

7 March 2019

To: All Natural Scientists Employers

Dear Manager

Registration of Natural Scientists practising in South Africa

The South African Council of the Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) is a statutory Council established by an Act of Parliament - The Natural Scientific Professions Act, (Act No. 27 of 2003) as amended (hereby referred to as the NSP Act) and is the registration and regulation authority for natural science professionals in South Africa.

A survey conducted amongst natural scientists practising in South Africa, revealed that

- *professional training and development,*
- *leaders who support their development and*
- *innovation*

were their top three requirements in the work environment. This report further revealed only 19% of all natural scientists surveyed are likely to recommend their current employer with 44% interested in changing their employer in the current year. (Universum Talent Research 2017; Talent Insight Report, SACNASP vs. All Natural Scientists). Talent acquisition and retention is crucial for the success of any business in the world. Registration of practising natural scientists with SACNASP is one the mechanisms to assist industry and commerce.

A 'Practising natural scientist' means a person who practises in the disciplines of the natural sciences and includes a person qualified in any of the fields of practice who is self-employed or employed by any company, organisation or by any sphere of government.. Employers or member of the public engaging the skills of professionals related to the natural scientific profession need to ensure these activities are only performed by a registered scientist. A person may not practise in any of the fields of practise outlined in Schedule 1 of the Act unless registered with SACNASP. Currently, there are 25 fields of practice gazetted by the Minister of Science and Technology and they represent the fields that have a significant enough impact on the economy or safety of the public. This includes fields such as chemistry, physics, mathematics, biology, food sciences, zoology, and geology. Scientists are registered in fields of practice and are not allowed to do natural science work outside their registered fields of practice to ensure a high quality of work.

Registration at SACNASP sets a baseline for professional training, skills and competence required by the professional as determined and evaluated by their peers. It is a mark of excellence, ensures public confidence, international recognition, marketability and professionalism. This is achieved firstly by a rigorous registration process that assesses the applicants' qualifications and work experience. The applicants need to prove to professional scientists that they have the correct qualifications in terms of the level and subject matter, supported by relevant work experience prior to registration at this Council. Once registered, natural scientists are expected to remain relevant in their fields of practice

by attending industry related events, training and reading relevant material throughout their careers as natural scientists. This is monitored via the Continuing Professional Development Programme. These activities will be regularly audited by SACNASP to ensure that the registered scientists, in their fields of practice, are still actively involved in the field and can hence maintain their registration as a professional natural scientists.

Registered Scientists must also comply with a Code of Conduct. If a registered scientist is responsible for substandard work or has displayed behaviour not in compliance with the Code of Conduct, SACNASP can take appropriate action. As indicated, the key role of SACNASP is as a registration and regulation body for natural scientists and in so doing, provide protection to the public and the profession. By employing a Registered Scientist, industry benefits in terms of risk mitigation in that their scientists were evaluated by the statutory registration authority and are regulated by such.

Modern society and the social and economic challenges facing South Africa, requires top quality, highly skilled professionals in the fields of science and technology. SACNASP is therefore also involved in the setting and controlling of standards in education, training and conduct of professionals.

Finally, you are welcome to contact Landi Jacobs at yjacobs@sacnasp.org.za for further information.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pradish Rampersadh', written in a cursive style.

Dr Pradish Rampersadh Pr.Sci.Nat.

CEO: SACNASP