NITheCS Colloquium

NITheCS
National Institute for Theoretical and Computational Sciences

From Frills to Foundations: Rethinking Science Communication's Role in Research

Robert Inglis

(YAZI Centre for Science and Society in Africa & Jive Media Africa)

Monday, 12 October 2026 | 16h00–17h00 SAST

HOW TO ATTEND:

In person (main venue):

- Road House Cinema (Neelsie)
  Stellenbosch University

Watch at satellite venues:

- MITP Boardroom P215, 2nd Floor Physics Building
  University of the Witwatersrand
- Seminar Room K310
  Physics Building G5
  North-West University

Online (live stream)

--- Please note, a recording of the lecture will be published on the NITheCS YouTube channel following the event ---

ABSTRACT

Science communication is too often treated as decorative trim – a frill to be added onto the edges of research, by an already overburdened researcher. Rarely incentivised, celebrated, or rewarded.

Drawing on 25 years of experience as a science communicator, trainer, researcher, and facilitator, Robert Inglis makes the case that this framing is backwards. Far from a peripheral flourish at the end of a lengthy research process, integrating communications into scientific processes is exactly what keeps science meaningful, visible, impactful and accountable.

More than this, co-creating communications with communities most affected by research can build relationships, develop skills, and open space for scientists to reflect deeply on the societal value of their work. This shapes not only how science is shared, but also how science transforms society, and is itself be transformed in the process. If you want your science to be visible, impactful and meaningful, join us at the colloquium.

BIOGRAPHY

Robert Inglis is passionate about facilitating dialogue between experts and the public, which can lead to sustainable solutions and transformed lives. To this end, he has spent over 20 years working at the intersection of science and society, providing media and communications support to researchers and research organisations.

He holds a Master's degree in Science Engagement from Stellenbosch University and a National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) award for a "contribution to the discipline of science communication". He is a director of the YAZI Centre for Science and Society in Africa, and co-founder and director of Jive Media Africa.

Robert works closely with leading scientists and research managers to strategise and implement communications solutions to bridge the gap between science and society and to increase the visibility and positive impacts of research.

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