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Join us for our next

## NITheP Colloquium

**Prof Azwinndini Muronga**

Nelson Mandela University

**Date: Monday, 15 June 2020 Time: 16h00**

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Science:

Transforming the landscape of science in South Africa and the role of theoretical & computational sciences

As we continue to navigate the impact of COVID-19 on our lives and in our communities, science as a beacon of hope has been called to action to stand up to the challenges faced by humanity.

In the midst of this pandemic we also find ourselves again mourning and raging over state and vigilante violence against Black people. The recent murders of Collins Khosa, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery are just a few examples of the violence and racism that Black people live with every day -- and have for centuries -- around the world.

In South Africa, we join scientific organisations and institutions around the world who are standing up against discrimination in the sciences. From the dawn of democracy South African science has made some notable strides in terms of investment and capacity building in science. Yet we still have a long way to go in terms of addressing transformation in the true sense of the word within our ranks.

In this colloquium I will discuss the challenges facing the transformation agenda in the sciences and then suggest ways of addressing such challenges. I will focus my discussion of the latter on Science Engagement and on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in science. In discussing some of the possible solutions to the current challenges, I will specifically be looking at the role of theoretical and computational sciences as a catalyst of transformation.

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**Register in advance for this webinar:**

[https://ukzn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_wfTzD\\_rRTDu3eFN6AkdcjQ](https://ukzn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wfTzD_rRTDu3eFN6AkdcjQ)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**Biography:** Azwinndini Muronga is a science educator, researcher, communicator, advocator, and activist.



His formal schooling started in Vhembe District, Limpopo, South Africa. His undergraduate studies and teacher training qualifications were done at the University of Venda where he obtained his BSc (Physics and Mathematics) and University Education Diploma (currently Postgraduate Certificate Education). His BSc Honours in Theoretical Physics, and MSc in Theoretical Physics were both obtained from the University of Cape Town. He obtained his PhD in Physics from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA.

He did his postdoctoral studies at Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany, as well as at the GSI Laboratory, Darmstadt, Germany, before returning to South Africa where he holds several academic positions as well as administration, management and leadership roles in universities, civil organisations and science societies.

He is currently the Executive Dean of Science at Nelson Mandela University. He served as the President of the South African Institute of Physics (SAIP) (2015-2017) and as SAIP councillor responsible for International Affairs (2013 – 2019). He is currently serving as SAIP ambassador for the Teacher Development and the Outreach & Public Understanding of Physics Projects. He has served as a member of the National Institute for Theoretical Physics (NITheP) Steering Committee. He is currently serving as the Chair Judge for the Mathematics and Physics category for the Global Undergraduate Awards (UA) (since 2016).

He is also currently serving in 1) the Interim Council for the African Physical Society; 2) the IUPAP C11 Commission on Particles and Fields; 3) the South African National Space Agency Board, and 4) the Snowmass Advisory Group and the Community Engagement Forum of Snowmass.

As a science advocator and activist, he is proactive about engaging schools, universities and communities in promoting quality mathematics and science education, and access to higher education for all talented students. He champions science communication at all levels to broaden the universal understanding, enjoyment and inspiration of science.

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