



Dialogue: “Roundtable on the Inclusion of Youth as Key Partners in Transforming Water Research Science and Growing Youth Employment”

HELD IN CELEBRATION OF YOUTH MONTH 2022

Date: 23 June 2022

Time: 10:00 – 11:30

Background

Following the advent of South Africa’s democracy in 1994, the 16th of June was declared as National Youth Day and June as Youth Month. This declaration honours the contribution of youth in the struggle for the liberation of the country. This year, National Youth Day and Youth Month will be celebrated under the theme “The Year of Charlotte Manny Maseko: Growing Youth Employment for an Inclusive and Transformed Society”.

As part of its strategic plan, the Water Research Commission (WRC) conducts myriad activities to promote transformation and redress of water research and development within the sector. As such, the WRC places emphasis on building capacity in the science community by increasing the number of female and youth project leaders on its funded projects and, with the knowledge generated from the research, aims to promote socio-economic development by providing solutions aimed at reducing poverty and inequality in communities.

In the last financial year, the WRC recommended a total of 37 research projects that were led by a youth project leader, and these saw a total of 69 students being involved in WRC-funded projects. These included the University of the Western Cape led project titled “Remote sensing of groundwater-dependent ecosystems in the Kruger National Park, South Africa”, the University of Zululand’s “Mapping the water quality in informal settlements: comparing the potential effects of inland and coastal water bodies on human health through remote sensing” as well as the “Examining the opportunities for community-based service providers/enterprises in water services delivery” project led by Walter Sisulu University.

According to a 2017 report by the United Nations: Economic Commission for Africa, the potential of young people is the driving force of our collective prosperity. This is particularly relevant to Africa where the population is projected to represent over 40% of the world’s young people in less than three generations suggesting that young people must be meaningfully involved in the implementation and tracking of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063.

Therefore, with each year, the WRC remains committed to promoting transformation and

redress of water research and development within the sector through its activities that align to the Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS) National Water and Sanitation Master Plan that ensures DWS, with its relevant institutions, undertakes activities that result in new sustainable development solutions, new products and services, empowering of communities especially youth and women, informed policy and decision-making, etc.

As such, the WRC will be hosting a virtual "Roundtable on the Inclusion of Youth as Key Partners in Transforming Water Research Science and Growing Youth Employment" as a platform to showcase the wealth of young intellectual capacity that South Africa has to offer in response to this year's Youth Month theme. The aim of the event is to inspire and make young male and female high scholars in the country aware of the opportunities available within the water science research and development space. Relevant youth speakers from within the WRC's 2021 Annual Call cycle will be invited to share their projects and experiences with the event's delegates. The "Roundtable on the Inclusion of Youth as Key Partners in Transforming Water Research Science and Growing Youth Employment" will run as an open one-day event on the 23rd of June 2022.

Programme

As an open event, the "Roundtable on the Inclusion of Youth as Key Partners in Transforming Water Research Science and Growing Youth Employment" has been designed as a knowledge sharing platform where the WRC is connecting youth who, in their various domains and areas of impact, have made great progress towards the mission of growing youth employment beyond the water research science arena:

Time	Activity	Participants
<i>Introduction</i>		
10:00 – 10:05	Introduction: Career Guide Video	WRC Facilitator
10:05 – 10:10	Opening and Setting of the Scene	Dr Jennifer Molwantwa, Chief Executive Officer (WRC)
10:10 – 10:25	<i>Keynote Address: Each one Teach one - Achieving the Multiplier Effect in the Water Research Science Sector</i>	Dr Eunice Ubomba-Jaswa, Research Manager (WRC)
<i>Youth Project Leader Presentations and Panel Discussion</i>		
10:25 – 10:35	Youth Science Leader Presentation on "Foresight Strategic Wastewater	Ms Dinoe Maila (Prime Africa

	Treatment Works Plan”	Consultants)
10:35 – 10:45	Youth Science Leader Presentation on “A Full Cost Recovery Model for Financing Wastewater Infrastructure and Operation”	Mr Mluleki Mnguni (Umgeni Water)
10:45 – 11:25	<p><i>Facilitated Panel Discussion – “Inclusion of Youth as Key Partners in Transforming Water Research Science and Growing Youth Employment”</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Ms Sarah Ravhudzulo (WRC)</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turning Research into Action: Future of Inclusive Water Research, Mr Odwa Ntsika Mtembu [DWS Candidate Scientist (Earth Sciences) & World Merit SA Founder] • Unlocking Youth Potential, Ms Sherrie Donaldson [Sector Lead for Water and Plumbing (Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator)] • The Importance of Internships - Creating “Employment Ready” Candidates, Ms Cassandra Gabriel [Managing Director (Gabriel & Associates)] • The Importance of Capacity Building for Inclusive Growth – A Youth Perspective, Ms Dinoe Maila [Prime Africa Consultants] 	
11:25 – 11:30	Q&A and Session Closure	Ms Sarah Ravhudzulo, Programme Administrator (WRC)
<i>Closure</i>		
11:30	Closing remarks and Career Guide Video	Facilitator

Who Should Attend

Youth aged between 15 and 35 interested in the water sector, educators, universities/academic institutions, researchers, project leaders and stakeholders in the water and sanitation research space.