INTERNET MEMORY

"Communicating scientific issues with people behind the screen makes it harder to develop a relationship of trust and confidence with your audience."

With internet devices and data becoming common in some household commodities in Africa, young people's access to social media has increased. Sharing life stories, opinions, and graphics with family and friends has become a norm. At the same time, due to the internet's ability to archive such information uploaded, people with bad intentions, such as internet bullies, haters, stalkers and hackers, can retrieve and use such information against them - something that most social media users in Africa are not aware of. The science communication project - **Internet Memory** - designed by **Thembelihle Rose Dlamini**, aimed to raise awareness to Facebook users (between the ages of 15 to 30 years) to be cautious of what they post online as it might end up negatively affecting them in the future. She launched her project on the 18th of November 2021 by uploading various posters on the Facebook platform for the participants to read and engage with. The posters' contents focused on participants' social media use, potential dangers and information transmission.

While Thembelihle's project was a success and impacted those who participated, she noted that the experience of delivering the project was an eye-opener. When she conceptualised her project, she thought delivering it through social media platforms would be easy since people are mostly found online nowadays. However, she learned that communicating scientific issues with people behind the screen makes it harder to develop a relationship of trust and confidence with one's audience. Most participants were afraid to actively engage in the project for fear of their private information being publicised, while others would challenge her motive for the project.

Thembelihle is currently a Master's Student in Quantum Mechanics at AIMS South Africa. She indicated that the experience of planning and delivering her project has inspired her to practice science communication more through writing blogs to discuss her science journey and interesting topics making use of non-technical language with less scientific jargon and simpler diagrams.