



Joint Media Statement

22 November 2023, Johannesburg

African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) sponsors R20 million into research at the University of the Witwatersrand

African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme to support research into water, energy and digitalisation in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment.

South Africa is facing three key challenges: energy shortages, water scarcity, and the lack of skills in digitalisation. A new collaboration between [African Rainbow Minerals](#) ("ARM") and the [Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment](#) ("Faculty") in the University of the Witwatersrand ([Wits University](#)) aims to develop the high-level skills required to address these issues.

Dr Patrice Motsepe, Founder and Executive Chairman of African Rainbow Minerals (ARM), a Wits University alumnus and recipient of an honorary doctorate degree, said: "ARM is proud to partner with Wits University which is a globally respected academic institution. Partnering with South African institutions of higher learning is paramount in our pursuit of knowledge, innovation, skills, and sustainable development. Public-private partnerships are crucial in addressing the socio-economic and environmental challenges confronting our communities and country. ARM works with several top universities across South Africa, supporting young people from undergraduate to post-graduate studies, helping them to realise their dreams. Some of these students come from communities neighbouring our mining operations. We also contribute to the development and upliftment of poor rural and urban communities in South Africa by educating students from these communities."

The ARM Postgraduate Fellowship Programme at Wits University aims to develop and sharpen a critical mass of skills in South Africa through supporting a new cohort of postdoctoral fellows who will specialise in Water Resource Management, Digitalisation, and work towards a Just Energy Transition. ARM will sponsor a R20 million endowment, which will be invested into perpetuity. The investment return on the endowment will be used to support research in the [Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment](#).

"We recognise the importance of digital transformation in the mining industry, and the necessity to develop the critical skills needed to advance our economy," says [Prof. Zebulon Vilakazi \(FRS\)](#), Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Wits University. "This investment is firmly located in the Wits University Mining Precinct and dovetails with our broader initiatives in quantum computing, fintech and innovation. We are confident that through more private sector partnerships like the ARM Postgraduate Fellowship Programme, Wits University can help make a real difference in developing the critical skills and research needed to secure the long-term sustainability of the mining industry."

[Prof. Thokozani Majozi](#), the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment adds: “The Faculty recognises the urgency of transitioning to a more sustainable and just energy system. Research and promotion of accessible, affordable, and socio-economically just renewable energy solutions are our top priorities. Water is a critical resource, and we aim to contribute to the sustainable management of water resources through research, education, increased awareness and community engagement. This includes addressing challenges related to water scarcity, pollution, and climate change.”

Phillip Tobias, Chief Executive Officer of ARM said: “The ARM Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme is a testament to our commitment to addressing critical challenges in water, energy, and digitalisation facing our business and the country as a whole. This initiative is about creating a pipeline of future critical skills that will cater for future business needs. We believe that through this collaboration, we can make a significant impact and leave a lasting legacy that will provide innovative and sustainable solutions that will benefit not only the mining industry but broader South African society as well.”

Renaming of the Chamber of Mines Building to the African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) Building

The partnership between ARM and Wits University will see the current Chamber of Mines Building on the Braamfontein West Campus facing the M1 highway being renamed the **Wits African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) Building**. The **Wits African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) Building** is a central and crucial component of the University of the Witwatersrand's academic and research infrastructure. This building was opened in 1989 with the fourth quadrant completed in 2012. It houses the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment's administration, the School of Mining Engineering and the School of Electrical and Information Engineering. The building is also home to the multidisciplinary Wits Mining Institute, a DigiMine and two other research entities.

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Links:

[African Rainbow Minerals Limited](#)

[Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment](#)

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