



WOMEN IN LABORATORIES AFRICA CONFERENCE 2026

Gugulethu Zwane

Deputy Director General:
Institutional Planning &
Support
**Department of Science,
Technology & Innovation**



Prof Hema Kesa

Director
**Food Evolution Research
Laboratory - University of
Johannesburg**



Sarah Dikgale

Laboratory Manager
**Centre for Scientific &
Industrial Research (CSIR).**



Dr Dharmarai Naicker

Board Member | Business
Manager
**National Laboratory
Association | SGS Southern
Africa**



Prof Nomvano Mketo

Chairperson: Department of
Chemistry in the College of
Science, Engineering &
Technology
University of SA - (UNISA)



Dr Safaa Kumari

Laboratory Head
**ICARDA
LEBANON - SYRIA**



Gillian Campbell

Leadership Coach | Mentor |
Motivational Speaker



Karabo Rasephei

Laboratory Manager: Mining
Industry: PGM's
Impala Platinum.



Kim Vermaak

Business Leadership Coach &
Trainer
W&L | PSASA Accredited



12 - 13 FEBRUARY 2026

**UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG
JOBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW: The Circuit Media Pty Ltd is delighted to announce the dates to the 1st Africa Women In Laboratories Conference 2026.

This convergence will bring together, under one roof, all laboratory managers and staff across a multiplicity of sectors for the purposes of enhancing attitudes, sharing knowledge, trends, approaches, policies and mechanisms to develop lab skills, training, promoting women and gender mainstreaming.

The Women In Laboratories Africa Conference is an opportunity for you to create new professional networks & contacts, develop new laboratory partnerships, meet new people, rub shoulders with women working in laboratories across Africa, share experiences, learn new skills and benefit from idea exchanges and training.

Experience powerful presentations, keynote sessions, future insights, skills, and trends from high-level executives in the day-to-day management of laboratories in Africa and the world.

Benefit from global trends, blueprints, lab management resources and toolkits, real life approaches, business frameworks and an opportunity to grow your professional connections network.

This conference program was researched to accommodate all laboratory staff in all sectors including and beyond; health, mining, food and beverage, agriculture, clinical, forensic, pathology, water, pharmaceutical, higher education and life science fields.

Attendees shall include C-suite executives, lab managers, supervisors, lab assistants, lab technicians from top-to-bottom; high-level, senior, mid and junior laboratory staff as well as interns.

The objective is to bolster day-2-day lab operations for excellence and ensure women grow and continue to climb the laboratory leadership ladder.

Join us for the latest perspectives, skills, approaches and trends in laboratory management for excellence in 2026 and beyond.

Do Not Miss Out!

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

This event is a Must Attend for ALL Laboratory Staff:

- Laboratory Managers, Directors, Supervisors, Technicians & Assistants.
- Scientists, Laboratory Technologists, Support Staff.
- Quality Management, Quality Assurance & Quality Control Professionals.
- Senior Staff, Mid-Level Professionals, Juniors & Interns In Laboratories.
- Human Resources Departments, Employee Relations and Employment Equity.
- Finance Managers, Admin, Private Laboratory Business Owners & Entrepreneurs.

**Presentations Panel Discussions
Real Life Cases Networking**

To Register, Fill In Booking Form (page 3), and follow instructions.

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OBJECTIVES OF THIS SUMMIT

- To create a networking platform for ALL women in laboratories in Africa for 2026 & beyond.
- To upskill & train your laboratory teams for best practices, success and excellence.
- To promote your participation in roundtable discussions, group presentations, one-on-one meetings, & networking receptions that will help you get ahead & grow your career.
- To galvanize & continuously uphold the impact of laboratories in all sectors.
- To unpack best practices in laboratory management, operations & improve outcomes.
- To create a marketplace of ideas, impart knowledge & to chart pathways for success.
- To share international and regional latest trends & approaches in lab management.
- To help you adopt new technologies in your laboratories: AI, Automation, 2026 Lab Tech.
- To provide training & skills development for ALL C-suite executives, managers, supervisors senior managers, mid-level professionals, junior staff & interns.

Dear Delegate,

This event is an opportunity to help you make a greater impact and bigger difference in gender mainstreaming, success and bolstering day-2-day lab operations.

We want you to map out a new vision and chart a new path towards success in your career as a female laboratory professional.

We look forward to hosting you.

Regards, - Head Event Coordinator (IVM).

SUMMIT DAY ONE

08:00	Delegates Arrival, Registration and Refreshments.
08:45	Chairperson's Opening Remarks.
09:00	OPENING ADDRESS: WOMEN IN SCIENCE, TECH & INNOVATION – GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVES FOR 2026. <i>Speaker: Gugulethu Zwane is Deputy Director General: Institutional Planning & Support at Dept. of Science, Technology & Innovation.</i>
10:00	Tea Break and Networking.
10:15	EVOLVING BEYOND THE LAB: HOW WOMEN-LED INNOVATION DRIVES TRANSFORMATION IN RESEARCH During this session, the speaker will unpack key laboratory innovation imperatives. She will also detail what it means to blaze the trail for women. The speaker will detail the bumpy leadership journey she and her team navigated in the road from laboratory to a "Research Centre," a milestone achieved late 2025. <i>Speaker: Prof Hema Kesa is Director of the Food Evolution Research Laboratory at University of Johannesburg.</i>
11:00	THE POWER TALK: PERSPECTIVES FOR GROWTH & CLIMBING THE LEADERSHIP LADDER FOR LAB WOMEN <i>Speaker: Sarah Dikgale is Laboratory Manager at Centre for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR).</i>
11:45	HEELS, A LAB COAT & GOGGLES: THE "ABC's" OF LAB MANAGEMENT FOR TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. <i>Speaker: Karabo Rasephei is Laboratory Manager & Chemist at Impala Platinum- Rustenburg Mine (IMPLATS).</i>
12:45	PANEL DISCUSSION: OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN LABORATORIES IN AFRICA. <i>Speakers: Convenor, morning speakers, participants & delegates.</i>
13:00	Lunch and Networking.
14:00	GROWTH TALK: A 2026 FRAMEWORK FOR DAY-2-DAY LABORATORY OPERATIONS, MANAGEMENT & SUCCESS. <i>Speaker: Prof Nomvano Mketo is Chairperson: Chemistry Dept College of Science, Engineering & Technology at UNISA.</i>
15:00	EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION, CRITICAL THINKING, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION FOR WOMEN. <i>Speaker: Cillian Campbell is a Leadership Coach & Mentor.</i>
16:00	Chairperson's Closing Remarks.
16:30	Summit Day One Closes.

SUMMIT DAY TWO

08:00	Delegates Arrival, Registration and Refreshments.
08:45	Chairperson's Opening Remarks.
	Note: This day is slated for mass participation. Following speeches from industry leaders and executives, delegates will be afforded the opportunity to contribute, ask questions, offer new ideas and posit possible ways for doing business to the benefit of all in the industry. All voices will be accommodated. The Chair facilitates panels.
09:00	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: WOMEN IN LABORATORIES AFRICA - PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE. <i>Speaker: Dr Dharmarai Naicker is Board Member at the National Laboratory Association & Health Business Manager at SGS .</i>
10:00	Tea Break and Networking.
10:15	HOW SHOWING UP SHAPES YOUR SUCCESS: LABORATORY LEADERSHIP SESSION FOR STAFF. <i>Speaker: Kim Vermaak Business Leadership Coach & Trainer.</i>
11:00	THE 21ST CENTURY LABORATORY EMPLOYEE. <i>Guest Speaker: Dr Basch is Training Facilitator, Coach, Motivational Speaker Futures Ingenium & TCM Group.</i>
11:45	SECTOR LABORATORIES BREAKOUT SESSIONS: GROUP SESSIONS FOR DIFFERENT LABORATORIES. <i>Speaker: Convened By Selected Group Leaders From Plenary.</i>
12:45	GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES: TRENDS, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN LABS. <i>ONLINE Speaker: Kate Morsey is Lab Technician at the Open University - United Kingdom.</i>
13:00	Lunch and Networking.
14:00	THE A-Z OF WOMEN IN LABORATORIES: EMBRACING EMERGING LAB SKILLS & HOW TO GET AHEAD. <i>Speaker: Dr Safaa Kumari is Laboratory Head ICARDA - Lebanon.</i>
15:00	NEW LAB CONTACTS EXCHANGE, PARTNERSHIPS ACQUISITIONS & NETWORK EXPANSION SESSION. <i>Speaker: Session is open to ALL participants.</i>
15:30	Chairperson's Closing Remarks.
16:00	Summit Day Two Closes.

Some Of The Featured Keynote Speakers



Gugulethu Zwane
Deputy Director General
Department of Science,
Technology & Innovation



Dr Dharmarai Naicker
Board Member
National Laboratory
Association | SGS



Prof Nomvano Mketo
Chairperson: Department
of Chemistry (CEST)
University of SA - UNISA



Prof Hema Kesa
Director
Food Evolution Research
Laboratory - UJ

Over 20yrs experience in government, state-owned entities & private sector.
Deputy Director General in DSTI.
Served as Programme Director for the African Science Leaders' G20 Dialogue.

Master in Business Leadership (MBL), PhD in Mycotoxicology (UKZN).
Board Member at National Laboratory Association ZA with +20yrs experience.
Biz Manager; SGS Southern Africa.

Recognized by L'Oréal & UNESCO Women in Science Sub-Sahara Africa.
Chairperson: Department of Chemistry & Senior Lecturer Analytical Chemistry.
PhD- UJ; Msc- SUN; BSc Hons- UWC.

PhD & Master's in Food Service Management.
Director of the Food Evolution Research Laboratory - University of Johannesburg.
Elected as a council member for NSSA.