

NITheCS COLLOQUIUM: Big data: the South African strategy and implementation

Dr Anwar Vahed (Data Intensive Research Initiative of South Africa)

Monday, 21 August 2023 | 16h00 – 17h00 SAST

Venue: in person* and online

* *Neelsie Cinema, Stellenbosch University*

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

ABSTRACT

The management and processing of massive data sets were once the domain of astronomy, bioinformatics and high-energy physics. With the continuing exponential growth in data and of high-throughput data streams, these challenges have now become relevant in, arguably, all disciplines. Big Data is an important asset and underpins applications of technologies such as AI and of the computational sciences in general. There is an increasing need to implement the needed infrastructure and to accelerate the development of skills needed to address the challenges and opportunities presented by Big Data.

The National Big Data Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation, approved by the Department of Science and Innovation, addresses these aspects. The objectives of this strategy are presented, along with the implementation plan for the actions in achieving these objectives. Such actions include a survey of the current big data research and human capital develop landscape. The findings of this survey will inform decisions to further invest in Big Data.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Anwar Vahed is the Director of the Data Intensive Research Initiative of South Africa (DIRISA). He manages the South African national research data infrastructure in support of data intensive research, and coordinates the development of relevant expertise, strategies and policies for research data management.

Anwar is a computer scientist with more than 20 years' experience in academia, and in research and development in the fields of data science, artificial intelligence, machine learning, artificial neural networks and research data management. He was Principal Researcher and Research Group Leader of the ICT for Earth Observation Research Group at the CSIR. Prior to joining the CSIR, he managed the data and information delivery systems of Statistics SA, and chaired the Department of Computer Science at the University of the Western Cape. He has developed the national strategy for research Big Data, is review editor of data science journals and serves on several local and international committees in the data sciences.



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