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## **Multiple nominations for UCT in NSTF “Science Oscars” awards**

Several outstanding members of the University of Cape Town (UCT) community have been nominated for the 2024/2025 National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) NSTF–South32 Awards – widely regarded as the “Science Oscars” of South Africa.

- [Download a short audio version.](#)

These prestigious awards, now in their 27th year, celebrate and honour exceptional contributions to science, engineering, technology (SET) and innovation across the country.

This year, the awards spotlight *Quantum Science and Technology*, aligning with the United Nations’ proclamation of 2025 as the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology.

The nominated UCT researchers, scholars and teams have been recognised for their sterling work, which continues to place the institution at the forefront of cutting-edge research, social impact and scientific excellence.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Mosa Moshabela said: “These nominations are a testament to the world-class calibre of research and innovation being undertaken at UCT. They also reflect our collective commitment to addressing complex challenges through knowledge, creativity and collaboration.”

The nominees in the various categories are as follows:

### **Lifetime Award**

- **Professor Brenda Morrow** – Department of Paediatrics and Child Health – for her interdisciplinary work improving child health outcomes in resource-limited settings.

### **TW Kambule–NSTF Award: Researcher**

- **Professor Mark Blumenthal** – Solid State Physics and Nanotechnology – for advancing forensic imaging in South Africa.
- **Dr Mubeen Goolam** – Cell Biology and Neuroscience Institute – for developing African-specific brain models to study neural development and disorders.
- **Dr Shajid Haque** – Department of Mathematics – for his contributions to quantum complexity and its implications in theoretical physics.

#### **TW Kambule–NSTF Award: Emerging Researcher**

- **Dr Rachael Dangarembizi** – CIDRI-Africa – for groundbreaking work on neuroinfectious diseases and her leadership in scientific mentorship.
- **Dr Alex de Voux** – School of Public Health – for innovations in STI testing and HIV prevention among pregnant women.

#### **NSTF–SAMRC Clinician-Scientist Award**

- **Dr Melissa Nel** – Neurogenomics Lab, Neuroscience Institute – for introducing genome sequencing to clinical settings to aid in diagnosing rare neurological disorders.
- **Professor Aneesa Vanker** – Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital – for exploring the impact of environmental exposures on children’s lung health.

#### **Data for Research Award**

- **Dr Jasper Slingsby** – Centre for Statistics in Ecology, the Environment and Conservation – for BioSCape, Africa’s largest airborne-ground biodiversity dataset.
- **Dr Sanjin Muftić** and **Ms Thandokazi Maceba** – Digital Library Services – for advancing open-access digital scholarship through the Ibali and ZivaHub platforms.

#### **Communication Award**

- **Professor Anusuya Chinsamy-Turan** – Biological Sciences – for bringing prehistoric biodiversity into public consciousness.
- **The Cosmic Savannah Podcast Team** – Dr Jacinta Delhaize and colleagues – for showcasing African astronomy to a global audience.

#### **Special Annual Theme Award: Quantum Science and Technology**

- **Professor Mark Blumenthal** – for his dual contributions to quantum science and forensic innovation.

The NSTF Awards Gala will take place on Thursday, 31 July 2025.

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***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

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