

litasa

LITERACY  
ASSOCIATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA

## THE 21ST ANNUAL LITASA CONFERENCE

**“Reading the Future, Ukufunda Ikusasa, Ho Bala Bokamoso:  
Literacies for Transformative Education”**

**4 - 6 SEPTEMBER 2026,  
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG, GAUTENG**

**PRE CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS TO BE HELD AT:  
REGENESYS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**Abstract submission closing date: 15 March 2026**  
To submit your abstract, visit [www.litasa.org.za/conference](http://www.litasa.org.za/conference)



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**Celebrating 21 years of literacy research, practice and advocacy.**

For more than two decades, the LITASA Conference has brought together educators, researchers, policymakers, community organisations, and literacy advocates committed to shaping South Africa's literacy landscape. As we celebrate LITASA'S 21st conference, the 2026 conference committee invites you to reimagine literacy's role in building equitable, multilingual, and socially just futures - futures where every South African can access knowledge, participate fully, and exercise agency with dignity.

In a moment marked by challenging PIRLS findings, widening inequalities, rapidly advancing AI technologies, and shifting linguistic and cultural ecologies, literacy remains a powerful tool for transformation. This year's theme, Reading the Future / Ukufunda Ikusasa / Ho Bala Bokamoso, foregrounds multilingual literacies as dynamic resources for bridging home and school, local realities and global opportunities, and foundational learning and higher education.

We invite contributions that explore innovative research, classroom practice, community work, and policy directions that speak to multilingualism, literacy development across the lifespan, and education in a changing world.

**Transformative Literacy: Keeping Pace in a Changing World**

- How might literacy education contribute to more just, equitable, and participatory societies?
- How can pedagogical and technological innovations respond to emerging literacy challenges?
- What does literacy education look like in the age of AI?
- How can literacy support critical thinking, civic participation, and the creation of democratic cultures?
- How can partnerships, innovative funding models, and effective monitoring and evaluation strengthen long-term literacy impact?
- How do we ensure sustainable literacy models?

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**Foundations for the Future: Literacy in the Early Years**

- How do strong early literacy foundations shape long-term learning outcomes?
- What strategies best support literacy development in the early years?
- How can home languages and cultural knowledge be meaningfully integrated into early literacy pedagogy?
- How can partnerships, including “third spaces,” strengthen young children’s literacy learning?

**Reading Across the Years: Transitions and Continuities**

- How do literacy skills evolve as learners progress through the school system?
- What practices deepen reading and writing engagement beyond the foundational phase?
- How can schools ensure continuity in reading and writing instruction and assessment across grades?
- How do language transitions influence literacy development?

**Literacies in Higher Education: Access, Equity and Epistemic Justice**

- How do universities cultivate academic and disciplinary literacies in linguistically diverse settings?
- What does epistemic justice look like in reading and writing pedagogies?
- How can interventions empower rather than remediate?
- How do higher education institutions respond to challenges posed by AI, digital writing tools, and shifting literacy demands?

**Rethinking Assessments: Assessment for Meaningful and Equitable Literacy Learning**

- How can assessment strengthen literacy development in multilingual contexts?
- How do classroom, school, national, and international assessments shape literacy teaching?
- What assessment designs validly capture learners’ multilingual and multimodal repertoires?
- How can teachers use assessment data to guide responsive instruction and curriculum planning?

**Back to the Future: Literacies Beyond the Classroom**

- How do literacies flourish in community, family, workplace, and cultural spaces?
- How do libraries, NGOs, community groups, and literacy organisations widen access to reading and writing?
- What new literacies are emerging in digital, social, youth, or cultural spaces?

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## **Submission Details:**

### **Language of Submissions:**

- We welcome submissions and presentations in all twelve official South African languages. Please indicate your preferred presentation language when submitting.

### **Presentation Categories:**

• Individual papers	- 15-min presentation   10-min engagement
• Practitioner presentations	- 15-min presentation   10-min engagement
• Workshops	- Workshops   1 hour
• Poster presentation	- On display throughout the conference
• Panel Discussions	- 1 hour   3-5 speakers
• Community project showcases	- 15-min presentation   10-min engagement
• Innovative or multi-sensory literacy demonstrations	- 15-min presentation   10-min engagement

### **Length:**

Abstracts for research papers, practitioner presentations, workshops, posters, community project showcases and innovative multi-sensory literacy demonstrations should not exceed 200 words, and should not contain citations. Abstracts for panel discussions should not exceed 350 words, including the details of the panellists.

**DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS: 15 MARCH 2026**

**Join us as we reflect, challenge, reimagine, and celebrate the multilingual futures of literacy in South Africa and beyond.**