SHE IS FORESTRY SA

Power of Words

2026 WEBINAR

The second She Is Forestry SA (SIFSA) webinar in our five-year **Mentor Me Series**, entitled **'The Power of Words'**, celebrated the launch of the **SIFSA Book Club** and symbolised the true power of words: that they mean most when they are followed through, and for SIFSA, this means elevating our previous **Role Models** into **Webinar Hosts**, giving them a platform to grow.



"Being a true female leader means being brave enough not only to step through the door you were helped to open, but to pull the next woman through with you. We are too often scared that in lifting others, we might dilute our own power. This is never the case, as together we are stronger."

- Khosi Mavimbela, FSCC Executive Director.

Role Models to Hosts

Yoliswa Dlamini, Sappi Forester, **Noxolo Kheswa,** Mondi GIS Analyst, **Nonkululeko Ntinga,** Mondi Nurseries Manager, **Trudy Sebelebele,** Sappi Certification Manager, **Mfundo Ngcobo,** NCT PR & Communication Manager, and **Dr Noxolo Ndlovu,** NCT Forestry Science Researcher.

Six exceptional women, travelling along six very different career paths, brought together by a shared goal: *'to uplift, inspire and mentor others'*.

Their journey began as SIFSA Role Models, relatable mentors, opening the eyes of school learners to the career opportunities available to them. Over the last three months, they have become mentees, joining the SIFSA webinar organising committee and stepping up to host this year's webinar. These women are already shaping the future of SIFSA, and now they will have a role in shaping this platform too.

The 2026 Keynote Address

Dr Kaluke Mawila

Campus Principal

Nelson Mandela University George Campus



Dr Mawila took to the stage to share her journey of being a "first" and the unique challenges that come with breaking new ground, her message was one of authenticity over assimilation: *"We do not need to prove ourselves, because that is precisely when we start changing our shape to fit in"*.

Instead, Dr Kaluke urged the audience to show up every day as the best version of who they were always meant to be. She encouraged investing in relationships that build us up unapologetically, and of consciously bringing the next woman into the room with us. *"Women thrive when they bring the next one on board, a reminder that none of us survives, let alone succeeds, on our own."*

Well done, ladies! We're excited about a future with you at the helm!

Thank you! to our sponsors

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490	357	R280K	13	R60K
Registrants	Max audience	Sponsorship	Speakers	Award prizes

Mentor Me Talks

Designed to inspire, equip and connect, turning individual success stories into a collective network that helps the next woman rise too.

Dr Karin Hofer

R&D Manager, Gratkorn, Sappi Europe



Effective Communication in Your Network

Dr Tatenda Mapeto

Lecturer, Nelson Mandela University



In Progress: Figuring It Out – Lessons from a Career Still Being Built

Prof Sanushka Naidoo

Programme Leader of the FMG– EPPI, FABI



Leadership Styles: Exploring Different Approaches and Embracing Your Own

Tamaryn Whittal-Steynberg

Manufacturing Strategy & Optimisation Manager, PG Bison



From the Boardroom to the Laboratory: How Motherhood Upgrades STEM Leadership

Cindy Mji

Business Development Manager, Mondi Zimele



Building a Personal Brand: Creating a Strong Professional Identity and Networking Effectively

Sedzani Nemukula

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment



A Career Protecting South African Forests

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Join the SIFSA Book Club

Recognising that the right book can change our trajectory, but busy women rarely have hours to spare to find and then read it, SIFSA created a solution: short, trusted reviews from those in our sector. Housed on the SIFSA website, the Book Club is an opportunity for individuals to be guided by the experience of the sector when it comes to their next read.

We don't just want the list of great books to grow; we want it to come to life through quarterly lunchtime seminars exploring new reads. Each led by an inspiring sector figure, sharing the books that transformed their lives, turning individual reading into collective, lasting change.

Submit your book submission here

Visit the Book Club!



Learning from the Journeys of Others

ERIKA DONKER HEAD OF BEE, KAP

Erika's incredible life story could come straight from a Hollywood movie. A single mother, she worked her way up tirelessly from entry-level positions at PG Bison to ultimately leading transformation at its holding company, a journey defined not by shortcuts, but by sheer determination and hard work.

Erika is the poster girl for a can-do attitude. Her advice is refreshingly simple: start where you are, do the work in front of you, and be prepared to learn and adapt as you go. Approached this way, she believes, there is nothing you cannot achieve, but is quick to point out that the journey is never made alone. The key, she says, is *"finding a company willing to invest in you and believe in its people, something worth more than gold. It is this kind of investment that turns potential into progress."*

Be inspired by Erika's story

Book Club with Nelly Ndlovu

CEO/GM, MONDI ZIMELE

To host the first book club, we invited Nelly Ndlovu, the first person to make a book recommendation. *"I think this is a very valuable resource and one as a sector, we should all support. The book I recommended was the 5 am Club by Robin Sharma. It provides an effective strategy for revolutionising your life, made more powerful because it is written as a story. The book takes you on a journey with its main characters, whose transformation illustrates the power of Sharma's message. It is a brilliant book, and I would recommend it to anyone who's looking to make tangible and lasting change."*



Nelly also chose Lean In by Sheryl Sandberg and Dare to Lead by Brené Brown follow the QR code to learn more.

Enjoy the Book Club with Nelly

SHE IS FORESTRY SA

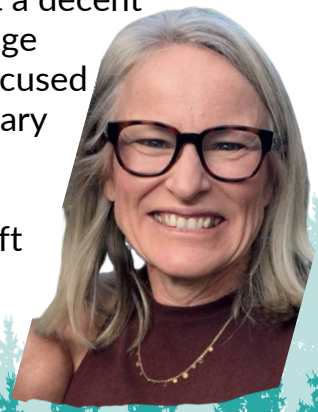
Thank you!

To our hosts, speakers, SIFSA award winners, nominees and those who nominated them. Thank you to our sponsors, collaborators and audience. None of this would be possible without you.

SIFSA Schools: Investing in STEM

SIFSA Partnering in Education

Ruth Hicks from the Shaya Izibalo Maths Institute (SIMI) explained how SIMI was founded on a simple but powerful belief: that a decent mathematics education should be a right for all, not a privilege reserved for the few. Through write-in workbooks, exam-focused resources and online teaching videos, SIMI supports secondary schools, particularly in under-resourced communities.
For the SIFSA-supported schools that offer core maths, this partnership is transformative, ensuring learners are never left behind simply because of where they are or the resources available to them.



Learn more about SIMI

THE 2026 SIFSA AWARD WINNERS

Resounding Contribution to the Forestry Sector



Ms S Mbense,
Senior Silviculture Forester, Mondi

Resounding Contribution to Forestry Science



Dr N Jones,
Programme Leader - Tree Biotechnology, Sappi

Resounding Contribution Behind the Scenes



Ms P Singo,
Administrative Assistant, FSA

Small Scale Enterprise Award



Ms D Vumase,
Small-scale Grower, Sappi

Undergraduate Award



Ms E Sobekwa,
Fort Cox

Postgraduate Award



Ms S Langman,
Nelson Mandela University

Congratulations to all our worthy winners and fantastic nominees