

ASSAf
PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLES
SCIENCE | SCHOLARSHIP | SOCIETY

Professor Thokozani Majozi
President, Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)

invites you to

the 15th ASSAf Presidential Roundtable Discussion on

Academia and Commercial Conflict of Interest

Exploring the integrity of academia-industry partnerships in South Africa's National System of Innovation

Date: 25 November 2026

Time: 13:00 – 15:00

Platform: ZOOM Webinar

Registration: Click **here** to Register (You will receive a joining link immediately after registration)

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(@ASSAf_Official @dsigovza #AcademiaIndustryPartnerships #ConflictOfInterest #ASSAf_PRT)

The 15th ASSAf Presidential Roundtable, convened by Prof Thokozani Majozi, will critically examine the nature, extent and management of commercial conflict of interest (COI) within South Africa's National System of Innovation (NSI). Conflict of interest arises when primary obligations and secondary interests diverge, creating the possibility of biased or perceived-biased professional judgement. While academia–industry partnerships are vital for innovation and socio-economic development, they carry risks of actual, potential and perceived bias, prompting stricter COI declaration requirements, particularly in medical and life sciences publishing.

With an estimated $8.51 billion flowing from industry to academia globally in 2024, and the NSI generally underfunded, safeguards are increasingly pertinent. The roundtable will assess the scale of the threat, interrogates the boundary between academic and commercial freedom, examine institutional conflicts arising from funding interests, clarify whether academics should hold commercial interests or industry governance roles, evaluate appropriate industry engagement, and review whether existing institutional policies and guidelines are sufficient or require reform.

The panellists will include:
Prof Edward Kirumira (STIAS), Prof Leslie London (UCT),
Dr Sharon Nyatsanza (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids) and **Prof Keymanthri Moodley (SU).**

The ASSAf Presidential Roundtables (PRT) on Science, Scholarship and Society are evidence-based dialogues that bring together high-level experts and stakeholders to address critical issues affecting society at large and are of interest to a broad audience.

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