



**28 SEPTEMBER -
2 OCTOBER 2026**

*Centre for
Digital Humanities*

*Centre for Contemporary
Identity and Diversity Studies*

*Centre for Geopolitical
Security and Strategy*

3rd International Spring School 2026

HUMANISING A FRACTURED WORLD

Intersections of Identity, Digital Humanities, and Geopolitics

PROGRAMME



PROGRAMME

MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2026					
7:45 - 8:30	Registration			iBhubesi Hall Foyer	
8:30 - 8:45	Introduction Prof Mirna Nel (Deputy Dean for Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)			iBhubesi Hall	
8:45 - 9:00	Welcome Prof Dumo Moyo (Executive Dean, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)			iBhubesi Hall	
9:00 - 10:00	Keynote <i>From Curiosity to Contribution: Finding Your Place in Research</i> Dr Neil Barnard (North-West University)			iBhubesi Hall	
10:00 - 10:30	TEA BREAK				
	Undergraduate and Honours Conference			Spring School Workshops	
TIME	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Sundowner Deck	iBhubesi Hall	Indaba
10:30 - 13:00	Undergraduate and Honours Paper Presentations			Workshop 1 <i>Academic writing</i> Prof Gustav Butler & Mrs Anneke Butler (NWU)	Workshop 2 <i>Preparing for your conference presentation: An interactive workshop</i> Prof Chris van Rhyn (NWU)
13:00 - 13:45	LUNCH				
TIME	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Sundowner Deck	iBhubesi Hall	Indaba
13:45 - 17:00	Undergraduate and Honours Paper Presentations			Workshop 3 <i>Academic writing</i> Prof Gustav Butler & Mrs Anneke Butler (NWU)	Workshop 4 <i>PhD article model and how to get your article published</i> Prof Ian Rothmann (NWU)
END OF DAY 1					

PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2026						
7:45 - 8:30	Registration			iBhubesi Hall Foyer		
8:30 - 9:00	Welcome & Reflection Prof Mirna Nel <i>(Deputy Dean for Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)</i>			iBhubesi Hall		
9:00 - 10:00	Keynote Five vignettes from the future Dr Doris Viljoen <i>(University of Stellenbosch)</i>			iBhubesi Hall		
10:00 - 10:30	TEA BREAK					
Undergraduate Paper Presentations				Spring School Workshops		
TIME	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Sundowner Deck	iBhubesi Hall	Indaba	Optentia Seminar Room Vanderbijlpark Campus
10:30 - 13:00	Undergraduate and Honours Paper Presentations			Workshop 5 <i>Researching sensitive topics: Ethics, care, and reflexivity in marginalised contexts</i> Prof Yanga Zembe (UKZN)	Workshop 6 <i>Organising and preserving your research: A hands-on introduction to metadata and digital archives and repositories</i> Prof Bryan Carter (University of Arizona, USA)	Workshop 7 <i>Statistics</i> Prof Ian Rothmann (NWU) <i>Transport will be arranged</i>
13:00 - 13:45	LUNCH					
Spring School Workshops						
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	Indaba	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Sundowner Deck	Optentia Seminar Room Vanderbijlpark Campus
13:45 - 17:00	Workshop 8 <i>Holding Memory in 3D Photogrammetry and Decolonial Heritage Storytelling</i> Prof Bryan Carter (University of Arizona, USA)	Workshop 9 <i>Thematic data analysis</i> Dr Musara Lubombo (NWU)	Workshop 10 <i>Storying lived experiences: Narrative, voice, and representation in inclusive research</i> Prof John Ringson (NWU)	Workshop 11 <i>What is a theoretical framework? Developing a new framework or model</i> Dr Evaristus Adesina & Prof Abiodun Salawu (NWU)	Workshop 12 <i>Strategies for reflecting on and writing about your creative outputs in academic texts</i> Dr Annemi Conradie Chetty (NWU)	Workshop 7 (continue) <i>Statistics</i> Prof Ian Rothmann (NWU) <i>Transport will be arranged</i>
END OF DAY 2						

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PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2026					
7:45 - 8:30	Registration			iBhubesi Hall Foyer	
8:30 - 8:45	Introduction & Reflection Prof Mirna Nel <i>(Deputy Dean for Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)</i>			iBhubesi Hall	
8:45 - 9:00	Welcome TBD			iBhubesi Hall	
9:00 - 10:00	Keynote Weaponised Identity, Demonised Diversity Prof Nicky Falkof <i>(University of the Witwatersrand)</i>			iBhubesi Hall	
10:00 - 10:30	TEA BREAK				
Panels and Paper Presentations					Workshop
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	TIME	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Indaba
		THEME	Digital Mediation, Memory and Labour Session Chair: Dr Sandla Nomvete	Religion, Youth and Belonging Session Chair: Dr Sarel Marais	
10:30 - 12:45	Panel discussion Humanising research and policy in contexts of division: Whose knowledge, whose voices? Panel Leader Prof Tendayi Garutsa (NWU) Panel Members Prof Blessed Ngwenya (NWU) Prof Mandla Mfundo Masuku (UKZN) Prof Yanga Zesizwe Ncebazakhe (UKZN) Prof Simbarashe Gukurume (UCT)	10:30 - 11:00	Digital Witnessing: The representation of the DRC conflict on social media platforms Matlolane, Z. B. & Motahane, N. S. (UFS)	Exploring the role of Faith-Based Organizations in local economic development: A case study of a selected church at Bodibe village Fannie, I. P. (NWU)	Atlas Ti Prof Janelize Morelli (NWU)
	11:05 - 11:35	Navigating Digital Selves: identity fragmentation and human experience in the age of Hyperconnectivity Siaga, L. L. (NWU)	Faith before therapy: Exploring norms and the stigma of mental health help-seeking in Christian youth Hadebe, H. S. (NWU)		

PROGRAMME

Panels and Paper Presentations					Workshop
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	TIME	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Indaba
		THEME	Digital Mediation, Memory and Labour Session Chair: Dr Sarel Marais	Religion, Youth and Belonging Session Chair: Dr Sandla Nomvete	
10:30 - 12:45	Panel discussion <i>Humanising Research and Policy in Contexts of Division: Whose Knowledge, Whose Voices?</i> Panel Leader Prof Tendayi Garutsa (NWU) Panel Members Prof Blessed Ngwenya (NWU) Prof Mandla Mfundo Masuku (UKZN) Prof Yanga Zesizwe Ncebazakhe (UKZN) Prof Simbarashe Gukurume (UCT)	11:40 - 12:10	<i>The archives that forgets: Digital silences, colonial logic and a Sankofan Critique of Memory</i> Ojakorotu, V. (NWU) & Daniel, J. O (University of Ibadan)	<i>Negotiating religion and secularism in Nigeria: Youth identity and the Politics of Belonging</i> Olomitutu, A. K. & Ojakorotu, V. (NWU)	Atlas Ti Prof Janelize Morelli (NWU)
		12:15 - 12:45	<i>Somewhat less necessary: Human expertise, artificial agency, and the quiet commodification of the coder</i> Croucamp, S. & Croucamp, P. (NWU)	<i>Exploring beneficiary perceptions of the First Home Finance subsidy programme in Mahikeng Local Municipality</i> Sibiya, A. S. & Khowa, T K. (NWU)	
12:45 - 13:45	LUNCH				
Panels and Paper Presentations					Workshop
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Indaba	
THEME	African Geopolitics and Postcolonial Nationalism Session Chair: Dr Bathromeu Mavhura	Access, Housing and Wellbeing Session Chair: Prof John Ringson	Youth, Employability and Student Life Session Chair: Koos de Villiers		
13:45 - 14:15	<i>When Africa refuses the celebration: Afrophobia, diplomatic boycott and the crisis of Pan-African solidarity in South Africa</i> Ntsele, B. Tafadzwa, L. (UNISA)	<i>The commodification of state-subsidised housing: Exploring the drivers of RDP rental and backyard dwelling</i> Khowa, T. (NWU)	<i>Exploring the experiences of the youth beneficiaries of the Basic Education Employment Initiative in Bodibe village, South Africa</i> Kgosiemang, M. (NWU)	Mixed Method Research Prof Mirna Nel (NWU)	

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Panels and Paper Presentations				Workshop
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	Libandla	Sundowner Boardroom	Indaba
THEME	African Geopolitics and Postcolonial Nationalism Session Chair: Dr Bathromeu Mavhura	Access, Housing and Wellbeing Session Chair: Prof John Ringson	Youth, Employability and Student Life Session Chair: Koos de Villiers	
14:20 - 14:50	Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in Africa: The role of indigenous institutions in promoting peace and social cohesion Onuk B. O. (NWU)	Re-interrogating the student housing crisis in contemporary Higher Education Institutions: Towards a multidimensional perspective Itlhabanyeng, L. A. & Mupambwa, G. (NWU)	The influence of social factors on the North-West University Potchefstroom campus undergraduate students' self-perceived employability in the South African labour market Matemana, A. S. (NWU)	Mixed Method Research Prof Mirna Nel (NWU)
14:55 - 15:25	The dramaturgy of postcolonial tensions and nationalist anxieties: African digital wars (Twars) between Zimbabwe and South Africa Fingson, K. W. (UFS)	Exploring Community-Based Coping Strategies for accessing healthcare services in Dithakwaneng village, North-West province Ciya, B. P. (NWU)	Studentification and student wellbeing: Exploring student's perceptions on university outsourced accommodation Mangwedi , P. (NWU) & Mangwedi , P. (UP)	
END OF DAY 3				

THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2026		
8:00 - 9:00	Registration	iBhubesi Hall Foyer
9:00 - 9:15	Introduction & Reflection Prof Mirna Nel <i>(Deputy Dean for Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)</i>	iBhubesi Hall
9:15 - 9:30	Welcome TBD	iBhubesi Hall
9:00 - 10:00	Keynote The democratic system in South Africa: is it fit for purpose? Prof Anthonie Van Nieuwkerk <i>(UNISA)</i>	iBhubesi Hall
10:00 - 10:30	TEA BREAK	

PROGRAMME

Panels and Paper Presentations						Art Exhibition
TIME	iBhubesi Hall	TIME	Libandla	Indaba	Sundowner Boardroom	Sundowner Deck
		THEME	The role of the Arts in a Posthuman World Session Chair: Dr Daouda Dao	Economies of Gender and Identity Session Chair: Dr TK Khowa	Identity in Literature and Media Session Chair: Dr Hannelie Otto	
10:30 - 12:45	Panel discussion <i>The democratic system in South Africa: Is it fit for purpose</i> Panel Leader Dr B Mavhura (NWU) Panel Members Prof Hussein Solomon (UFS), Prof. Barend Prinsloo (NWU), Dr Naledi Modise (NWU)	10:30 - 11:00	Understanding the use of artificial intelligence in music education: A participatory action research study Geldenhuys, G. (NWU)	Gendered subjectivity, agency and the modern South African telenovela: An approach to "The Wife" Khumalo, M. N. (NWU)	Spider-Man: An investigation of fetishised grief and commodified nostalgia Mfeka, S. N. (NWU)	Art Exhibition
		11:05 - 11:35	Creating sacred storyworlds beyond the human: A posthuman reading of digital hierotopies Lotz, C. (NWU)	Behind the curtain: A preliminary exploration of liminality, masculinity and queer-resistance in Jozi-Kings and Things Language, M. (NWU)	Global coloniality, economic (in)justice and epistemic reconstruction in Nig Mhlongo's Dog Eat Dog (2004) Moopi, P. (NWU)	
		11:40 - 12:10	Sonic bridges in a fractured world: Music, digital humanities, and the politics of human connection Twala, T. A. (NWU)	Integrating rural female scrap collectors into formal waste management systems through extended producer responsibility in the Eastern Cape, South Africa Xweso, M. (NWU)	Styling citizenship: Homegrown English slang as linguistic inclusion in Masvingo Urban Tarasarira, S. (NWU)	
		12:15 - 12:45	The Contemporary Cyborg: An 'Individual-Dividual' Marais, S. (NWU)	Fragmented personalities: Examining how (un)belonging influences the formation of post-colonial identities Gambu, N.S K. (NWU)	A critical analysis of the representation of black lived experiences in Rosie Motene's Reclaiming the Soil; A Black Girl's Struggle to find Her African Self Thebeetsile, G. (NWU)	

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12:45 - 13:45	LUNCH	
Round Robin Tables		
13:45 - 14:25	Roundtable Discussion 1 <i>Different forms of democratic systems: How do they compare?</i> Session chair Prof Barend Prinsloo (NWU) Moderator Dr Faith Mabera (Institute for Global Dialogue)	iBhubesi Hall
14:30 - 15:10	Roundtable Discussion 2 <i>The fracturing of the geopolitical system: Causes and Effects</i> Session chair Prof Barend Prinsloo (NWU) Moderator Dr Bathromeu Mavhura (NWU)	iBhubesi Hall
15:35 - 16:15	Roundtable Discussion 3 <i>Does “international law” really exist?</i> Session chair Prof Barend Prinsloo (NWU) Moderator Prof Barend L. Prinsloo (NWU)	iBhubesi Hall
END OF DAY 4		
18:00	GALA DINNER	

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER 2026		
7:45 - 8:30	Registration	iBhubesi Hall Foyer
8:30 - 8:45	Introduction & Reflection Prof Mirna Nel <i>(Deputy Dean for Research and Innovation, Faculty of Humanities, North-West University)</i>	iBhubesi Hall
8:45 - 9:00	Welcome TBD	iBhubesi Hall
9:00 - 10:00	Keynote <i>Against the archive of everything: Decay and the limits of digital preservation</i> Dr Lizabé Lambrechts <i>(Executive Director: Nuuseum)</i>	iBhubesi Hall

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10:00 - 10:30	TEA BREAK	
10:30 - 13:00	Panel discussion <i>Archive to algorithm: Thinking about the South African voice in Digital Human</i> Panel Leader Prof Janelize Morelli Panel Members Dr Lizabé Lambrechts (Nuuseum) Prof Bryan Carter (University of Arizona, USA) Mrs Adri Jansen (NWU) Ms Jessica Mabaso (NWU, SADiLaR)	iBhubesi Hall
13:00 - 13:15	Closure	iBhubesi Hall
13:15 - 14:00	LUNCH	
END OF DAY 5		