



# The Centre for Researching Education and Labour, Wits School of Education, is celebrating

100 years of excellence in educational preparation for work at Wits  
10 years of researching skills for just transitions and the future of work

## on 17-18 August 2022

In its first year as a formal university, the University of the Witwatersrand had 6 faculties and little more than 1 000 students. The sectors and occupations that would employ the graduates were relatively straight forward. Today Wits is part of a complex post-school sector that is expected to produce the skills required by labour markets, employers, the economy, and society, while reflecting on future needs. As part of its contribution to better insights into the complex interface between education and work, and the relationships between different parts of the education and training system, the REAL Centre was created to be a focused hub for research and postgraduate training. *As Wits celebrates 100 years of excellence, the Centre for Researching Education and Labour celebrates 10 years of researching educational preparation for work and skills for an equitable, just, and sustainable future.*

## Day 1 Wed 17th August: Researching the complex relationships between education and work

09:30 to 10:15

**Arrival, registration and coffee**

10:30 to 12:00

**Session One: Researching the complex relationships between education and work**

Themba lethu  
Seminar room

Chair of session:  
**Prof Stephanie Allais**, SARCHI  
Research Chair  
of Skills  
Development

**Welcome: Prof Juliet Perumal**

**Panel: REAL's contribution: 10 years of researching youth transitions from education to work**

This panel looks backward to understand why and how Wits founded the REAL Centre, and its achievements over its 10-year history, as well as forward to REAL's research trajectory and its connection to national priorities in the changing world of work and an increasingly unequal society.

- **Dr Peliwe Lolwana**, first Director of the REAL Centre: *Reflecting on the creation of REAL*
- **Dr Presha Ramsarup**, current Director of the REAL Centre: *An overview of REAL's current and planned work*
- **Rudi Dicks**, Presidency: *National interventions for youth employment and sectoral economic development: priorities areas for research*

12:00 to 13:30

**Lunch and poster exhibition of work at REAL offices**

Office and foyer

13:30 to 15:30

**Session Two: Beyond Supply and Demand of skills: insights from 10 years of research on getting skills wrong, getting skills right**

Themba lethu  
Seminar room

Chair of session:  
**Dr Presha Ramsarup**,  
Director of the  
REAL Centre

Skills planning is important, but hard to get right. Over the past ten years, REAL has conducted various pieces of research highlighting the complexity of the ideas of planning and matching the worlds of skills and the worlds of work. We have also trained senior civil servants working in this area, through our MEd focused on Education and Work. The panel presents some high-level findings from our research, with responses from four students of REAL's Masters in Education and Work who work in different parts of the public service engaged in thinking about 'supply' and 'demand' of skills.

- **Prof Stephanie Allais**, SARCHI Research Chair of Skills Development: *Key insights from REAL research in SA and Africa, on the challenges of skills anticipation and planning*
- Perspectives on Skills Planning: Responses from four students of REAL's M. Ed focused on Education and Work:
  - **Melissa Erra** – Chief Director Strategy, Innovation and Organisational Performance at National Skills Fund, Department of Higher Education
  - **Nadia Starr** – Executive / NQF Operations at SAQA
  - **Vijayen Naidoo** – CEO of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
  - **Mamphokhu Khuluvhe** – Director: System Monitoring & labour Market Intelligence, DHET

16:00

### Session Three: Book celebration

Thembaletu  
Seminar room

Chair of Session:  
Wits School of  
Education Head  
of School: **Prof  
Juliet Perumal**

Wits celebrates that amongst its strong publication track record, REAL has produced 5 books exploring various aspects of education and work relationships. This cocktail party is a moment to share brief insights about each book's contribution, and celebrate Wits' contribution to knowledge in an important area of research.

- Welcome: Prof Juliet Perumal, Wits School of Education
- Brief introductions to each of the five books:
  - *Selling Out Education*: **Stephanie Allais, 2014**
  - *Knowledge, Curriculum, and Educational Preparation for Work*: **Stephanie Allais and Yael Shalem, 2018**
  - *Green Skills Research in South Africa: Models, Cases and Methods*: **Eureta Rosenberg; Presha Ramsarup and Heila Lotz Sistitka, 2020**
  - *Transitioning Vocational Education and Training in Africa: A Social Skills Ecosystem Perspective*: **The VET 4 Collective, 2022**
  - *Higher Education and the Public Good in Africa*: **Elaine Unterhalter, Stephanie Allais, Mthobisi Ndaba, Colleen Howell, Christine Adu-Yeboah, Sam Fungwa, Jibrin Ibrahim, Tristan MacCowan, Palesa Molebatsi, Louise Morley, Siphelo Ngcwangu, Ibrahim Oanda, Mark Obonyo, Moses Oketch, Lerato Posholi, Cecilia Selepe, 2022**

**Join us for cocktails to toast in celebration of 100 years of excellence, and  
10 years of research of researching educational preparation for a changing world of work**

## Day 2 Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August: Skills for just transitions and the future of work

10:00 to 13:00

Chair of session:  
Prof Volker  
Wedekind,  
University of  
Nottingham

Welcome by Pro VC Prof Imraan Valodia

**Keynote address 1: Minister of Employment and Labour, Thulas Nxesi: The Changing World of Work**

Thembaletu  
Seminar room

### Session Four: Insights from REAL's research on skills for just transitions and the changing world of work

Over its 100-year history, Wits has been a leader in innovation. Now, through the office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Climate Sustainability and Inequality, the University leads a multifaceted and coordinated approach to deal with the twin challenges of climate sustainability and inequality as part of a just transition to a green and sustainable economy. This panel explores how Wits is focusing on the role of skills in just transitions and the changing world of work in the context of rising inequality, drawing on current and ongoing research produced at the REAL Centre.

- **Dr Presha Ramsarup**, REAL Director: *An overview of REAL's work with a sustainability lens on post school education*
- Short presentations from REAL researchers focusing on key insights for knowledge and policy:
  - **Themba Tshabalala**, PhD student: *Learning and Work Transitions of Maritime TVET students*
  - **Dr Palesa Molebatsi**, Researcher: *Skills and the Energy Transition in six SADC countries*
  - **Dr Nicola Jenkin**, Postdoctoral fellow: *Collaboration in South Africa's Forestry-Products Biorefinery Innovation System*
  - **Victoria Hepplethwaite**, PHD student: *Skills and the Just Transitioning of Food Systems*
- **Discussant: Prof Heila Lotz-Sisistka**, Distinguished Professor of Education and SARCHI Research Chair: Global Change and Social Learning Systems at Rhodes University

13:00 to 14:00

### Session Five: Exploring the trajectory of researching teaching and learning for education and training beyond schooling: A conversation with Faculties of Education

Office and foyer

14:00 to 17:00

Welcome by Wits Vice Chancellor, **Prof Zeblon Vilakazi**

**Keynote Address 2: Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande: The role of research and knowledge in a changing world of work**

Faculties and Schools of Education mainly emerged from colleges of education and have a history of preparing schoolteachers. But increasingly, they are grappling with a larger education system, and contributing to training educators for various parts of the post-school system, as well as conducting research on this. This panel provides an opportunity for four South Africa leaders of education to explore future trajectories in this regard.

Thembaletu  
Seminar room

- **Prof Stephanie Allais, SARCHI Research Chair, Skills Development:** a brief introduction to REAL's postgraduate programme

Chair of session:  
**Prof Garth  
Stevens**, Wits  
Dean of  
Humanities

**Leaders of Schools and Faculties of Education in conversation:**

- **Prof Juliet Perumal**, Wits School of Education
- **Prof Azeem Badroodien**, UCT School of Education
- **Dr Muki Moeng**, Executive Dean - Nelson Mandela University
- **Prof Volker Wedekind**, Nottingham School of Education

17:00

Vote of Thanks: Dr Presha Ramsarup

