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UCT lecture explores how catalysis can drive a just and sustainable transition



Professor Nico Fischer

Photo: Supplied

A University of Cape Town (UCT) Inaugural Lecture by [Professor Nico Fischer](#) will examine how one of the most influential yet often overlooked areas of science could help redefine the relationship between industrial growth and environmental sustainability.

Titled "Catalysis as key enabler of a just and sustainable transition", Professor Fischer's lecture will take place on Tuesday, 9 June 2026 at 17:00 SAST in the Chemical Engineering

Building, Chemical Engineering Seminar Room, upper campus. He is the director of the [Catalysis Institute](#).

The lecture will examine the central role of catalysis in modern industrial production and its link to both economic development and climate change. While catalytic processes underpin much of global industry, they also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Fischer will argue that catalysis is not only part of the challenge, but also a key part of the solution. He will explore how advances in catalytic science can enable cleaner industrial processes, new value chains and alternative energy systems. The lecture will consider how these innovations can support a transition away from fossil resources while promoting economic inclusion, skills development and equitable access to sustainable technologies.

Fischer is a chemical engineer and catalysis scientist whose work spans academia, industry and technology commercialisation. He holds the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation / National Research Foundation (DSTI/NRF) SARChI Chair in Sustainable Catalysis. His research focuses on advanced catalytic materials for sustainable chemical transformations, including synthesis gas conversion, CO₂ activation and plastic decomposition.

He has published widely in leading journals, holds multiple international patents and is an NRF B-rated researcher. Beyond academia, he is a founding director of C*STAR Holdings and part of the founding team of Moya Scientific, both UCT spin-off companies advancing catalytic technologies and scientific instrumentation.

- Members of the media wishing to attend the lecture are requested to [RSVP](#) via email.

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