



Nelson Mandela University

17 October 2025

**Redefining Creative
Arts**

Business School Campus,
2nd Avenue,
NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY,
GQEBERHA

Session Proceedings Brief
TEDxNelsonMandelaUniversity 2025 TEDx Track
17 October 2025

Background

The creative arts take centre stage at Nelson Mandela University this October, as the institution hosts TEDxNelsonMandelaUniversity 2025 under the theme “Redefining Creative Arts.” In an era defined by technology, social transformation, and global interconnectedness, the boundaries of artistic expression are constantly shifting.

This year’s TEDx talk gathers artists, academics, entrepreneurs, and innovators to explore and celebrate the evolving landscape of creativity and its power to shape culture, identity, and the future. Traditional boundaries between disciplines are dissolving, and new forms of expression are emerging; challenging conventional norms and redefining what it means to be an artist, creator, storyteller, or cultural contributor.

Organised under the official TEDx licence, the event aims to inspire new ways of thinking about art’s role in society - how it intersects with technology, education, activism, and entrepreneurship; and to strengthen ties between the University and the region’s vibrant creative community.

08H30-09H00 | Registration & Live Performance

09H00 – 11H00 | Session 1:

09H00- 09H20 | Opening

Program Director: **Mr Nolo Mokoena**
Co-Founder, Crtev Development

Session Overview:

This session explores how art, heritage, and enterprise converge to redefine African creativity. Industry leaders and academics share insights on how storytelling, craftsmanship, and design drive both cultural preservation and economic innovation. Together, they uncover how creative expressions rooted in history yet boldly modern; shapes identity, fuels entrepreneurship, and reimagines Africa’s creative future.

Session Format:

The session will take a sequential presentation format, with each speaker individually introduced by the Programme Director, Mr Nolo Mokoena. Speakers will deliver their talks consecutively, each allocated **10–15 minutes** to share their ideas aligned with the theme “*Redefining Creative Arts*”. After each presentation, Mr Mokoena will provide a brief reflection before introducing the next speaker, ensuring a smooth and cohesive flow throughout the session.

(5 Minutes after each speaker)

Speakers

1. **09h20–09h35 | Prof Azwinndini Murongo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation (RII)**

Prof Murongo will deliver the welcoming address, reflecting on how creativity and the arts can redefine cultural expression and inspire new ways of thinking. His remarks will highlight the university's role in nurturing innovation, imagination, and the transformative power of storytelling in shaping Africa's creative future.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

2. **09H40–09H55 | Ms Unathi Lutshaba, Executive Director, South African Cultural Observatory**

Ms Lutshaba will discuss the evolving landscape of Africa's creative industries, providing insights into their economic potential, key challenges, and opportunities for growth. Her talk will underscore the importance of data and innovation in strengthening sustainable creative ecosystems across the continent.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

3. **10H00–10H15 | Ms Giselle Bailie, Cultural Historian and Researcher**

Ms Baillie will present on how historical narratives continue to shape identity and creative expression. She emphasizes the importance of reclaiming and reinterpreting African histories through the arts as a means of fostering cultural revitalization, empowerment, and imaginative transformation.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

4. **10H20–10H35 | Prof Pitika Ntuli, Sculptor, Poet, and Philosopher**

Prof Ntuli will explore how traditional materials such as bone and stone can be used to engage with historical memory and cultural identity. Drawing from his interdisciplinary background in fine arts and industrial sociology, Prof Ntuli will reflect on the role of sculpture as a medium for storytelling, resistance, and reimagining African heritage in contemporary contexts.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

5. **10H40–10H55 | Mr Laduma Ngxokolo, Founder and Creative Director, MAXHOSA AFRICA**

Mr Ngxokolo will present his story of transforming traditional Xhosa beadwork and patterns into globally celebrated fashion. His presentation will illustrate how cultural heritage can be a foundation for innovation, entrepreneurship, and the global celebration of African identity.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

11H00-11H30 INTERMISSION

11H30–13H00 | Session 2:

Programme Director: Mr Nolo Mokoena

Session Format:

The session will take a sequential presentation format, with each speaker individually introduced by the Programme Director, Mr Nolo Mokoena. Speakers will deliver their talks consecutively, each allocated **10–15 minutes** to share their ideas aligned with the theme “*Redefining Creative Arts*”. After each presentation, Mr Mokoena will provide a brief reflection before introducing the next speaker, ensuring a smooth, engaging, and cohesive flow throughout the session.

Session Overview

The second session focuses on the transformative power of the arts in education, healing, and cultural empowerment. Through a series of engaging talks, speakers will explore how performance, music, pedagogy, and storytelling serve as tools for personal growth, social connection, and cultural preservation. Each presentation will offer insights into how creative expression can foster resilience, inspire learning, and strengthen identity within communities. This session invites the audience to reflect on the role of the arts not only as a form of expression, but as a catalyst for meaningful change in society.

Speakers:

11H30-11H40 | Second session Introduction

Programme Director, Mr Nolo Mokoena

6. 11H40-11H55 | Mr Hlomla Dandala, Actor, Television presenter, and Director

Mr Dandala will unpack the layers of how performance can be used as a powerful tool for storytelling and identity formation. He will reflect on how acting brings personal and collective narratives to life, helping individuals and communities express their experiences, challenge perceptions, and connect through shared stories.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

7. 12H00-12H15 | Mr David Bester, Senior lecturer and Head of Strings at Nelson Mandela University

Mr Bester will share insights into how string education can be a powerful space for personal and artistic development. Drawing from his experience as a performer and educator, he will reflect on how teaching and learning through music helps shape identity and fosters deeper engagement between students and their craft. His talk will highlight the role of creative pedagogy in building confidence, connection, and expressive freedom in young musicians.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

8. 12H20-12H35 | Ms Zolani Mahola, singer, actress, storyteller, and inspirational speaker

Ms Zolani Mahola will illustrate how music and storytelling can be used to express personal journeys and connect communities. She will reflect on how songs become a space for reflections, emotional strength, and shared understandings. Her talk will highlight the role of the arts in inspiring hope and shaping meaningful conversations in society.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

9. 12H40-12H55 | Dr Gcina Mhlophe, storytellers, playwrights, authors, and literacy advocates

Dr Gcina Mhlophe will reflect on the role of storytelling and writing in preserving and evolving cultural traditions. She will explore how language and narrative shape identity, connect generations, and inspire learning. Her talk will highlight the importance of keeping stories alive to honor heritage and build stronger, more connected communities.

09H35-09H40 | Programme Director (5 minutes)

A brief reflection on the previous speaker preceded by an introduction of the next speaker

10. 13H00-13H05 | Director: Research, Innovation and Internalization

The Director of the Research, Innovation and Internationalization will conclude the TEDxNelsonMandelaUniversity 2025 programme with closing reflections on the day's theme, "*Redefining Creative Arts*". This brief address will highlight key insights from the speakers, acknowledge contributors and attendees, and reinforce the university's commitment to fostering creativity, innovation, and cultural engagement. The closing will also invite continued dialogue and collaboration beyond the event, as the audience transitions into the networking lunch.

13H05-15H00 LUNCH & NETWORKING