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Professor Phakeng named Top 10 finalist for inaugural Africa Education Medal

New award by T4 Education in collaboration with HP and Intel to be given to an outstanding individual who has demonstrated impact, leadership, and advocacy in the field of African education

University of Cape Town Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng has been named a Top 10 finalist for the new [Africa Education Medal](#), launched this year by T4 Education in collaboration with HP and Intel.

Professor Phakeng joins nine other outstanding individuals from across Africa, including Jakaya Kikwete, former President of Tanzania and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Partnership for Education.

The Africa Education Medal was founded to recognise the tireless work of those who are transforming education across the continent – to celebrate the stories of those who have lit the spark of change so others will be inspired to take up the torch.

Phakeng said: “Being recognised for the work that I am passionate about, with no expectation of a reward, is an incredible honour. I hope this achievement inspires many more people to pursue their own education, but also enables others to achieve their educational dreams.”

Brad Pulford, Managing Director at HP Africa, said: “In honouring her tireless work to improve education, I hope many others will be inspired to follow her outstanding example as leaders in the field. HP has been committed to enabling better learning outcomes for 100 million people by 2025. Achieving this bold goal wouldn’t be possible without empowered education leaders and trailblazers who are at the forefront of the rapidly changing education environment.”

Phakeng is among the world’s leading scholars in mathematics education. She became the first black female South African to achieve a PhD in Mathematics Education in 2002 and she is determined not to be the last. In the two decades since she has published more than 80 research papers and five edited volumes that continue to shape mathematics education in

classrooms across Africa and far beyond. Her research focuses on language practices in multilingual mathematics classrooms.

Her research and community work have won her many prestigious awards, not least the Order of the Baobab (Silver) conferred on her by the President of South Africa in April 2016. She was named the most influential woman academic in Africa by CEO magazine in 2014, and in 2020 she was included in Forbes' inaugural list of the 50 Most Powerful Women in Africa.

This year she became the first African to be elected Chair of the International Alliance of Research Universities, succeeding Professor Stephen J Toope, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.

Nominations for the Africa Education Medal opened in April 2022 for individuals working to improve education, who are either educators, administrators, civil society leaders, public servants, government officials, political leaders, technologists, or innovators.

- [Read more about the Top 10 finalists.](#)

The winner will be announced in September. Finalists will be assessed by a jury comprising prominent individuals based on rigorous [criteria](#).

ENDS

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