



# ARIN

## African Research Integrity Network

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER



## Message From The CHAIRMAN

Mr. Francis Kombe

**I**n 2025, ARIN celebrated a remarkable milestone– **our 10th anniversary** and **our first-ever Annual General Meeting (AGM)**.

This milestone not only allows us to reflect on our ten-year journey but also reaffirms our commitment to our vital mission of fostering research integrity across the African continent.

The AGM was momentous in demonstrating ARIN’s resilience and the organic journey embarked on a decade ago, during the 4th World Conference on Research Integrity, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2015, where the idea of establishing ARIN was conceptualised.

It must never be lost that ARIN was born out of a pressing need to elevate the standards of Research Integrity in Africa, where the potential for research, Science and scholarship continues to grow in volume and complexity, but the practices of those who make or break the trust in the research enterprise remain opaque and largely ignored.

The AGM and the election of the inauguration executive committee, therefore, serve as an important reminder to all members and must force us to take a moment to reflect on the six core-values of ARIN (Cultural identity and sensitivity (Ubuntu, Respect), Professionalism (Rigour, Responsibility), Fairness (Partnership, Collegiality, Collaboration), Honesty (Transparency, Responsiveness) and Accountability (Trustworthiness, Reliability). It is these values that must continue to shape the essence of ARIN’s strategic objectives,

including sustaining dialogue, engagement, and networking among African role-players and stakeholders of Research Integrity (RI), developing a better understanding of, and sensitizing people about, the conditions for RI in African scholarship, sharing relevant information and resources on RI, to build and nurture capacity and leadership in RI for Africa, contributing to the development of research integrity policies and guidelines for

Africa and promoting collaboration with international counterparts in pursuit of the core objectives, as stipulated in the constitution that has recently been promulgated. Thus, as the inaugural executive committee takes office and assumes charge of the newly endorsed constitution, we believe that together with the above core values, we will build the strong foundation needed to move ARIN from strength to strength, in promoting research integrity in and for Africa.

## Formation of Executive Committee and Sub-Committees

A fourteen-member executive committee was inaugurated early last year (2025) to guide the implementation of ARIN-related activities. The executives held their first ExCo meeting on the 11th of March, 2025. A total of nine monthly meetings have been successfully held by the ExCo members. The issues discussed at these meetings include: the registration of ARIN, plenary and symposium sessions at the upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Research Integrity, 2026.

The executive members are: Mr Francis Kombe (Chairperson), Dr Limbanazo Matandika (Vice Chairperson), Prof Fred Yao Gbagbo (Secretary), Ms Thando Lorretta Mdaka (Treasurer), Ms Eleni Flack-Davison (Regional Representative), Dr Seydou Samake (Regional Representative), Dr Retha Visagie (Executive Advisor), Professor Minrie Greeff (Executive Advisor), Associate Professor Gordon Wayne Towers (Executive Advisor), Dr Pearl Hammond (Regional Representative), and Mr Kwame K. Adjei (Regional Representative).

## Profile of ARIN Executive Committee Members



Francis Kombe is the current chairperson of ARIN. He is also the Chief Executive Officer of EthiXPERT, South Africa and a Public Health practitioner and bioethicist, with a passion in Research Integrity. He has a wealth of experience working in international health research institutions, where he held various leadership positions. Kombe holds an MSocSc (research ethics) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), South Africa; Master of Public Health (MPH) and Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health (PGDPH) from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine-UK (LSHTM) and is currently awaiting to graduate from a Wellcome Trust-funded PhD at University of KwaZulu-Natal which focused on research integrity. (<https://www.ethixpert.org.za/board-of-directors>)

## Profile of ARIN Executive Committee Members



Prof Minrie Greeff is an ARIN executive advisor and an emeritus professor at the North-West University, South Africa where she currently serves as their Research Integrity Officer and Advisor

Her focus after retirement was to develop and implement an Integrated Research Integrity Management System (IRIMS) for the NWU. She acts as mentor, consultant and educator for research ethics, research integrity and qualitative research. Prof Greeff has been sharing her experience and expertise in research, research ethics and research integrity for many years. . [Prof Minrie Greeff | 1st South African National Biennial Research Integrity Symposium](#)



Pearl Hammond, PhD, is a regional representative of ARIN, a professional counseling psychologist, administrator, and lecturer at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) Ghana.

She is currently a Professional Counseling Psychologist and Administrator/Lecturer for the Centre for Distance Education and e-Learning (CODEL) at UEW. She has also previously served as the Assistant Registrar of UEW. Her goal is "making an immense impact on people's lives". As a member of the Executive Committee of ARIN, she is predominantly involved in the activities of the Training Sub-committee. [Pearl Hammond, PhD | LinkedIn](#)



Associate Prof Fred Gbagbo is the secretary for ARIN and a public health consultant with specialisation in population and health, sexual and reproductive health and rights,

He also has expertise in bioethics, health policy analysis and policy reviews with 25 years of cumulative work experience in these areas. He is also into health policy formulation and analysis within public, private and NGO health sectors in Ghana and internationally. He is currently an associate professor at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana, and the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Health, Allied Sciences, and Home Economics Education. [Prof. Gbagbo, Fred Yao | University of Education, Winneba](#)



Matandika Limbanazo, PhD, is the vice chairperson for ARIN. She obtained her PhD majoring in bioethics (2023) from the University of Malawi, College of Medicine.

She holds a Master of Social Science degree in Health Research Ethics (2017) from the University of Kwa Zulu Natal in South Africa and a master's in public health degree (2014) from the University of Malawi, College of Medicine. She is therefore a bioethicist, public health specialist and social scientist by training. She has vast experience in research governance, research ethics education, clinical trial coordination and project management. [Dr. Limbanazo Matandika - MUBAS Staff Research Catalogue](#)

## Profile of ARIN Executive Committee Members



Retha Visagie, PhD is an executive advisor for ARIN and a senior research management professional, certified by the International Professional Recognition Council.

She is the chairperson of the EthiXPERT Board. Retha co-founded and co-chairs the SARIMA Northern Regions Community of Practice for Research Ethics and Integrity and has led major capacity-strengthening initiatives. She co-authored the SARIMA/SANBio SADC Research Ethics Guidelines and Toolkit on the Nagoya Protocol and the Cape Town Statement on Fostering Research Integrity through Fairness and Equity. [Dr Retha Visagie | 1st South African National Biennial Research Integrity Symposium](#)



Kwame Kesse Adjei is a regional representative for ARIN. He is a researcher and deputy chief nutritionist with the Ghana Health Service. He is also the founder and CEO of the Centre for Global Health and Bioethics Research Ltd

As a researcher, he has been involved in research projects covering various areas such as maternal health, vaccine development, bioethics, and non-communicable diseases. He also serves as a reviewer for some selected journals and has disseminated his research findings through publications and participation in various conferences. He is awaiting to defend his thesis and graduate with a PhD from the School of Public Health, University of Ghana. He also serves as an adjunct lecturer at the Bioethics department of the university <https://www.ghbr-healthresearch.org/>



Associate Professor Gordon Wayne Towers is an ARIN executive advisor and the Head of the Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support (HS Ethics Office) in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the North-West University (NWU) in South Africa. His passion is building ethical practice in health research. He holds a PhD in Biochemistry and completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Research Ethics at Stellenbosch University in 2015 (cum laude).

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/wayne-towers-61975021/>



Eleni Flack-Davison, BA LLB LLM, is an ARIN executive regional representative and an admitted attorney of the High Court of the Republic of South Africa, Legal Adviser, Research Compliance Manager, Head: Office of Research Integrity and the Research Data Protection Officer at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits University), South Africa. She has been part of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) drafting Committee in relation to the POPIA Code of Conduct for Research in South Africa <https://uct.ac.za/sanbris/contacts/eleni-flack-davison/full?subsite=2837>

## Profile of ARIN Executive Committee Members



Dr. Eunice Omanga is a regional representative and a research and program specialist with passionate commitment to working with vulnerable communities. is a recognized leader in public health, higher education, and leadership development.

Dr. Omanga is a WHO trained Infodemic Manager (IM) and an experienced Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Research expert with a track record of leading national and regionally based teams. Dr. Omanga has been a Principal Investigator/ Co-investigator in various operational research studies and programs covering diverse areas such as: HIV/AIDS, malaria, maternal and child health adolescent health, gender mainstreaming, health equity, and health systems strengthening.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-eunice-o-09959416/>



Prof. Temitope Oloruntoba Olomola is an ARIN regional representative and a renowned academic, research leader. He is a professor of organic chemistry whose career has been marked by excellence in scientific inquiry, higher education leadership, and policy-relevant publications

With over 18 years of academic and institutional leadership experience, Prof. Olomola has risen through the ranks to become a Professor of Organic Chemistry. He is currently the Head of the Chemistry department at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU). His leadership within OAU include roles such as vice chairperson of OAU branch under the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). He is also a selected member of the University Senate and Appointments & Promotions Committee

<https://kingsgateinstitute.org/bio/professor-temitope-oloruntoba-olomola/>



Dr Seydou Samake is an ARIN regional representative and a medical doctor by training from Mali. He graduated from the faculty of medicine of Bamako. In 2014, he was appointed an Associate Clinical Researcher at the University Clinical Research Center (UCRC) Mali.

In 2020, he completed his master's degree in science with a focus in Clinical Investigation at Northwestern University (Chicago, USA). In 2023, he obtained a second master's degree in public health with focus in Research Ethics from the University of Science, Technique, and Technology of Bamako (USTTB Mali).

[www.ucrc-mali.org](http://www.ucrc-mali.org)



Thando Mdaka is the treasurer for ARIN. She is also currently serving as a Research Integrity Coordinator: Investigations at the University of Cape Town (UCT), a role she started in 2024. Before joining UCT, she worked at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in the Research Ethics and Integrity unit, where she served as a Research Integrity Officer. In her role at UNISA, she focused on developing and implementing robust research ethics and integrity training to ensure institutional compliance. She holds a Postgraduate degree in Operations Management and is currently pursuing her Master's in the same field.

[www.linkedin.com/in/thando-mdaka-976982133/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/thando-mdaka-976982133/)

## 2025-2026 ARIN Activities

### First Annual General Meeting, Approval of Constitution and Celebration of 10th Anniversary:

ARIN held its first AGM on 15th May 2025. The ARIN constitution was also finalised and approved at the AGM. ARIN also celebrated its 10th Anniversary following its initiation at WCRI 2015. In his speech at the AGM, the chairman touched on the importance of ARIN's 10th anniversary and the need for members to conduct themselves responsibly.

The chairman reported that as of 2024, ARIN had a total of 185 members across five subregions. Additionally, as part of the AGM, Roxana Lescano Guevara made a presentation on the challenges and opportunities for a research integrity network based on her experiences in Peru.

### Planned Activities- 1st Quarter of 2026

#### Registration of ARIN Umbrella and Regional offices (ARIN-WA and ARIN-EA)

- ARIN intends to establish and register a non-profit organization (NPO) as a legal entity in South Africa.
- Additionally, ARIN will develop a structured implementation plan for the phased establishment of regional offices across the continent.
- ARIN Umbrella (South Africa) will serve as the central governing entity, providing strategic direction, policy oversight, and accountability across all regional offices.

#### Symposium- World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI- 2026)

- ARIN plans to have a symposium at the next WCRI 2026
- Speakers from diverse backgrounds will discuss challenges and opportunities associated with creating a code of conduct for research integrity.

- The proposed symposium will lay the ground for developing a code of conduct for research integrity in Africa, and similar settings. The presentation topics include: Africa's Research Integrity landscape-Key considerations for an indigenous African code of conduct for research integrity and From Compliance to Coherence:

- Aligning African Indigenous Knowledge Systems with Global Frameworks through an African Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. ARIN will participate in a plenary session titled "GenAI and Research Integrity: Global Ethics, African Wisdom, Shared Responsibility."

- The session is a collaborative engagement featuring Dr Lorna Waddington (University of Leeds), Dr H. Titilola Olojede (National Open University of Nigeria), and Dr Retha G. Visagie (ARIN).

- This high-level dialogue will explore the ethical implications of generative artificial intelligence in research, integrating global governance perspectives with African epistemologies and shared accountability frameworks.

#### Functional Website and Other Social Media Handles

- ARIN is working on a new website to be launched by the end of the 1st quarter

- Other social media platforms are under construction. A LinkedIn site currently exists: [african-research-integrity-network-arin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/african-research-integrity-network-arin)

- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/109268176/admin/dashboard/>

## AGM speech by Chairman

### Introduction from the Executive Committee

As we reflect on the milestones of 2025, the Chairperson's AGM address below captures both the urgency and promise of our work. We hope that this work will continue unabated with your support in 2026.

To help us continue our work in 2026, we would also be grateful if you could fill out this survey as it would help us prioritize your training needs

Link:

[AFRICAN RESEARCH INTEGRITY NETWORK \(ARIN\) Training Needs Analysis](#)

### Chairman's AGM speech

Welcome to the 2025 AGM. Today, I would like all of us to take a moment and reflect on the six core objectives that have guided our work and continue to shape the essence of our network.

ARIN was established with a vision to promote research integrity in Africa and for Africa and a mission to nurture a culture of integrity in African researchers, institutions, and decision makers, guided by African perspectives, values and inclusive thinking.

We are acutely aware that Africa is endowed with rich cultural diversity. For this reason, ARIN remains responsive and sensitive to Afrocentric values such as Ubuntu and respect for our cultural diversity. Furthermore, the work ARIN is set out to do must always be guided by high integrity, including transparency, accountability, professionalism and honesty, which ARIN has vowed to uphold at all times.

To walk the talk, we expect that all our members, regardless of the field, area of expertise or discipline, carry out their work with rigour and remain accountable at all times.

In addition, as a region that has been a victim of social injustices, we hope that ARIN values will inspire all our members to always conduct themselves responsibly and advocate for fair treatment and partnerships/collaborations in all our endeavours, as clearly stipulated in the Cape Town statement on fairness, equity and diversity in research.

As we celebrate our 10th Anniversary and first AGM, we want to critically reflect on these values and always choose to do the right thing, no matter what!

This means remaining responsive to the social challenges facing our beautiful continent, promoting fairness and collegiality in all our undertakings and conducting ourselves with honesty and trustworthiness. If each one of us commits to adhere to these values, we will not only contribute to promoting research integrity in our own little ways, but we will collectively make Africa a great place where responsive conduct of research thrives! Thank you.

**Francis Kombe**  
(Chairperson)



# ARIN

## African Research Integrity

African Research Integrity Network

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ARIN is a project of the African Research Integrity Institute (ARI) in partnership with the African Research Integrity Network (ARIN).