

## **South African Association for Theoretical and Applied Mechanics**

Esteemed Members of SAAM,

As President of the South African Association for Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, I am sharing feedback from the recently concluded 26th International Congress of Theoretical & Applied Mechanics (ICTAM 2024) held in Daegu, South Korea, from August 25-30, 2024. This event provided valuable opportunities for our community to engage with global developments in our field.

### **IUTAM Leadership and Governance**

- Prof. Norman Fleck (Cambridge University, UK) concluded his second term as IUTAM President.
- Prof. Jacques Magnaudet (CNRS, France) has been elected as the new President for 2024-2028.
- IUTAM is now officially registered in The Netherlands under new statutes, enhancing its international standing.

### **Increased Activities and Outreach**

- IUTAM events and summer schools now occur almost monthly, offering more opportunities for our members to participate.
- The new IUTAM website (<https://iutam.org/>) features a "New Horizons" section, which I encourage our members to explore for emerging areas in mechanics.

### **Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives**

Of particular interest to our South African community is IUTAM's allocation of a \$50,000 diversity budget for 2025-2027 aimed at:

- Promoting diversity within IUTAM Symposia and Summer Schools
- Supporting new topics in mechanics
- Increasing participation from underrepresented countries
- Encouraging meetings in underrepresented regions

I strongly encourage our members to consider leveraging these initiatives to increase South African participation and visibility in the international mechanics community.

### **ICTAM 2024 Statistics**

Hosted by Prof. Heuy Dong Kim, the congress was a significant success:

- Total presentations: 2,172
- Breakdown: 2 plenary talks, 2 prize lectures (Hill and Batchelor prizes), 16 sectional lectures
- 247 mini-symposia
- Thematic sessions: 909 in fluids, 2,756 in solids, 240 in fluid-structure interaction
- 2,512 abstracts accepted
- 54 countries represented
- Top participating countries: China (605), Korea (326), India (218), USA (175), France (126), Japan (119)

### **Support and Participation**

- Support Grants (registration waivers) were provided to 100 students and 70 young scientists.

- I'm pleased to report that one South African student received a support grant, but I believe we can increase this number in future events.
- Total registrations: 2,882 (940 full, 1,425 students, 517 accompanying persons)

### **Looking Ahead: ICTAM 2028**

Wien TU will host the next congress from August 21 to 25, 2028, in Vienna, Austria.

- ICTAM 2028 Presidents:
  - Prof. Alfredo Soldati for Fluid Mechanics
  - Prof. Christian Hellmich for Solids

As we look towards ICTAM 2028, I would like to set an ambitious goal for our association to increase South African representation significantly. I propose that the National IUTAM committee develop strategies for:

1. Encouraging more abstract submissions from our members
2. Seeking funding to support our young researchers and students to attend
3. Exploring possibilities for hosting IUTAM symposia or summer schools in South Africa

The success of ICTAM 2024 and the new initiatives by IUTAM present excellent opportunities for our South African community to engage more deeply with the international mechanics community.

As your President, I am committed to facilitating this engagement and elevating our association's profile on the global stage.

I welcome your thoughts, ideas, and volunteers for our ICTAM 2028 preparation committee. Please contact me directly <president@saam.africa> to share ideas how we can best capitalise on these opportunities.

Sincerely,

Daniel N. Wilke

President, South African Association for Theoretical and Applied  
Mechanics