

## LGBTIQ+ network launches forum

In an effort to unify the LGBTIQ+ community globally, the Thami Dish Foundation will host a three day global network session that seeks to unleash a unified global voice - aimed at championing issue-based responses, advocacy and interventions around matters pertaining the LGBTIQ+ community.



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The global LGBTIQ+ Network Conference, that runs from 10 to 12 October 2018 at Constitution Hill Johannesburg South Africa, will provide a platform where ordinary members of the LGBTIQ+ community share their personal life anecdotes, debate the state of legislature as well as diverse issues faced by LGBTIQ+ people across different landscapes. “Considering the various challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ people across the globe, there has not been enough and easily accessible documentation of movement that creates an authentic space for the rights and issues of homosexual, trans, bisexual and intersex people to be debated and interventions to be tabled,” explained Jay Matlou, global LGBTIQ+ project manager.

“This platform will serve as the first initiative of its kind that seeks to bring together this community, blur continental lines and unleash an authoritative voice that advocates and celebrates the LGBTIQ+ life.”

He added that such a gathering will assist in establishing a global community that collectively responds and reacts to the injustices and prejudice against LGBTIQ+ people – a voice that empowers and enables the community to be part of the global narrative that is seen as a contributing worldly member towards building global values and practices.

With October marking the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Johannesburg Gay Pride March, the conference will also pay tribute to anti-apartheid gay activist, Simon Nkoli, one of the country’s first gay activists, who through his dedication and voice pioneered gay rights campaigns in apartheid South Africa.

“Simon Nkoli was an ordinary community member, like you and I, who shared his daily challenges and through his bold unapologetic voice continuously spearheaded the rights of LGBTIQ+ across the globe. We draw strength from his activism and as such hope that this platform will unearth a global collective Simon Nkoli voice,” said Matlou.

Notable speakers and facilitators will include:

- Sade Giliberti – conference MC
- Ricki Kgositau – international trans activist
- Siya Khumalo – published author and activist
- Reverend Nokuthula Dhladhla
- Tamara Mathebula – member of the Commission for Gender Equality
- Buti Manamela – deputy minister of higher education, South Africa
- Judge Edwin Cameron – Constitutional Court of South Africa judge
- Phindi Malaza – co-founder of Soweto Pride
- Ghadir Shafie – The Young Feminist Fund, Palestine

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