

Sifiso Fana Mdluli (26)

Career Objective:

I am driven to excel in roles requiring a blend of administrative, technical, and strategic competencies. With a strong interdisciplinary background and analytical acumen, I aim to spearhead impactful research and policy initiatives that address pressing societal challenges. My mission is to bridge the academia-policy gap by steering evidence-based decision-making processes and catalysing positive change across local, national, and international landscapes. Rooted in rigorous research methodologies and a nuanced comprehension of policy frameworks, I am committed to collaborating with diverse stakeholders in crafting innovative solutions. My passion lies in advancing social equity, environmental sustainability, and economic prosperity, particularly focusing on sustainable development and social inclusion. I aspire to inform policies and programs that foster equitable opportunities for all, driving a brighter, more inclusive future.

Education:

Tertiary Education

Institution	Qualification	Date of Completion
University of South Africa	MA in Development Studies	Current

Research Title: The inclusion of people with disabilities in employment-focused learnerships in Mbombela Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. South Africa.

Institution	Qualification	Date of Completion
University of South Africa	BA Honours in Development Studies	2023

Research Title: Barriers Affecting People Living with Disabilities within the Provincial Department of Social Development in Mpumalanga.

Institution	Qualification	Date of Completion
University of Mpumalanga	BA in Development Studies	2021

Core Modules: Development Planning, Policy Development, Development Economics, Gender Studies and Sociology.

High School Education

School: Lungisani Secondary
School

Grade: Twelve (12)

Date of Completion: 2016

Work History:

University of South Africa

Postgraduate Student Assistant (GYOT)

Sep 2022 - Current

Main Duties:

- Acting as the primary point of contact for student support inquiries via email, phone, and MS Teams.
- Responding promptly and professionally to student and staff inquiries.
- Ensuring students are kept informed about available events and support services.
- Assisting academic staff and students in troubleshooting technical problems.
- Generating awareness about events and support initiatives available to students and staff.
- Processing Non-Degree Purposes and Recognition of Prior Learning applications and collaborating with other student support members to ensure holistic student support.
- Attending and contributing to organising seminars, conferences, and departmental research.
- Supporting departmental and college committees.
- Participating in conferences, seminars, and research activities.
- Conducting internet searches for resources beneficial to Unisa students.
- Interacting with departmental staff, academic heads, College members, students, prospective students, other educational institutions, and professional societies nationally and internationally.
- Teaching a first-year module, Introduction to Development Studies, facilitating lectures, engaging students in foundational concepts of development, and guiding them through coursework and assessments.
- Actively utilizing the TravelIT booking system, managing travel arrangements, and ensuring seamless coordination of bookings and related services.

South African Development Studies Association (*SADSA*)

Administrator

Sep 2022 – Current

Main Duties:

- Organizing conferences for the South African Development Studies Association and liaising with delegates.

- Securing venues, managing registrations, coordinating speakers, and overseeing logistics.
 - Managing communication channels such as newsletters, email lists, and social media accounts to keep members informed about association news, events, and opportunities.
 - Providing support and assistance to members, including answering inquiries related to conferences, resolving issues, and facilitating networking opportunities during events.
 - Overseeing the publication of academic journals, newsletters, or other publications affiliated with the association.
 - Managing editorial processes for publications related to development studies.
 - Cultivating relationships with other academic institutions, organizations, and stakeholders to foster collaboration and partnership opportunities related to development studies.
 - Maintaining and analysing data related to conference registrations, membership, finances, and other aspects of the association's operations.
 - Using data to inform decision-making for future events and strategic planning.
 - Identifying areas for improvement within the association's conferences, publications, and overall operations.
 - Implementing strategies to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and member satisfaction.
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Skills & Competencies:

- **Excellent Command of English (Verbal and Written):** Proficient in professional communication, ensuring clarity and effectiveness in stakeholder interactions.
- **Administrative Proficiency:** Skilled in general administration tasks including documentation, record-keeping, and process management.
- **Pressure Management:** Experienced in managing multiple tasks efficiently and effectively under tight deadlines.
- **Stakeholder Relations:** Demonstrated ability to build and maintain positive relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- **Detail and Process Orientation:** Meticulous in handling administrative tasks and ensuring adherence to processes and protocols.
- **Team and Independent Work:** Flexible in autonomous and collaborative work settings, contributing positively to team dynamics.
- **Attention to Detail:** Highly attentive to details, ensuring accuracy and thoroughness in all tasks.
- **Confidentiality and Organization:** Committed to maintaining confidentiality and exhibiting strong organisational skills.
- **Customer Focus:** Dedicated to providing excellent service and support to stakeholders, ensuring their needs are met effectively.

- Knowledge of Relevant Legislation and Policies: Familiar with the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Skills Development Act, Employment Equity Act, Labour Relations Act, Skills Development Levies Act, PFMA and BBBEE, DHET Policies and Processes, Public Sector Reporting Protocol, and SETA Grants Regulations.
 - Strategic Thinking and Innovation: Proficient in strategic thinking, innovation, and creativity, envisioning long-term goals and developing innovative solutions to challenges.
 - Project Management and General Administration: Experienced in project management, from planning to execution, and skilled in general administration tasks, including documentation, record-keeping, and process management.
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Awards:

- NRF Masters 2023 Scarce Skills Full Cost Scholarship.
 - NRF Honours 2022 Scarce Skills Full Cost Scholarship.
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Manuscripts:

- Navigating Unemployment: Exploring Competency-Based Education in South Africa's Higher Education Landscape. Sifiso Mdluli. **In progress.**
 - Exploring the Efficacy of Inclusive Employment Policies for People with Disabilities: A Comparative Study between the Nordic Region and South Africa. Sifiso Mdluli. **In progress.**
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Conference & Seminar Presentations:

- International Teaching and Learning Conference, 6 – 10 May 2024, UNISA
- North Eastern Region UNISA Postgraduates Conference, 19 – 21 July 2022
- CHS Grow Your Own Timber Symposium, 13 September 2023
- Department of Health Studies Research Day, 6 October 2023