

Wits, African Rainbow Minerals partner to strengthen research in mining

By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Wits University and African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) on Wednesday, 9 November, signed a five-year Memorandum of Agreement that aims to boost research and technology development in the mining sector.



Professor Cuthbert Musingwini, head of the Wits School of Mining Engineering

While the Wits School of Mining Engineering will be the main contact point for managing the agreement, the partnership extends to the Schools of Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering, Accountancy, Geosciences, and the Wits Mining Institute.

Wits' partnership with ARM is a particularly special one because of its focus on postgraduate research, said Professor Cuthbert Musingwini, head of the School of Mining Engineering.

ARM will offer bursaries and vacation work experience for selected postgraduate students who will be able to carry out their research in a real-world environment. They will also be considered for the mining firm's graduate development programme and future permanent employment.

"This is what makes this partnership quite unique in that we are building this pipeline of skills," said Musingwini.

"And even those who would have gone through this programme and don't end up being absorbed into African Rainbow Minerals, they are also able to transfer their skills to the rest of the minerals industry," he said.

ARM, in collaboration with Wits, has selected five MSc and two PhD research topics so far.



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Collaboration and cooperation with local communities

The partnership aims to add value to the industry while also addressing some of its numerous challenges, particularly in the social space, said Thando Mkatshana, chief executive of ARM Platinum.

"It's quite important that, as the mining industry, we forge new partnerships with our communities and all our stakeholders to ensure that we succeed.

"This is one of the areas we'd like to spend more time and resources on to see how we can move forward in a collaborative and cooperative way to ensure that we make an impact on those communities that we operate in," Mkatshana said.

Apart from cultivating a multidisciplinary approach that goes beyond just the technical aspects, partnerships such as this

also lead to a more transdisciplinary approach, said Professor Ian Jandrell, deputy vice-chancellor: systems and operations at Wits.

"If we look at the challenges in the mining industry, not only in South Africa but internationally, it's finding those opportunities in the new spaces of that transdisciplinary environment that I truly believe the future will be created," he said.



Thando Mkatshana, chief executive of ARMPlatinum

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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