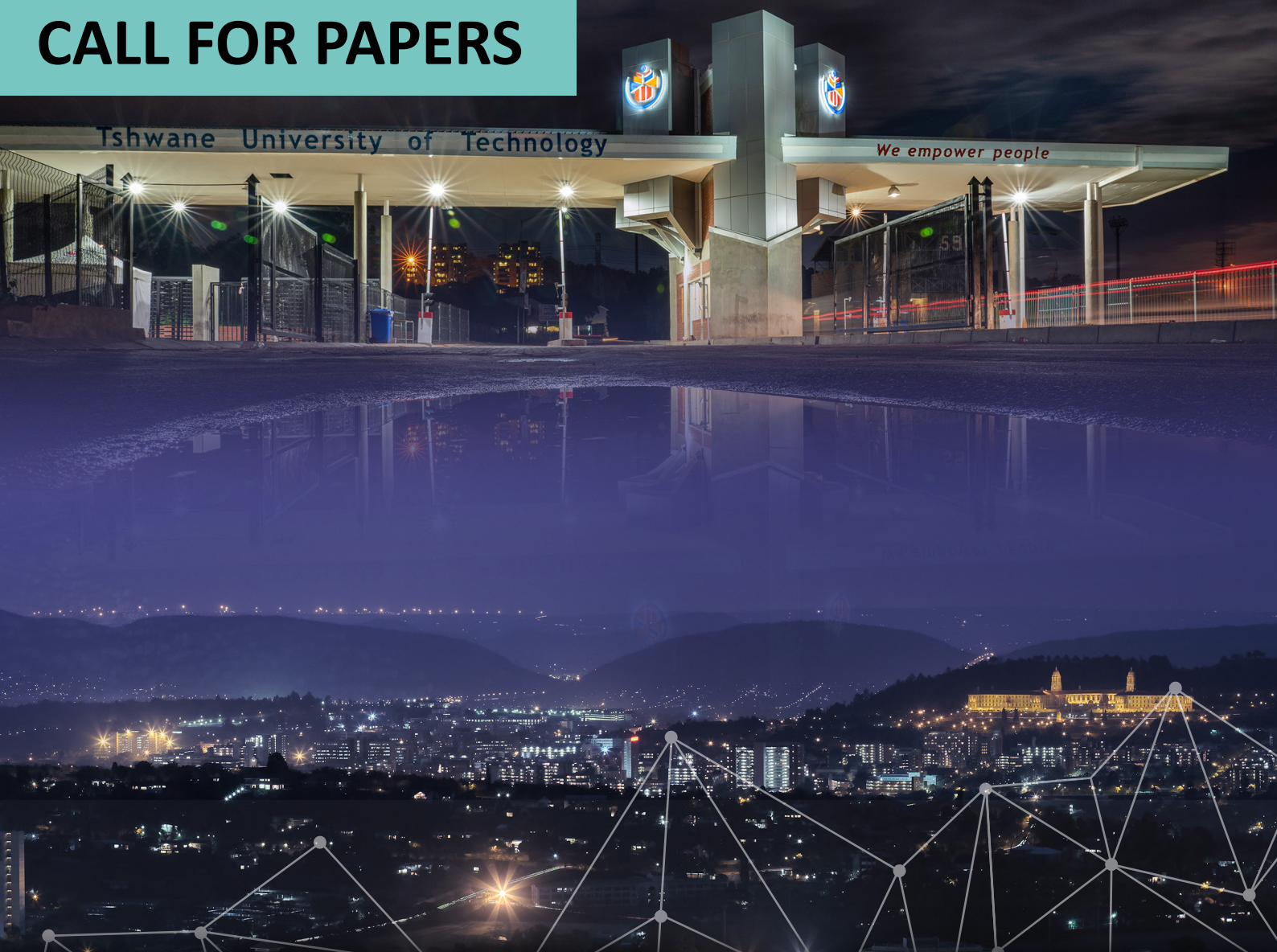


CALL FOR PAPERS



31st SAAIR (Southern African Association for Institutional Research) Conference



5-8 November 2024



Theme:
Transformed Reimagined University Experience
[TRUE]



» 1. CONFERENCE THEME: TRANSFORMED REIMAGINED UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE [TRUE]

The inaugural SAAIR conference, 30 years ago, marked a pivotal moment with its intentional focus on Institutional Effectiveness under the theme 'Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Improvement.' This foundational emphasis has persisted over the years, becoming deeply ingrained within the identity of SAAIR.

Recent shifts in the economic landscape, both domestically and internationally, have underscored the imperative for deliberate efficiency in the effectiveness goal. The burgeoning array of AI (Artificial Intelligence) initiatives reflects this pursuit of efficiency on multiple fronts.

Building upon the discussions and presentations of previous conferences, this year's theme, encapsulated in the acrostic TRUE - Transformed Reimagined University Experience, aims to delve into transformative strategies. It endeavours to redefine the university in the modern era, forecast the trajectory of higher education and its various stakeholders, and provide insight to the lived experiences within the university ecosystem. This theme serves as a bridge between academic rigor and broader societal relevance, inviting both scholarly inquiry, practitioner' and wider engagement.

» 2. CONFERENCE STREAMS EMANATING FROM THE THEME:



Stream 1 - Optimising University Efficiency and Effectiveness:

- Value Chain,
- Ethics,
- Policy Implications
- Analysing the holistic system of processes and stakeholders to enhance value creation and delivery throughout the university ecosystem. The value added to the student experience feedback and the university responsiveness. Investigating the ethical considerations and policy impacts inherent in academic and administrative practices within higher education. Implementing strategies to ensure the efficient and effective utilisation of resources and practices across all university functions, disciplines, decision-making and application.
- University preparedness for the type of student entering



Stream 2 - Transformed and Reimagined Inclusiveness:

- The endeavour to a favourable higher education experience for all
- Transformation in:
 - Curriculum
 - Mode of Delivery
 - Practices
 - Infrastructure
 - Research, Innovation and Technologies
 - Community Engagement
- Traditional University Education vs The New Era of the University
- Mental Health and Well-being: The well-being of students and staff plays a crucial role in the effectiveness and quality of the educational experience. Including a focus on mental health support, strategies for promoting resilience, and creating inclusive environments that support the well-being of all members of the university community. E.g. Data-driven insights on mental health needs, identifying at-risk groups, and pinpointing factors that contribute to stress, anxiety, and other mental health problems.
- Digital transformation and online education

- Teaching, learning and assessment in a blended system
- The challenges and innovations in delivering quality education and capacitating staff
- Digital literacy among students and faculty
- Scope and adoption in research, support, the academic project
- Impact on Quality and Quality as a Steering Mechanism
- Research Practices and Research Output
- Student Success and Interventions for Success
- Prepared and Relevant Graduates
 - » Industry/Market relevance
 - » Entrepreneurial readiness and mindfulness
 - » Study Articulation
 - » Focus on SDG2030, NDP2030, Africa Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want
 - » Value application - societal, immediate impact/personal value, economic, graduate attributes
 - » Curriculum preparedness and relevance

» 3. POSTER PRESENTATIONS

This year, we are expanding our horizons to invite a more diverse array of participants. In the sphere of institutional research (IR), we typically encounter academic researchers, institutional researchers, and IR practitioners. However, we have recognised a significant gap where the traditional academic research model does not fully resonate with many practitioners, who comprise the core audience of SAIR conferences.

That is why we are thrilled to introduce poster presentations (Rapid Presentations) this year, adding an exciting new dimension to the event. Similar presentations, known by various names such as PechaKucha or 20x20 presentations, promise to be both dynamic and engaging. They can be delivered through either visually captivating poster displays or rapid-fire slides. Throughout these presentations, presenters will be allotted 10 minutes for their presentation, and conclude with 5 minutes for audience feedback and interaction. Posters should be the approximate size of a standard wall calendar (600x900mm).

We are now inviting submissions for poster designs, which will be prominently featured throughout the conference and formally presented on the final day.

Examples of good poster presentation layouts (Source: <https://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design/>)

Title pitched at general audience that provides conclusion or at least hints at something interesting

Colin B. Purrington, Department of Posterology, Hudson University

<p>Introduction</p> <p>Three sentences max.</p> <p>Persuade reader you have novel, interesting question(s) and hypothesis.</p> <p>Resist urge to use all the white space.</p>	<p>Results</p> <p>Highlight your LARGE photographs, charts, maps, or in this central arena.</p> <p>Don't include every graphic you've made that relates to project. Choose one. Or two. And separate graphics with plenty of white space.</p> <p>If you have just one or two simple graphics, viewers will be drawn to explore them. If you have too many or they are too complicated, they will be repelled.</p>	<p>Conclusions</p> <p>Explain why outcome is interesting. Don't assume it's obvious. Three sentences max.</p> <p>Maybe include a sentence about what you plan to do next.</p> <p>As for introduction, don't feel like you need to fill the entire box.</p> <p>I.e., if you retain a lot of white space you will attract more viewers. Seriously.</p>
<p>Materials and methods</p> <p>Three sentences max.</p> <p>If viewer truly wants to know gruesome details, they'll ask or email you.</p> <p>Sometimes adding a pic is good.</p>	<p>Annotate graphics with arrows and callout boxes so that viewer is visually led through how hypothesis is addressed. The goal is to enable viewers to understand the logic behind your conclusions <i>without</i> you needing to be there.</p> <p>Keep font size of all text (even graph labels) as big or bigger than in rest of poster.</p>	
<p>Literature cited</p> <p>Author, J. 2012. Article title. Journal of Something 1:1-2.</p>	<p>Acknowledgments</p> <p>Be brief.</p>	<p>Further information</p> <p>Please see https://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design/ for more templates and tips. I'm at colinpurrington@gmail.com if you have a question or comment.</p>

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Title pitched at general audience that provides conclusion or at least hints at something interesting

Colin B. Purrington, Department of Posterology, Hudson University

<p>Introduction to question(s)</p> <p>Three sentences max. Persuade reader you have novel, interesting question(s).</p> <p>Resist urge to use all the white space.</p>	<p>Results and Conclusions</p> <p>Put a question here.</p> <p>Insert a LARGE photograph, chart, question, map, or table that addresses question on left. Annotate with arrows and callout text boxes so that viewer is visually led through how question is addressed. Keep font size of all text as big or bigger than rest of poster.</p> <p>Put an interesting conclusion here. Three sentences max. Two better. One best.</p> <p>Do the same here if you have a second question.</p> <p>Put an interesting conclusion here.</p>
<p>Methodology</p> <p>Three sentences max.</p> <p>Sometimes adding a pic is good.</p>	
<p>Literature cited</p> <p>Author, J. 2012. Article title. Journal of Something 1:1-2.</p>	<p>Acknowledgments</p> <p>Be brief.</p>
	<p>Further information</p> <p>Please see https://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design/ for more templates and advice. I'm at colinpurrington@gmail.com if you have a question or comment.</p>

» 4. SAAIR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The major purpose of the Association is to contribute significantly to the understanding, planning and effectiveness of higher education institutions and systems in the Southern African region.

The Association serves its members by providing capacity development and networking opportunities.

In keeping with the dynamic nature of institutions of higher education, the Association exposes its members to diverse thinking and applications of research principles and methodologies beyond the lens of Higher Education practice.

It also looks for opportunities to connect its members and to share their research via various platforms, some of which may be offered by the Association itself.

» 5. CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The conference will bring together experts from universities, higher education, industry, civil society, and international organisations to discuss the theme related matters of higher education.

An opportunity exists for authors to publish in a DHET accredited journal. Talks are in process with the Journal of New Generation Sciences (JNGS). Authors who wish to publish should please indicate their intent and will receive journal specific criteria.

You are invited to submit an abstract reflecting on your practice at both individual and institutional levels under any of the topics listed above.

Abstracts should be submitted by **30 April 2024**, and the acceptance notification will be sent by **14 June 2024**.

Presenters/authors are requested to submit an abstract (at most 400 words), include 3-5 keywords and conclusion (at most 150 words) of their proposed contribution and send it via email to **truesaair@tut.ac.za**.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR SUBMISSION

1

Please prepare your submission, name it [your topic_your name and surname_date] and email it to **truesaair@tut.ac.za**

2

The same goes for the rapid poster presentations.

3

You are expected to complete your paper in full. Final paper submission deadline: Friday, 04 October 2024 (poster presentations need not have papers)

4

Authors who wish to submit papers to a DHET accredited journal in this submission, please make contact for further criteria.



All questions about submissions can be emailed to **TRUESAAIR@tut.ac.za**.

» 6. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of proposals is an important activity to ensure the quality of submissions. The SAAIR Executive Committee is committed to coordinating the evaluation process in a fair, objective, and rigorous manner whilst also considering issues such as the representation of all types of higher education institutions across Southern Africa.

» In facilitating this, the following should be noted:

- A panel of experts will be constituted to assess proposals against a predetermined list of quality criteria (see below).
- All evaluations are undertaken through a double-blind review process.
- Where proposals are rated at the same level of quality, the evaluation committee will consider the number of proposals by an individual researcher, and the type of institution to which the individual researcher(s) are affiliated to ensure reasonable diversity without neglecting the quality requirements as evaluated by the peer review panel.
- Contributions that seek to make a scholarly contribution to addressing the theme of the conference will be given priority of acceptance. However, submissions that do not directly address the theme of the conference will also be considered, if they have a clear focus on one or more of the objectives of the SAAIR, namely “to benefit, assist and advance institutional research leading to improved understanding, planning and operation of institutions of higher education.”

» General criteria applicable to all proposals

- Whether the proposal links to one or more of the SAAIR’s, objectives namely “to benefit, assist and advance institutional research leading to improved understanding, planning and operation of institutions of higher education.”
- The degree to which the proposal links to the Conference theme (Submissions that do not directly address the theme or sub-themes of the conference will also be considered if they clearly focus on one or more of the objectives of SAAIR).
- The overall clarity of the proposal (e.g. quality of writing, organisation of ideas, clarity of assumptions, the logic of arguments).
- The importance, significance, and relevance of the topic and major issue(s) addressed for institutional research.
- The potential significance of the contribution.

» Specific criteria applicable to contributed papers

- Abstracts must include the title of project, authors, and contact information of lead author.
- Abstracts must include objectives, methodology, findings, and key recommendations.
- Appropriateness of theoretical or conceptual framework.
- Soundness of research design.
- Appropriateness of data sources or evidence used.
- Clarity of exposition of ideas, analyses, arguments, and conclusions.
- Evidence that the research is near completion and that the paper will be completed by the time of the conference (e.g. preliminary results).

» Specific criteria applicable to contributed posters or Rapid Presentations

- Appropriateness of the content displayed.
- The rapid presentations will be story-like short, flowing presentations of no more than 10 slides and 10 minutes in duration, image-rich with very little text.
- Clarity of exposition of ideas, analyses, arguments, and conclusions.

➤ **Specific criteria applicable to pre-conference workshops**

- The overall focus of the workshop and key issues addressed.
- Soundness of design.
- Appropriateness of data sources or evidence used.
- Clarity of exposition of ideas, analyses, arguments, and conclusions to be shared with participants.

➤ **Publication**

Full length papers may potentially also be submitted to a special issue of a South African accredited journal for review and publication, which will qualify for subsidy in South Africa.



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The call is open, so please submit it as soon as possible.

We look forward to receiving your submissions and welcoming you to the 31st SAAIR Conference.