



Project Can-RISE Meeting 2026

Day 1 programme | Monday, 21 September 2026 | CSIR International Convention Centre, Pretoria

Theme: *Transforming cancer research through empowerment, innovation and equity in South Africa*

TIME	SESSION / ACTIVITY	TOPIC / FOCUS	SPEAKER
08:00 - 08:45	Registration and Arrival	Registration, tea/coffee and networking	Dr Rachel Chikwamba Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
08:45 - 09:00	Welcome and Opening	Opening of Project Can-RISE 2026	
OPENING SESSION: CANCER RESEARCH IN CONTEXT Session chair: Prof Raquel Duarte			
09:00 - 09:20	Plenary address	Cancer research in the South African context	Prof Ntobeko Ntusi South African Medical Research Council
09:20 - 09:35	Invited talk (Cancer registry perspective)	Cancer surveillance, data and the national cancer landscape	Dr Carole Metekoua National Cancer Registry
09:35 - 09:50	Invited talk (Industry perspective)	Access to medicines	Dr Stavros Nicolaou ASPEN Pharma
09:50 - 10:05	Invited leadership perspective	Empowering the Next Generation to Shape the Future of Cancer Research	Prof Bettina Chale-Matsau Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University / NHLS
10:05 - 10:25	Panel discussion and Q&A	Cancer Research in South Africa	Session speakers
SESSION 1: EMPOWERMENT Session chair: Dr Aadilah Omar			
10:25 - 10:40	Invited talk	Defining the career path towards becoming an established researcher	Prof Emmanuel Nweke University of the Witwatersrand
10:40 - 10:55	Invited talk	Emerging career researcher programmes and opportunities	Dr Maphuti Madiga Deputy Director: Research Development Department of Science, Technology and Innovation
10:55 - 11:10	Panel discussion and Q&A	Career pathways, mentorship, funding and research development: Priorities, gaps and opportunities for strengthening cancer research and collaboration	Session speakers
11:10 - 11:30	TEA BREAK		
INDUSTRY TECHNOLOGY SPOTLIGHTS: Dr Aadilah Omar			
11:30 - 11:45	Industry technology spotlight	Advancing precision oncology research through targeted genomic profiling	Thermo Fisher Scientific
11:45 - 12:00	Industry technology spotlight	Building local genomics capacity for cancer research: from project design to sequencing and bioinformatics	Inqaba Biotec
SESSION 2: EQUITY Session chair: Dr Botle Precious Damane			

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12:00 - 12:20	Invited talk	Access to cancer medicines	Dr Thulo Molefi University of Pretoria
CANCER ADVOCACY AND SURVIVOR PERSPECTIVES Session chair: Dr Botle Precious Damane			
12:20 - 12:35	Invited talk	Cancer survivorship and advocacy	Zodwa Sithole Head of Advocacy, CANSA
12:35 - 12:50	Invited talk	Cancer survivorship, resilience and advocacy	Marlene Pretorius CANSA Global Hero of Hope Be Brave Vitality
12:50 - 13:05	Panel discussion and Q&A	Cancer advocacy and survivor perspective	Cancer advocacy and survivor perspective speakers
13:05 - 14:10	Lunch and poster session		
SESSION 3: INNOVATION Session chair: Dr Mutsa Takundwa			
14:10 - 14:25	Invited talk	Strengthening early detection and access to cancer diagnostics	Prof Tivani Mashamba-Thompson Centre for Development and Implementation of Point-of-Care Diagnostics University of Pretoria
14:25 - 14:40	Invited talk	Advanced drug delivery and translational approaches in cancer therapeutics	Dr Poomima Ramburrun University of the Witwatersrand
14:40 - 14:55	Invited talk	Nuclear technology in cancer research, diagnosis and treatment - NuMeRI perspective	Dr Joseph Chalwe Nuclear Medicine Research Institute
14:55 - 15:10	Invited talk	Indigenous Knowledge Systems, biotechnology and cancer research	Prof Monde Ntwasa University of South Africa
15:15 - 15:30	International speaker spotlight	Functional precision medicine: bridging tumour profiling and treatment response	Dr Jesse S. Boehm Co-President, SIFM Principal Investigator, Koch Institute, MIT
15:30 - 15:40	Panel discussion and Q&A		Session speakers
15:40 - 15:55	TEA BREAK		
15:55 - 16:10	Invited talk	Cancer biology, molecular research and locally developed approaches	Prof Zukile Mbita University of Limpopo
16:10 - 16:25	Invited talk	Natural products and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in cancer research	Prof Lesetja Motadi University of Johannesburg
16:25 - 16:40	Invited talk	Artificial intelligence, digital pathology and imaging	Dr Benny Mosoane University of Pretoria
16:40 - 16:50	Panel discussion and Q&A	From discovery to implementation: strengthening locally relevant cancer innovation	Session speakers
16:50 - 17:00	Closing and Awards	Day 1 reflections and introduction to Day 2 activities	Prof Emmanuel Nweke Project Can-RISE Organising Committee
17:00	Networking session with light drinks and refreshments		Project Can-RISE Organising Committee

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