



SIOPSA
SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL &
ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF SA

CONFERENCE

CHARTER

2026

HUMAN + AI

DESIGNING POSITIVE ORGANISATIONS

through Augmented Intelligence, Inclusion,
and Well-being

20 - 24 July



SIOPSA
SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL &
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*"We are entering a world where we will learn to coexist with AI,
not as its masters, but as its collaborators."*

- Mark Zuckerberg



Message from the Siopsa President

Welcome to the 2026 SIOPSA Conference, a landmark event where we step boldly into the future of work.

We stand at a unique intersection of humanity and technology, faced with both unprecedented challenges and extraordinary opportunities. This conference is our collective response—a call to Industrial and Organisational Psychologists, HR leaders, technologists, and business visionaries to not just adapt to change, but to design it.

Our theme, Human + AI, is a declaration. It signifies a partnership, not a takeover. It's about leveraging Augmented Intelligence to amplify our human potential, deepen inclusion, and architect workplaces where people don't just survive, but thrive.

We are returning to our spiritual home at the CSIR to honour our past and launch ourselves into this new frontier. This is more than a conference; it is a collaborative movement. Join us as we equip ourselves with the thought leadership, practical tools, and united networks needed to co-create positive, intelligent, and truly human organisations for Africa and the world.

We look forward to co-designing the future with you.

Sincerely,

Dr
Sane Ngidli

SIOPSA President
2025/2026





The Urgency of Human + AI Design Where Psychology Meets Possibility

As the world of work evolves at an unprecedented pace, shaped by technological disruption, hybrid work models, and shifting human needs, the role of Industrial and Organisational Psychology (IOP) becomes ever more critical. The 2026 SIOPSA Conference addresses the pressing question: **"How can we design organisations where augmented intelligence supports human well-being, inclusion, and purpose?"**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept; it is actively transforming talent acquisition, leadership, and workplace well-being. Concurrently, evolving work models demand new paradigms for engagement, culture, and inclusion. Together, these forces create both challenges and opportunities for IOPs to shape workplaces that are ethical, inclusive and psychologically healthy.

"Work Psychologists are the strategic architects of human potential — shaping how people, organisations, and technology co-evolve for a sustainable, inclusive future of work."

— Dr Sane Ngidi

IOPs, as scientist-practitioners, are uniquely positioned to translate research evidence and ethical principles into effective interventions. IOPs are critical evaluators of AI tools and architects of interventions that uphold psychological safety, human dignity, and organisational ethics. By integrating science with practice, IOPs ensure that technological innovation enhances rather than diminishes the human experience at work. This perspective makes IOPs indispensable in guiding organisations through the ethical and practical challenges of AI adoption. This evolving landscape presents a strategic opportunity for SIOPSA to lead globally, showcasing Afrocentric approaches to ethical AI and workplace design. Embedding African perspectives into the development of organisational systems allows us to model leadership that is culturally grounded, inclusive, and aligned with both human and technological potential.

"Our intelligence is what makes us human, and AI is an extension of that quality."

— Yann LeCun



Positive Workplaces Powered by Intelligence

Positive Organisational Psychology (POP 2.0) represents a new wave of organisational interventions, where classic IOP tools are augmented by intelligent technologies. Examples include AI-personalised coaching to build psychological capital, real-time well-being monitoring and nudging platforms, ethical AI to promote inclusion and psychological safety, and immersive VR/AR simulations for empathy, ethics, and leadership development. These are not replacements for human insight—they are enhancements, built and guided by IOPs.

At its core, POP 2.0 reflects the intersection of psychology, technology, and ethics, directly enabling the key strategic themes for the future: Human-Technology Synergy, Well-being & Resilience, and Next-Generation Leadership.



Looking through an Afrocentric Lens: South Africa & The Global South Lens

Designing for the Many, Not the Few

South Africa's diverse economic and social context present both unique opportunities and pressing challenges. Digital transformation across the Global South is uneven, demanding solutions that are inclusive and contextually designed. Key considerations include the digital divide, access, and affordability, alongside a growing demand for scalable, cost-effective mental health and development tools. South African IOPs are well-positioned to lead in the ethical deployment of AI and the creation of culturally resonant interventions that prioritise inclusion from the outset. This means actively designing for Future-Fit Workplaces, robust DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging), and Talent Development & Lifelong Learning ecosystems that are accessible to all. It calls on each and every one of us to reflect on:

"How do we build intelligent systems that serve all, not just the privileged few?"

The answer lies in collaboration. Building workplaces where technology enhances rather than excludes depends on the combined efforts of psychologists, human resources professionals, and organisational leaders. Let's leverage from the IOP- HR- Leadership Triad.



The Power of the Triad: IOP, HR and Leadership

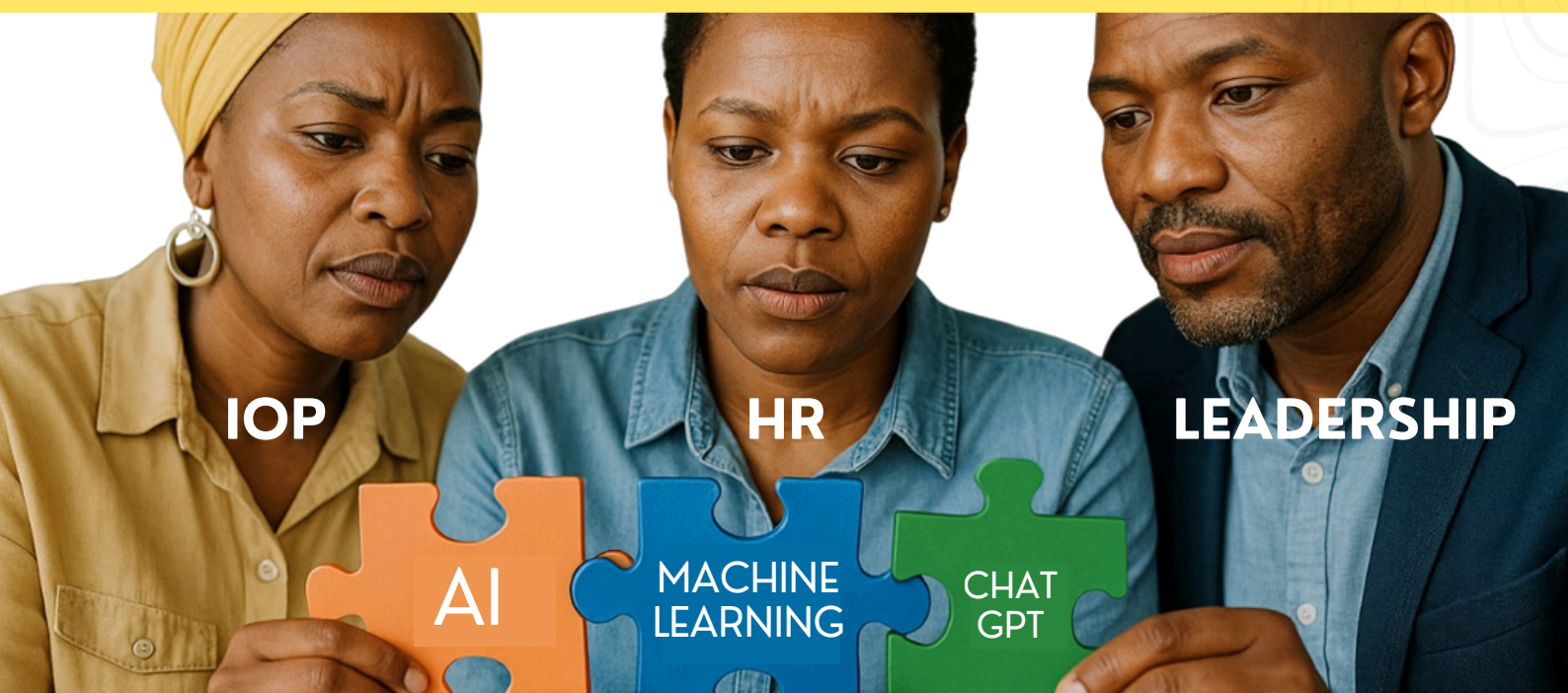
The future of humane workplaces is contingent upon the collaborative engagement of Industrial and Organisational Psychologists (IOPs), Human Resources (HR) professionals, and organisational leadership.

- IOPs contribute scientific knowledge and psychological expertise.
- HR operationalises this insight by translating strategy into people-centred practices.
- Leadership provides the vision, resources, and cultural direction required for effective implementation.

This triad establishes a critical framework to ensure that artificial intelligence is deployed in ways that advance employee well-being, foster inclusion, and support long-term organisational sustainability. This collaboration is essential for establishing strong Ethics, governance, and sustainability in the age of AI.

"Artificial intelligence is not a substitute for human intelligence; it is a tool to amplify human creativity and ingenuity."

- Fei-Fei Li





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The Evolution of SIOPSA Conference Themes

Over the past five years, SIOPSA's annual themes have charted a deliberate trajectory, reflecting the evolving priorities of Industrial and Organisational Psychology in South Africa and beyond.

2021



Building resilience in post-pandemic workplaces.

2022



Reimagining work with purpose and agility.

2023



Advancing inclusion, psychological safety, and ethical leadership.

2024



Systemic impact through context, content, and conduct.

2025



Future-proofing organisations through AI, sustainability, and lifelong learning.

2026



Human + AI by Design

Represents a natural evolution: moving beyond responding to change, it is now about **proactively designing workplaces** that integrate intelligence, inclusion, and well-being, blending human insight with technological potential to shape the organisations of the future.

Siopsa 2026 is about honouring our past, embracing our present, and shaping a future where psychology meets possibility - coming full circle, yet always moving forward.



Conference Objectives and Goals

The 2026 SIOPSA Conference is designed to convene Industrial and Organisational Psychologists (IOPs), psychometrists, HR professionals, business leaders, academics, and technologists to reflect, integrate, and innovate around the future of work.

The conference aims to create a platform where IOPs, psychologists, psychometrists, HR professionals, leaders, and technologists can collaboratively shape the future of work in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The focus is on how AI can augment—rather than replace—human capacities, enabling more ethical, inclusive, and psychologically healthy workplaces. This is not just a knowledge-sharing event but a call to action: to design purposeful, intelligent, and humane organisational systems.

The Conference Will:

- Critically evaluate the role of AI in organisational life with a focus on **ethics, inclusion, and employee well-being**.
- Honour the historical evolution of Industrial and Organisational Psychology while engaging with its renewal in the age of **digital transformation**.
- Position **Afrocentric thought leadership** at the centre of global conversations on AI, work, and organisational design.
- Create space for dialogue and collaboration across professions to create **human-centred, technologically advanced workplace solutions**.



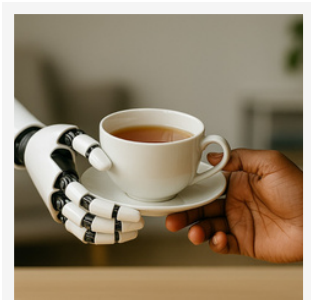
Employee
Well-being



Digital
Transformation



Afrocentric
Leadership



Human-centred
Technology

Key Outcomes

By attending the 2026 SIOPSA Conference, delegates will have the opportunity to engage with a diverse range of learning formats. These include traditional approaches such as case studies, master tutorials, research presentations, and panel discussions, alongside innovative and interactive experiences such as live tool clinics, ethics clinics, playbook workshops, policy hacks, role-play labs, and fireside chats. This combination of formats is designed to provide both rigorous academic insight and practical, hands-on application, ensuring delegates leave equipped with actionable knowledge and strategies to implement in their organisations.

Delegates Will Gain:



Thought Leadership

Establish SIOPSA as a global voice on Afrocentric, ethical AI in the workplace.

Practical Toolkits

Delegates will leave with playbooks, frameworks, and evidence-based interventions.



Collaborative Networks

Strengthened partnerships between IOPs, psychometrists, HR, leadership, and technologists.



Policy Influence

Actionable recommendations for AI governance and workplace inclusion in the South African and African contexts





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Conference Tracks

Dive into the Critical Focus Areas



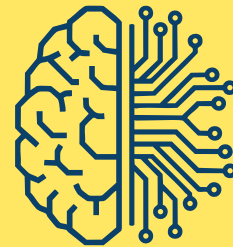
AI-Augmented Positive Workplaces

Leveraging AI for real-time engagement, feedback, and well-being strategies.



Digital Empathy & Psychological Safety

Enhancing human connection and trust through digital tools.



The Hybrid Human Experience

Creating inclusive, meaningful work across digital and physical spaces.



Ethics, Bias & AI Governance

Addressing AI risks and ethical standards in people management.



Lifelong Learning & Leadership in the Age of AI

Building AI-literate, values-driven leadership pipelines.



Data Design & Culture

Using AI to shape culture, inclusion, and purpose-driven workplaces



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The Conference Experience

Pre-Conference Workshop

July 2026

SIOPSA is your trusted destination for all CPD opportunities. To help you get the most out of your conference experience, we're excited to offer one dynamic pre-conference workshop in July 2026.

Virtual Programme

20 July 2026

Full-day virtual programme on the Whova platform

21 July 2026

Full-day virtual programme on the Whova platform

In-person Programme

22 July 2026

AGM & Networking Event
(Free for all delegates, booking is essential)

23 July 2026

Full day programme,
Gala Dinner & Presidential Awards

24 July 2026

Full day programme



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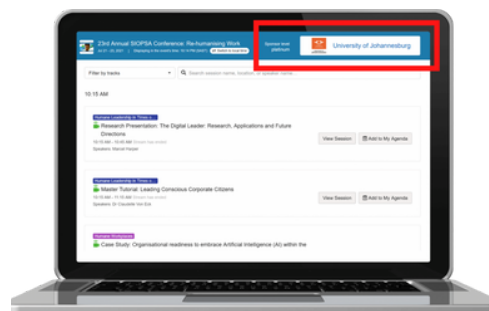
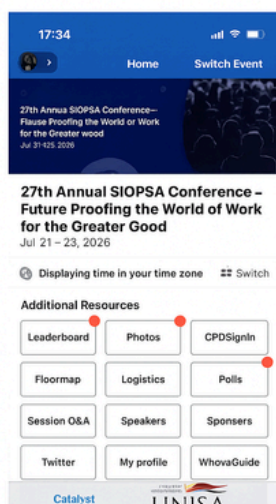
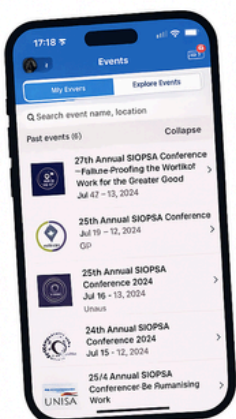
Virtual Programme Award Winning Whova Platform

The 2026 SIOPSA Conference will continue to use the Whova platform, an award-winning virtual conference solution, to complement our in-person experience. This decision reflects our commitment to accessibility, engagement, and global reach.

Whova enables us to cater to a growing number of virtual delegates, providing seamless access to live sessions, networking opportunities, discussion forums, and interactive tools, no matter where participants are located. It also allows delegates to engage before, during, and after the conference, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across borders.

We ensure that the conference remains inclusive, flexible, and globally connected, reflecting both the evolving nature of work and the needs of a modern, technologically enabled professional community.

Whova



"[Whova] is very user-friendly and allows for all the conference moving parts to come together in an aesthetic, easy to navigate, and appealing manner. Both the back end and front end were easy to navigate and intuitive for users."

—PHIONA MARTIN, ORGANIZER



Returning to our Roots The Symbolic Return to CSIR

We are delighted to announce that the 2026 SIOPSA Conference in-person programme will take place at the CSIR International Convention Centre (CSIR ICC), Pretoria.

This decision is more than logistical; it is deeply symbolic. The CSIR has long been the home of SIOPSA conferences in the pre-COVID era, and by returning here, we are coming full circle—honouring our history, while embracing the future. This purposeful return reflects our commitment to continuity, resilience, and the spirit of innovation that defines our community.

Just as the 2026 conference focuses on “Human + AI: Designing Positive Organisations through Augmented Intelligence, Inclusion, and Well-being” calls us to blend the wisdom of psychology with the promise of technology, our return to CSIR embodies the balance of past and future, tradition and transformation. It is a space where SIOPSA’s community has gathered for decades to challenge ideas, share breakthroughs, and imagine new futures—and it is the perfect stage for our next chapter.

As we lean into Human + AI by Design, CSIR provides the grounding we need to ask the urgent questions:

- How do we design organisations where technology enhances rather than replaces humanity?
- How do we ensure that innovation is inclusive, ethical, and future-fit?
- How do we, as IOPs, HR professionals, and leaders, co-create systems that serve all, not just the privileged few?

This return to CSIR is not a step back, but a strategic leap forward—rooted in our history, yet aligned with our bold vision of Positive Workplaces Powered by Intelligence (POP 2.0). Together, we will gather where SIOPSA has always thrived—in a space that represents both our heritage and our horizon. The journey has come full circle. Now, it’s time to design the future.



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A Call to Action: Co-Design the Future of Work

This is more than a conference. This is a movement.

The future of work will be defined by the choices we make today. Will we let technology dictate our path, or will we steer it to create a more human, intelligent, and inclusive world?

The 2026 SIOPSA Conference calls on IOPs, psychometrists, HR professionals, business leaders, researchers, and technologists to unite and move beyond discussion, and boldly step into the role of co-design. Join us to acquire the tools and insights that will define the next decade: actionable frameworks for ethical AI, transformative Afrocentric and global leadership strategies, and a renewed conviction in our mission to make organisations thrive.

The future is not something that happens to us. It is something we build together.

*It's time to lean into possibility.
It's time for Human + AI.*





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The reference list is not merely a formality; it is the intellectual architecture of this conference. It documents the key theories, research, and practices that inform our theme, '**Co-Designing the Future of Work,**' ensuring our collective efforts are grounded in scientific integrity and build upon a legacy of knowledge.

Every great blueprint requires a foundation. The references in this charter are the bedrock upon which we will co-design the future of work.

We look forward to hosting you at the CSIR in 2026!





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THANK YOU

WE LOOK FORWARD
TO HEARING FROM YOU

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