

SA teacher Mariette Wheeler in top 10 for R18.6m Global Teacher Prize 2023

Mariette Wheeler, a science teacher at Protea Heights Academy in Cape Town, has been named a top 10 finalist for the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize 2023, which is organised in collaboration with Unesco.



Mariette Wheeler | Image supplied

Wheeler was selected from over 7,000 nominations and applications from 130 countries around the world. She first trained as a scientist, obtaining a PhD in zoology and spending two years on the sub-Antarctic Marion Island.

As she started sharing her knowledge and experience with younger generations, she realised teaching was her true calling.

Now her creativity in the classroom, mixing science-themed charades, class debates, and science apps helps students excel at science and her broadcasts on marine life reach 400,000 people.

In 2021, she was named National Best Teacher and represented South Africa at the virtual Unesco celebration of World Teacher's Day.

If Wheeler wins the Global Teacher Prize, she will use the funds to set up a medical centre focusing on teenagers; increase her church's efforts in sustainable community building; set up a mobile science equipment unit that can travel between schools; and create a dedicated marine sciences venue.

Now in its eighth year, the \$1m Global Teacher Prize is the largest prize of its kind. It was set up to recognise one exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession as well as to shine a spotlight on the important role teachers play in society.

By unearthing thousands of stories of heroes who have transformed young people's lives, the prize hopes to bring to life the exceptional work of millions of teachers all over the world.

The other top 10 finalists for the Global Teacher Prize 2023 are Annie Ohana from Canada, Deep Narayan Nayak from India, Shafina Vohra from the United Kingdom, Sister Zeph from Pakistan, Eric Asomani Asante from Ghana, Nicolas Gaube from France, Melissa Tracy from the United States, Annie Ohana from Canada and Artur Proidakov from Ukraine.

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