

# SANORD Preliminary Report 2024

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SANORD

Southern African-Nordic Centre

DECEMBER 3

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**Southern African Nordic Centre**

**Authored by: SCO**



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## **ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

### **1. REPORTING PERIOD**

This report covers the period 1 December 2024–30 November 2024. The report gives a detailed description of the SANORD Central Office's (SCO) activities in terms of its office operations, Secretariat function, Research Working Group and the vital input from our Contact Persons at each member institution in the SANORD network.

### **2. GOVERNANCE**

#### 2.1 The Council

The Council is the total membership in SANORD and comprises a well-represented cohort of 33 Southern African institutions and 24 Nordic member institutions. The Central office and the invaluable willingness and efforts of its members direct the organisation. Members volunteer their time to serve on various committees to support the Central Office in achieving SANORD's focused goals.

The Council elects a Vice Chairperson bi-annually on a rotation basis for a two-year term. Articles of our Statutes refer to the Vice Chancellor/Principals or their respective proxies as representatives as Council members of SANORD. The Council members have been instrumental in the development of policy and strategies related to the Central office and its activities, as well as to innovative initiatives for SANORD research, collaboration and programme of development.

The SANORD Council gathers once a year in conjunction with our annual conference. The 2023 Council meeting took place at the **Innland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Hamar** at the SANORD Annual Conference.

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Executive members

### **SANORD Chairperson**

In accordance with the SANORD Statute, Art. V, 4; the clause requires the rotation of the Chairperson between the Southern African and Nordic regions applicable. It meant that the current Vice-Chairperson, Durban University of Technology (DUT) automatically becomes the new Chairperson for the period 1 January 2023-31 December 2024.

According to the SANORD Statute, Art, V, 4 the SANORD Council elects a new Vice-chairperson bi-annually. At the Council meeting on 6 December 2022, the Council announced the proposal for the election of the new Vice chair for the period 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023. The incoming Chair and Vice Chairperson was:

Chair: Durban University of Technology, represented by: Dr. Lavern Samuels

Vice Chair: Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, represented by: Prof Stine Grønvold

### **Election of the Vice Chair**

Following the SANORD 2023 conference, an online election was conducted to appoint a new Vice Chair for the organisation for the term 2024 to 2025. The election concluded with the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences receiving the highest number of votes, thereby securing the position of Vice Chair. This outcome reflects the confidence of the member institutions in Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences to lead the organisation effectively during the upcoming term.

### **Board Election**

At the beginning of the year, the process for electing members to the Board commenced. Similar to the Vice Chair election, the voting for the Board was conducted online to facilitate participation from all member institutions.

Several universities were re-elected to the Board, demonstrating their commitment to the organisation. These institutions expressed their willingness to remain in their positions to

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ensure that institutional memory is preserved. Their continued participation is crucial for maintaining continuity and enhancing the effectiveness of the Board's operations.

The successful elections following the SANORD 2023 conference signify a proactive approach to leadership within the organisation. The appointment of Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences as Vice Chair and the re-election of several Board members will contribute to a stable and knowledgeable governance structure. This continuity is essential for the growth and development of SANORD and its member institutions and encourage ongoing engagement within SANORD.

### Board members

The Board members are elected based on nominations by the Council members to serve a two-year office term. The SANORD Council Chair and Vice-Chair are also the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. According to the Statutes, Art. V1, 2, three institutions in the southern African and three in the Nordic region are elected to serve on the Board. The following Board members were elected virtually in February 2024 to assume duties from 1 January 2024 - 31 December 2025. Election reports can be found in annexure 2 to ensure transparency.

Board members for the period 2024-2025 comprised:

	<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>REGION</b>
1	Durban University of Technology (DUT) South Africa	Lavern Samuels Chairperson	South
2	Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences	Stine Grønvold	Nordic
3	Lund University, Sweden	Lena Eskilsson	Nordic

4	University of Souther-Eastern Norway	Stephan Hamberg	Nordic
5	Tampere University, Finland	Sami Pirkola	Nordic
6	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	Dina Burger	South
7	University of Western Cape	Jose Franz	South
8	Central University of Technology	Leolyn jackson	South
9	SANORD Central Office, Cape Town, South Africa	Umesh Bawa Kelly Cyster Nicole Umwizerwa	SCO

## **SANORD at IEASA**

The 26th Annual International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) Conference served as a vital platform for the Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD) to engage with prominent leaders in the field of higher education internationalisation. This year's theme, "Navigating Internationalisation in Challenging Times," provided crucial insights and innovative perspectives that will enhance SANORD's mission of fostering collaboration between Southern Africa and the Nordic countries.

As exhibitors at the conference, SANORD showcased its initiatives and connected with key institutions and organizations involved in internationalisation. The event facilitated discussions focused on strategies for advancing global partnerships in higher education. The engaging panel discussions, keynote addresses, and networking sessions enriched our understanding of current challenges while inspiring innovative approaches that align with SANORD's objectives.

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A standout moment of the conference was a session led by Minister Naledi Pandor. Her extensive experience and leadership in global diplomacy and education offered relevant and inspiring guidance. Minister Pandor's insights on advancing internationalisation amid today's complex global landscape were particularly impactful, equipping us with strategies to foster international collaboration in these challenging times.

Throughout the conference, attendees engaged in critical discussions regarding the sustainability and advancement of internationalisation efforts in the context of economic, political, and environmental pressures. This unique opportunity allowed participants to share insights, learn from one another, and explore innovative solutions, all of which will undoubtedly shape the future of global education.

For more information and visuals from the conference, please visit: <https://sanord.uwc.ac.za/news/sanord-at-the-26th-annual-ieasa-conference-strengthening-internationalisation-in-challenging-times/>

## **EAIE Conference 2023**

### **Theme: "En Route"**

The 2023 EAIE Conference, themed "En Route," convened more than 7,300 professionals from diverse sectors, including educators, policymakers, and international mobility experts. The event focused on exchanging ideas to enhance inclusivity and accessibility in international education.

The conference highlighted emerging strategies to adapt education systems to the rapidly evolving global landscape. Central topics included:

- The rise of virtual mobility
- New student exchange programs
- Leveraging technology to broaden access for traditionally underserved populations

A significant emphasis was placed on the theme of inclusivity. Many sessions underscored the urgency of providing equitable access to international education opportunities, framing

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inclusivity not just as a goal but as a necessity to meet global sustainability and development targets.

In addition to the informative sessions, the conference served as an exceptional platform for networking. Attendees included representatives from institutions and organizations worldwide. Notable discussions occurred between stakeholders from South African universities and European institutions, focusing on strengthening cross-border academic partnerships. The attendance of the French Ambassador to South Africa underscored the importance of diplomatic and academic collaboration between nations. For more information and visuals from the conference, please visit: <https://sanord.uwc.ac.za/news/sanord-en-route-at-eaie-2024/>

### **SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship Recipients for 2023/24**

The SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship aims to promote academic excellence and intercultural exchange among postgraduate students. The scholarship specifically supports female students, addressing gender imbalances in higher education and facilitating their advancement in various fields. This report highlights the gender balance among the 2023 scholarship recipients and discusses how the scholarship enhances educational experiences, broadens networks, and enriches research perspectives.

In 2023, the SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship awarded scholarships to a total of **7** recipients, with **6** identifying as female. This representation underscores the commitment to empowering women in academia, ensuring that female students have access to opportunities that may otherwise be limited. The emphasis on gender balance not only promotes equality but also enriches the academic environment by fostering diverse perspectives.

The SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship provides Master's level students with the opportunity to experience different educational systems. By studying abroad, recipients gain exposure to various pedagogical approaches and research methodologies that may not be prevalent in their home universities. This experience is crucial for fostering adaptability and innovation in their academic pursuits.

Moreover, the scholarship facilitates intercultural exchanges, allowing students to engage with peers and faculty from diverse backgrounds. This interaction enhances their understanding of

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global issues, cultural nuances, and collaborative practices, which are essential skills in today's interconnected world.

One of the significant benefits of the SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship is the opportunity for recipients to expand their professional networks. Through this scholarship, students are introduced to a broader community of scholars, researchers, and industry professionals. Building these connections can lead to collaborative research opportunities, internships, and mentorship, which are invaluable for their academic and professional development.

The scholarship enables students to pursue research topics from different perspectives, informed by the unique contexts and resources available at the host institutions. Exposure to different facilities, libraries, and laboratories may provide access to tools and materials that are not available at their home universities. This diversity in resources can significantly enhance the quality and depth of their research projects.

Additionally, engaging with a variety of academic and cultural viewpoints allows recipients to develop more comprehensive and nuanced analyses in their work. This experience is vital for fostering critical thinking and innovation, skills that are essential for successful careers in academia and beyond.

The SANORD Brian O'Connell Scholarship for 2023 has made a significant impact by supporting female students and promoting gender balance in higher education. The opportunities for intercultural exchange, professional networking, and diverse research perspectives provided by this scholarship are invaluable for the recipients' academic and personal growth. By facilitating these experiences, the scholarship not only empowers individual students but also contributes to the broader goal of fostering equality and diversity in higher education. **Refer to the Annexure 1 (list of BOC recipients).**



### Brian O'Connel Scholarship Recipient of 2024

First Name	Last Name	Home University	Department	Host University	Gender
<b>Cecilia</b>	Naule	University of Namibia	Master of Science in Renewable Energy - Department of Physics, Chemistry & Material Science	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)	Female
<b>Dortea</b>	Nakandjibi	University of Namibia	Department of Animal production, Agribusiness and Economics - MSc in Agriculture (Agricultural Economics) by Thesis	University of Helsinki	Female
<b>Blessing</b>	Sekhwela	University of Vanda	MSc in Biological Sciences:Zoology	University of Oulu,Finland	Female
<b>Johanna Ndesihafela</b>	Kadhila	University of Namibia	Master in education (inclusive education)	Norwegian University of Science and Technology	Female
<b>Febronia Ndilimike Shekupe</b>	Shimhanda	University of Namibia	MASTER'S OF EDUCATION (SCIENCE EDUCATION)	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)	Female
<b>Abdel-Hakeem</b>	Mohamed	University of the Western Cape	Institute for Social Development; MA Development Studies	University West	Male
<b>Karla</b>	Redelinghuys	University of Stellenbosch	Department of Genetics	University of Bergen	Female

### Brian O'Connel Scholarship Recipient of 2025

Applicant Name	Home university	Department	Host University	Gender	Planned Date of travel
<b>Penehafo Johannes</b>	University of Namibia	Department of Public Health	Linnaeus University	Female	Second semester 2025 (July-December)
<b>Beatrice Kotewa</b>	University of Botswana	Chemistry Department, Inorganic Section	Lund University	Female	First semester 2025 (January-June)
<b>Rolien Buhrmann</b>	University of Stellenbosch	MA (Political Science)	University of Oslo	Female	First semester 2025 (January-June)
<b>Rejoyce Ikuambi</b>	University of Namibia	Department of humanities and arts/Master of Arts: English Studies	University of Karlstad	Female	First semester 2025 (January-June)
<b>Kirsten van der Heyden</b>	University of Cape Town	Archaeology	Norwegian University of Science and Technology	Female	First semester 2025 (January-June)
<b>Kulaumone Monika Joseph</b>	University of Namibia	Educational Foundation	University of Oulu	Female	First semester 2025 (January-June)

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## Brian O'Connell Scholarship 2024/2025

For the 2025 cohort of the Brian O'Connell Scholarship, a total of six applications were received.

The applicants hail from a variety of SANORD prestigious member institutions across Southern Africa:

- **University of Namibia:** 2 applicants
- **University of Botswana:** 1 applicant
- **University of Stellenbosch:** 1 applicant
- **University of Cape Town:** 1 applicant
- **North-West University (South Africa):** 1 applicant

This distribution shows a balance between universities in South Africa (University of Stellenbosch, University of Cape Town, and North-West University) and institutions from neighbouring countries (University of Namibia and University of Botswana). Notably, the University of Namibia had the highest number of applicants.

Gender representation among the applicants is skewed towards **female** participants:

- **Female applicants:** 6 out of 6

This indicates a 100% female representation in the applicant pool, demonstrating strong interest from women in pursuing this prestigious scholarship opportunity. This gender distribution highlights the scholarship's role in supporting female scholars in the region.

The Brian O'Connell Scholarship received a limited number of applications for the 2025 cohort, with all six candidates coming from a diverse set of universities across Southern Africa. The cohort is entirely composed of female applicants, reflecting the growing representation of women in academia, particularly in fields related to public health, political science, archaeology, and the humanities.

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## Challenges

The **SANORD network** faces several challenges related to the administration and execution of its scholarship programs. Key issues include:

### 1. Misalignment of Academic Calendars

Due to differences in academic calendars across SANORD member institutions in various regions and countries, it has proven difficult to synchronize semesters. This misalignment poses challenges in coordinating exchange programs, placements, and other academic activities, impacting both students and host institutions.

### 2. Quality of Applications

A recurring challenge is the inconsistent quality of applications received for the scholarship programs. Despite efforts to attract strong candidates, many submissions do not meet the expected academic standards, which affects the overall selection process and limits the pool of eligible candidates.

## Recommendation

To ensure measurable and high-quality outcomes from the **Brian O'Connell Scholarship**, it is recommended that future recipients be required to **co-author an article in an accredited journal** alongside their host supervisors. This initiative would:

- **Enhance academic output:** Co-authored publications will contribute to the academic record of both the recipient and the host institution, ensuring tangible results from the scholarship.
- **Foster collaboration:** Encouraging joint research and publication will strengthen partnerships between the scholarship recipients and their host supervisors, promoting knowledge exchange and mentoring.
- **Increase visibility and impact:** Publishing in accredited journals will increase the scholarly impact of the research conducted during the scholarship period, raising the profile of the Brian O'Connell Scholarship and the associated research efforts.

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This recommendation aims to establish a structured framework for accountability and academic excellence for future scholarship recipients.

### **SANORD information sessions**

In alignment with its mission to promote international collaboration in higher education, the Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD) was invited to participate in the International Weeks held at several South African universities. This year, SANORD presented at the University of Zululand and the University of Free State. These International Weeks serve as a platform for universities to showcase their international activities and opportunities available to students.

### **Objectives**

The primary objectives of SANORD's presentations were to:

1. Raise awareness of SANORD's initiatives and programs among students and faculty.
2. Promote the Brian O'Connell scholarship.
3. Introduce the "Three Minutes" initiative, designed to encourage succinct presentations of research.
4. Provide information about the upcoming SANORD conference.

The presentations at both universities were well-received, with active participation from students and faculty. Key outcomes included:

1. **Increased Awareness:** Students expressed interest in the BOC scholarship and the opportunities it presents for international research collaboration.
2. **Engagement:** Several students inquired about the Three Minutes initiative, indicating a desire to develop their presentation skills and engage with international research.
3. **Conference Participation:** Interest in the upcoming SANORD conference was high, with several attendees indicating plans to participate.

### **SANORD @SASUF May 2024**

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The SANORD regional engagement at Malmö University convened to address various aspects of SANORD's business matters, including council activities, and information dissemination.

Participants from various universities and academic roles were present, emphasising the diverse and inclusive composition of the group. This atmosphere fostered open dialogue and collaborative spirit throughout the meeting.

### 1. Ratification of Board Elections

- The meeting included the formal ratification of recent board elections. The outcomes were announced, marking a significant step in SANORD's leadership.

### 2. SANORD 2024 Conference

- A primary focus of the meeting was the upcoming SANORD 2024 conference, scheduled to take place at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town.
- The theme, "**Epistemic Justice, Equity, and Partnerships for SDG Impact,**" generated significant enthusiasm among participants. This theme underscores the relevance of equity and justice in higher education and research.

The engagement outlined various themes for the conference, including:

- Plenary sessions accompanied by feedback opportunities.
- A dedicated track for student presentations, emphasizing the importance of including emerging scholars in academic discourse.

The discussion highlighted the urgency of focusing on equity, social justice, and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the context of global challenges and approaching deadlines.

Aligning SANORD's efforts with the **African Union Agenda 2063** was identified as a crucial strategy for achieving SDG objectives amidst ongoing global crises.

The engagement stressed the critical need to address pressing global issues such as poverty, hunger, and gender equity. Participants advocated for the inclusion of diverse voices in conference abstracts, particularly those of students and emerging scholars, to foster mentorship and collective progress.

Enhancing regional activities, connecting with Southern African partners, and diversifying SANORD’s membership were identified as key priorities for the organization.

The SANORD regional engagement concluded with a strong commitment to advancing SANORD’s mission through collaborative efforts and inclusive practices. The discussions reinforced SANORD's vital role in promoting Sustainable Development Goals and addressing significant global challenges. Participants left with a renewed focus on equity, justice, and partnerships, setting a positive trajectory for the upcoming conference and future initiatives.

A new Nominations Committee comprising the following was nominated by the Council.

**Nominations Committee members 2023-2025:**

	<b>Institutions in Nordic Region</b>	<b>Institutions in Southern African Region</b>
1.	University of Bergen Kristin Svartveit	Durban University of Technology Divinia Jithoo
2.	Innland university of Applied Science Gerd Wikan	Eduardo Mondlane University Emílio Tostão
3.	Linnaeus University Lena Kulmala	University of the Western Cape Tracy Beckett

**The duties of the Nominations committee include:**

- i.** Evaluating all new applications for membership and making a recommendation to the Board
- ii.** Assisting in the development of guidelines for:
  - New membership applications
  - Brian O’Connell scholarship criteria and call
  - Student Intern's criteria and call for application
- iii.** Evaluating and making recommendations to the Board concerning applications for Theme Group

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Projects funding support in collaboration with the Research Working Group, and the Brian O' Connell

Scholarship applications;

iv. Coordinating the Council and Board elections and preparing recommendations to the Council

v. Undertaking any other task as deemed needed by the Board.

## Membership

Since 2022 to date the membership has increased to 33 members in the Southern African region across the following seven countries such as (Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and 22 in the Nordic region across 5 Countries such as (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). This brought the total of membership in SANORD at fifty-five (55) members. In early 2024, two SANORD members (Linköping University and University of Gothenburg) left the network due to new leadership and new strategies as far as collaboration with African universities are concerned. We have also noticed more interest in the network from new member institution, currently four membership application are under review, two university from Southern African and two Nordic regions.

University name	Country	Region
University of Fort Hare	South Africa	Southern African
Oslo Metropolitan University	Norway	Nordic
Walter Sisulu University	South Africa	Southern African
Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education (DMMH)	Norway	Nordic

## Membership Fees:

SANORD, being a non-profitable organisation, is dependent on the payment of membership fees by the members.

Since 2019, the membership fees were fixed until further notice at:

- R30 000 for Southern African members
- EUR 4500 for Nordic members

Members are encouraged to pay their membership fees by the end of March each year to ensure that full membership remains active. At most 70% of the members honour their



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membership fee payments while 30% of the members do not. This is more prevalent in the Southern African region, some of the member institutions have indicated their financial constraints however other are disengaged. Refer to annexure 3 for list of membership.

#### **4. SANORD Central Office (SCO)**

The SCO is supported by Kelly Cyster and Nicole Umwizerwa, and Mr Umesh Bawa (Director) and has successfully delivered on all the goals and objectives for this year. SANORD remains a network of committed, socially conscious institutions that focus on the public good in its vision and mission. The SCO remains committed to supporting the delivery of this endeavour.

The following operational activities illustrate the major activities that the SCO were actively involved with from January 2024-30 September 2024; supported by the Nominations committee, Conference committee members and the Contact Person at each institution.

#### **4.1 Webinars: SANORD hosted two workshops and one webinar thus far to encourage scholarly engagement**

##### ***Sustainable Energy: Opportunities for Co-creation and Collaboration (23 February 2024)***

The central question posed during the webinar was: **What role can higher education and research play in advancing the sustainable energy transition?**

##### **1. Role of Higher Education and Research:**

- Higher education institutions are pivotal in advancing renewable energy technologies through research and innovation.
- Universities serve as hubs for training skilled professionals capable of managing and implementing sustainable energy projects.
- Collaborative research between academic institutions and industry can lead to the development of locally adapted, cost-effective renewable energy solutions.

##### **2. North-South Cooperation:**

- The webinar underscored the importance of collaboration between **Southern and Northern regions** to drive innovation and knowledge-sharing in sustainable energy.

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- North-South partnerships can facilitate capacity-building initiatives, technology transfer, and joint research efforts that benefit both regions.
  - By leveraging the strengths of both regions, the global sustainable energy transition can be accelerated, creating a more inclusive and equitable energy landscape.

The webinar highlighted the critical need for interdisciplinary approaches that combine academic research, technological innovation, and international cooperation to address the challenges posed by climate change and energy poverty. As countries continue to pursue their sustainable energy goals, higher education and research institutions have a vital role in ensuring that the transition is inclusive, innovative, and impactful.

### ***SANORD Administrators COIL Workshop (25 April 2024)***

The **SANORD Administrative Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Webinar** focused on identifying and addressing the **administrative challenges** that institutions face in facilitating international research and education collaborations. The webinar was part of SANORD's broader initiatives to enhance cross-border academic partnerships and cooperation.

### **Key Objectives**

The primary goal of this webinar was to introduce SANORD members to the COIL framework as a tool for overcoming institutional barriers to effective international collaboration. The **COIL model** encourages participants to engage in structured, cross-border teamwork, fostering greater cooperation and problem-solving across institutions.

### **Collaboration and Problem-Solving**

During the webinar, it was emphasized that SANORD member institutions are encouraged to:

- **Identify their administrative challenges:** Each institution is responsible for engaging internally to pinpoint specific administrative obstacles hindering international research and education collaborations.
- **Collaborate on solutions:** Participants from different institutions work in cross-border teams to co-develop solutions tailored to the unique needs and contexts of their institutions.

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## Outcomes and Opportunities

The SANORD Admin COIL framework provides an innovative platform for members to address administrative inefficiencies by sharing best practices, streamlining processes, and fostering stronger institutional partnerships. The anticipated outcomes of this initiative include:

- **Increased collaboration:** By resolving administrative hurdles, institutions can enhance their capacity to participate in international research and educational programs.
- **Strengthened partnerships:** Cross-border teamwork within the COIL framework will lead to deeper cooperation between Southern African and Nordic institutions, improving overall institutional engagement.

The webinar underscored the importance of **collaborative problem-solving** in addressing administrative challenges that often impede international partnerships. Through the COIL model, SANORD members are empowered to work together, share knowledge, and find practical solutions that will enhance their ability to engage in **global research and education collaborations**.

## SANORD Three-Minute Thesis Competition

### *SANORD 3MT- Candidates received for the 2024 conference*

Nordic Region	Southern African Region
Malmö University Joel Holmgren	Durban University of Technology Ellen Kwenda
Linnaeus University Rumbidzai Mugwira.	Rhodes University Tressia Chikodza_
Turku University Nicko Widjaja	University of Johannesburg Odifentse M. Lehasa UJ
	Nelson Mandela University Clifford Osabuohien Uwuoruya
	University of Venda Takalani Nethavhanani

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The **SANORD Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition** has seen significant growth and engagement since its inception. Initially, the competition received only three submissions; however, it has now expanded to nearly ten participants, reflecting its growing popularity and relevance.

The competition's momentum is evidenced by the rise in submissions, from three to almost ten entries. This increase highlights the enthusiasm and commitment of postgraduate students from across the SANORD network. In response to this heightened interest, the competition's prize offerings have also been enhanced. Winners will now receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the next SANORD conference, including:

- **Round-trip flights**
- **Accommodation**
- **Conference registration fees**

The participant pool demonstrates a balanced representation between the two SANORD regions. This inclusivity ensures that the competition reflects a wide range of perspectives and academic expertise.

The topics submitted by the candidates are diverse and tackle pressing global challenges. These subjects are not only regionally relevant but also resonate on a global scale, reflecting the competition's alignment with SANORD's mission to address key societal issues through research and collaboration.

### **SANORD Funding Challenges and recommendations**

To expand its activities and enhance its impact, SANORD requires external funding, as the current model relying solely on membership fees is not sustainable. Presently, the membership fees are the primary financial support for all SANORD activities; however, many Southern African member institutions, particularly those in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique, face difficulties in paying their fees. This financial constraint limits their active participation in SANORD initiatives and hinders broader engagement across the network.

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To address this, SANORD must actively seek external funding sources to ensure the sustainability and growth of its initiatives. Leveraging opportunities such as Erasmus funding for capacity building is a critical step towards securing additional resources. These external funds would enable SANORD to continue offering valuable initiatives while expanding its reach and impact.

Currently, SANORD is also in the early stages of discussions with the National Research Foundation (NRF), which has established a new unit dedicated to supporting university networks. While these discussions are ongoing, securing external funding from organisations like NRF will be crucial for SANORD's long-term sustainability and ability to fulfil its mission of promoting international collaboration in higher education.

## SANORD 2024 Conference Delegate Support Recipients: Regional Themes and Insights:

Name and Surname	University Name (where you are a staff or enrolled if you are a student)	Name of your abstract that is accepted for presenting at the conference and reference number
Khutso Senyatsi-Hanser	University of Limpopo	Bridging the Digital Divide: Strategies for Integrating Digital Technologies and AI in First-Year Academic Literacy Courses
Zinhle Mbongo	University of the Free State	Evaluating the effectiveness of flood Disaster Management Policies and the use of Remote Sensing and GIS techniques in flood management: The case of Emfuleni Local Municipality in South Africa
Kabelo Kaapu	University of Limpopo	Whole genome sequencing vs standard of care tests in the care for drug-resistant tuberculosis: Implications for future diagnostic tools
Hannah Mago	Nelson Mandela University	The impact of digital technologies on property valuation practice in Gqeberha, South Africa REF#095
Vukosi Makondo	University of Limpopo	Determination of genetic diversity of drug resistance Mycobacterium tuberculosis in Limpopo Province ,South Africa
Sanele Mkhabela	University of Limpopo	Sociodemographic Vulnerability and Sexually Transmitted Infection among pregnant women in Limpopo
Togara Warinda	University of Zimbabwe	Togara Warinda
Kaarina Nduuvunawa Amutenya	University of Namibia	Ref #035: A missed opportunity to implement a Cabinet Resolutions on Health in All Policies (HiAP) Approach in Namibia
Felix Emeka Anyiam	Durban University of Technology (DUT)	Bridging the Gap: Socioeconomic Determinants of HIV Self-Testing Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa - A Path Towards Health Equity
Jaisubash Jyakumar	University of Cape Town	Empowering Student Success through Social and Epistemic Justice: Cultivating Agency in the pre-clinical MBChB Curriculum at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Togara Warinda	University of Zimbabwe	Togara Warinda
Dada Temilola	University of the Western Cape	“Exosomal cargoes as Diagnostic Biomarker for Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma among sub-Saharan Africa Population: A multinational study” (#019)
Dalene Crowther	Central University of Technology, Free State	Promoting equity and sustainable development in Tourism, Hospitality and digital learning.
Josh Platzky Miller	University of the Free State	Epistemic Justice in Philosophy: Three Alternative Sources to the Canon
Tapera	National University of Science & Technology,Zimbabwe	TOWARDS THE ADOPTION OF INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL GAMES IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM, THE TRANSITION TO ACHIEVE EDUCATION FOR SUSTENABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION, THE ZIMBABWEAN EXPERIENCE.

Douglas Nyathi	University of Johannesburg	Complexities of conflict: Climate change, elephants and local livelihoods in Lupane, Zimbabwe
Nsovo Mayimele	Tshwane University of Technology	"The establishment of a smart sustainable campus pharmacy at a higher education institutions" #194
Mavis Soko	University of the Free State	Towards the Realisation of Sexual Rights: The Intersection of Gender and Ethnicity
Rosemary Farayi Masaire	University of Zimbabwe	Gender and PhD Pursuit: Unpacking gender disparities and performance challenges facing female candidates.
Belemu Vhahangwele	University of Venda	Postharvest handling practices and technologies harnessed by smallholder fruits crop farmers in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa #005
Vhahangwele Belemu	University of Venda	Postharvest handling practices and technologies harnessed by smallholder fruits crop farmers in Vhembe, District Limpopo, South Africa. Reference number #005
Forbes Makudza	University of Zimbabwe	FROM ADOPTION TO INSIGHT: MODELLING VIRTUAL LEARNING DRIVERS, ADOPTION AND METACOGNITION IN UNIVERSITIES. Reference number 232
Mandy Carolissen	University of the Western Cape	Towards sustainable waste management at the University of the Western Cape
Maraire	University of Bergen	Advancing Climate Justice Through Legal Action: Pathways to Livability
Charline King	The University of the Western Cape	"The legacy of Apartheid: Afrophobic manifestations and occurrences in South Africa from 2008 - 2022."
Kjetil Torp	Rhodes University	Bridging the digital divide in an Eastern Cape university town
Vhahangwele Belemu	University of Venda	Postharvest handling practices and technologies harnessed by smallholder fruits crop farmers in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Reference number #005
Quentin Williams	University of the Western Cape	The Intellectualization of Kaaps, #141
Refilwe Moleyane	Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)	Gender equity, the need for Policy reform or enhancement
Sadhana Manik	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Geography Undergraduate Student Teachers and their transformation in addressing Global challenges within a framing of the SDGs
Rachid Madingue	Eduardo Mondlane University - Mozambique	Title of the abstract: Analysis of Vulnerability to Food and Nutritional Insecurity in the Context of Floods and Survival Strategies in the Marracuene District in 2023. Reference number: reference number is #002
Thandazile Sibindi	University of the Western Cape	Exploring the Views and Roles of Nurses in Tackling Climate Change: Insights from Climate and Health Experts in South Africa. #170

Emma Hay	Nelson Mandela University	Bio-cultural loss, eco-grief, and response-ability: learning from Indigenous and Traditional ecological knowledge. #079
Calton Mupande	Nelson Mandela University	Internationalisation at Home: reflection of student experiences on Nelson Mandela University's student buddy program
Jesse Zhou	University of Cape Town	Using the political economy perspective to understand the NHI legislative process
Janine Senekal	University of the Western Cape	Doctoral graduate attributes: supporting the holistic development of PhD graduates (128)
Isaiah Owwoye	University of the Western Cape	1. Nursing students acceptance and use of online learning in low-resource setting: A cross sectional study. 2. Assessing the psychological distress and coping strategies among academic staff of a University during Covid-19
Mkwelie Nhlanhla	National University of Science and Technology , Zimbabwe	No.103-The effect of integrating GeoGebra graphing software on Geometric Transformation conceptual understanding of Ordinary Level learners in Khami District, Zimbabwe and No.186-Mainstreaming Education for Sustainable Development in the Zimbabwean Higher Education Institutions. A Systematic Literature Review
Andrew Mangena	National University of Science and Technology Zimbabwe	"A case study into the teaching of Computer Networking: Improving Computer Science Education through the Implementation of Microcredentials." and "Enhancing self-directed learning by utilising mobile learning: Attaining a learner-centered approach in Zimbabwe."
Martina Moss	Central University of Technology, Free State	"International Mobility Programme as a Transformative Learning Experience: A Case Study of University of Technology #089
SITHULISIWE BHEBHE	University of Eswatini	Strategies for enhancing technology integration in pre-service teacher education in two universities in Southern Africa
Maraka Lefera	Central University of Technology, Free State	International Mobility Programme as a Transformative Learning Experience: A Case Study of University of Technology Study
Toughieda Basadien	University of the Western Cape	Reimagining Research Psychology Training: A Student's Perspective on the Need for Critical Approaches , 223
Goodness Tshabalala	University of Eswatini	Strategies employed by deputy principals in cultivating and sustaining a positive school culture in selected Eswatini secondary schools: Reference number is 137
Solomon Makola	Central University of Technology	Strategies employed by deputy principals in cultivating and sustaining a positive school culture in selected Eswatini secondary schools
Natasha Ross	University of the Western Cape	Advancing Social and Epistemic Justice: Integrating Environmental and Climate Action



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Rashid Ahmed	University of the Western Cape	Towards Transformative Tutoring: Integrating Decolonial Frameworks, Critical Community Psychology, and Soft Skills in Psychology Education, 058
Cornélio Afonso Cornélio Machungo	Eduardo Mondlane University	Fermentation losses and chemical composition of cactus pear silage with dried mulberry leaves and branches as additive

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**Conference Delegate Support** refers to financial or logistical assistance provided to selected delegates from member institutions to enable their participation in SANORD's annual conference. This support aims to foster inclusivity and representation by facilitating the attendance of delegates from diverse institutions, particularly those who might face financial or geographical barriers. The assistance typically covers costs related to travel, accommodation, and conference registration, allowing delegates to share research, collaborate with peers, and engage in cross-regional dialogues on issues central to SANORD's mission, such as sustainable development, social justice, health, and education.

Through Conference Delegate Support, SANORD helps enhance knowledge exchange, strengthen institutional partnerships, and broaden the perspectives and contributions of member institutions within the Southern African Nordic network.

For 2024 SANORD conference, SANORD supported a diverse cohort of delegate from Southern African universities and a Nordic representative from Norway, each focusing on themes that reflect their respective regional challenges and priorities. The primary thematic areas included health, education, environmental sustainability, and social justice critical pillars in advancing SANORD's mission of fostering regional collaboration and sustainable development.

South African institutions represented at the conference focused on a broad spectrum of critical issues, including the digital divide, health equity, social justice in education, and climate adaptation. Key projects addressed bridging gaps in digital technology access, particularly in rural and underserved communities, and promoting health equity through research on diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis. Additionally, the integration of social justice principles into educational curricula reflects a commitment to systemic reform, while the exploration of climate adaptation strategies highlights the need for resilience in the face of environmental challenges. This multi-faceted approach underscores South Africa's commitment to addressing both immediate needs and long-term systemic issues. Delegates from Zimbabwe and Namibia concentrated on sustainable development in education and climate adaptation. Zimbabwe's contributions emphasized the role of technology in enhancing educational outcomes, particularly in supporting sustainable development. Namibian representatives focused on issues of food and health security, highlighting gaps in policy and the environmental pressures affecting these areas. Together, these themes

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demonstrate a shared commitment to educational reform and the enhancement of resilience in critical sectors affected by environmental and socio-political challenges. Eswatini's contributions at the conference were centered on fostering resilient educational cultures and improving teacher training through the integration of technology. Efforts to sustain a positive school culture and prepare educators for modern challenges reflect a forward-looking approach, one that emphasizes the importance of foundational changes in educational systems. By building capacity in education, Eswatini is addressing long-term resilience within its education sector.

Delegates from Mozambique presented research focused on food security and community engagement, particularly in response to climate change. This focus on local-level food resilience and community-driven solutions underscores Mozambique's proactive stance on addressing the immediate impacts of environmental challenges. The emphasis on community engagement highlights the value placed on inclusive, grassroots approaches to building. Norway's contribution, represented by the University of Bergen, focused on climate justice a theme with significant implications for global and regional partnerships. Norway's expertise in legal pathways for sustainability complements the environmental efforts of Southern African institutions, presenting opportunities for cross-regional collaboration in climate action and policy frameworks. The Nordic emphasis on justice-driven approaches aligns with the sustainability goals shared by SANORD member institutions. The thematic focus areas of the SANORD 2024 conference delegates underscore a shared commitment to addressing the pressing social, health, educational, and environmental issues facing Southern African and Nordic regions. Through collaborative research and policy initiatives, delegates are contributing to a regional framework for sustainable development. The diversity of themes and regional perspectives represented at the conference highlights SANORD's role as a critical platform for fostering cross-regional partnerships that advance sustainability, equity, and resilience across Southern Africa and the Nordic region.

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## Conclusion

The **SANORD network** continues to play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration and advancing higher education across the Southern African and Nordic regions. Despite the challenges of aligning academic calendars and improving the quality of scholarship applications, SANORD's commitment to creating opportunities for academic growth and research collaboration remains strong.