Passionate data scientist Professor Vulositi Marlve (BSc Eng 2007, MSc Eng 2009) is the only South African to be included in the World Economic Forum’s Young Global Leaders Class of 2023 in the “academia/think-tank” category. He is currently the Absa chair of data science at the University of Pretoria. He is a co-founder of the Deep Learning Indaba, the largest machine learning/artificial intelligence workshop on the African continent. He is a chief investigator on the Masakhane NLP project and is on the steering committee of the Lacuna Fund. He is interested in data science for social impact using local challenges as a springboard for research. He is also one of the Witsie founders of the new artificial intelligence research and product lab Lelapa AI.

Internationally respected AIDS researcher Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim (BSc Hons 1984) was elected as the 7th president of the World Academy of Sciences (UNESCO-TWAS) for advancing science in developing countries. She was also nominated among Forbes Africa’s 50 over 50 — a compilation of women scaling new heights and inspiring the next generation of leadership on the continent. She now co-chairs a 10-member technical group set up by UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres. In addition she is professor in clinical epidemiology at Columbia University and pro vice-chancellor for African Health at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Image: Rajesh Jantilal