

14TH NRF ANNUAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS WORKSHOP

20 – 22 October 2026 | ICC Premier Hotel, East London

20 October 2026: Day 1

Programme Director: **Mr Simon Lotz**,
Manager: University Programmes and Collaboration (UPC)

Arrival and Registration		09:00 – 10:00
Opening and Welcome	Dr Gugu Moche , Deputy CEO: Research, Innovation, Impact Support and Advancement (RIISA)	10:00 – 11:00
PLENARY: <i>Building Institutional AI Literacy: From First Prompts to Smarter Research Management</i>	Mr Wesley Phillip , NRF-South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity, IT System Manager	11:00 – 12:00
PANEL DISCUSSION: <i>What we Don't Know about Engaged Research</i>	FACILITATOR: Dr Mamoeletsi Mosia , Managing Director: NRF-South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement PANELLISTS: Prof Lebo Gafane-Matemané , North-West University Dr Konosoang Sobane , Human Sciences Research Council	12:00 – 13:00
Lunch		13:00 – 13:45
PLENARY: <i>Research Outputs Submission System</i>	Mr Alistair White , NRF-Digital Transformation: Senior Business Intelligence Specialist Ms Maserufe Mokgwatsana , NRF-Digital Transformation: Business Intelligence Developer Representative (Virtual Participation): Department of Higher Education and Training	13:45 – 14:30
PLENARY: <i>Updates to the Research and Development Information Platform (RDIP)</i>	Mr Alistair White , NRF-Digital Transformation: Senior Business Intelligence Specialist	14:30 – 15:15
PLENARY: <i>"A Day in the Life of a DA and FO"</i>	Institutional Representatives: Designated Authorities Finance Officers	15:15 – 16:00
Tea Break/Networking		16:00 – 16:30
Networking Event (Cocktail Setting)		18h00 – 20h00



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Arrival and Registration		08:30 – 09:00
PLENARY: Modernisation of NRF Connect	Ms Tshenolo Lobelo , NRF-IT Systems Development, Support and Administration, Front End Developer	09:00 – 09:30
NRF Connect Updates: Reviews, Progress Reports, Enhancements and Next Steps	Ms Nkateko Maringa , NRF-IT Systems Development, Support and Administration, IT Test Analyst	09:30 – 10:30
Tea break		10:30 – 11:00
BREAKAWAY 1: <i>International Grants and Partnerships (IGP) and University Programmes and Collaboration</i> FACILITATOR: Mr Themba Ngomane , Research Management Specialist: IGP Ms Boitumelo Radebe , Research Management Specialist: IGP Ms Zamokuhle Buthelezi , Research Management Coordinator: IGP	BREAKAWAY 2: <i>Strategic Investments, Innovation and Impact (SIII)</i> FACILITATOR: Dr Makobetsa Khati , Executive Manager: SIII	11:00 – 12:30
<i>Advancing Global Partnerships and Capacity Building in South African Universities through the NRF's IGP, Mr Lebohang Mpetle</i> , Research Management Specialist: IGP <i>AI and Due Diligence in Research Management, Dr Raven Jimmy</i> , Manager: IGP, <i>From Legacy to Leadership: Transforming Institutions, Mr Simon Lotz</i> , Manager: UPC	<i>The Future of SARCHI and CoEs aligned to the Decadal Plan, Mr Mashudu Mbulaheni</i> , Research Management Specialist: SIII <i>National Institutes of Research, Development and Innovation (NIRDIs), Mr Frank Mazibuko</i> , Research Management Specialist: SIII <i>The Innovation Readiness Framework, Dr Nsovo Mathebula</i> , Research Management Specialist: SIII	
PLENARY: Feedback from Breakaway Sessions/General Discussion		12:30 – 13:00
Lunch Break		13:00 – 13:45
BREAKAWAY SESSION 1: <i>Finance, Auditing and Compliance</i> FACILITATOR: Mrs Thembi Ramotobele , RIISA-Grant Finance Controller	BREAKAWAY SESSION 2: <i>Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation</i> FACILITATOR: Dr Patrick Nonjola , Acting Senior Specialist: PME	13:45 – 14:45
<i>Finance, Auditing and Compliance</i> Ms Thozama Gonya , RIISA-Grant Finance Officer Ms Tebogo Manganye , RIISA-Grant Finance Officer Mr Mandla Dhladhla , NRF-Internal Auditor Mr Ben Smit , NRF-Senior Internal Auditor	<i>Understanding PoE Requirements for Effective Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting</i> Dr Patrick Nonjola , Acting Senior Specialist: PME Ms Andisiwe Jukuda , Manager: PME	
PLENARY: Feedback from Breakaway Sessions/General Discussion		14:45 – 15:15
PLENARY: <i>In Conversation with the NRF / Institutions,</i> FACILITATOR: Mr Simon Lotz, Manager: UPC	All Delegates	15:15 – 16:00
Tea Break/Networking		16:00 – 16:30
Gala Dinner		18:30 for 19:00



Arrival		08:30 – 09:00
PLENARY: <i>Understanding the NRF Funding System following Institutional Engagements</i>	Representative: Postgraduate Steering Committee	09:00 – 09:30
PLENARY: <i>Developments in Rating and Awards</i>	Dr Zolani Dyosi , Executive Manager: Theme-ReSA Dr James-Justus Meiring , Manager: Theme-ReSA	09:30 – 10:00
Tea break		10:00 – 10:30
BREAKAWAY 1: <i>Next Generation and Emerging Researchers (NGER)</i> FACILITATOR: Dr Busisiwe Sibiya , Manager: NGER	BREAKAWAY 2: <i>Thematic Research, Support and Advancement</i> FACILITATOR: Dr Zolani Dyosi , Executive Manager: Theme-ReSA	10:30 – 12:00
<i>Activating the ER pipeline/Improving Processes and Empowering Next Generation Researchers,</i> Dr Busisiwe Sibiya , Manager: NGER, Ms Edith Shikumo , Acting Manager: Emerging Researchers.	<i>Strategic Science Missions: Advancing Inter and Transdisciplinary Research for Societal Impact,</i> Mr Jonathan Diederiks , Manager: Theme-ReSA <i>Partnering with Universities in the Implementation of Thematic Research Programmes,</i> Ms Tracy Klarenbeek , Manager: Theme-ReSA <i>Strengthening the Partnership with Institutions in Improving the Rating System,</i> Dr James-Justus Meiring , Manager: Theme-ReSA	
PLENARY: Feedback from Breakaway Sessions/General Discussion		12:00 – 12:30
Closing Session		
Consolidation of RAW 2026: Summary and Action Items	Mr Simon Lotz , Manager: UPC	12:30 – 12:45
Closing Session	Dr Mbulelo Ncango , Managing Director: NRF-Research Advancement	12:45 – 13h00
Lunch and Networking		13:00 – 13:45

