



# The US Witsie



**Wits Fund Newsletter December 2024**

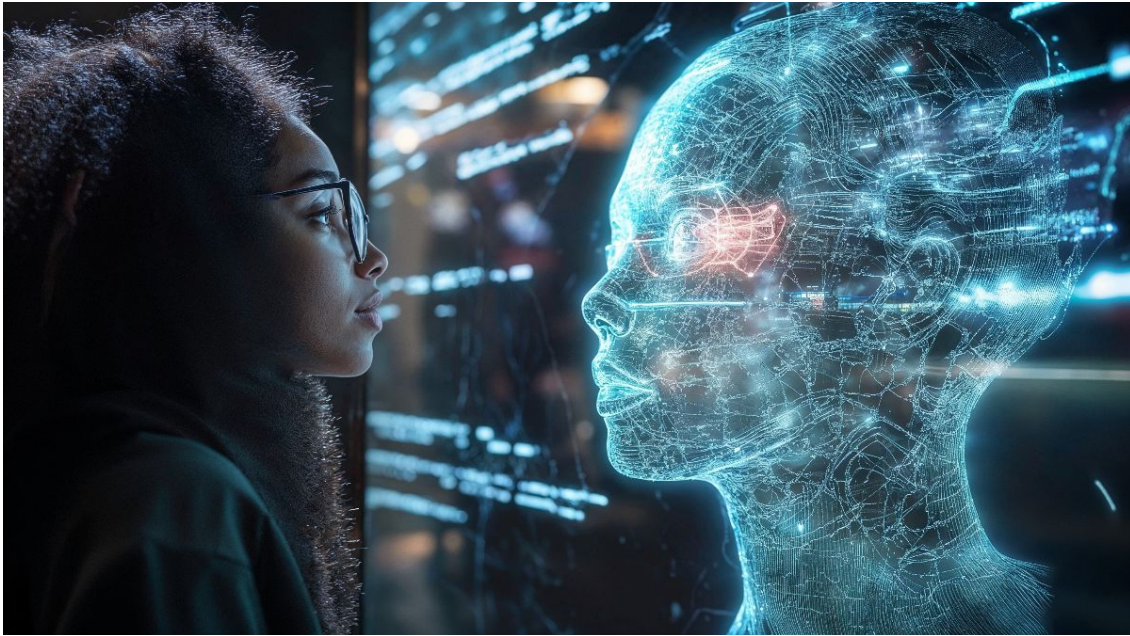
[witsfund.org](https://witsfund.org)

Read more about [Wits today](#).

IN THIS SEASON OF GIVING AND GENEROSITY, the members of the Wits Fund wish you and your loved ones joy and light, and a restful and safe December. As you contemplate your giving and charitable donations, we remain grateful for your support of Wits, our *alma mater*. [Donate here](#).

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**UNLOCKING INTELLIGENCE: The Wits MIND Institute to  
Transform AI Research in Africa**



Wits University recently launched (pictured below), the **Machine Intelligence and Neural Discovery (MIND) Institute**, an innovative research hub aimed at advancing the fundamental science of artificial intelligence (AI), while developing cutting-edge technologies tailored to Africa's unique challenges, through robust interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Institute will collaborate with IBM on joint research initiatives, combining expertise and innovation to drive impactful projects. The Institute is engaging with market leaders across diverse sectors, including the tech industry, financial services, healthcare, manufacturing, retail, and logistics.

Read more [here](#).



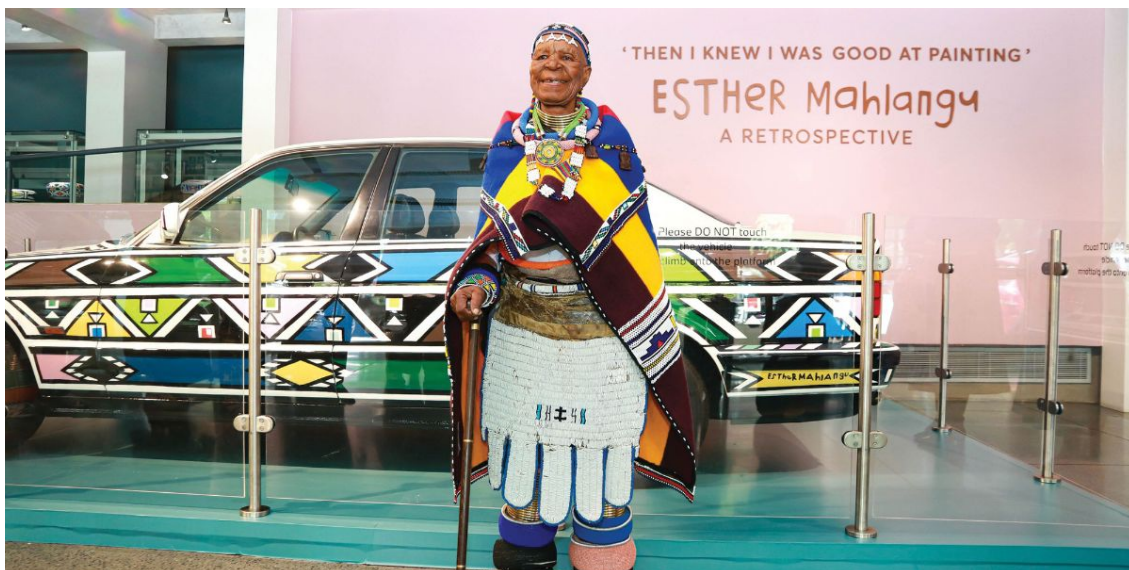




The Wits MIND Institute | A Groundbreaking Hub for AI Research

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## GLOBAL CULTURAL ICON AT WITS: *Esther Mahlangu, A Retrospective*



The Wits Art Museum is thrilled to host the work of South Africa's cultural icon on display until 17 April 2025. Titled: ***Then I Knew I Was Good at Painting: Esther Mahlangu, A Retrospective***, the exhibition at the [Wits Art Museum](#) spans seven decades and features over 100 artworks, including the iconic BMW Art Car, beadwork, painted mannequins and a TV.

Curator Dr Nontobeko Ntombela explains that “**this retrospective offers a remarkable opportunity to experience Esther Mahlangu's artistic journey. Her work has had a profound impact on South African modern and contemporary**



art, and this exhibition is a testament of her incredible contribution.”

Read more [here](#).

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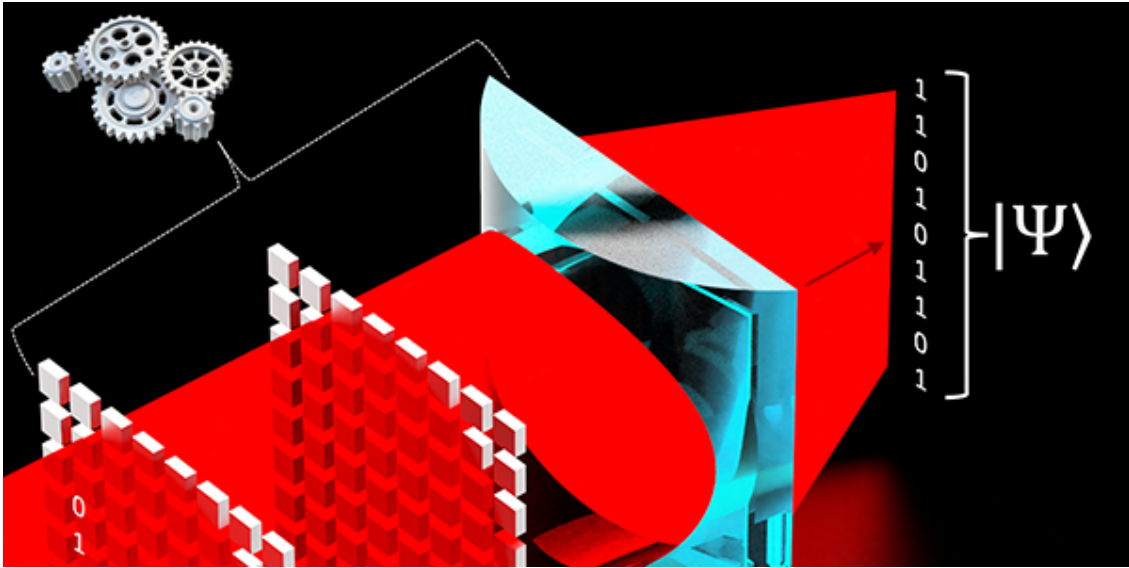
## **WATCH: Jonny Steinberg in Conversation with Hlonipha Mokoena on his latest book *Winnie & Nelson: Portrait of a Marriage***



WATCH: a webinar in which Jonny Steinberg discusses his internationally acclaimed book, which takes in a century of South African history through the prism of the marriage of Nelson Mandela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Jonny, a Wits alumnus and researcher at WISER at Wits, is now based at Yale University. His book is winner of the SA Sunday Times Literary Award for Non-fiction 2024, is shortlisted for the UK Wolfson Foundation History Prize 2024, and is winner of the USA National Book Critics Circle Award for Biography 2023.

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## **WITS RESEARCHERS PIONEER QUANTUM COMPUTING BREAKTHROUGH**



**Innovative computing system using lasers and everyday display technology marks a significant leap in the quest for more powerful quantum computing solutions.**

Physicists from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) have developed an innovative computing system using laser beams and everyday display technology, marking a significant leap forward in the quest for more powerful quantum computing solutions.

The breakthrough, achieved by researchers at the university's Structured Light Lab, offers a simpler and more cost-effective approach to advanced quantum computing by harnessing the unique properties of light. This development could potentially speed up complex calculations in fields such as logistics, finance and artificial intelligence. The research was [published in the journal APL Photonics](#) as the editor's pick.

Read more [here](#).

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As we feel gratitude for the blessings in our lives, one way to pay it forward is through making an impact in a person's life that will uplift them, and their families, for generations to come.

**DONATE [HERE](#)**

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WATCH: WITS' LATEST NEWS IN SIXTY SECONDS - In this episode, Nobel Laureate Prof. Maria Ressa warns against disinformation and its impact on democracy; we explore Joni Brenner's IMPACT exhibition celebrating the Taung Child's legacy; and we delve into discussions on the energy transition at the Matla-Urja conference featuring the Minister of Electricity and Energy, Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa. We also highlight an innovation workshop strengthening academia-industry collaboration across Africa and the appointment of Wits academics and alumni to South Africa's Presidential Economic Advisory Council.

Read the full stories [here](#).

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### Vision

To ensure that Wits University remains one of Africa's – and the world's – pre-eminent research-intensive educational institutions, with top academic standards, committed faculty, and supportive alumni.

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