



IS BECOMING



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COMMUNICATION FROM SATN REGARDING UPDATES ON SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Dear Colleagues,

SATN acknowledges and takes seriously the direction given by President Ramaphosa in his briefing of the nation on the Coronavirus outbreak in South Africa. We acknowledge that the situation is changing rapidly, and our top priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our community, in and out of Universities and our stakeholders (nationally and internationally) that we work with on a daily basis. The President has declared a national state of disaster and in this regard the SATN has taken the following actions regarding activities that were planned for this period. We will endeavour to keep our communication active and transparent as we implement contingency plans and additional measures. Planning the details of activities will continue but dates and times will be communicated to all stakeholders as we receive information from the National office.

The DHET/UCDP PhD programme.

- At this point, we have no more workshops planned for the next 3 months and all materials of the last 4 workshops are online; candidates have access to the lectures and notes.
- In addition, all candidates have online access to the SATN PhD facilitators and staff.
- The June workshop (MODULE 5) will be rescheduled as we are provided with more information from the NICD.
- Your Programme co-ordinator will be in touch with you regarding your progress reports, your mobility grant applications and updates on your data analysis and write-up.
- Note that all travel in respect of mobility grants are suspended until further notice.

UIF PROJECT:

- Students registered for the theoretical component of the programme are in class, and the classes are small.
- The Dept. of transport issued a statement this morning indicating that they have partnered with the Taxi Association and are engaged in deep cleaning of taxis as well as awareness raising around hygiene and precautionary measures that need to be adhered to etc.

- Our Service provider MILZET is also taking all precautions to ensure the safety of the students in class.
- Students placed in industry are also being provided with the necessary health and safety information and we urge them to be compliant and report to the nearest clinic services that we have put up on our website to prevent the spread of the virus.
- We also urge students to be patient with placements as many of the industry partners who have agreed to accept students for internships have either closed due to the virus issue (e.g. Table Mountain- environmental practice) as they are tourist destinations or are hesitant to accept students before they have safety measures in place.
- Students should inform SATN and MILZET if the employer has suspended work or initiated isolation of staff.
- Again, students traveling to the respective industries are urged to take all precautions as stated by the NICD and report any symptoms they may have so that the companies can assist them with getting tested and with information about self-isolation and prevention of spread within the company.
- Students may contact SATN or MILZET should they have queries regarding this matter.

SATN/THEA RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM:

- Preparations for the colloquium are continuing given that the deliverables for the project do not necessitate in-person meetings at this stage.
- Whilst we cannot make definite travel arrangements for the proposed colloquium in Cork Ireland, we are continuing with the necessary preparations for the proposed colloquium.
- The coordinator of the programme will share with the cluster co-leaders the guidelines for the research paper that each cluster will need to produce; a skeleton/outline of this paper is due on April 15th. Draft 1 and 2 deadlines will be set based on global decision-making around the virus and events.
- A monthly skype meeting with cluster leaders is scheduled for the 31 March 2020 at 12pm.
- The coordinator will be in communications regarding additional developments.

SATN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:

There is on-going planning for the SATN 11th International Conference scheduled for 14-16 October 2020.

No decision has been taken yet to postpone or reschedule this event, which is scheduled for later in the year. The SATN will continue to engage with its various national and international stakeholders (influential members of the industry, business, government, the higher education sector and the interested public) on the status of the conference event. Without a doubt, the situation around COVID-19, will be the determining factor on how we proceed with this event.



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Travel and other restrictions

About travel, it has become necessary to implement the following contingency measures and restrictions until further notice:

- All SATN related international travel is prohibited. **Hence, we will not be considering any candidate for their mobility grants to any international destination until further notice.**
- Personal international travel is strongly discouraged.
- Extreme caution and judgment should be applied for personal domestic air travel.
- We strongly encourage the use of technology for all research colloquium/conference and capacity building activities henceforth.

Protect yourself and others

Prevention is key to containing this pandemic and it is important to take care of your health and protect yourself and others from contracting or spreading viruses and illnesses. It is also important not to spread fake news online or amongst your family and friends, as it will lead to unnecessary panic and public misinformation. Please keep yourselves, colleagues, stakeholders you work with and your family abreast of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the [WHO Website](#) and the [NICD South Africa website](#) and follow these measures to protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water;
- Avoid touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Keep away from communal spaces as much as possible (i.e. social distancing);
- Cough into your elbow.

We will continue to update our stakeholders as additional information becomes available through the office of the President and the NICD in South Africa on our website www.satn.org.za

CONTACT DETAILS OF COORDINATORS OF THE ABOVE PROGRAMMES ARE FOLLOWS:

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Yours Sincerely,

Dr Anshu Padayachee
CEO: South African Technology Network (SATN)