

## Digital Tools for Social Engagement in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Ms Zinzi Magoda

Ms Sisanda Nkoala

Mr Vusi Mshayisa

Dr Blessing Makwambeni

Dr Victor Mugobo

Digital tools have become a way of life, and as such, have become a growing topic of study for researchers in a range of disciplines. There is growing agreement in the scholarship that due to the ways in which they shape human to human interaction, greater focus needs to be placed on understanding the role they play in social engagement from a transdisciplinary perspective. The current dominant outlook of these tools appears to be understanding them as disrupters of particular fields or an enabler in certain contexts. There does not appear to have been much research on how these tools are used to facilitate social engagement, and the consequence of this gap is that we have not sufficiently theorised on how the role of digital tools in social engagement. As such, the key research question the study intends to answer is: How do digital tools help or hinder social engagement in teaching and learning? The study is explorative in nature and employs qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. The purpose of this transdisciplinary project is to examine and theorise on ways that different fields employ digital tools for social engagement. To this end, the study hopes to make findings that will firstly expand the theoretical perspective on digital tools to better understand their role in social engagement, addressing an existing gap in the literature. Secondly, due to its transdisciplinary nature, the study hopes to make an epistemological contribution, through its findings on how these digital tools shape teaching and learning in different disciplines within higher education. The final purpose of the study is to work towards developing an actual digital tool that can be used across disciplines to address any issues related to the use of these tools that arise during the investigation.

Stream: Student Learning

Format: Poster Questions

1. What are the implications of using digital tools that were not conceptualised with educational ends in mind for teaching and learning?
2. What are the consequences of trying to replicate in-person engagement in online spaces?