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**12 November 2025**

## **Women scientists take the spotlight as UCT brings research to the public**

**15 November 2025 | 14:00-17:00 | Clock Tower, V&A Waterfront**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) will bring science to the people when it hosts the fourth edition of [Soapbox Science](#) – an initiative aimed at increasing the visibility of women in science and inspiring the public by sharing innovative research – at the V&A Waterfront Clock Tower on Saturday, 15 November 2025.

Soapbox Science is inspired by the legendary Speaker's Corner in Hyde Park in the UK. This worldwide event brings science into the public spotlight, setting the stage for dynamic discussions on groundbreaking discoveries and stirring controversies.

[Ten speakers](#) from South Africa's top institutions, including UCT, will engage with people from all walks of life and share some of South Africa's most ground-breaking scientific research. They will cover a spectrum of topics, ranging from nuclear physics to vaccine research, from astronomy to the secrets of sea life. They will engage the public for over three hours, divided into three time slots.

Dr Lucia Marchetti, a senior lecturer at UCT's [Department of Astronomy](#) and a 2015 London Soapbox Science speaker, said: "Our speakers will share some of South Africa's most groundbreaking scientific research. This is your chance to delve into the wonderful world of science in a fun and entertaining way. It's science like you've never seen before – taking to the streets and sparking curiosity at every turn."

Led by Marchetti, the event is organised by a group of enthusiastic women scientists: Dr Elisa Nemes and Dr Carly Young-Bailie from UCT's [Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine](#) (IDM), Associate Professor Luna Pellegrini and Dr Thuthukile Khumalo from Wits/ [iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator Based Sciences](#) (iThemba LABS), and Dr Rosalind Skelton from the [South African Astronomical Observatory](#) (SAAO).

The new entry for this year is an MSc student from UCT's Department of Astronomy, Ms Carys Gilbert, who is in charge of coordination and training the volunteers.

Marchetti said: "Soapbox Science provides an exciting opportunity for the public to meet, engage and be inspired by our great female scientists. We are all very excited and we hope many will come to engage with us on the day."

She added that they started with the first edition in 2019, then due to COVID-19 and administration delays that followed, they had to stop for a few years and came back in 2023. "Since then, we never stopped, and this year, 2025, is thus the fourth edition.

"The format of the event hasn't changed, as it works just like it! We counted about 500 people stopping by every year, so the event is really successful and entertaining. As for the previous two editions, we partnered with the UCT Hasso Plattner d-school to do the speakers' training workshop, which covered best practices in storytelling and communicating science with the public in an engaging manner. The speakers have learnt how to use simple props to convey the message, and we are just looking forward to seeing what they will come up with this year," said Marchetti.

The event receives funding from the [National Research Foundation](#), the [Department of Science and Innovation](#), iThemba LABS and UCT's IDM. It also receives in-kind support from SAAO and the V&A Waterfront.

- Media interested in attending the event are requested to [RSVP](#).

***Ends***

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

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