



Pioneering progress: The future of rock engineering



It was our great pleasure to welcome delegates to AfriRock 2025, themed “*Pioneering progress: The future of rock engineering*,” held at the Sun City Hotel and Casino in Rustenburg from 19 to 23 July 2025. The conference was an absolutely resounding success. This prestigious international event brought together rock engineering professionals, researchers, and industry leaders from across the globe to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and showcase innovations that are shaping the future of mining both on the African continent and worldwide.

Two pre-conference workshops were held ahead of the formal proceedings—one focused on pillar design and the other on stress measurements—setting the tone for an engaging and technically rich event. We were honoured to host distinguished keynote speakers, each contributing unique expertise and insight. In addition to the keynote addresses, the symposium featured a robust programme of technical papers presented by industry professionals, consultants, and researchers. Technical slope stability papers published in the special edition of the *SAIMM Journal (August 2025)* were also presented at the conference, reinforcing the academic and practical depth of AfriRock 2025. Following the formal proceedings, technical visits to gold, platinum, diamond, and copper mines were organised, offering delegates the opportunity to experience innovative rock engineering practices in action. Complementing the technical programme, social events held at the end of each day provided valuable opportunities for attendees to network in an informal and engaging setting.

Conferences like AfriRock 2025 play a vital role in advancing our industry by fostering collaboration, professional growth, and the dissemination of cutting-edge technologies and best practices. The discussions and presentations throughout the event highlighted the importance of continuous learning, sustainable design, and the application of modern geotechnical methods to meet the evolving challenges faced by the mining environment.

We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this conference a success—our keynote speakers, paper authors, reviewers, exhibitors, and sponsors. Their dedication, time, and expertise formed the foundation of this achievement. A special note of appreciation goes to the Technical Paper Review Committee and the Organising Committee, comprising members of the South African National Institute of Rock Engineering (SANIRE) and the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM), for their commitment and hard work in delivering an exceptional international conference.

K. Le Bron