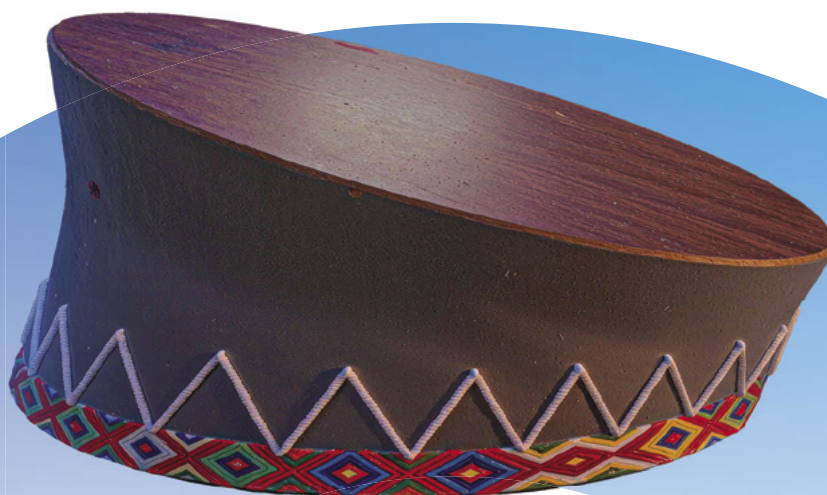




CALL FOR PAPERS:

2026 CONFERENCE

KwaZulu-Natal AMAFA & Research Institute in collaboration with the School of Arts, College of Humanities invite you to a Bicentennial Commemoration of Queen Nandi: A Conference on Prominent Women in Southern Africa.



Friday,
16 October 2026



08h30 - 16h30



Unite Building, Howard College,
Gate 8, University of
KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

CLICK HERE TO RSVP



A programme will be shared with registrants.

CONFERENCE THEME:

Queen Nandi, the mother of King Shaka ka Senzangakhona, occupies a significant place in the history of the Zulu Kingdom and the broader history of Southern Africa. Born circa 1764, Queen Nandi lived during a transformative period in the region's history. She died on 10 October 1827. The year 2027 will mark the bicentenary of Queen Nandi's passing. This milestone presents an important opportunity to reflect on her historical significance and to situate her life within the wider history of influential women in Southern Africa. In recognition of this upcoming bicentenary, KZN Amafa proposes to host an academic conference that will explore the lives, roles and historical contributions of prominent women in Southern Africa. The conference will serve as a platform for scholars, researchers and heritage practitioners to present new research and perspectives on women's leadership, influence and historical legacy in the region.

The conference will provide a platform for academic exchange among historians, heritage scholars and practitioners, anthropologists, sociologists, onomasticians, archaeologists, language scholars, visual studies scholars, and other researchers working across related interdisciplinary fields. It will contribute to the documentation and dissemination of knowledge on women's history in Southern Africa.

Delegates are particularly encouraged to engage with the overarching conference theme. In addition, this conference intends to invite delegates to explore the lives, leadership and historical contributions of prominent women in Southern Africa across different historical periods. Possible figures who may form the focus of conference papers include:

- Queen Nandi – her life, influence in the early Zulu Kingdom, and her historical legacy.
- Queen Mthaniya – her role in building the Zulu Kingdom.
- Princess Mkabayi kaJama – her role as a political authority and kingmaker in the Zulu Kingdom.
- Princess Magogo kaDinuzulu – her contributions to Zulu music and the preservation of oral traditions.
- Queen Lozikeyi Dlodlo – her leadership during the late nineteenth-century Ndebele state.
- Queen Modjadji VI – the enduring institution of female political and spiritual authority in Balobedu society.
- Charlotte Maxeke – an early pioneer of African women's political organisation and education.
- Lilian Ngoyi – a leading figure in the women's struggle against apartheid and the 1956 Women's March.
- Albertina Sisulu – her role in community leadership and the liberation struggle.
- Sarah Baartman – memory, representation and historical redress
- Nokutela Mdimadube – the co-founder of Ohlange High School and co-founder of Ilanga laseNatal Newspaper.

Our keynote sessions will be delivered by some of the world's leading thinkers in the humanities. The purpose of the conference is to honour the historical legacy of Queen Nandi. Promote scholarly engagement on the role and influence of women in Southern African history. Encourage new research on prominent historical women in the region.

Possible conference subthemes may include:

- Royal women and leadership in African kingdoms
- Women and political authority in precolonial Southern Africa
- Women in anti-colonial resistance movements
- Women and cultural preservation (music, oral history, ritual traditions)
- Women in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa
- Memory, heritage and the representation of historical women
- Women's leadership in African religious and spiritual tradition

SUBMISSION DATES

Abstracts for papers: **18 September 2026**

Final notification of acceptance of abstracts: **25 September 2026**

Abstracts for workshops and papers should be sent to:

Qhelani Msweli Qhelani.msweli@amafainstitute.org.za or

Nokubonga Dlamini Nokubonga.dlamini@amafainstitute.org.za

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

Abstracts of 150-250 for paper presentations should be submitted by e-mail as **MS Word files** accompanied by the following information:

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- Title, full name(s), and surname
- Institutional affiliation (i.e., position of the delegate, institution's name, faculty/school, department, and location)
- E-mail address (if paper has multiple authors, please state name of corresponding author)
- Contact details (mobile and/or office number)

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- Full title of the paper
- Abstract

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING

- Paper presentations will be limited to 20 minutes plus a 10-minute question/discussion session.
- No references, tables or graphics should be included in the abstract.
- When using abbreviations within the body of the abstract, please spell out the name in full at first mention and follow with the abbreviation in parenthesis.
- Please make sure that you submit an abstract that has been text edited.
- All abstracts will be adjudicated.
- No changes will be made on abstracts once they had been adjudicated.
- No abstracts will be accepted after the deadline.

REGISTRATION

For *students

Exempted from payment but must provide proof of university registration.

For non-students

Early bird registration: R1 000

Late Registration: R1 200

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Delegates will be requested to fill in electronic registration forms after acceptance of their abstracts.

The conference organisers will handle no cash at the registration desk at the conference.

COSTS

Travel, accommodation, subsistence, etc. related to delegates' participation in the conference must be covered by the delegates or their institutions, regardless of the proposal acceptance.

ENQUIRIES:

General and Registration

General: Nokubonga Dlamini Nokubonga.dlamini@amafainstitute.org.za

Registration: Ms Rakshika Sibran Sibran@ukzn.ac.za