

SAAIR PURPOSE

The Southern African Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR) is a dynamic association with the vision of promoting institutional research, training and development, and the exchange of information in the context of an effective Institutional Research unit in each institution of higher education.

MEMBERSHIP

SAAIR has an annual membership 300 to 400 members from some 45 different institutions mainly from South Africa, Namibia and Botswana.

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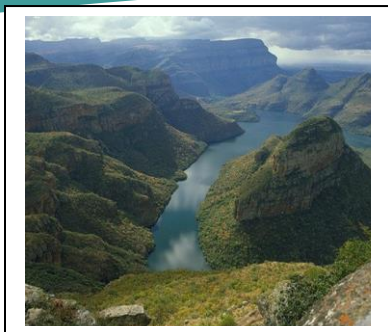
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Save the date on the SAAIR 2019 upcoming events

The 26th Annual SAAIR Conference Tuesday, 5 November to Thursday, 7 November 2019, hosted by Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), at their Mbombela (Nelspruit) Campus, Mpumalanga, South Africa. Pre-conference workshop on 4 November.



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SAAIR FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2019

26TH ANNUAL SAAIR CONFERENCE

The 26th Annual Conference of the Southern African Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR) is fundamental in supporting the aims of the association. The theme for the 2019 SAAIR Conference is *Institutional Research as the X Factor for Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education Institutions* and is scheduled to take place on **4 to 7 November 2019** at **Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Mbombela (Nelspruit) Campus, in Mpumalanga, South Africa.**

Institutional Researchers have become the "X-factor" towards attaining institutional effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The "X-factor" includes the core elements, skills and knowledge associated with IR, as well as the more elusive, intangible factors, which make certain Institutional Research Professionals (IRPs) major positive influencers and change agents. Your particular "X-factor" may relate to planning, marketing and recruitment, financial management, quality assurance, technology/artificial intelligence, student retention, academic staff development, as well as curriculum and pedagogy in order to meet quality standards or various combinations of these. As we are often at the coalface, we need to reflect critically on our practice to devise strategies that will enhance institutional effectiveness and efficiency on a continual basis. The strategies position HEIs to be responsive to challenges and disruptive innovation ideally.

Don't miss out top speakers listed like, Dr. Dhaya Naidoo, Prof. Sid Nair is the Executive Director of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). **Christine M Keller** is the AIR (American Association for Institutional Research) Executive Director, and **many more.**



SAAIR 2019 COMPLETED EVENTS 2019

Association for Institutional Research Forum was held on 27-31 May 2019 at the Denver Convention Centre, Denver, Colorado, USA

The Association for Institutional Research Forum was held on 27-31 May 2019 at the Denver Convention Centre, **Denver, Colorado, USA**. Our very own, Deputy-President, Dr. Mxolisi Masango was in attendance representing IR in Southern Africa.



Very insightful conference covered a range of topics from Big Data to Institutional Effectiveness, Predictive Analytics, Ethical Use of Data, Student Success, Student Engagement, and the use of GIS in student success, and University Rankings, to mention just a few. Almost 2000 delegates from 30 countries were in attendance at this well organised the conference made up of 300 sessions, described by Mxolisi as a "wow" event and who returned home with a host new ideas to inspire SAAIR for future practice.

Learner Analytics Special Interest Group (SIG) launched at the Learner Analytics Foundations & Institute

The Southern African Association for Institutional Research (SAAIR) launched the Learning Analytics Special Interest Group (SIG) on 18 March 2019. The launch took place as part of **SAAIR's Learner Analytics workshop hosted by the University of South Africa (UNISA)**, specifically the portfolio Strategy, Risk & Advisory Services (Prof Khehla Ndlovu) with its Directorate for Institutional Research and Business Intelligence (Dr Matseliso Molapo). The event hosted some of the giants in South African Higher Education such as Prof Narend Bajinath, Council for Higher Education, Prof Paul Prinsloo, Unisa and Prof Alan Amory, SAIDE, all expertly organised and facilitated by Dr Angelo Fynn and his team at Unisa, as well as SAAIR under the leadership of Dr Elizabeth Archer.

There has been immense investment in learning analytics by the Department of Higher Education and Training as well as the Kresge Foundation through the Siyaphumalela Project. These investments are already bearing fruit, but it is still fragmented with pockets of excellence, resources and skills. The **Learning Analytics SIG** was borne out of the need to marry the modern science and technology of Learning Analytics with the power of Ubuntu moving beyond boundaries and silos such as private vs public higher education, South Africa vs neighbouring countries, hard scientist, support practitioners, lecturers, ethicists, policy and strategy experts.

The emphasis is on collectively improving South African Higher Education Analytics as a sector, beyond perceived institutional rivalries. The maturation will have specific milestone events; these include the 2019 SAAIR conference, a **National Learner Analytics Event in 2020**, all building

up to a robust, competitive bid to **host the 12th International Learning Analytics and Knowledge (LAK) Conference in South Africa**. This will represent a major victory for Africa as a whole as the event has never been hosted on the continent; promising an influx of more than 1000 participants. It is also fitting that the bid-process will be led by Prof Paul Prinsloo, the widely acknowledged leading African researcher in Learner Analytics Ethics, and previous recipient of the best paper award at LAK..

With that, the drums of the Special Interest Group are calling. Please visit our page. The strategic goals are currently being framed through stakeholder engagement and will be finalised in due course. Feel free to complete the online form and join the movement to place Africa on the Learning Analytics map. <http://www.saair-web.co.za/saair-sig-on-learning-analytics/>

Quality Forum 2019, University of Johannesburg

The 2019 SAAIR Quality Forum took place on 3 - 4 July in the vibrant, multicultural city of Johannesburg. The event was proudly hosted by the University of Johannesburg at the well-equipped Council Chambers at its Auckland Park Kingsway Campus.

Our colleagues across the Southern African Higher Education landscape and beyond gathered to share their good practices, knowledge and wisdom on Quality Assurance and Academic Planning matters in HE. The 2019 Quality Forum was facilitated by experienced Higher Education practitioners who generously shared their experiences and good practices.

The theme for this year's QF was **Internal and External Review Processes: The Quest for Quality**, where we discussed the National Qualification Reviews and Institutional Audits. Our esteemed colleagues shared perspectives from the CHE as well as professional bodies. It was refreshing to have public and private higher education institutions in on the conversation. The QF provided an excellent opportunity for fostering collaborative learning and network opportunities. A lavish dinner was held at the Johannesburg Country Club in Auckland Park.

The forum was very well attended with some 90 participants, 22 public universities, 5 private HEIs, two National bodies and a professional body were represented. We were delighted to welcome our colleagues from Namibia and Botswana.



HEMIS Foundations & Institute 2019

This year the HEMIS Institute and Pre-Institute HEMIS Foundations workshop were hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand at WITS Rural in Bushbuckridge in Limpopo from 6 to 8 August 2019. A total of 69 people attended the Foundations Workshop on 4 August, and 92 people attended the Institute on 7 and 8 August. The local organizing team did a stunning job to ensure that the events ran smoothly and we want to say a huge thank you to Ingrid Turton and her team.

The programmes again covered a wide range of relevant issues. The Foundations focused on the important aspects and concepts that form the basis of the Higher Education Management Information System. These included the big picture of Higher Education, Qualifications and courses, Student reporting, Staff reporting and Space reporting. The presenters included Herman Visser, Leon Eygelaar, Naveena Moodley and Jacques Botha. Once again, the contributions of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE) during the Institute were very valuable. The Institute kicked off with an update on enrolment planning. Presenters for the Institute included Jean Skene and Brenda Swart (DHET), Louie Swanepoel and Michael Gordon (CHE).

However, it was not all work and no play. Valuable networking time was also available during the events.

Institutional Research Forum

Institutional Research Foundations Workshop (25 September 2019) and Institutional Research Institute (26 and 27 September 2019) was hosted by the University of Zululand, at The Premier Hotel, Richards Bay

The Foundations of Institutional Research Workshop and the Institutional Research Institute was hosted by UniZulu in Richardsbay. The event was attended by 30 participants over the three days. The event not only provided great learning opportunities, but the opportunity to examine real cases of student success. Participants shared and networked, making sense of the contextual application of Institutional Research.



The theme for the Foundation was Transforming IR Data into Actionable Strategic Insights

The Purpose of the Foundations of Institutional Research Workshop is to:

- Explain the **nature and scope** of Institutional Research and to **locate it in the broader South African Higher Education context**,
- Explain the **foundations and principles** of institutional research and
- Provide an opportunity to participants to gain **experience** of some of the aspects of institutional research.

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