



ize
INTERNATIONAL ZOO
EDUCATORS CONFERENCE
CAPE TOWN 2026

IZE 2026 PROGRAMME

Here is a basic outline of what to expect when attending the 2026 IZE Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. The conference, icebreaker event and the gala dinner will all be held in venues in the Two Oceans Aquarium.

Saturday 10 October 2026	Sunday 11 October 2026	Monday 12 October 2026	Tuesday 13 October 2026	Wednesday 14 October 2026	Thursday 15 October 2026	Friday 16 October 2026
IZE Board meeting (Closed) Venue: Tranquility Board Room	IZE Board meeting (Closed) Venue: Tranquility Board Room		09h00 to 17h00 Conference opens in Avenue Conference Centre, Two Oceans Aquarium	09h00 to 17h00 Avenue Conference Centre, Two Oceans Aquarium	09h00 to 17h00 Avenue Conference Centre, Two Oceans Aquarium	09h30 to 16h00 Avenue Conference Centre, Two Oceans Aquarium
	Board dinner (Closed)	19h00 Icebreaker evening Venue: Two Oceans Aquarium	Free evening	Free evening	19h00 Gala dinner Venue: Two Oceans Aquarium	Conference closes

Please check in for programme updates.

We look forward to hosting you!

Here is the draft full programme for IZE 2026. Please note this is still subject to change.

Monday 12 October 2026

15h00 - 18h00 Registration opens in AVENUE, Dock Road (next to the Two Oceans Aquarium).

19h00 - 21h00 Icebreaker - Two Oceans Aquarium, Dock Road

Tuesday 13 October 2026 - AVENUE, Dock Road (next to the Two Oceans Aquarium)

07h00 - 08h30	Registration & coffee	
09H00	Opening Ceremony	
09h20	Welcome – CEO of V&A Waterfront	Graham Wood
09h30	Formal Welcome - CEO Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation	Ann Lamont
09h40	IZE President's welcome	Dr Sarah Thomas
09h50	Keynote address - 20 mins + 10 mins for Q&A discussion	Dr Gina Mhlophe
10h20	Morning Tea	

THEME: Storytelling: Building empathy and connection		
10h50	Oral presentation - Designing With, Not For Audiences: Utilizing Co-Design As a Best Practice	Kimberley Hoorman, Saint Louis Zoo (USA)
11h03	Oral presentation - Data-informed conservation Education: a Community-Led Approach to advancing Human Wildlife Coexistence.	Esther Muhindo, North Carolina Zoo's Unite for the Environment(Uganda)
11h16	Oral presentation - Heart of Africa at Chester Zoo: Interpretation that empowers and inspires	Caroline Heap, Chester Zoo (UK)
11h29	Oral presentation - Innovative Approaches to Early Environmental Education: Puppet-Powered Learning at the Two Oceans Aquarium	Wafiqah Slamong & Aisha Martin, Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation (South Africa)
11h42	Oral presentation - The Power of Empathy: Weaving Values, Story, and Action for Change in Zoos and Aquariums	Marta Burnet, Woodland Park Zoo (USA)
11h55	BREAK - Q&A discussion (15 mins)	

THEME: Behaviour change for action		
12h10	Oral presentation - Translating the Ocean: Designing Inclusive, Multi-Sensory Aquarium Experiences for Visitors with Visual Impairments	Bianca Engel, Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation, (South Africa)
12h23	Oral presentation - Community-Led Conservation: Empowering Maasai Youth for Climate Action in Amboseli	Simon Mpaayo Malano, Wildlife Research and Training Institute (Kenya) Eduata Emaa Community Based Organization (CBO) (Kenya)
12h36	Oral presentation - The Human Side of Conservation	Isa Pinho, CSS Behaviour Change Zoomarine (Portugal)
12h49	Oral presentation - From Knowledge to Action: Behaviour Change Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation	Ojok Sunday, Uganda Wildlife Authority (Uganda)
13h02	Questions and session wrap up (15 mins)	
13h17	LUNCH	
14h15	Workshop set up and explanation	
14h25 - 15h55	Workshop - Beyond Facts: Using Story Psychology to Spark Awe, Wonder, and Pro-Environmental Behaviour	Dr Gianna Moscardo & Dr Karen Hughes, James Cook University and University of Queensland (Australia)
14h25 - 15h55	Workshop - The Proof is in the Pudding...and it's your Favorite Flavor: Professional Development!	Nette Pletcher, Beez Kneez Creative (USA) & Adam Senior, CREW Training (UK)
14h25 - 15h55	Workshop - Aligning with international targets and strategies, and demonstrating the global conservation value of zoo education -	Charlotte Smith, Chester Zoo, UK, & Mackenzie Borau, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance (USA)
16h00	Afternoon Tea	
THEME: Growing the future: Leadership and professional development		
16h30	Oral presentation - Every Job Is a Conservation Job: Green Skilling the Global Workforce	Dr Garrett E Eriksen, Congo Wildlife, South Africa
16h43	Oral presentation - Zoo School: An accreditation scheme for schools!	Dr Cerian Tatchley, British and Irish Association of Zoos & Aquariums (BIAZA) (UK)

16h56	Oral presentation - Connecting our Members: BIAZA Conservation Education Networks	Dr Cerian Tatchley & BIAZA Conservation Education Committee, British and Irish Association of Zoos & Aquariums (BIAZA), (UK)
17h09	Oral presentation - Teaching those who will teach	Laura Julie Purlund, Copenhagen ZOO, (Denmark)
17h22	TBC	
17h35	TBC	
17h47	Questions, session wrap up, plan for night & tomorrow (15 mins)	
18h05	Free evening	

Wednesday 14 October 2026 - AVENUE, Dock Road (next to the Two Oceans Aquarium).

06h30 - 08h30	Guided walks and activities (delegates can sign up for one at registration) - Marine Wildlife Walk, V&A Sustainability Walk, Green Point Park walk, Rocky Shore explore at Mouille Point including beach cleanup	
09H00	Keynote address - 20 mins + 10 mins for Q&A discussion	TBC
THEME: Growing the future: Leadership and professional development		
09h30	Introduction to Emerging Leaders Mentorship Program	
09h43	Emerging Leader Oral Presentation 1	Sarah Martin, Manager of Education Programs, Wildlife Conservation Society – New York Aquarium (USA)
09h56	Emerging Leader Oral Presentation 2	Falina Razafimamonjy, Assistant Manager, Wildlife Madagascar (Madagascar)
10h09	Emerging Leader Oral Presentation 3	Ariel Segura, Zoo Apprenticeship Program (ZAP) Coordinator, Oregon Zoo (USA)
10h22	Emerging Leader Oral Presentation 4	Lizzie Seymour, Learning Technology Officer, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (Scotland)
10h35	Emerging Leader Oral Presentation 5	Kaitlin Van Der Linden, Edmonton, Alberta (Canada)
10h48	Questions and wrap up session	
11h00	Morning tea	

THEME: Interconnectedness – partnerships for and with nature		
11h30	Oral presentation - From Awareness to Action: Designing Pollinator Education Through Partnership and Behaviour Change	Nanna Nørgaard Lillie & Laura Julie Purlund, Copenhagen Zoo, (Denmark)
11h43	Oral presentation - Designing for Mindfulness at Mandai: Enhancing Healthcare Staff Wellbeing Through Nature and Wildlife	June Chen, Mandai Wildlife Group, (Singapore)

11h56	Oral presentation - Free Tickets and Empty Seats: Lessons in Inclusive Engagement	Iona Byrne, Highland Wildlife Park, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) (United Kingdom)
12h09	Oral presentation - Where water meets curiosity - possibility flows: Transforming local ecosystems into outdoor classrooms with the Khayelitsha Wetland Programme in South Africa.	Wandiswa Jonga, Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation, (South Africa)
12h22	Oral presentation - Halting local extinction of the shoebill in Uganda through Conservation Education	Ruhinirwa Francis William, Vanice Mirembe, Uganda Wildlife Authority, (Uganda)
12h35	Oral presentation - Zoos and the academic world	Dr. Shai Ben Ami, The Tisch Family Zoological Gardens in Jerusalem and The Gottesman Israel Aquarium (Israel)
12h48	Questions and wrap up session (15 mins)	
13h00	LUNCH	
14h00 - 15h30	Round table discussion: Framing the future: The Power of Image Framing on People's Attitude and Perception towards Wildlife	Anthony Ochieng' Onyango & Ephie Lumumba, TonyWild Foundation, (Kenya)
14h00 - 15h30	Round table discussion: "Expanding Impact Through University Partnerships"	Michelle Kolar, Indianapolis Zoo (USA)
15h30	Afternoon tea	

THEME: Innovation and imagination for a diverse future		
16h00	Oral presentation - Unlocking innovation through corporate partnerships	Cat Hickey, The Zoological Society of London, (UK)
16h13	Oral presentation - Inclusion in Action: Inclusive Conservation Education at Guadalajara Zoo	Maria Martinez, Guadalajara Zoo, (Mexico)
16h26	Oral presentation -Transforming Education at the Lost World Aquarium Through Technology and Storytelling	Freisha Patel, Atlantis Dubai (United Arab Emirates)
16h39	Oral presentation - Mobile technology for interpretation in zoos and aquariums	Michael Wolf, Formula D_, Climate Risk Lab (University of Cape Town) (South Africa)

16h52	TBC	
17h05	BREAK - Q&A discussion (15 mins)	
	THEME: Building a culture of conservation education	
17h20	Oral presentation - Inclusive Conservation in Action: Dublin Zoo Volunteers	Martha Whelan, Dublin Zoo (Ireland)
17h33	Oral presentation - From Activities to Culture: Embedding Conservation Education into Zoo Governance at a High-Visitation Public Zoo in India	Dr Shashikant Sharma, Sardar Patel Zoological Park, (India)
17h46	TBC	
17h59	Questions and wrap up session	
18h15 - 19h30 (cash bar)	Poster & video session	
19h30	Free evening	

Thursday 15 October 2024 - AVENUE, Dock Road (next to the Two Oceans Aquarium).

06h30 - 08h30	Guided walks and activities (delegates can sign up for one at registration) - Marine Wildlife Walk, V&A Sustainability Walk, Green Point Park walk, Rocky Shore explore at Mouille Point including beach cleanup	
09H00	Keynote address - 20 mins + 10 mins for Q&A discussion	Loyiso Dunga (Seas of Good Hope)
	THEME: Strengthening evidence for conservation education	
09h30	Oral presentation -Spreading Sustainability: How School Programs Influence Household Practices Near Protected Area	Bruce Ainebyona, Andrew Davids, Tinka John & Elizabeth Folta, North Carolina Zoo's UNITE for the Environment, (Uganda)
09h43	Oral presentation - Science to Action: How the Barranquilla Zoo and its District Department of Education Co-Created a Model for Citizen Science and Biodiversity Governance	Camila Martins, Juan Camilo Tovar-Castro, Farah Ajami, Diego Alberto Medina Campo, Ingrith Dayana Rodriguez Gutierrez, Yani Aranguren Díaz, Paola Amar Sepúlveda, Fundación Botánica y Zoológica de Barranquilla, Barranquilla's District Department of Education (Secretaría Distrital de Educación de Barranquilla) (Colombia)
09h56	Oral presentation - Connecting strategy to its Impact: Piloting a pathways measurement framework	Beccy Angus, Royal Zoological Society Scotland (RZSS) (Scotland)
10h09	Oral presentation - Evaluating the long-term effect of the Young Biologist Course at the Two Oceans Aquarium, in Cape Town.	Dr Nathalie Viljoen, Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation, (South Africa)
10h22	TBC	
10h35	Questions and session wrap up (15 mins)	
10h50	Morning tea	
	THEME: Storytelling: Building empathy and connection	
11h15	Oral presentation -Engaging Without a Guide: The Impact of Self-guided Interpretation at Singapore Zoo	Vera Yang, Mandai Wildlife Group, (Singapore)
11h28	Oral presentation - Rewilding the Workshop	Jessica Menendez, Sydney Zoo (Australia)
11h41	Oral presentation - Many Voices for Many Hands: Conservation Education Through Theater	Daniel Cardenas Yusty, Cali Zoo - Zoológico de Cali (Colombia)

11h54	TBC	
12h07	Oral presentation - From Literacy to Conservation: Storytelling as a Pathway to Environmental Empathy	Rota Mamimbahiny Andriantsoa, Wildlife Madagascar (Madagascar)
12h20	Oral presentation - One Planet, Many Voices: Immersive Storytelling that Builds Empathy and Inspires Biodiversity Action	Nanna Nørgaard Lillie, Copenhagen Zoo, (Denmark)
12h41	Questions and wrap up session	
12h56	LUNCH	
14h00 - 15h30	Workshop - Evaluation 101: Essential Evaluation Skills for Zoo & Aquarium Educators	Stephanie Burns, Josie Blue, Mackenzie Borau, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, (USA)
14h00 - 15h30	Workshop - Making campaign choices that count: a strategic tool for conservation campaign planning -	Rachel Haydon, Orana Wildlife Park, (New Zealand), Dr Sarah Thomas, Auckland Zoo, (New Zealand) Lian Wilson, Zoos Victoria, (Australia)
14h00 - 15h30	Workshop - Zoo of Poo - Engaging Students in Conservation, Animal Nutrition and Microbiology through a Zoo-Industry Partnership -	Jessica Menendez , Sydney Zoo, (Australia) & Belinda Chapman, Quantal Bioscience (Australia)
14h00 - 15h30	Workshop - Teaching for Teacher Learning: Making a Case for the Professionalization of Teacher Education in Zoos and Aquariums	Dave Liam Johnston, Wildlife Conservation Society, (USA)
15h30	Afternoon Tea	
16h00 - 16h15	IZE & WAZA partnership: 5 years of impact of the WZACES	Rosa Pons, WAZA and Dr Sarah Thomas, Auckland Zoo, (New Zealand)
16h15	IZE AGM	
17H15	Questions, session wrap up, plan for night & tomorrow (15 mins)	
17h30	Close for the day	
19h00 - 22h00	GALA DINNER	

Friday 16 October 2026 - AVENUE, Dock Road (next to the Two Oceans Aquarium).

07h00 - 08h30	Coffee	
09H00	Keynote address - 20 mins + 10 mins for Q&A discussion: 89 From Distant Forests to the Animal in Front of Us: Rebalancing Zoo and Aquarium Interpretation Toward Welfare Using the Contextual Model of Learning	Dave Morgan - TBC
	THEME: Interconnectedness – partnerships for and with nature	
09h30	Oral presentation - How do teachers' prior experiences with zoos shape their decisions to attend zoo excursions?	Kimberley Clayton, Zoos Victoria, Australia
09h43	Oral presentation - Building an inclusive conservation sector through strategic partnerships	Georgia Furlong, Zoological Society of London (Whipsnade Zoo) (UK)
09H56	Oral presentation - One Landscape, Many Voices: Leveraging Partnerships to Drive Community-Led Conservation	Stephen Musau Itulya, (Kenya)
10H09	Oral presentation - Ecology & Economy in Action: Co-Creating Conservation Education with Frontline Communities	Sharlene Cohen, Urban Rewild, (Australia)
10h22	Oral presentation - Learning in Partnership: Co-creating Equitable Pathways for Nature Education and Workforce Development	Dana Murphy, Lincoln Park Zoo, (USA)
10h35	Questions and session wrap up (15 mins)	
10h50	Morning tea	
11h20	Workshop set up and explanation	
11h30 - 13h00	Workshop - Recognising and Developing Your Leadership Skills: Pathways for Educators into Senior Roles in Zoos and Aquaria	Aileen Tennant, Beccy Angus, Charlotte Smith, Cat Hickey, Fota Wildlife Park (Ireland); RZSS (UK); Chester Zoo (UK); ZSL (UK)
11h30 - 13h00	Workshop - Intentional Pathways: Designing Zoo & Aquarium Programmes That Build True Connection to Nature -	Adam Williams, Zoological Society of London, (UK)

11h30 - 13h00	Workshop - Happy World [Insert Species] Day! Now What? Rethinking the Purpose, Design, and Impact of Awareness Days in Zoo and Aquarium Education -	Melissa Wong, Houston Zoo, (USA)
13h00	LUNCH	
14H00 - 14H15	Future Trends of Zoos & Aquariums	Dr Sarah Thomas, IZE President
14H15 - 15H00	Open session	
14H15 - 15H00	Open session	
14H15 - 15H00	Open session	
15h00	IZE Membership Talk	
15h15 - 15h45	Conference reflections, conclusions and celebration of the end!	