for doing things that are the best in the world—I have learned so much from them. They have kept me young at heart and in my mind."

Already the recipient of prestigious accolades such as the Order of Mapungubwe in Silver (2008) and the China Government Friendship Award (2022), Prof. Ngoepe's legacy was further celebrated in 2023 with an international Materials Modelling Workshop held in his name. SMU's decision to honor him with a Doctor of Science (honoris causa) adds to this rich tapestry of recognition and firmly situates the institution on the map of globally engaged research universities.

The conferment symbolizes SMU's evolving identity—not only as a leading health sciences institution but also as a university willing to celebrate transformative science beyond its traditional boundaries.

Source:  SMU

Youth Month Spotlight: Dr Beauty Shibiri

PIONEERING ENERGY STORAGE RESEARCHER & RISING PHYSICS LEADER



A major influence on her journey was Professor Rapela R. Maphanga, whom she met during a WiPiSA luncheon in 2014. “She ticked all the boxes for me; beautiful, well-dressed, lipstick on and all, something I never thought existed if I became a woman physicist or researcher.”

Building Better Batteries, One Simulation at a Time

Dr Shibiri’s current work focuses on large-scale simulations of LiMn_2O_4 (LMO) spinel cathodes, aimed at overcoming challenges like voltage fade, manganese dissolution, and mechanical instability. Through nanoengineering, her research introduces robust nanoarchitectures that improve electrochemical performance and prolong battery life. One of her key findings has been identifying a critical lithium concentration that contributes to fracture and capacity loss—an insight that could drastically enhance the reliability of next-generation energy storage systems.

Mentorship, Recognition, and Leadership

Beyond the lab, Dr Shibiri is an active mentor and supervisor of postgraduate students. She also serves as Cluster Coordinator for the Energy and Storage Materials Group and sits on the School of Physical and Mineral Sciences Research Committee at UL. Her work has earned her multiple accolades, most recently as one of the Mail & Guardian’s 200 Young South Africans (2024) under the Energy category—a prestigious honour that reflects her growing national influence.

Balancing Brilliance and Well-Being

Despite her demanding research schedule, Dr Shibiri believes in planning, setting clear priorities, and taking time to recharge. “Taking as much as needed breaks,” she notes. She also credits her resilience to her faith and support system, saying, “God has been faithful—and being surrounded by people who believe in you makes all the difference.”

Her message to aspiring young scientists, especially women:

“Setbacks have always been there, but they usually never last. They are part of life and help us grow and embrace the journey even more”

Source: Rebecca Letsoalo



In celebration of Youth Month, we proudly feature Dr Beauty Shibiri, a dynamic early-career physicist whose drive, resilience, and passion for research are lighting the way for the next generation of scientists. At just 31, Dr Shibiri is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Materials Modelling Centre (MMC), University of Limpopo, where she is carving out an impactful career in energy materials research.

A Journey Rooted in Passion and Purpose

Dr Shibiri’s journey began at the University of Limpopo, where she earned her BSc in Physics and Geology (2016) and later her BSc Honours in Physics (2017). Her MSc studies were upgraded to PhD level in 2019, culminating in the award of her doctorate in 2022 at age 28—a remarkable achievement for a young woman in a highly technical field. Today, she continues to break new ground in energy materials, researching LMO cathodes for lithium-ion batteries, with a patent filed in 2024 for her pioneering work.

Rewriting the Narrative for Women in Physics

What inspired her path? “Growing up I was surrounded by people who always had something negative to say about Physics, how difficult it is and how it is not meant for women,” says Dr. Shibiri. “something in me just wanted to prove them wrong and change the narrative in my community.” As a young girl, she was struck by the absence of female physicists in her environment, a reality that made her all the more determined to challenge stereotypes and inspire others.

University of Venda and SAIP Collaborate on Science Skills Workshop for Early Childhood Practitioners



In a significant move toward building a science-conscious society from the earliest stages of learning, the **University of Venda (UNIVEN)**, in collaboration with the **South African Institute of Physics (SAIP)**, hosted a vibrant workshop titled “Science Skills Development for Early Childhood Development (ECD) Practitioners.” The two-day event was held at the Vuwani Science Resource Centre, drawing together approximately 80 ECD practitioners from communities across Limpopo.

This initiative was born out of the shared vision to strengthen science education at the grassroots level, ensuring that science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are not reserved for upper grades but meaningfully introduced in the playful, imaginative, and foundational phase of early learning.

The workshop emphasized that early exposure to scientific concepts—when delivered through creative, holistic, and age-appropriate methods—can spark lifelong curiosity and critical thinking in young minds. This aligns with South Africa’s ECD 2030 Strategy, which highlights the importance of preparing children for a changing and technologically driven world. Led by Professor Shonisani Agnes Mulovhedzi, the sessions explored integrated STEM learning, including coding, robotics, environmental science, and play-based inquiry. Activities included the use of natural and recyclable materials like stones, bottles, leaves, and glue, reinforcing that effective science teaching doesn’t always require expensive resources—just creativity and purpose.

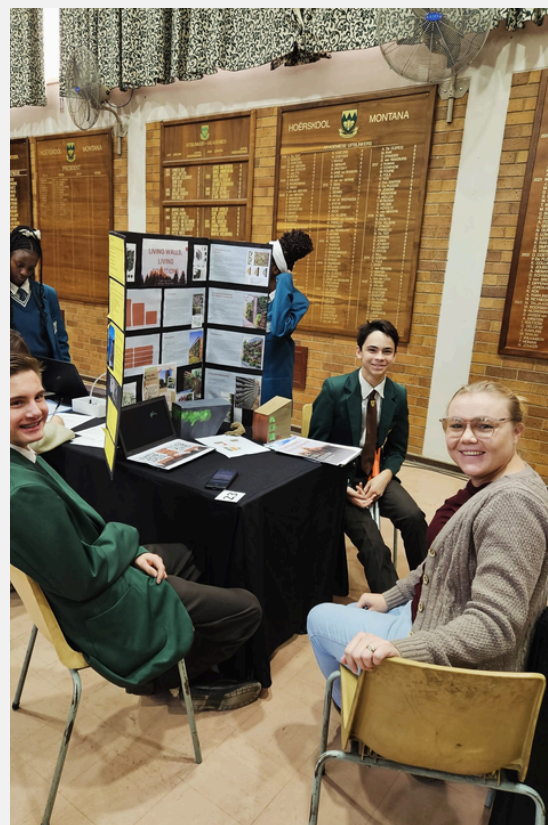
Practitioners from **Tshisaulu, Duthuni, Itsani, Vyeboom, Vuwani, Masia, Mashau, and Tshitungulwane** participated in the training, bringing diverse insights and community-driven teaching perspectives. Staff from the University of Venda Crèche also attended, sharing experiences and contributing to a cross-pollination of best practices. Participants engaged in reflective discussions, with questions like “What is your experience with STEM?” sparking deep conversations and renewed commitment to making science more accessible and meaningful to children. Group activities demonstrated how STEM principles can be introduced through everyday play, with practitioners building mock STEM classrooms and simulating hands-on learning environments.

In post-workshop surveys, attendees expressed deep appreciation for the initiative, noting how empowering and practical the training was. Many pledged to implement the lessons in their own classrooms, requesting that such workshops be continued and expanded across the country. Looking ahead, SAIP has begun the process of accrediting the ECD STEM module with the South African Council for Educators (SACE), ensuring its recognition and integration into formal teacher development programmes. The University of Venda and SAIP remain committed to inclusive education, sustainable development, and capacity building, with future plans to expand the model, provide continuous support, and integrate climate science and sustainability topics into the ECD curriculum.

Source: Prof. Eric Maluta

SAIP PARTNERS WITH ESKOM EXPO FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS

NURTURING YOUTH INNOVATION AND SCIENTIFIC TALENT IN SOUTH AFRICA



The South African Institute of Physics (SAIP) is proud to announce a new partnership with the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists, furthering its mission to advance physics and inspire young scientific minds across the country. To launch this exciting collaboration, SAIP representatives—Prof. R. Mhlongo and Dr. C. Dlamini—participated as adjudicators at the Tshwane North District Competition, held on Saturday, 17 May 2024, at Hoërskool Montana.

The event brought together learners from various schools who showcased innovative and thought-provoking research projects spanning physics, engineering, environmental science, life sciences, and more. The SAIP delegation was deeply impressed by the learners' scientific rigor, creativity, and enthusiasm for research.

This collaboration highlights SAIP's strategic commitment to youth engagement, supporting platforms that ignite curiosity and nurture the next generation of scientists, technologists, and innovators.

Through this partnership, SAIP aims to:

- Support learner-led scientific inquiry and innovation.
- Promote physics careers and awareness in schools.
- Contribute to a broader national pipeline of STEM professionals.

As part of future engagements, SAIP will continue to support Expo activities across provinces, offer mentorship to budding young researchers, and integrate its outreach programmes to broaden participation in physics—especially in previously underrepresented communities.

Source: SAIP

MEERKAT JOINS THE EUROPEAN VLBI NETWORK: A NEW ERA FOR GLOBAL RADIO ASTRONOMY

SOUTH AFRICA'S WORLD-CLASS TELESCOPE EXPANDS ITS REACH



The Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI) has proudly announced the successful integration of South Africa's MeerKAT radio telescope into the European Very Long Baseline Interferometry Network (EVN)—a momentous scientific breakthrough in global radio astronomy. This marks MeerKAT's first full participation in an EVN observation, officially operating as a Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) station in one of the world's most advanced and sensitive VLBI systems. The achievement signifies a giant leap for high-resolution radio astronomy, with South Africa firmly embedded in a global network of radio telescopes probing the cosmos with extraordinary precision.

The 12-hour observation session included four hours of high-quality data from MeerKAT, integrated with signals from other EVN stations. Working in tandem with the 26-metre Hartebeesthoek Radio Telescope, MeerKAT helped extend the north-south baselines of the EVN array, significantly enhancing the angular resolution of the resulting images. This collaborative observation focused on the supermassive black hole J0123+3044, producing stunning enhanced images of its energetic plasma jets—a strong early success for the partnership and a preview of the extraordinary discoveries this alliance can deliver. The integration was led by SARA0's engineering and science teams in close collaboration with the Joint Institute for VLBI in Europe (JIVE), headquartered in the Netherlands, which played a central role in coordination, data processing, and imaging. This milestone embodies scientific diplomacy and shared innovation, bringing together teams and telescopes across Europe, Asia, and Africa in a joint quest to unlock the mysteries of the universe. From VLBI breakthroughs to SKA preparations, South Africa is emerging not only as a key geographic node in global astronomy but also as a scientific leader. MeerKAT's success signals the expanding global window on the universe, with South African expertise and infrastructure opening up new frontiers in high-precision space science.

Source:  DSTI



WiPiSA Webinars

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Inspire inclusion: a global dialogue on mentorship and empowering women in science

Webinar



Dr. Katekani Shingange
South Africa
(Facilitator)



Tlamele Makati
Botswana



Dr. Beauty Shibiri
South Africa



Dr. Pamela Kilavi
Kenya



Thursday
3 April 2025



Time
12:00 - 13:00 (SATS)



Virtual webinar on:
Zoom

Tlamele highlighted the importance of understanding intersectionality and using social media and school visits to raise awareness. The session concluded with a focus on practical steps: institutions should implement policies supporting equitable hiring and compensation, women scientists should return to their communities to mentor young girls, and male colleagues should be invited to these discussions to build mutual understanding and support.

The Youth Month Webinar, held on 26 June 2025, celebrated the achievements of young women physicists in South Africa. Panelists included PhD students researching clean energy storage, aerosol science, and machine learning applications in astrophysics. They shared their experiences in overcoming challenges in academia and discussed strategies for maintaining mental health, such as building strong support systems, setting boundaries, and prioritizing self-care.

The conversation explored how personal definitions of success combine professional recognition, personal fulfillment, and advocacy for future generations. Panelists underscored the importance of early outreach, mentorship, and visibility to attract more young women to physics, as well as building resilience in the face of uncertainty.

Both webinars featured Q&A sessions where participants engaged with panelists on mentorship approaches, available fellowships, and practical advice for navigating postgraduate studies. Announcements included WiPiSA's 20th anniversary celebrations, with invitations for physics departments and institutions to propose inter-university or inter-institutional luncheons to strengthen collaboration and community.

Key Next Steps from Both Events:

- WiPiSA will organize more global webinars and outreach programs to encourage girls to pursue physics.

In April and June 2025, Women in Physics in South Africa (WiPiSA) hosted two powerful webinars focused on strengthening mentorship, promoting inclusion, and inspiring young women in science.

The Inspire Inclusion Webinar: WiPiSA, in collaboration with Women in STEM (Botswana) and the Kenyan Women in Physics Association (Kenya), held a global dialogue on mentorship and empowering women in science webinar on the 3rd of April, 2025. Panelists discussed the challenges women face in physics and science careers, including societal stereotypes, limited resources, unconscious bias, and exclusion from networking opportunities. Dr. Pamela and Dr. Beauty emphasized the need for structured mentorship programs, flexible policies for work-life balance, and visible role models to inspire schoolgirls.

JOIN US FOR A PANEL DISCUSSION ON ...

Young Women in Science: Aspirations, Challenges and Representation

Dimakatso Maheso
North-West University

Anneke Erasmus
Stellenbosch University

Mamonamane Mphahlele
University of Limpopo

Host: Tebogo Ledwaba, WiPiSA

WIPISA
Women in Physics in South Africa

26 JUNE 2025
11:00-12:30
ZOOM

REGISTER NOW

- Institutions are encouraged to adopt policies addressing bias and supporting flexible work arrangements.
- Women physicists/scientists are urged to engage with schools and communities as mentors and role models.
- Men will be invited to participate in women-focused events to foster allyship.
- Proposals for WiPiSA's 20th anniversary luncheons should be submitted by **15 July 2025**.
- Attendees were reminded to register for upcoming conferences and explore networking opportunities.

Together, these dialogues underscore WiPiSA's commitment to building a supportive, inclusive, and inspiring environment where women in physics can thrive, innovate, and lead the next generation forward.

Source: Dr. Katekani Shingange



SOUTH AFRICAN CHPC TEAM SECURES SECOND PLACE AT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CLUSTER COMPETITION



A student team from the Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC), a strategic pillar of the National Integrated Cyberinfrastructure System (NICIS) supported by the DSTI, has earned an impressive second place at the International Student Cluster Competition, held online and hosted in Hamburg, Germany, from 10 to 12 June 2025.

The CHPC team, composed of six students and one reserve from leading South African universities, competed against 21 university teams from around the globe. Their success is a testament to their technical excellence, resilience, and collaboration, as well as the strength of South Africa's investment in youth skills development for the digital and data-driven economy.



Team Members: **Kapil Ramlall**—Electrical Engineering (Wits), **Thina Calana**—Computer Engineering (CPUT), **Lisa Pitsi**—Computer Science (UWC), **Tebogo Diraditsile**—Computer Engineering (CPUT), **Allen Van Dieman**—Computer Engineering (CPUT), **Abdullah Jaffer**—Computer Engineering (CPUT), and **Anna Lukose** (Reserve)—Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Cape Town

Guided by expert mentors and operating a 3-node high-performance computing cluster sponsored by Hewlett-Packard Enterprise, the team demonstrated outstanding capability in system performance, energy efficiency, and technical presentation.

This achievement reaffirms South Africa's growing global reputation in high-performance computing and the transformative potential of empowering youth through advanced training and international exposure. The CHPC continues to serve as a launchpad for young South Africans to excel in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and beyond.

Source: DSTI

RHODES UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR MAKAIKO CHITHAMBO ELECTED FELLOW OF THE AFRICAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



Rhodes University proudly congratulates Professor Makaiko Chithambo, Head of the Department of Physics and Electronics, on his election as a Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences (AAS)—a prestigious recognition of his outstanding contributions to physics and science on the African continent.

The African Academy of Sciences is a pan-African organization that brings together the continent's leading scientists to shape science policy, promote research excellence, and drive innovation across Africa. Fellowship is awarded through a rigorous peer-reviewed selection process, involving expert evaluation, voting by existing Fellows, and final endorsement by the AAS Governing Council.

As an AAS Fellow, Professor Chithambo will join a distinguished network of scholars dedicated to advancing science, technology, and innovation in Africa. His roles will include shaping science policy, contributing to continental research programs, participating in expert advisory committees, and helping identify and mentor future Fellows.

As an AAS Fellow, Professor Chithambo will join a distinguished network of scholars dedicated to advancing science, technology, and innovation in Africa. His roles will include shaping science policy, contributing to continental research programs, participating in expert advisory committees, and helping identify and mentor future Fellows.

This honour adds to an already distinguished career in luminescence, solid-state physics, and science leadership. Professor Chithambo is also a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and a former President of the South African Institute of Physics (SAIP).

Regarding the announcement, Professor Chithambo said, “*I am truly humbled to have been elected a Fellow of this Academy. I've always believed in the power of collaboration between researchers in Africa and the importance of supporting each other to succeed, despite the challenges we face. It's possible to achieve meaningful progress even with limited resources—you just have to make smart, deliberate choices. As a Fellow, I intend to draw on my experience in international science policy and my global networks to support students and fellow African academics wherever I can.*”

Source:  Rhodes

DR BRIAN MASARA: NSTF-SOUTH₃₂ AWARDS FINALIST FOR MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE



The South African Institute of Physics (SAIP) is proud to celebrate Dr. Brian Masara, its executive officer, who has been nominated for the prestigious Management Award at the NSTF-South32 Awards—often known as the “Science Oscars” of South Africa. These awards recognise individuals and organisations who have made outstanding contributions to science, engineering, technology (SET), and innovation in South Africa since 1998.

Dr. Masara’s nomination is a recognition of his transformative leadership and unwavering commitment to advancing physics as a driver for socioeconomic development. Under his leadership, SAIP has:

- Strengthened strategic governance and institutional sustainability,
- Expanded education and training initiatives,
- Facilitated continental and international collaborations,
- Championed public science engagement and policy influence,
- Advocated for equity, access, and excellence across all levels of physics in SA.

His work has significantly amplified the impact and visibility of physics within South Africa’s science ecosystem and beyond. This nomination is not only a personal milestone but also a reflection of SAIP’s growing influence in shaping science for development across Africa.

Source:SAIP

COMMENTS AND ADVICE FOR PRESENTERS AT FUTURE SAIP CONFERENCES

These remarks are intended to support and enhance the quality and professionalism of research presentations across all divisions.

1. Strict Timekeeping Is Essential

Session chairpersons must enforce the time limits allocated in the program—this includes plenary, oral, and student presentations. Respecting the schedule ensures that all presenters receive their fair opportunity and that the programme runs smoothly.

2. Ensure Technical Readiness

Conference organisers must verify that all equipment—microphones, data projectors, and computers—are fully functional before the start of the event. Spare microphones should be available, and technicians must be trained to promptly resolve any issues related to sound or visual projection.

3. Voting Integrity

During elections for divisional executives or the SAIP Exco, mechanisms must be in place to ensure that only paid-up members of SAIP participate in the voting process, in accordance with the SAIP Constitution.

4. Presentation rehearsals are crucial.

Supervisors and promoters should conduct “dry runs” of their students’ presentations before the conference. This helps ensure presenters stay within the allocated 15 minutes (10 minutes for presentation + 5 minutes for questions). A guiding principle here is the KISS rule: Keep It Short and Simple.

5. Use Readable Colours and Fonts

Avoid using green or light yellow in PowerPoint slides, as these are often difficult to read from a distance. Similarly, light blue slides with black data tables can be problematic—unless the font is bold and of sufficient size.

6. Minimise Redundant Narration

Refrain from reading aloud the names of co-authors, supervisors, or sponsors at the beginning or end of your presentation. This information is already in the programme or on the slides, and time is better spent on your scientific content.

7. Be Mindful of Time-Wasting Tactics

Listing multiple sponsors or reading long reference lists at the end of a presentation often appears to be a tactic to avoid taking questions. This is contrary to the collaborative spirit of a scientific conference. Save detailed references for a future publication.

8. Avoid Data Overload

Do not overwhelm the audience with large tables or too many graphs on one slide. Focus on key results, and use highlighting to draw attention to important data. Simplicity improves impact.

9. Be Concise and Prepared

Poster adjudicators are often on a tight schedule. Be ready to clearly explain:

- What you did,
- Why you did it,
- What conclusions you reached— in 2–3 minutes.

Avoid reading from the poster—it gives the impression that you didn’t create the content. Speak naturally and confidently. Also, avoid unrelated tangents; adjudicators can read and are looking for clarity and originality. These suggestions are offered in the spirit of support, mentorship, and improvement, and we hope they contribute positively to future SAIP conferences.

Source: Prof Japie Engelbrecht

CALLS

This edition features a variety of calls and opportunities designed to support and advance your career in physics. We strongly encourage all eligible members to apply early, meet the deadlines, and seize these opportunities to grow, collaborate, and make an impact in the physics community.

1.

SMU PHYSICS LECTURER/ PROF HOD-PHYSICS

2.

DSTI-NRF POSTGRADUATE STUDENT FUNDING FOR THE
2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

3.

IUPAPA CONFERENCES FOR 2025

4.

New Node within the South African Quantum
Technology Initiative (SA QuTI)

5.

Emerging leader call

6.

Student bursary.

7.

SFSA 2025 PROGRAMME

8.

NRF-SASOL YAAP PROGRAMME 2026

9.

WIPISA 20-YEAR CELEBRATION INTER-INSTITUTION
PROPOSAL

PHYSICS SERIES—PROFILING

The aim of SAIP profiling is to spotlight physicists (students, researchers, professionals, and educators), showcasing their journeys, research, inspirations, challenges, and advice to the next generation of scientists. Explore and be inspired by their stories through the links below:

 [Thamaga Madiga](#)

 [Jade Morano](#)

 [Tshiamo Baloyi](#)

 [Itumeleng Sebe](#)

 [Youth day celebration](#)

PC Magazine Editorial policy

Article types: The magazine is devoted to articles, reports, interesting facts, announcements, and recent developments in several areas related to physics:

Manuscripts: Solicited manuscripts will be judged first for reader interest, accuracy, and writing quality. The editor reserves the right to request a rewrite, reject, and/or edit for length, organization, sense, grammar, and punctuation.

Re-use: The publisher reserves the right to reuse the printed piece in full or in part in other publications.

Submission and Format: Manuscripts must be submitted to the editor on or before the designated due date. Manuscripts must be submitted electronically, on the prescribed Microsoft Word template available for download from <https://www.saip.org.za/pc-magazine/>. Manuscripts are to be submitted directly to the editor: PhysicsComment@saip.org.za.

Style: AP style is followed for punctuation, capitalization, italics, and quotations.

Photography and Illustration: All solicited photography and illustrations should be part of an article and will be judged first for technical quality and editorial appropriateness. The editor and art director reserve the right to request revision or reject any material that does not meet their criteria. The publisher reserves full rights to all solicited photography and illustration, including the right to reprint or reuse graphic material in other publications.

Categories of Content Contributions

Technical articles and reports: These are generic articles of about 1,500 words plus diagrams and pictures. A technical article covers a relevant feature topic. Articles are authored by the writer and publishing a 40-word resume of the author could enhance its credibility. By submitting an article that has been previously published the author confirms that he/she has the right to do so and that all the necessary permissions have been received. The acknowledgment must be made within the article.

News: These are short editorial items usually not more than 250 words. Full-colour pictures must be referenced on the editorial submission and the picture or picture file.

Advertorials: Advertorials could be published when supplied by the client. We recommend a maximum of 500 words plus one or two pictures for maximum impact. A PDF file of the laid-out advertorial should be emailed to the client along with an MS Word file of the text and separate image files of the pictures. It is the client's responsibility to ensure that the advertorial is correct as it is, in fact, a paid-for advert page.

Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor are encouraged. The Editor reserves the right to edit for length and format. The Editor will not change the political position of the initial letter. Physics Comment does not publish anonymous letters.

Advertising Policy: The Editorial Board will determine advertising prices for Physics Comment, subject to approval by the SAIP Council. The objective will be to obtain revenue to maintain and develop the magazine. Physics Comment offers classified advertising to subscribers of the magazine for free. The advertisements must be a maximum of 60 words including the telephone number, and there is a limit of three free classifieds per subscriber, per issue. Advertisements may include a photo, which may be reduced in size or resolution by the editor to optimize loading time. All items or opportunities, that are being advertised for free, should be physics-related. The Editor reserves the right to refuse any advertising, which does not conform to the objectives of the magazine.

Submission of Articles

All articles must be submitted on the prescribed template available for download from <http://www.saip.org.za/PhysicsComment/>.

PC Magazine Editorial policy

Physics Comment is an electronic magazine for the Physics community of South Africa, providing objective coverage of the activities of people and associations active in the physics arena. It also covers physics-related ideas, issues, developments, and controversies, serving as a forum for discussion. It is not a peer-reviewed journal.

Physics Comment publishes innovative reports, features, news, reviews, and other material, that explore and promote the many facets of physics. Physics Comment endeavors to:

- support and inform the physics community.
- promote membership of the South African Institute of Physics
- promote the understanding of physics to interested parties and the general public represent the readers' point of view
- focus on issues and topics of importance and of interest to the physics community.

We accept submissions on any physics-related subject, that endeavors to inform readers and encourage writers in their research. We aim to be politically, socially, and geographically inclusive in the articles, which we commission and receive. Therefore, we shall not discriminate according to political or religious views. Physics Comment does not support or endorse any individual politician or political party. However, contributions, that are being published, may contain personal opinions of the authors. We desire to present unfettered the opinions and research of our readers and contributors. All articles submitted for publication are subject to editorial revision. Such revisions, if necessary, will be made in cooperation with the author.

The views expressed in published articles are those of the authors and are not attributed to the Editorial the Editor will make the final determination of the suitability of the articles for publication.

Declaration by Author

When an author submits material for publication, this means:

1. The author(s) assures the material is original, his/her own work, and is not under any legal restriction for publication online (e.g., previous copyright ownership).

2. The author allows PC to edit the work for clarity, and presentation, including making appropriate hypermedia links within the work.

3. The author gives PC permission to publish the work and make it accessible in the magazine's archives indefinitely after publication.

The author may retain all other rights by requesting a copyright statement be placed on the work.

Authors should respect intellectual integrity by accrediting the author of any published work, that is being quoted.

Publication Deadlines

Physics Comment is published four times a year.

Issue Closing Date Publication Date

Issue 1	28 February	15 March
Issue 2	31 May	15 June
Issue 3	31 August	15 September
Issue 4	30 November	15 December

Specification and Submission of Content

Editorial Tone: As the voice of the physics community, the magazine will create a provocative, stimulating, and thoughtful dialogue with the readers; and provide a variety of perspectives that reflect the dynamism of the physics community.