

NITheCS

National Institute for
Theoretical and
Computational Sciences

NITheCS Colloquium
Monday, 25 October 2021, 16h00 – 17h00
Dr Mark Nasila (FirstRand Risk)

“The critical role of design thinking in artificial intelligence and machine learning applications”



ABSTRACT

Design thinking is transforming the way leading companies create value. The Design Value Index tracks 16 publicly traded ‘design-centric’ companies and has found they produce a greater than 200% return when compared to the average S&P 500 company. Recent studies have also shown that the focus of innovation has shifted from being engineering-driven to design-driven. This means a design mindset is not just problem-focused; rather, it’s solution-focused and action-oriented. It involves both analysis and imagination. In this session, I will discuss the critical role of design thinking in artificial intelligence and data science applications. I will introduce the idea of design thinking, examine how artificial intelligence and machine learning applications fail due of a lack of it, outline the design-thinking process, and consider some of its key implications in data-driven use cases.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Mark Nasila is the Chief Data and Analytics Officer of FirstRand Risk, a Singularity University Faculty. He is also a steering committee member of the National Institute for Theoretical Physics and Computational Sciences (NITheCS).

As an experienced AI and data science expert, he ensures the techniques and methodologies he introduces into FNB are at the forefront of where banking is headed, both locally and internationally. He is the developer and the brain behind Manila, an AI system FNB has harnessed to reimagine its risk management and forensic due diligence processes.

Dr Nasila has presented at local and international conferences, such as the:

- Business-Tech Digital Banking Conference - SA
- Chief Data & Analytics Officer forums in South Africa and the UK
- European Simulation & Modelling Conference.

He has published and written opinion pieces in *Business Day*, *Mail & Guardian*, *TechCentral*, *Daily Maverick*, *CIO Talk Network*, *CIO.com*, *Corinium Intelligence* and the *European Simulation & Modelling Association*.

He holds a PhD in Mathematical Statistics from the Nelson Mandela University, and is also an alumni of the SingularityU South Africa Executive programme. He was named one of the Corinium Global Intelligence ‘2020 Global Top 100 Innovators in data and analytics’.

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