



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

17 August 2018

New platform promoting science and technology fields to high school learners launching at UCT

It has been widely accepted that skills in the science, technology, engineering and mathematical (STEM) fields are the way of the future with the fourth industrial revolution upon us. However, South Africa still lags behind in this field, reporting some of the lowest levels of mathematics and science education in the world.

An innovative internet-based platform and mobile application, mGenAfrica, which aims to increase awareness and interest in careers in genomic and in the STEM fields will be launched on Saturday, 18 August 2018 at the New Lecture Theatre, Upper Campus, University of Cape Town.

The platform aims to improve knowledge, attitudes and practises of high school learners towards participation in genomics and life sciences research; and improve knowledge and attitudes towards life sciences high school curriculum. For the research staff, the platform aims to improve skills and attitudes towards public engagement activities.

Dr Vicky Nembaware, a project coordinator and a bioinformatician commented: "mGenAfrica makes learning life sciences fun and promotes careers in this field."

Initiatives such as mGenAfrica are preparing South Africa for the future and moulding the next generations to be at the forefront of technology and science.

The platform promotes activities such as quizzes, freely accessible learning material including videos, profiles of staff working in life sciences and live chat sessions, a career corner, translation corner and online competitions.

The launch will include mGenAfrica hosting the finals of a Grade 12 learner quiz competition organised in partnership with the Metro South Education District (MSED) (Western Cape Education Department).

The platform is an initiative started by the Pan African Bioinformatics Network for H3Africa and is supported by various stakeholders and collaborators including the Human Heredity and Health in Africa Consortium working groups (Community Engagement and Education & Coordinated Training); the Sickle Africa Data Coordinating Center, the Wellcome Centre for Infectious Diseases Research in Africa and the MSED.

[Learn more about mGenAfrica](#)

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Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Aamirah Sunday

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5427
Cell: (076) 947 6071

Email: aamirah.sunday@uct.ac.za

Website: www.uct.ac.za