

TO THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY AND ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) Library Services, in celebration of International Open Access Week, cordially invites Academics, Researchers, Students, and Staff to the 2026 International Open Access Week Symposium.

Theme: “The cost of Knowledge”

DATE

Wednesday,
21 October 2026

TIME

09h00 – 13h30
(SAST)

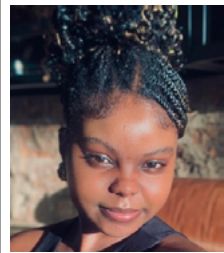
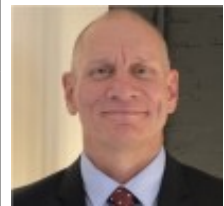
TO RSVP ONLINE

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PROGRAMME DIRECTOR: DR SIYANDA KHESWA

09h00 – 09h05	Welcome and Opening remarks: Mrs Aphelele Xulu (Acting Portfolio Manager: Library and Information and Circulation Services)
09h05 – 09h50	 Guest Speaker: Ms Nokwanda Nhlanzeko Ngcobo Topic: Navigating Modern Publishing and Overcoming Structural Barriers Ms. Nokwanda N. Ngcobo is a pharmacist, lecturer, researcher, and emerging scholar in pharmacology and pharmaceutical sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). She holds a BPharm from Rhodes University and an MPharm in Pharmacology from UKZN. She joined UKZN as a lecturer in 2024 and is currently pursuing her PhD, focusing on the use and effectiveness of monoclonal antibodies in rare inflammatory disorders. Her research interests include pharmacotherapy, medication adherence, rare diseases, diabetes, and medicine utilisation. Ms. Ngcobo has authored 13 peer-reviewed publications and presented her research at national and international conferences, including SASBCP and the World Congress of Pharmacy. Her work focuses on strengthening evidence-based, safe, and accessible pharmacotherapy in South Africa. Her research contributes to a growing evidence base on medicine use and access, particularly in areas where clinical evidence remains limited. Through her teaching and research, she is contributing to the development of future healthcare professionals and to improved pharmaceutical care in South Africa.
09h50 – 09h55	Q & A
09h55 – 10h25	 Presenter: Ms Tanya McMullin Topic: The Hidden Cost of Not Publishing OA: Citation, Visibility & Career Impact Tanya McMullin is the Senior Manager, Open Research Program (EMEA) at Wiley. With an extensive background in the academic publishing sector, she leads strategic initiatives focused on open research policy, stakeholder engagement, and project management across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Tanya is deeply involved in driving sustainable open-access growth and executing complex transformational agreements such as the Wiley-SANLiC agreement—to increase global knowledge equity and visibility for regional researchers. She holds a Master of Arts in Publishing Studies from Oxford Brookes.
10h25 – 10h30	Q & A
10h30 – 11h15	 Guest Speaker: Ms Hlengiwe Khuzwayo Topic: The Open Access decision journal fit, platform credibility and mentorship Ms Hlengiwe Khuzwayo is an emerging environmental researcher and MSc Environmental Science student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her research focuses on wildfire dynamics, geospatial science, remote sensing, and environmental change in South Africa. She holds an Honours degree in Environmental Science with Merit and has experience in GIS, remote sensing, spatial analysis, and Python-based data analysis. Her current MSc research examines wildfire activity and emerging wildfire hotspots in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga using satellite-derived data. Her research interests also include scientific communication, research dissemination, and Open Access. As an early-career researcher, she is particularly interested in the opportunities and challenges of Open Access, including journal selection, publication costs, research visibility, and institutional support.
	 Guest Speaker: Ms Lerato Masingo Lerato Masinga is an emerging environmental researcher and MSc Environmental Science student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Her research focuses on remote sensing, GIS, geospatial science, and environmental change associated with underground coal mining in South Africa. She holds an Honours degree in Environmental Science and has experience in GIS, remote sensing, spatial analysis, and Python-based data analysis. Her current MSc research uses satellite imagery and InSAR to investigate mining-related ground deformation, subsidence, and impacts on surface water, wetlands, vegetation, and drainage systems. Her broader interests include using Earth observation and geospatial technologies to support environmental monitoring and improved environmental management in South Africa.
11h15 – 11h20	Q & A
11h20 – 11h25	Break
11h25 – 11h55	Sabinet
	Presenter: Ms Sunél van Rensburg
	 Topic: The Future of Scholarly Publishing is Collaborative: Libraries, Technology and Sabinet Working Together Sunél Van Rensburg is an Online Publishing Specialist at Sabinet Online (Pty) Ltd, where she works within the Product Management team to support and advance scholarly publishing initiatives. She specialises in digital publishing workflows, journal management, metadata quality, online content production, and publisher support. Based in Wierdapark, Gauteng, Sunél works closely with publishers, editors, and stakeholders to ensure high-quality online publishing services and improved discoverability of scholarly research. Her expertise spans journal hosting, publishing platforms, workflow optimisation, and the implementation of innovative solutions that enhance the academic publishing ecosystem.
11h55 – 12h00	Q & A
12h00 - 12h30	Springer
	 Presenter: Mr Philip De Kock Topic: Open Access Philip De Kock is a Licensing Manager at Springer Science+Business Media, where he has worked since 2012. Based in Pretoria, he has over 25 years of experience in the library and information sector, having previously held roles at Swets Information Services, Universal Knowledge Software, and Richards Bay Municipality. He holds an MBL in Services Marketing from UNISA and an M.Bibl in Information Management from the University of Pretoria. He is an active member of the South African library and information community.
12h30 - 12h35	Q & A
12h35 - 13h20	Keynote Speaker: Prof Moses Okpeku
	 Topic: Open Access Is Not a Risk: Firsthand Stories of Quality, Equity, and Inevitability Professor Moses Okpeku is a genetics and genomics researcher and academic in the Discipline of Biological Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). He holds a PhD in Genetics and has an interdisciplinary research profile spanning genetics, genomics, bioinformatics, infectious diseases, animal and aquaculture genetics, plant genetics, and forensic genetics. His research combines conventional biological approaches with modern genomic and computational methods to address challenges in human health, agriculture, biodiversity, and forensic science. He has international research experience, including postdoctoral research at the Kunming Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and has collaborated with researchers across Africa, Asia, and North America. Professor Okpeku is also actively involved in postgraduate supervision, mentorship, research training, and interdisciplinary scientific collaboration, contributing to the development of emerging researchers in genetics and related fields.
13h20 – 13h25	Q & A
13h25 – 13h30	Vote of thanks: Mrs Faith Magwaza

For Enquiries: Magwazan1@ukzn.ac.za