



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA RELEASE

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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALISATION TO COME UNDER SPOTLIGHT IN NORTH WEST

The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (**the dtic**), in partnership with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC), the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) through the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO), and North-West University will host the Intellectual Property and Technology Commercialisation Colloquium. The colloquium will be held at the North-West University, Mahikeng campus from 28-29 March 2023 from 09:00, under the theme *Advancing Innovation through IP Commercialisation for Full-scale Industrialisation*.

According to the Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Mr Fikile Majola, the colloquium will provide a platform to exchange ideas and experiences in addressing challenges inhibiting successful technology commercialisation and what measures can be put in place to address these challenges. Majola will deliver a keynote address at the session on 29 March 2023.

Importantly, Majola says the session will also unpack best possible approach towards technology development with the intent of accelerating commercialisation.

“It is widely acknowledged that intellectual property (IP) is one of the important contributors towards knowledge dissemination, technology transfer and economic growth. The session will therefore explore the different IP regimes including patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyright and know-how and how these can contribute towards innovation and economic growth,” states Majola.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research and Innovation at the North-West University, Professor Jeffrey Mphahlele says the NWU has a long history of intellectual property and

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technology commercialisation, being one of the first universities in South Africa to establish an office of technology transfer.

“It is our pleasure and privilege to have been asked by **the dtic** to host their 4th annual Intellectual Property and Technology Commercialisation Colloquium. The NWU’s Strategic Plan, has a strategic goal to strengthen research and innovation with a strategic focus on impactful globalisation. This cannot be done without the collaboration and cooperation of partners both in the private and public sectors,” says Mphahlele.

He adds that the university’s Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office is already working with CIPC, DSI and NIPMO to do regular training and awareness-raising on the importance of intellectual property protection and commercialisation.

“We are in the process of concluding a MoU with **the dtic**, so the hosting of the colloquium is one of the first activities to cement our relationship going forward,” concludes Mphahlele.

The session will bring together practitioners from technology transfer office, technology brokers, technology consultants, commercialisation specialists, IP Merchant Bank, venture capitalists, incubators, fund finders, lawyers, accountants and patent attorneys.

It will also draw participations of high school learners from selected high schools in the Mahikeng communities and tertiary students, in order to instill interest of IP. The involvement the young people is based on the premise that in honing the youth today through intellectual property education and the relevance of IP, the country will be building a sustainable future where a wide respect for IP will drive innovation and creativity among the youth – the future innovators of our country.

Some of the plenary topics of discussion will be:

- Understanding IP rights and their role in technology transfer (TT) and economic growth;
- IP in successful technology development and the realisation of products and services;
- Approaches to successful technology development of products and services;

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- Protection and commercialisation of public research results; and
- Influence of Artificial intelligence on IP commercialisation.

A special masterclass for SMMEs will be held where the following aspects will be unpacked: Everything an SMME needs to know (the role of Incubation in commercialisation, How to pitch to investors and Business Development)

The colloquium will have exhibition stands for innovators to display their products and services in order to stimulate interest amongst other potential innovators. The exhibition will also be used to showcase support offered by government to innovators through different funding instruments. These include the Khoebo Innovation Promotion Programme, Support Programme for Industrial Innovation and Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme.

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