The IFORS Triennial 2008 conference will bring operational researchers from around the globe together in Sandton, in southern Africa. We invite you to join your colleagues for the pre-eminent international conference in operational research, offering an intensive scientific programme covering the full spectrum of topics in our field.

The Conference Organising and Programme Committees together represent many countries from all five continents, bringing the research, applications and perspectives of their areas to this truly international forum.

Sharing of ideas, knowledge and experience is the primary goal of the conference and of IFORS itself. These exchanges take place not only during the formal scientific programme, but also informally in hallways, over cups of coffee and at social events. The international OR community has increasingly focused its attention on Africa in recent years. IFORS 2008 will be an ideal opportunity to showcase these endeavours and to strengthen the outreach into Africa, as well as to experience Africa, with all its beauty, opportunities and challenges! The IFORS Triennial is well known for its extensive and exciting social programme – and 2008 will be no exception. You can connect with old friends and meet new ones at the Welcome Reception. The traditional full-day excursion is planned for Wednesday, mid-conference, where you will be able to experience some of what South Africa can offer in terms of a variety of opportunities such as game parks, deep mining, African culture, etc. The closing banquet will also feature something typically African, showcasing the diversity of South Africa’s cultures.

The Operations Research Society of South Africa (ORSSA) is proud to host IFORS 2008 at the Sandton Convention Centre, in the heart of South Africa’s business and economic activities. Conference hotels are in very close proximity to the Convention Centre. We invite you to experience all the beauty and diversity of Sandton, and South Africa’s surrounding environments while you participate in this premier OR meeting: the 18th Triennial Conference of the International Federation of Operational Research Societies.

Hans W. Ittmann
Chair, Organising Committee
Logistics and Quantitative Methods, CSIR, RSA
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John J. Bartholdi, III
Chair, Programme Committee
Georgia Tech, USA
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Abstract Submission
Deadline: December 15, 2007
All members of the international OR community are invited and encouraged to submit papers for IFORS 2008.

Online abstract submission will open June 1, 2007. All abstracts - including Invited papers, Submitted papers and National Contributions - should be submitted electronically. In rare instances, hard copy will be accepted. Abstracts must be written in English and contain no more than 50 words (no formulas or mathematical notations are allowed). The official language of the conference is English. Complete submission guidelines will be provided at the online submission site.

There is no abstract fee. All attendees, including speakers and session chairs, must register and pay the registration fee. If you require an early confirmation for travel visas or budgetary reasons, please indicate this on the online submission form.

Publications
Papers may be submitted for publication in International Transactions in Operations Research (ITOR). An editor for the special issue of ITOR will be appointed. See the IFORS 2008 website for an update on this.

IFORS Prize for OR in Development
IFORS is pleased to continue the tradition of the IFORS Prize for OR in Development to be awarded at the close of IFORS 2008. A grand prize of US$2,000 and runner-up US$1,000 are offered. For details, refer to www.ifors.org or contact Prof. Paul Fatti, School of Statistics and Actuarial Science, University of the Witwatersrand, PO.WITS, 2050 South Africa; Tel. (+2711) 717-6273; fax (+2711) 717-6285; fatti@stats.wits.ac.za

Social Programme
IFORS 2008 will offer a full social programme, with most of the events included in your registration fee. We invite you to meet with old friends and to make new friendships at the Welcome Reception on the Sunday evening. The Wednesday excursion will be to typical African venues where we plan to provide different options. These will include a visit to a gold mine, a game farm, cultural African villages and many more. On the Thursday evening, the traditional closing banquet will feature entertainment that will cover the diversity of what the South African cultures can offer.

South Africa – the Rainbow Nation
South Africa has a very rich history of diverse groups and cultures. The nation achieved a miracle in 1994 that amazed the world and continues to do so! Politically, the country has moved from the apartheid era to a full democracy in a peaceful manner. Whilst it still faces many challenges, great strides have been made since 1994. Come and experience the rainbow nation with its magnificent tourist attractions. These include the world famous Kruger National Park, an outstanding game park, the beauty of Cape Town with Table Mountain and the wine lands, and many more. The neighbouring southern African countries also offer great attractions, such as the Okovango Delta in Botswana, the majestic Drakensburg and Maluti mountains in Lesotho, the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe – to mention but a few.

Important Dates
- June 1, 2007: Abstract submission opens
- December 15, 2007: Abstract submission deadline
- March 15, 2008: Super-saver registration deadline
- May 1, 2008: Authors' registration deadline to appear in the printed programme
- May 15, 2008: Early registration deadline
- July 14-18, 2008: Conference dates

Conference Theme
Operational Research: Developing communities, managing the connections between them.

For further information updates visit www.ifors2008.org