SA to benefit from new agreement on basic, computational sciences

Higher Education, Science and Innovation Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande has welcomed a new agreement between South Africa and Italy, that will see basic and computational sciences development in South Africa.

Image source: Andor Bujdoso – 123RF.com

This follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between South Africa's National Institute of Theoretical Physics (NITheCS) and Triste's Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) on the sidelines of the World Science Forum in Cape Town last week.

NITheCS Director, Prof Francesco Petruccione and ICTP Director, Prof Atish Dabholkar, signed the agreement in the presence of Nzimande.

Nzimande believes that the partnership will not only provide important support for basic science in South Africa but also serve as a model for future international collaborations in the field.

The agreement will see the two institutes working together on a range of initiatives, including the development of theoretical and computational research and education in South Africa, and the exchange of scientists and students between the two countries.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with NITheCS to support the growth of theoretical physics in South Africa,” said Dabholkar.

“This collaboration will provide valuable international opportunities for South African scientists and students and those at ICTP to work together and advance their research,” he added.

The department said the MoU is a significant step forward in the relationship between ICTP and NITheCS.

“It will have a positive impact on the development of theoretical and computational sciences in South Africa and Africa,” noted Petruccione.

The NITheCS provides a platform for research, training and engagement in theoretical physics, astronomy and astrophysics, data science, mathematics, statistics, quantitative finance, bioinformatics and quantitative biology, earth systems modelling and climate change modelling.

According to Dabholkar, ICTP is a unique institution that explores fundamental scientific questions at the highest level, promotes active engagement with scientists in developing countries, and advances international cooperation through science.

“Scientists there conduct rigorous excellent, curiosity-driven research in frontier and interdisciplinary science ranging from string theory, cosmology, and black holes to quantum computing, climate science, and quantitative life sciences.”

To learn more about these institutions, please visit www.nithecs.ac.za and www.ictp.it.