



SFSA2018, Pretoria, 13 & 14 December 2018

Call for **Session** Proposals

1. Background to SFSA2018

The South African **Department of Science and Technology** is proud to host the fourth **Science Forum South Africa** on **13 & 14 December 2018** in Pretoria. New to SFSA2018 is the venue of the plenary session on 12 December at the LC de Villiers Sport Complex of the University of Pretoria. The rest of the programme, on 13 and 14 December, will again be at the CSIR International Convention Centre, Pretoria.

SFSA2018 will, like previous editions, serve as a large, open public platform for debating the science and society interface. It will again provide the opportunity for all interested parties to *Ignite Conversations about Science*. The organising committee is excited to deepen the partnership with the **African Academy of Sciences (AAS)** to further expand and enhance the focus on **Science, Technology, and Innovation on the African Continent** and increase the **Pan-Africa scientific participation**.

2. Strategic Objectives of SFSA

The strategic objectives are:

1. To stimulate a vibrant debate on the role of science, technology and innovation in society;
2. To promote international science, technology and innovation partnerships; and
3. To create a network platform for key science, technology and innovation actors, including senior government leaders, academics, scientists, industry, civil society, and students.

To achieve these objectives **SFSA2018** will focus on:

1. A provocative and stimulating programme including several parallel sessions and talks, with the primary aim to *ignite conversations about science*;
2. A *rich diversity of participants*, comprising scientists, students, public and private sector representatives as well as civil society members;
3. Strong *international participation*, especially from Africa.

3. Focus and Themes for SFSA2018

SFSA2018 will, as indicated above, emphasise *Pan-African Science, Technology and Innovation*. The following themes will provide the framework for session allocation:

- 3.1 **“Shaping Humanity”** the focus in this track will be on how social sciences shape our human experiences and behaviours to improve the quality of life for all human beings, and the world we live in, including a better understanding of what is required to uplift people in a sustainable manner.
- 3.2 **“Preparing people for the knowledge economy”** the focus in this track will be on the attitudes, education, experience, and abilities required individually and collectively to succeed in the knowledge economy, with a specific focus on achieving gender and racial balance in an optimal functioning system of innovation.
- 3.3 **“Open science and open innovation for Africa’s development”** the focus in this track is around the impact on Africa’s development if a concerted drive were made to intensify collaboration among all stakeholders in the scientific and innovation enterprise, including through the enhanced dissemination and sharing of research results to maximise impact.
- 3.4 **“Science transforming society”** the focus in this track will be on how science, technology and innovation is changing society, how it is contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of all citizens and how we ensure ethical considerations are addressed and science-driven development is equitable and sustainable.
- 3.5 **“A Better World”** the focus in this track will be on the sustainable solutions that science, technology and innovation can provide to global challenges like poverty, inequality, inclusive development and a secure society, with an emphasis on the value of enhanced international collaboration in addressing these shared global challenges.
- 3.6 **“Innovation shaping the industry of tomorrow”** the focus in this track will be on how the exponential pace of progress in science, technology and innovation is disrupting every industry in every country and how the so-called “fourth industrial revolution” will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another.

4. Session Format

- 4.1 Please remember **SFSA**, as an open science forum, is not a conventional scientific event (conference, convention, or symposium). The audience will be diverse and will not necessarily have expert technical or subject knowledge of your session topic.
- 4.2 The purpose of all sessions should be to *ignite conversations about science* in an interactive manner, with a multi-stakeholder audience.
- 4.3 All sessions will run concurrently with other sessions, and participants are free to move between sessions.
- 4.4 Each parallel session will last *90-minutes* (1 hour and 30 minutes).
- 4.5 Different formats are welcomed. You are encouraged to develop your own innovative and creative formats, i.e.
 - 4.5.1 Most popular and successful at previous **SFSA** events: a panel discussion, with a moderator and five panellists. Each panellist speaking for a maximum of 10 minutes, before engaging the audience.
 - 4.5.2 An interactive roundtable, offers a flexible format with space for audience interaction after opening remarks.
 - 4.5.3 “TED talk” format to introduce the topic followed by interactive discussions with the audience.

- 4.6 Also consider the use of the **SFSA** APP and social media (e.g. Twitter) to enhance audience interaction prior and during the session.
- 4.7 Please note that the SFSA2018 Programme Committee reserves the right to modify session formats before final acceptance on to the programme.

5. Guidelines

Please read the following guidelines for session proposals.

The purpose of all sessions: To *ignite conversations about science*.

Deadline for submission of session proposals: **8 June 2018**.

All submitted proposals will be reviewed and assessed by the SFSA2018 Programme Committee. Please note that the Programme Committee reserves the right to request modifications to proposals prior to final acceptance on to the programme.

The following criteria will guide the SFSA2018 Programme Committee in the selection process:

5.1 Content:

- Relevance to the strategic objectives (point 2, above), focus and themes (point 3, above).
- Quality and originality of proposal to ensure relevance to current debate.
- Igniting vibrant discussions.
- An interdisciplinary approach.
- National, continental, and international topicality.
- Potential to attract media interest.

5.2 Panel members

- International Perspective (the ideal panel will include a South African, African, and rest of the world perspective).
- Gender Parity (panels should strive to include an equal number of male and female panellists).

5.3 **NEW**: Youth Perspective (panels should strive to include at least one under 35-year-old panellist).

5.4 Multi-stakeholder approach (a broad range of perspectives will enhance the conversations).

5.5 Format

- Interactive sessions (remember the purpose is to *ignite conversations about science*).
- Limit the number of panellists (see notes on session format, point 4, above) to ensure enough time for the conversations to ignite.
- Use the **SFSA** APP and social media (e.g. Twitter) to enhance audience interaction.
- Innovation formats will be welcomed.

6. New Youth Category

6.1 SFSA2018 is excited to announce a *new category* of parallel sessions. There will be a *dedicated track* of parallel sessions focusing on *Youth in Science*.

6.2 Most panellists must be under 35 years old. Only two panellists can be older than 35 years to qualify for this category.

6.3 The same selection criteria as above, i.e. content, panel members, and format will still apply to this category.

6.4 Please clearly indicate when you submit your proposal under this category.

6.5 Please indicate whom of your panellists are under 35 years old.

7. Organisational Aspects

- 7.1 Session proposers are responsible for organising their own sessions, including the speakers (panellists).
- 7.2 Session proposers are encouraged to do session specific marketing. **SFSA** cannot guarantee an audience for a session. The open forum nature of **SFSA** events attracts many participants, but they are encouraged to attend the sessions of their choice.
- 7.3 An exciting topic, top quality speakers, and plenty of time for discussions (not too many speakers) has been proven to attract large audiences.
- 7.4 A full range of conference facilities will be available.
- 7.5 PLEASE NOTE: **SFSA** does not have supporting funds available to facilitate forum or session attendance. The involvement of speakers (and participants) must therefore be completely self-financed; including travel, accommodation and any organisational expenses. However, no registration fees will be charged to participants.

8. Selection Process

- The call for session proposals opens on **6 April 2018**.
- The call for session proposals closes on **8 June 2018**.
- Proposals will be evaluated by the Programme Committee.
- The Programme Committee may request revisions to some proposals.
- The proposal allocation will be announced on **30 July 2018**.

9. Proposal Submission

Submission of session proposals can be done online [HERE](#)

10. Contact information

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