

# INVITATION

Dialogue on migrant youth in South Africa

**TOPIC:** *The Architecture of 'Stoppedness': Exploring Administrative Violence and Ontological Insecurity through Participatory Research with Migrant Youth in South Africa*

## SPEAKERS

**DATE:** Thursday, 11 June 2026

**TIME:** 16:00 - 18:00 (SAST)

**VENUE:** Future Africa Campus, University of Pretoria

**RSVP** by 29 May 2026

[REGISTER](#)



**Prof. Jane Freedman**  
GRABS Project, CRESSPA  
Université Paris 8



**Dr Glenda Santana de Andrade**  
GRABS Project, CRESSPA



**Aron Tesfai**  
GRABS Project  
Human rights activist



**Prof. Nolwazi Mkhwanazi**  
University of Pretoria  
Professor of Anthropology

In partnership with the IRD-CNRS-CIRAD Joint Office in Southern Africa and Future Africa at the University of Pretoria

# ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

## Dialogue on migrant youth in South Africa: The Architecture of 'Stoppedness'

11 June 2026 | 16:00 - 18:00 | Future Africa Campus, University of Pretoria

SCIENCE SHARING SERIES

SCIENCE SHARING SERIES

SCIENCE SHARING SERIES

SCIENCE SHARING SERIES

SCIENCE SHARING SERIES



Find out more about the  
**GRABS project**  
Here

UNIVERSITÉ  
**PARIS**  
DES CRÉATIONS



Forced migration and mobility across borders is a major issue for Southern Africa, and has become particularly contentious in South African politics. While global migration discourse predominantly focuses on the mechanics of mobility—the crossing of geographical and social borders—this conference shifts the focus to the lived and embodied reality of immobility. Drawing from the GRABS project in South Africa, we examine how young people (aged 15–25) in situations of forced migration encounter systemic forms of violence that restrict both physical movement and social mobility. Within this framework, we analyze various forms of structural and physical violence — manifested through legal barriers, bureaucratic violence, xenophobia and afrophobia — creates a state of ontological insecurity for these young people. This "stoppedness" is not merely a delay; it is a fundamental disruption of the self, preventing them from projecting a stable identity into an imagined adult future.

This conference aims to show how these methods might lead to the emergence of new knowledge from the margins to help us better understand the challenges faced by migrant youth and their strategies for coping with them. We hope that this in turn will allow us to develop recommendations for policies and programmes to support these young people and to challenge the multiple forms of violence they face.

**Jane Freedman** is the leader of the GRABS project. She is a Professor at the Université Paris 8 and a member of the Paris Centre for Social and Political Research (CREPPA). Her research has focused for many years on issues of migration and borders, with an intersectional and postcolonial approach. She is particularly interested in the ways that migration and border policies create gendered and racist forms of violence and vulnerability for people on the move, and the ways in which people on the move resist this violence.

**Glenda Santana de Andrade** holds a PhD in Sociology and is affiliated with CRESSPA (Centre for Sociological and Political Research in Paris). She is a fellow at the Institut Convergences Migrations. Currently a postdoctoral researcher within the GRABS project and a lecturer at Sciences Po Paris, she is also a member of the scientific network Genre & Politiques Migratoires, the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration, and the International Public Policy Association.

Previously, as a postdoctoral researcher at CNRS (2022–2023), she worked on the project "Transactional Sex and the Health Repercussions in Forced Migration", which examined why, when, and how refugees (male, female, transgender) engage in transactional sex and its impact on their sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and mental health. Her PhD thesis focused on Refugees and Survival Strategies: The Case of Syrians in Urban Spaces in Jordan and Turkey. Her research interests include refugees, migration, citizenship, collective action, survival strategies, intersectionality, and gender. She has published multiple articles and books in both English and French.

**Aron Hagos Tesfai** is a South Africa partner in the GRABS project. He has a PhD in Psychology (Health Promotion) from University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. His research focuses on migration and psychosocial well-being of refugees. His research interests cover the social psychology of migration and explore themes such as integration, social trust, belongingness, mobility and agency. He is a refugee activist and involved in refugee politics. He is currently involved in a research project on migration looking at the intersectional vulnerabilities of young refugees and sexual and gender-based violence in the context of migration.

**Nolwazi Mkhwanazi (discussant)** is a Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship at the University of Pretoria. A medical anthropologist, her work examines reproduction, kinship, care, sexuality, gender, and the life course in Africa. Her research is grounded in long-term ethnographic work in South Africa and in collaborative projects across Africa and internationally. She is co-founder of the Medical and Health Humanities Africa network and leads the Wellcome-funded project Reimagining Reproduction: making babies, making kin and citizens in Africa.

