



Message from NSTF Executive Director

Technologies based on light have improved our lives and will continue to do so. The provision of fibre-optic cables in our cities is an excellent example. Join us on 14-15 March for discussions of light-based technology innovation in South Africa. [Read More](#)



Upcoming discussion forums

Light-based Technologies Innovation Forum: Kempton Park, 14-15 March 2016

The first discussion forum of the year will focus on advances in light technologies in solar renewable energy, additive manufacturing and fibre optic communications from a South African point of view, in support of the International Year of Light and Light-Based Technologies. [Read More](#)

Getting to know the work of the NSTF Award winners

This month, the spotlight falls on Professors Jennifer Jelsma and Nigel Bennett, joint winners of the award for research capacity development (sponsored by Eskom). [Prof. Jelsma](#) (UCT), expert in physiotherapy, and inspiring teacher, has an interesting history. Among other things, she worked with disabled combatants in Zimbabwe, after the bush war in 1981. The work of [Prof. Bennett](#), Research Chair in Mammalian Behavioural Ecology and Physiology at UP, studies mole rats, and particularly their social interactions. Why are some mole rats solitary and others sociable? Rain could have something to do with that...

Brilliant – investing in our future innovators

How do SA's best and brightest learners achieve such remarkable results? Sharon Ellman, Gauteng's top female student in maths and science in 2014, and currently studying environmental and engineering geology at the University of Pretoria, has her own recipe for success. [Read More](#)

Share n Dare activities – Engaging communities through science

[Click here](#) to read more about NSTF Award winners motivating and encouraging the youth of South Africa in Limpopo and North-West during the month of February



SET Policy News

Featured SET policy: Draft African Exploration Mining and Finance Corporation (AEMFC) Bill 2015

According to the draft Bill, this new 'corporation', the AEMFC - whose sole shareholder will be the government through the mineral resources minister - will acquire and develop any mining permit, mining right or mining interest granted to it on behalf of the state. The firm will also "ensure that mineral resources are developed in a sustainable manner to the best interest of the people of South Africa". Critics argue, however, that the Bill "...will multiply opportunities for corruption and rent seeking... This will send investors, mining companies, and the urgently needed jobs they create, abroad.". [Read More](#)

Other SET-related policies currently open for public comment

- [Policy on evaluation of creative outputs and innovations produced by public higher education institutions](#) - Comments by 9 March 2016
- [Veterinary Strategy and accompanying strategic implementation plans in South Africa](#) - Comments by 10 March 2016
- [National Public Health Institute of South Africa Bill and National Health Laboratory Service Amendment Bill](#) - Comment by 31 Mar 2016
- [National Water Act: Classes of water resources and resource quality objectives for catchment of Inkomati](#) – Comments by 22 March 2016
- [National Water Act: Classes of water resources and resource quality objectives for catchment of Letaba](#)- Comments by 22 Mar 2016
- [National Water Act: Establishment of Mzimvubu-Tsitsikamma Catchment Management Agency](#) - Comments by 29 Mar 2016
- [National Water Act: Establishment of Orange Catchment Management Agency](#) - Comments by 29 Mar 2016
- [National Water Act: Establishment of Berg-Olifants Catchment Management Agency](#) - Comments by 5 Apr 2016

Other SET-related policy news

- [Joemat-Petersson wants nuclear under IPP office](#). (Engineering News)
- [Joemat-Petersson: We simply have to go nuclear route](#) (Engineering News)
- [Cabinet approves development zones for future renewables projects](#) (Polity.org)
- [New state-run pharmaceutical company to produce ARVs by 2019](#) (Mail & Guardian)
- [Higher Education Amendment Bill hearings begin today](#) (EWN)
- [Adjustments needed to HEA bill - UCT](#) (IOL)
- [Council on Higher Education contradicts UCT, Saptu on amendment bill](#) (Polity.org)
- [SA hosted successful Investing in Africa Mining Indaba](#) (polity.org)
- [Pandor launches Operation Phakisa Oceans Economy Initiative](#) (AllAfrica.com)
- [SA plans platinum economic zone](#) (southafrica.info)
- [Fuel-cell technology fast-tracked with launch of feasibility study in SA](#) (Polity.org)
- [Wrap-up of MPRDA matter of urgency - Minister](#) (Engineering News)



Upcoming SET Events

Launch of the Structured Light Laboratory

The Structured Light Laboratory at the School of Physics, University of the Witwatersrand will be officially launched by Prof. Andrew Forbes on the 4th March 2016. In March 2015 Prof. Forbes joined Wits as a Distinguished Professor and started the new laboratory and research programme at Wits from scratch. The "empty room" is now fully functional with experiments in classical and quantum communication, imaging, optical trapping and tweezing, and lasers. All these fields exploit structured light as a common tool. The team now consists of 15 members working on both fundamental and applied projects. The launch will highlight the research agenda of the team and showcase cutting edge science. Prof. Forbes was awarded the NSTF Photonics award in 2015. [Click here](#) to view the invitation.

- [Carbon Tax Seminar: Johannesburg, 11 March 2016](#)
- [IASTEM: 29th International Conference on Science, Technology and Management: Cape Town, 30 March 2016](#)
- [World Manufacturing Forum: Barcelona, Spain: 3-4 May 2016](#) *If you are interested in attending, contact Garth Williams at the Department of Science and Technology on garth.williams@dst.gov.za or 082 267 1246 no later than 15 March 2016 for more information. [Click here](#) to view the WMF Manufacturing Circle Bulletin.*
- [Water Institute of Southern Africa \(WISA\) Biennial Conference: Durban, 15-19 May 2016](#)
- [Southern African Research & Innovation Management Association \(SARIMA\) Annual Conference: Umhlanga, KZN: 16-20 May 2016](#)
- [7th World Nano Conference: Cape Town, 20-22 June 2016](#)
- [International Conference on Mining and Metallurgy: Cape Town, 27-29 June 2016](#)
- [5th International Conference on Agriculture & Horticulture: Cape Town, 27-29 June 2016](#)
- [International Bat Research Conference: Durban, 31 July- 5 August 2016](#)
- [35th International Geological Congress: Cape Town, 27 August-4 Sept 2016](#)
- [Science Forum SA: Pretoria, 6-7 December 2016](#)



proSET News

Engineering

- [Municipalities rated on wastewater management](#) (www.infrastructurenews.ws)
- [Saice Young Members Panel \(YMP\) going for national footprint in 2016](#)
- [National Cleaner Production Centre information-sharing portal live by June 2016](#) (Engineering News)

STEM education at school level

- [Science minds converge in Grahamstown: Scifest 2016, 2-6 March](#) (IOL)

Science and pure research

- [Africa Analysis: Research grant shake-up brings hope](#) (scidev.net)
- [Extinct sub-species zebra revived using selective breeding](#) (Natureworldnews)
- [Gravitational waves discovered, top scientists respond](#) (theconversation.com)
- [Gravitational waves: Will the global south provide the next pulse of gravity research?](#) (theconversation.com)
- [Read the latest issue of the SA Journal of Science](#)



SET Community News

Environment, Climate Change and Energy

- [GM crops could help save lives - UCT researcher](#) (IOL)
- [CSIR study puts wetlands under the microscope](#) (Citizen)
- [Africa's informal seed system needs to be brought in from the cold](#) (theconversation.com)
- [Extreme beans: New heat-tolerant varieties offer environmental and health benefits](#) (unep.org)
- [SA holds potential to be major unconventional gas producer](#) (Polity.org)
- [Smaller hydro projects fill power gap](#) (Engineering News)
- [SA must shift research focus from fossil fuels to renewables](#) (Polity.org)
- [SA's wind footprint breaches 1GW mark](#) (Engineering News)
- [SA dam levels improve](#) (Citizen)
- [Council for Geoscience advances shale gas research in the Karoo](#) (Engineering News)
- [Special desk set up to help black business with future nuclear opportunities](#) (Engineering News)
- [CUT researchers think software and tribal knowledge can predict drought](#) (motherboard.vice.com)

Higher Education

- [SA must move on from physical universities](#) (IT News Africa)



People in SET

- [SA scientist wins AU Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Award](#) (AllAfrica.com)
- [SA wins 2016 Edinburgh Medal](#) (southafrica.info)

Send us your news

The NSTF invites all our members, as well as all SET and innovation role players, to send us information on meetings, conferences and activities of interest to the broader S&T community. Please send us your news by the 20th of the month, for distribution at the beginning of the following month, to enquiries@nstf.co.za.

Feedback

If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve this newsletter, please e-mail the NSTF Secretariat at enquiries@nstf.co.za

About the NSTF

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF), established in 1995, is a broadly-representative stakeholder body for all SET and innovation organisations in South Africa, which seeks to influence policy formulation and delivery. The NSTF Awards are unique in SA, recognising the outstanding contributions of individuals and groups to SET and innovation. The science bursaries page <http://www.nstf.org.za/bursary/> provides information on bursaries and bursary providers for science, engineering and related studies.

Disclaimer

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