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National Institute for
Theoretical and Computational Sciences

NITheCS COLLOQUIUM:

The Role of Science Centres in STEAM Education

Dr Lungile Sitole (University of Johannesburg)

Monday, 27 November 2023 | 16h00 – 17h00 SAST

Venue: in person* and online

** Neelsie Cinema, Stellenbosch University*

--- Cheese and wine will be served at the venue ---

ABSTRACT

Science Centres play a pivotal role in advancing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education by serving as dynamic hubs for interactive learning and exploration. Science Centres act as catalysts for scientific curiosity, offering hands-on exhibits, interactive demonstrations and immersive experiences that inspire a sense of wonder and discovery. By providing accessible and engaging platforms, Science Centres stimulate interest in STEAM subjects and encourage individuals to pursue further exploration and education in these domains.

This presentation will explore the diverse contribution of Science Centres to STEAM education, emphasising their impact on fostering curiosity, promoting interdisciplinary engagement, and cultivating a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of these fields. As technology continues to reshape the landscape of education, Science Centres ought to adapt by incorporating virtual and digital elements, ensuring their educational impact extends beyond physical boundaries.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Sitole is currently a Senior Lecturer and Researcher in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) where she also serves as the Director of the UJ Soweto Science Centre. She holds both a Bachelors (Magna Cum Laude) and Master's (Cum Laude) degree in Organic Chemistry from Jackson State University (MS, USA) as well as a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Pretoria. She is a DST Women in Science alumni who was featured in the *Mail & Guardian* Top 200 Young South Africans (2015). She is also a Golden Key International Honours Society member as well as an ambassador for the South Africa's 2017 National Development Plan (NDP 2030).

Dr Sitole is a nationally and internationally recognised scholar through publications in peer-review journals. Her current research focus is on the application of metabolomic technologies in characterising HIV/AIDS and cervical cancer. Dr Sitole's research makes use of bioanalytical and biophysical techniques in the detection and identification of dysregulated metabolites in HIV infection. The potential output of this research is the discovery and development of novel markers that could be used as indicators of HIV disease progression, which could guide HIV treatment response.

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