

Keynote title: Institutional Research at a crossroads: the impact of technology and global forces on the profession

Over the past forty years the landscape of higher education has shifted considerably. The globalisation, massification and marketisation of higher education has meant that the majority of the population in every country feels entitled to (or at least contemplate the aspiration to) participate in higher education. While the opportunities for access are provided for many individuals, ongoing academic and financial support is often missing, and are key to higher completion rates. There are innumerable challenges for institutions and governments in managing the changing landscape and this keynote will consider these from a global perspective.

It is foreshadowed that across world regions the appetite for participation in higher education will continue to be as strong over the next twenty years as the world continues to navigate wave after wave of reform. This keynote is structured in three inter-related sections:

- A discussion of the several interconnected forces at play that are occurring globally (such as demographic shifts, technological transformation and geopolitical shifts).
- Through the lens of these drivers and megatrends we will then ponder on the challenges and opportunities these represent for higher education in South Africa and beyond. We will discuss some themes that resonate globally, most importantly how technology intersects with the global forces and what it means to those who are engaged in higher education.
- We will then focus on what the future holds for the practice of institutional research and planning and its ability to survive the onslaught of challenges that we currently confront.

The nature and intensity of such shifts will have profound implications in the way higher education is planned, delivered, funded and quality assured across the globe. Given the shifts in the world's population, the future of higher education resides on the developments that we encounter over the two decades in Africa.

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