
The Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria (Centre) is pleased to announce a call to alumni of the Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa (HRDA) master's programme to participate in the Alumni Networking Roundtable and Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture, which are scheduled to be held on **Thursday 27 July 2023** and **Friday 28 July 2023**, at the University of Pretoria. The Roundtable will consist of five thematic sessions and an alumni networking meeting. The Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture will be a separate event on the early evening of 28 July. While all alumni are invited to attend these events, alumni in need of financial support to ensure their attendance are invited to apply for support.

Background

The Centre will host the inaugural Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture in memory of the contribution of the late Professor Christof Heyns (Heyns) to human rights on the African continent. The Alumni Networking Roundtable and Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture will be a vital tool to re-connect the HRDA alumni with the Centre, current students, and the Global Campus (GC) regional hubs. The Centre is one of seven (soon to be eight) regional hubs of the GC, which each presents a master's programme in partnership with universities in different regions of the world, and the Centre is the regional headquarters of Global Campus Africa (GC Africa) and presents the HRDA together with 12 partner universities across Africa.

Sub-themes for the Alumni Networking Roundtable

The two days of the Alumni Networking Roundtable and Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture will have five substantive sessions, each devoted to a particular theme of contemporary relevance to human rights and democratisation on the continent:

- **Democracy**, rule of law, independence of the judiciary; democratic 'backsliding'; restrictions on/shrinking of civic space; (human rights defenders 'Remembering Thulani Maseko and the plight of human rights defenders in Africa')
- **Vulnerabilities** in the context of human rights (backlash against sexual and gender minorities; sexual, reproductive and health rights; challenges to realising the rights of persons with disabilities)
- The state of human rights within the **African Union** and its institutions (African Commission; Court; African Children's Rights Committee; PAP, ECOSOCC)
- The human rights implications of **new technologies**, artificial intelligence, specifically in an African context
- Economy and development in Africa- what to make of trade and investment regulation and the right to development; sustainable development, **socio-economic** rights; acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area and its implications for human rights (including freedom of movement)

There will be a sixth session devoted to the ways in which the alumni network may be strengthened and to facilitate joint activities.

Application process: Applying for financial support to attend the Alumni Roundtable and Memorial Lecture

We invite interested HRDA alumni to apply to be supported for travel/accommodation costs, containing the following:

- i. a brief curriculum vitae;
- ii. a brief motivation (maximum 300 words) – indicate where you would be travelling from, and indicate the expected cost; also indicate why do you want to attend the Alumni Networking Roundtable and Christof Heyns Memorial Lecture; what specific contribution/perspective do you 'bring to the table'; and
- iii. a summary of the topic and main points you would want to address in your 15 minute presentation, clearly showing how it links to the specific sub-theme (maximum 250 words) of your proposed contribution, on an issue of contemporary concern, in one of the five thematic areas above (please indicate the thematic area)

Please submit applications no later than **Monday 19 June 2023**.

Proposals should be sent as an email attachment to Dr Michelle Maziwisa at michelle.maziwisa@up.ac.za and copy Prof Frans Viljoen at frans.viljoen@up.ac.za

Successful participants will be notified by **Friday 23 June 2023**, and will be invited to submit a one-page outline of their presentation by **16 July 2023**. All participants whose requests for funding are accepted will be provided with a return economy class air ticket, meals and lodging in Pretoria for the duration of the conference. Although fully developed papers are not a requirement for participation in the Roundtable, participants who are interested in publishing may be invited to develop their papers presented at the Roundtable for publication as a special journal volume or edited book with the Pretoria University Law Press.

The selection process for supporting HRDA alumni to attend the event takes careful recognition of geographical representation, gender representation (in the sense that an equitable balance between women and men is sought), representation across the different year groups of the HRDA (between 2000 and 2022), and equitable representation of persons from vulnerable communities (such as persons with disabilities, persons belonging to indigenous communities and LGBTIQ+ persons).

HRDA alumni not requiring/applying for support

We hope to see as many alumni as possible on 27 and 28 July. If you do not require and are not applying for financial support, but intend to attend the event, please let michelle.maziwisa@up.ac.za know as soon as possible. Also please indicate to her if you would like to be a speaker in any of the five thematic sessions. If so, please indicate the topic and main points you would want to address in your 15 minute presentation.