

> IUBMB TI – Your Monthly Minutes

Your favorite monthly newsletter



In memory of Tatenda

Today we embrace the beauty of life and the reality of death - for Tatenda Murigo. With enthusiasm and engagement, she was about to shape the face of science in Africa. Tatenda, thank you for your efforts, for your energy and the projects you moved forward. Let's remember her energy and use it to progress the development of science!

> *Who Tatenda is*

Studied in Zimbabwe



Was finishing her Bachelor's degree soon



Driven by creativity



A multifaceted volunteer in various initiatives



I am in the last year of my undergraduate degree. I chose to study Biochemistry because it was the creative aspect of life that I was interested in! Mixing the element of science and creativity seemed just too exciting.



I currently work on the biosynthesis of Nanoparticles. We use plants extracts to couple them with magnesium-oxide-nanoparticles. Our work in bio-drug discovery should help treating skin diseases that are common here in Africa. We compare the efficiency of these extracts to cure infections caused by various bacteria. The ultimate goal to develop a cream for treatment.



I would like to proceed my career in bioprocess-engineering or biological engineering. I see a need for stronger participation and increased uptake of science in our country. We have to communicate how bioengineering can be used in agriculture, environmental, or medical applications. Our science and technology guidelines were last updated in 2012. We urgently need a credible voice to get the potential of scientific innovation recognized.

Tatenda, what do you think are the barriers to get scientific approaches established in Africa?

Something that might be called the barrier to entry. Especially for genetically modified organisms decision making is limited by a lack of knowledge. Another big challenge I see is the missing transfer of technology. There is a big desire for cooperating with European, Asian or American partners but very few aim at intra-African cooperation. That is often due to the missing funding for such undertakings.

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Sharing effectively

Some tips to communicate effectively: At first, it is important to select the content you want to communicate. That means, decide which points you want to bring across. Then, make sure you not only share the plain content but also why these insights are valuable. Finally, I once took a masterclass on public communication. They could show that the lower the complexity of your language the better. Its even [available for you](#) online!



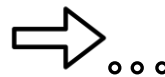
Whom to choose

I feel that there are very few group leaders who are good administrators and good supervisors at once. Most universities look only for the one or the other. The problem is that many do not know how to delegate when they lack the necessary skills. Whether it is how to handle finances, how to generate new leaders or support people in founding start ups. Still, I do think that many of the top performing universities look for a more holistic picture in their staff.



Invest in the future

To my mind, student development is underappreciated. In the pyramid of needs, many are emotionally and mentally malnourished. We need a kind of investment that goes into student well being in the form of mental but also physical health and education. One should get to know things outside of one's current boundaries. When viewed in the long run, that will improve the research output as well.



Our Future

I would like to contribute with a podcast. Such a form of content might engage our audience because it is more relaxed and available on-demand. I could imagine that people will feel better about sending a question to a podcast team rather than asking during a public talk. In the beginning, our Trainee Committee has to get it started. Later, we could start to invite speakers. I think with a rather informal style we can cover diverse set of content.

> What it means to be creative?

What characterizes my creative approach, might be thinking about how to take different perspectives on a process or a particular opportunity. Instead of merely doing research, we have to communicate our findings. Making others understand, even though they might be from other backgrounds. Creativity can be expressed in animations, films, or comics. Again, do not just break things down to make the audience understand but also transmit the importance and especially the beauty of solutions.

Thanks for your inspiration Tatenda –



Trainee Initiative

– We will continue to keep it up!