



Theme:
**AFRICAN LANGUAGES
 IN THE AGE OF 4IR**

29 October | 10:00 – 13:00

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BACKGROUND

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has become a global reality that is rapidly gathering pace. The 4IR is based on the confluence of multiple digital and information technologies that are changing the way language, and in particular indigenous South African languages, are used. These advances present unique opportunities for indigenous African languages and the humanities, to move towards digitalisation and the integration of 4IR technologies in teaching and learning. To harness the potential of this transformation, the imperative exists to enhance digital platforms and user interfaces to accommodate the user's language, cultural preferences, and other sensitivities. It is in this sense that the advancing scholarship of Digital Humanities comes to the fore, introducing new ways to research and collaborate, with engineering and computer (and techno) sciences.

This **ROUND TABLE EVENT** will articulate a clear appreciation of 4IR in South Africa and how African languages can profit from the advances both in terms of teaching and learning, and innovative research.



PROGRAMME

Facilitator:	Prof Langa Khumalo, North West University
10:00 – 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming by facilitator, Prof Langa Khumalo (NWU) • Opening remarks by Prof Ahmed Bawa, CEO, Universities South Africa • Remarks by Prof Mbulu Madiba, Dean of Humanities, (SU), Chairperson of CoPAL
10:30 – 11:00	Keynote Address by Dr Bhaso Ndzendze, Research Director at the University of Johannesburg Centre for Africa-China Studies (CACS): <i>The Fourth Industrial Revolution and its implications for African languages.</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Panel Presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Using data science in the advancement of African Languages</i>, Dr Vukosi Marivate (UP) • <i>Machine Learning and Automated Translation Systems for African Languages</i>, Dr Lehlohonolo Mohasi (SU) • <i>Human Language Technologies (HLTs) for African Languages</i>, Dr Karen Calteaux (CSIR)
12:00 – 12:30	Respondent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Aslam Fataar (SU)
12:30 – 13:00	Q & A

Organising committee:

USAf Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages (CoPAL)
 USAf National Directorate – Operations and Sector Support

BIO SKETCHES OF PRESENTERS



DR BHASO NDZENDZE is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Johannesburg and Research Director at the University of Johannesburg Centre for Africa-China Studies. Research and supervision areas include the following:

- Africa's international relations (China, EU, Brazil, Taiwan, and the US)
- African interstate conflicts, militarised interstate disputes, and post-conflict recovery
- International relations theory (democratic peace, deterrence, economic interdependence, hegemonic stability, signalling, and selectorate theory)
- Political science methodology
- Opportunity cost
- Technology dynamics in international relations
- Trade, FDI and peace economics

DR VUKOSI MARIVATE holds a PhD in Computer Science (Rutgers University) and MSc; BSc in Electrical Engineering (Wits University). He is currently based at the University of Pretoria as the ABSA Chair of Data Science. He works on developing Machine Learning/Artificial Intelligence methods to extract insights from data. A large part of his work over the last few years has been in the intersection of Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing (due to the abundance of text data and need to extract insights). As part of my vision for the ABSA Data Science chair, I am interested in Data Science for Social Impact, using local challenges as a springboard for research.



DR CALTEAUX has been working in the Human Language Technology (HLT) Research Group (now the Digital Audio-Visual Technologies Research Group) at the CSIR since 2009. The Group focuses on voice computing for low resource environments. Dr Calteaux's own research interests lie in the application of localized language technologies in impactful HLT-enabled solutions with a focus on the human-computer interaction aspects thereof. She has several publications relating to this. Dr Calteaux is a Member of the African Languages Association of Southern Africa (ALASA), Leads a sub-committee of the SABS TC37 (Technical Committee on Language Resources), and is the Vice-President of the Digital humanities Association of SA.

DR LEHLOHONOLO MOHASI is a Director ICT at the National University of Lesotho (NUL). She is also a part-time lecturer for Masters students in the Faculty of Agriculture in the same institution where she teaches two courses: ICT for Agricultural Extension and Advanced Computer Applications for Agribusiness. Before her current appointment, she was an Instructional Technology lecturer in the Centre for Teaching and Learning at NUL. She obtained her BSc (Electrical Engineering) and MSc (Electrical Engineering) at the University of Cape Town and her PhD (Electronic Engineering) at the University of Stellenbosch. Her particular interest is in how speech technology can be used for educational purposes and to assist persons with disabilities and the illiterate in English. Her focal areas include: Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), e-learning, prosody modelling, human-machine interaction, speech synthesis, machine translation, and language learning.



PROF ASLAM FATAAR is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Education Policy Studies at Stellenbosch University in Cape Town. He specialises in the areas of Sociology of Education and Education Policy. He has published more than 150 academic articles, book chapters and opinion pieces. He published four books which are: 1) *Education Policy Development in South Africa's Democratic Transition, 1994-1997* (2011) 2) *Engaging Schooling Subjectivities across the Post-Apartheid City* (2015), and 3) *The education practices and pathways of South African students across power-marginalised regions* (editor, 2018), and 4) *Searching for Islamic Ethical Agency in Post-Apartheid Cape Town: An Anthology* (2019). He also published five co-edited books. He is the former President of the South African Education Research Association and the former Editor-in-Chief of the journal, Southern African Education Review. His current book is, *Searching for Islamic Ethical Agency in Post-Apartheid Cape Town* (Africa Sun Media Press: Stellenbosch). He won three awards for three of his published articles and two awards in recognition of his educational scholarship. Aslam is currently an SU Council member and a MASSAf member.

