



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

23 September 2015

Leading authors, artists and academics to speak at the Symposium on Science and Society in Africa

Inner City Ideas Cartel – Cape Town - 28 and 29 September 2015

The importance of science in society will be in the spotlight at a symposium in Cape Town which will draw high-profile leaders in their fields from across Africa.

The symposium is being organised by the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS) which is made up of 50 of the top scientists in South Africa, all under the age of 40.

Dr Tolu Oni, SAYAS co-chair and Senior Lecturer in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town, said: "This year's truly interdisciplinary symposium looks set to be an exciting, one-of-a-kind hybrid event that showcases the relevance and importance of science in society."

Science fiction writers, musicians, designers, astrophysicists and public health scientists are among the speakers at the symposium

Entitled: 'Fact, Fiction and Media: Re-Imagining Science Engagement and its impact' the symposium will focus on ways other than traditional science communication to spark interest in science. These will include sound and images, such as music, film and the visual arts, that can be used to produce data and engage society in science in Africa.

The symposium will also explore what science can learn from science fiction writing.

- The symposium will bring together renowned Nigerian American Professor in creative writing and science fiction novelist, Professor Nnedi Okorafor; South African science fiction novelist, Lauren Beukes; and Dr Oni, who is a Next Einstein Forum Fellow, on a panel about popular fiction inspired by science.
- Neo Muyanga, musician from the group, Blk Sonshine, will be on a panel with Professor Jean Philippe Uzan, an astrophysicist who has created sounds of the universe.
- School learners called the 'Optimistic Youth Reporters' from the Children's Radio Foundation, will be recording their peers at the Centre of Science and Technology (COSAT) High School in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, answering questions about science

that will be replayed at the symposium. These same question will be put to scientists at the symposium to highlight how science is viewed by young people.

- South African Research Chair in Urban Policy, UCT academic, Professor Edgar Pieterse will be in conversation with Tau Tavengwa, Editor and Publisher of Cityscapes Magazine, while UCT historian, Dr Koni Benson, who has done extensive work on women's resistance to slum clearance in Crossroads, Cape Town, will be discussing her collaboration with a team of illustrators, the Trantraal Brothers.
- Curators of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Shared Sky exhibition at the National Gallery in Cape Town will also be featured.

SAYAS, which was established by the Department of Science and Technology in 2011, is the voice of young scientists in South Africa. One of its key objectives is to promote science awareness and engagement. Ten members are selected annually based on their scientific and academic excellence and a record of science engagement beyond their disciplines.

Dr Oni said: "We are very excited about the symposium. We hope young people are inspired and encouraged to pursue science. We also hope to show the potential for science to address societal challenges."

Media are welcome to attend all or any sessions of the symposium, which will be held at the Inner City Ideas Cartel, first floor, 72 Waterkant Street, Cape Town, between 08h00 and 17h00 on Monday, 28 September and Tuesday, 29 September. To download the programme [click here](#). To RSVP to the event and for interview opportunities, please contact Azwi Mufamadi at azwi.mufamadi@uct.ac.za or phone 021 650 4976.

END

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Azwi Mufamadi

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5427 Fax: (021) 650 3780
Cell: (078) 528 6065
Email: azwi.mufamadi@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za