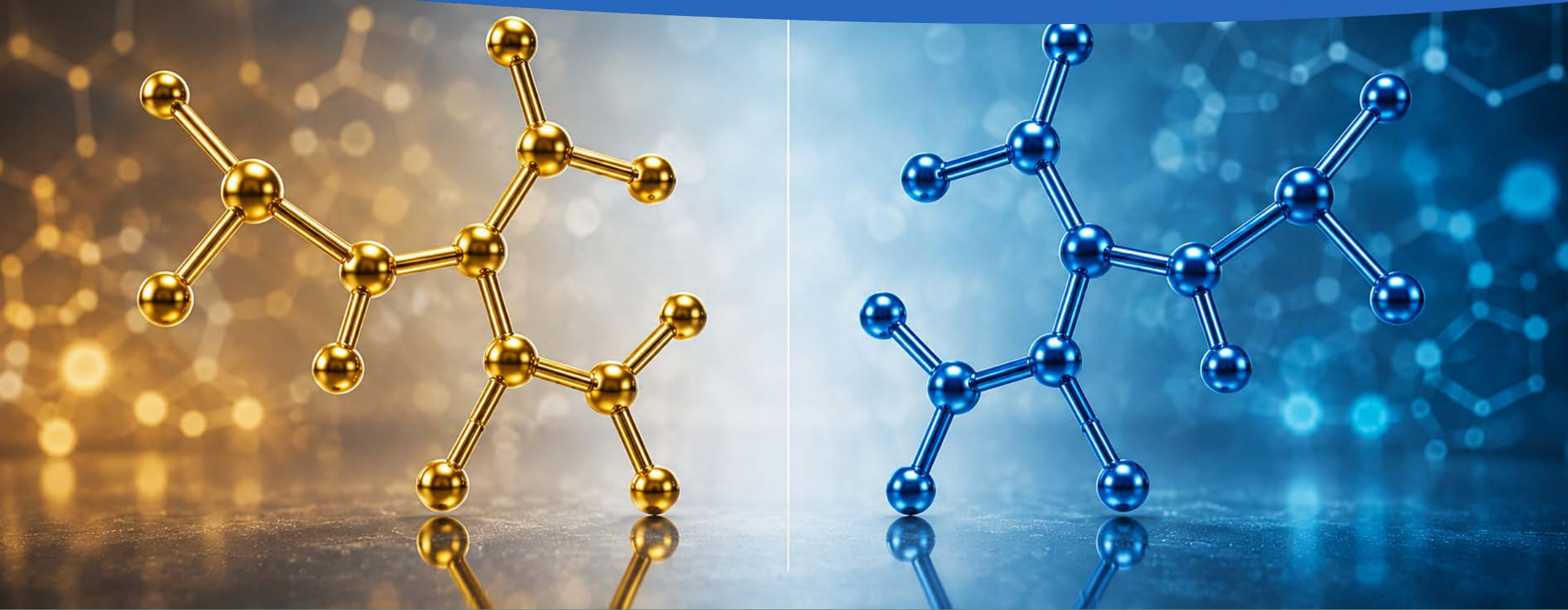




Join the
Academy of Science for South Africa (ASSAf) and the Mirror Biology Dialogue Fund
in a discussion on

Mirror Life:

Understanding the Science, Risks, and Governance Implications for Southern Africa

Purpose of the Webinar

The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), in partnership with the Mirror Biology Dialogue Fund, is hosting this webinar to introduce the emerging field of mirror biology and examine the scientific advances, potential applications, and governance challenges associated with mirror life. While mirror biology holds promise for innovations such as more durable therapeutics, the prospect of self-replicating mirror organisms raises unprecedented concerns for human health, biodiversity, environmental sustainability, and global biosecurity.

Date:
26 August 2026

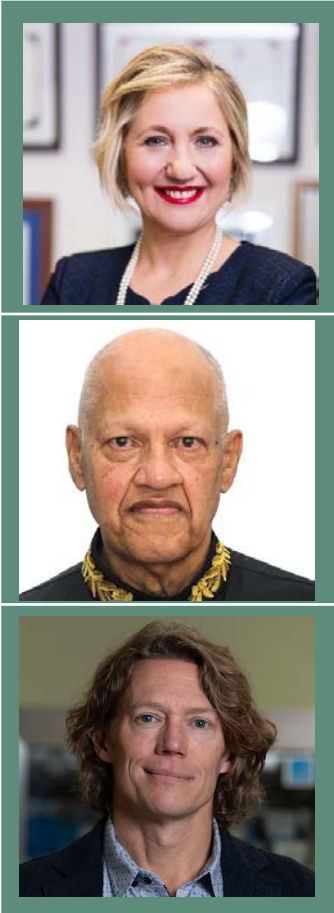
Time:
14:00 to 15:15 (SAST)

Platform:
Zoom

RSVP:
[Click here](#)
to register

Programme		
14:00 – 14:10	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Prof Glenda Gray Infectious Diseases and Oncology Research Institute (IDORI), Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, South African Medical Research Council
14:10 – 14:40	Keynote Speech on the Risks of Mirror Life	Prof Vaughn Cooper University of Pittsburgh
14:40 – 14:50	Policy Perspectives and Emerging Governance Approaches for Mirror Life	Dr Wilmot James Brown University
14:50 – 15:05	Q&A	Prof Glenda Gray, Prof Vaughn Cooper, Dr Wilmot James
15:05 – 15:15	Closing Remarks	Prof Glenda Gray

Moderator & Speakers



Prof Glenda Gray is an NRF A-rated scientist, Director of the Infectious Disease and Oncology Research Institute at Wits, and Chief Scientific Officer of the South African Medical Research Council. An internationally recognised HIV researcher, she has led groundbreaking work on HIV vaccines and mother-to-child transmission prevention. She is a member of several international academies and has received numerous prestigious scientific and national honours.

Dr Wilmot James is Professor and Senior Advisor for Pandemics and Global Health Security at Brown University and Director of the Africa Initiative. A recognised leader in global health security and science diplomacy, he serves on several international advisory boards, including the Wellcome Trust's Climate-Health Impact Awards Advisory Committee, and contributes to global policy on pandemics, climate, and emerging technologies.

Prof Vaughn Cooper is Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and founding Director of the Centre for Evolutionary Biology and Medicine. An internationally respected evolutionary biologist, his research explores bacterial evolution and antimicrobial resistance using genomic approaches. He is also dedicated to science education through the Evolving STEM programme.