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Forum on Regional Networks and related Scientific Conference plays important role in training new academic staff

The African Centre for Gene Technologies (ACGT), a partnership between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the University of Pretoria and the University of the Witwatersrand is one of the key organisers of a Forum on Regional Networks in Africa and a related Scientific Conference, which takes place from 5 to 8 October 2010 at the Kopanong Hotel and Conference Centre in Benoni. The Science Initiative Group (SIG) at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) will be hosting the conference.

The ACGT which is based at the University of Pretoria, plays a key role in the network “Southern African Biochemistry and Informatics for Natural Products” (SABINA). SABINA is one of five networks that make up the Carnegie-IAS Regional Initiative in Science and Education (RISE).

The Forum will also be celebrating three successful years of RISE and include panel discussions by leaders of universities, science academies, government ministries and regional organizations. The scientific conference will showcase RISE student research. All sessions will be open to the press.

Established in 2008, RISE prepares PhD and MSc-level scientists and engineers in sub-Saharan Africa through research and training networks, each involving universities in at least

three countries. Its primary emphases are on training new academic staff to teach in African universities and on upgrading the qualifications of current academic staff. Some 90 students from 14 institutions in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa have benefited from RISE support to date. Additional information about the initiative and the Forum is available at www.ias.edu/rise.

This Forum will bring together academic staff and students from all 14 RISE institutions. Selected PhD and MSc candidates will make short presentations on their research (intended for a non-specialist audience), and all student attendees will participate in poster sessions. There will be ample opportunity for interviews and informal interactions with students, faculty, and other meeting participants.

If you have any questions, please feel free to address them to Lori Mulcare at sig@ias.edu.

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