**National Science Week Media Release**

**National Science Week takes a tour of science**

National Science Week (NSW), an annual week-long event coordinated by the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement on behalf of the Department of Science and Technology, is now in its 18th year and will run from 5 to 12 August 2017.

NSW is a countrywide celebration of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and innovation (STEMI) exposes public and learners to the wonders of science.

Over ninety organisations, including three National Research Foundation facilities, two science councils, 24 science centres, five universities and 59 other organisations, will participate in bringing the world of science to the South African public. In 2016 NSW reached millions of people in South Africa.

Each year a different theme is chosen and the activities are offered around the theme. The 2017 theme is “Advancing Science Tourism” and it is aligned with the United Nation’s International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

This year, South Africa aims to showcase what it can offer when it comes to science tourism and celebrate the possibilities that science creates. The theme will allow all South Africans from all walks of life in different provinces to celebrate a link between science and tourism. It will encourage discussions around what makes South Africa special and showcase natural diversity.

Over 15 million tourists visited South Africa in 2015 for adventures and a taste of an African experience. Science and tourism are connected and the National Science Week theme will showcase the connection and strengthen the bond.

Science can be a tourist attraction and it plays a major role in improving tourists’ experiences. Tourists can explore scientific landmarks and scientific attractions such as the Square Kilometre Array, Cradle of Humankind, observatories, science centres, national parks, botanical gardens and zoos.

Science centres and museums around the country have an opportunity to create unique and exciting places for tourists to visit. The research around the human genome and interest in the history of humanity brings tourists to see the Cradle of Humankind.

National Science Week is run in all nine provinces simultaneously at multiple sites per province.

NSW aims to boost interest in scientific and technological development and innovation, helping the country transform into a knowledge-based economy. The event celebrates the role that science, mathematics, engineering and technology play in everyday life and encourages more young people to follow careers in these fields. It attracts thousands of members of the public, learners and educators to workshops, science shows and exhibitions at universities, schools and science centres countrywide.

**Grant holder can insert information about what they are doing in their province here.**

**Grant holder can insert information about their main activity that will attract people to visit activities here …**

The National Science Week launch event will be hosted by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Missionvale Campus on Saturday, 5 August 2017.

A program for the upcoming pre-events for National Science Week at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University will be online soon and all other events are already visible at <http://www.saasta.ac.za/programmes/focus-weeks/national-science-week/>