



## University of Kwa Zulu-Natal

### Disability Online Research and Practice Indaba-2020

#### Call for Abstracts

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly brought untold human suffering and indignity for many. It is also true that the effects thereof are being felt most by the marginalized populations, part of which are persons with disabilities. Considering this, the World Health Organization, through its 2020 report, has declared support for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in response plans and priorities in this COVID-19 moment. This coupled with the right to an equitable and equal Higher Education being a clear human rights trajectory evident in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Agenda, warrants bringing a focus that “nobody shall be left behind”. This exact premise, for Higher Education, translates to **“no student shall be left behind”**. Hence the need for reimagining a Higher Education space to accommodate the intersections of COVID-19 and disability as a new order to consider.

Abstracts are invited in relation to the following theme and sub themes below.

**“No student will be left behind”: Reimagining higher education disability services in response to COVID-19.**

The **subthemes** will focus on:

### **Digital Accessibility in Higher Education**

The sudden transition to remote online learning is affecting access and participation in higher education. Many students face digital isolation, whilst others are successfully navigating online learning to breach former barriers to equitable access and participation. However, inaccessibility to technology and data is sidelining students with disabilities to the margins of higher education.

### **Living and Learning: Building New Foundations in Higher Education for Enhanced Mental Wellness**

The impact of COVID-19 and disability in higher education living and learning spaces provides opportunities to build new foundations in supporting mental wellness, self-care, and stigma reduction. The Sustainable Development Goals 2030 Agenda supports equal educational opportunities to enrich and strengthen the expansion of human development in a socially inclusive world.

### **The Right to Self-Representation: A Rights-Based Approach to COVID-19 and Disability**

The voices of persons with disabilities must not be overlooked in the COVID-19 moment. This is the time when “No one should be left behind, and no human right ignored”.

#### **Important information:**

- **Date of the Disability Online Research and Practice Indaba: 10 November 2020.**
- **Closing date for the first call for abstracts: 11 September 2020**

- Abstracts to be emailed to: Mrs Tahitha Davinia Pillay at [PillayT7@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:PillayT7@ukzn.ac.za)
- Authors of the successful abstracts will still need to register using the online registration form.
- Registration is free.