

THE CONVERSATION EDITORS VISIT FABI

FABI welcomed Science and Technology Editor, Natasha Joseph and Environment and Energy Editor, Ozayr Patel from the online platform, The Conversation, on 26 February. Numerous FABIans have contributed editorials to this popular site including Prof Brenda Wingfield, FABI Director Prof Bernard Slippers and Smeetha Singh while a news item by Prof Wilhelm de Beer is in press.

When introducing the Editors, Brenda said that, in an era of Internet and social media, it is imperative that scientists have their views heard and to lobby for science. Public engagement by academics is crucial as the average person on the street reads articles with few filters and cannot easily distinguish fact from fiction.



Natasha explained that The Conversation is a free, open-access source of news and views from the academic and research community providing a platform for experts to engage with the public and provide expert information. In an era of “fake news” The Conversation aims to restore trust in journalism through rigorous selection criteria and transparency. The site only allows authors to write on a subject on

which they have proven expertise, which is disclosed alongside their article. All contributors must be academics or Ph.D. candidates. Articles are concise with a 900-word limit while topics cover a diverse range of disciplines.

Natasha emphasised that The Conversation believes in open access and the free-flow of information. It is a free resource: free to read and free to share or republish. They provide valuable media resources: free content, ideas and talent to follow up for press, web, radio or TV. Contributors reach a worldwide audience of professional and lay people.

Both Natasha and Oz encouraged more FABIans to become contributors but also to sign up for their newsletter. They stressed that The Conversation is not a peer-review Journal nor does it aim to be one. It is a platform to explain why your research matters in a clear jargon-free and easy to read format.