

BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: DR SANTOSH RAMCHURAN

Chief Researcher and Research Group Leader:
Biomanufacturing Technologies, CSIR
PhD Chemical Engineering, Lund University

Dr Ramchuran is a recognised leader in science, technology, and innovation with proven capabilities in developing, implementing, and commercialising novel bioprocesses and products in South Africa and internationally.

His core expertise includes Bioprocess Engineering and Process Development, Recombinant Protein Production, Protein Purification, Biomanufacturing, and Bio-entrepreneurship.

Santosh is passionate human capacity development and leads the African Biomanufacturing Workforce Development Program which focuses on training and developing researchers and scientist on the African continent in the biomanufacturing of biopharmaceuticals, biologics, and vaccines funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the GIZ.



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SESSION CHAIR: LARA KOTZÉ-JACOBS

Programme Manager: Future Production Chemicals, CSIR
MSc Chemical Engineering, Stellenbosch University

Lara is a seasoned programme manager within the CSIRs Future Production Chemicals Cluster, with several years of experience in leading multi-stakeholder programmes that strategically support the development of the South African bioeconomy on behalf of the CSIR, Technology Innovation Agency, the Jobs Fund, GIZ, BMGF and the Department of Science and Innovation.

The programmes involve technology, product and process development by the CSIR in partnership with start-ups, SMEs and established companies towards commercialisation.

Several training initiatives that support biomanufacturing workforce development also form part of her responsibilities.



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**PANEL FACILITATOR:
DR DOUGLAS MOMBERG**

PhD in Paediatrics and Child Health, GIZ

Dr Momberg is a public health specialist and clinical programme manager with expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and extensive applied hands-on fieldwork experience in various low- and middle-income country contexts.

His expertise and fields of interest include maternal and child health, child nutrition, growth, energy expenditure, body composition, and development; global health and epidemiology; paediatric oncology; governance, health systems analysis, humanitarian crises and public health in complex emergencies.

Momberg joined the SAVax team at the GIZ in 2024. His focus is on the advancement of critical skills needed in the South African and African bio-economies.

This is particularly through support to various skills initiatives, and engagement with private sector partners, in order to ensure a pipeline that leads matriculants, and graduates alike, to opportunities in industry.



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BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: DR MARLON CERF

PhD (Health Sciences), Stellenbosch University
Senior Programme Manager: Grants, Innovation
and Product Development, South African
Medical Research Council

Dr Cerf partners with stakeholders to deliver health programmes that address South African and global health challenges in infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and emerging diseases.

He leads and collaborates on capacity development initiatives and engages with universities to build and strengthen partnerships.

Through a public-philanthropy partnership, he supports biomanufacturing training of young graduates in health, science and allied disciplines towards building a skilled workforce for Africa.



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BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: PROF. PETRO TERBLANCHE

Chief Executive Officer: Afrigen Biologics (Pty) Ltd
Cape Town, South Africa

Afrigen hosts the WHO Global mRNA technology development and transfer Hub and has developed a mRNA technology platform, which is being transferred to 15 partners in LMICs as part of a global program to build capacity and capabilities in Low- or Middle-Income Country to design, develop and produce mRNA vaccines for access and health security.

Prof. Terblanche is the author of more than 200 scientific publications and conference papers in public health. She holds several Board positions and serves on a number of scientific advisory boards in the academic and public health sector.

She was recently acknowledged as one of the legends of science by the Academy of Sciences South Africa.



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BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: PROF. SAMUEL EGIEYEH

PhD (Biomathematics, Bioinformatics, and
computational Biology)

Prof. Egieyeh is a seasoned pharmacist, with over 25
years of experience across the fields of
pharmaceutical manufacturing, pharmaceutical
research and development, and academia.

He is a fellow of the International Centre for Genetic
Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) Cape Town
component.

He directs two postgraduate programmes in
Regulatory Sciences and Industrial Pharmacy
(Biomanufacturing) at the University of the
Western Cape.

He is a detail-focused regulatory affairs consultant,
well-versed in government regulatory affairs and
performing inspections and enforcement
proceedings related to regulatory
requirements on behalf of the national
regulatory agencies and donor
agencies in Africa.



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BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: DR. NATASHA SKOKO

Group Leader, Biotechnology Development Unit
International Centre for Genetic Engineering and
Biotechnology (ICGEB), Trieste, Italy

Dr. Skoko leads the Biotechnology Development Unit at the ICGEB. She is responsible for the development of technologies related to the production of biotherapeutics, the expansion of business opportunities and their delivery.

Her team facilitates the availability of biologics by transferring know-how to industrial partners located in emerging markets.

They provide a central facility for training in bioprocessing and GMP quality system to multiple recipients.

Skoko provides supervision on agreements for trainings, which have been concluded with industrial partners, research organizations and regulatory entities located in Argentina, Brazil, Bangladesh, China, Iran, Italy, South Africa, Turkey, Zimbabwe and many others.



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SPEAKER: DHEEPAK MAHARAJH

Chief Executive Officer: UVU Bio
Masters in Bioprocess Engineering Stellenbosch
University, MBA Gordon Institute of
Business Science

Dheepak has an impressive track record in science and engineering with a career that spans over 25 years. He specialises in developing biotechnology concepts from lab-scale to commercialization.

His expertise bridges scientific innovation with business acumen. Maharajh envisions the impact driven organisation as the central enabler of a thriving bioeconomy in Africa.

UVU Bio is a specialised biotechnology incubator, akin to international counterparts, providing access to lab resources, specialised skills development and support to propel startups toward successful market entry for their scientific innovations.



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SPEAKER:

DEVENDREN SUBBARAMONEY

Head of Quality: Biovac
National Diploma in Biotechnology,
Durban University of Technology

Devendren serves as the Head of Quality, leading the site's Quality Assurance, Validation, and Quality Control departments.

He possess over 13 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, Devendren has specialized in sterile pharmaceutical manufacturing, including the quality design for new facilities, processes, and technology transfer of various new products.

He has collaborated with multiple regulatory health authorities to obtain new licensure for facilities and products. Throughout his career, he has held several management positions, consistently demonstrating his commitment to excellence and continuous improvement in quality practices.

His leadership and strategic vision drive Biovac's mission to deliver safe and effective pharmaceutical products



BIOMANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING INITIATIVES SESSION

SPEAKER: PROF. SAHEED SABIU

Principal Investigator and Lead: Computational & Systems Biology Research Group, Durban University of Technology (DUT) PhD Biochemistry, University of the Free State

Prof. Sabiu leads the Computational and Systems Biology Research Group at DUT, where postgraduate students and emerging scholars are being mentored on bioprospection for new chemical entities (NCE) and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) against degenerative and microbial infections for new small molecule targets discovery.

In addition to having a library of over 50 novel therapeutic compounds against degenerative diseases, he has authored over 80 scholarly papers in reputable journals and serving as an Academic Editor in six international journals.

Prof. Sabiu is an alumnus of the Future Professors Program of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and a member of the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Focus Group on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD).

Just recently, Prof. Sabiu was announced as a finalist nominee for the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) awards.



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SPEAKER: Dr. Chiluba Mwila

Senior Technical Advisor Talent Development: Africa CDC
PhD Pharmaceuticals, Rhodes University

Dr Mwila is the Talent Development Lead for the Platform for Harmonized African Health Products Manufacturing (PHAHM) at the Africa CDC.

He has sound background in Pharmaceutical Technology & Manufacturing, and extensive experience in biopharmaceutical and pharmaceutical manufacturing workforce development. Chiluba has been instrumental in championing the establishment of regional capability and capacity networks in Africa.

His work focuses on developing and implementing strategies to strengthen the continent's health products manufacturing talent development initiatives, ensuring that Africa can respond effectively to future health emergencies. He has also served as a Senior Lecturer and researcher at the University of Zambia



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