

# Adriana Marais



“The reason she wants to go to Mars is simple: The allure of the unknown is far more powerful than the comfort of the known.” Adriana Marais – theoretical physicist, Head of Innovation at SAP Africa, Director at the Foundation for Space Development and aspiring extra-terrestrial – believes that we are living at a unique point in the history of life on Earth.

As Head of Innovation at SAP Africa since 2017, She is passionate about creative applications of emerging technologies that will improve people’s lives across Africa and the world. She was selected to speak as a Rising Talent at the Women’s Economic Forum in 2017. She is currently pursuing a second PhD in economics, which focuses on designing a resource-based economics model that will facilitate sustainable expansion beyond Earth.

Developments in science and technology are taking place at an unprecedented rate and the expansion of our society beyond this planet is within reach. As a member of the SingularityU South Africa faculty, she talks about research in quantum biology and the origins of life, the technology required to sustain terrestrial life on Mars and the various projects that aim to send crewed missions there. She discusses how the establishment, and potential discovery of evidence of, life on Mars, would be one of the most profound possible contributions of science to humanity, as well as how technological developments inspired by space exploration are crucial for creating a sustainable future on Earth.

As Director at the Foundation for Space Development, Adriana is planning a Mars simulation expedition to Antarctica in the winter of 2020. She is also driving the Africa2Moon project that aims to inspire African youth to ‘reach for the Moon’ through education, science and space exploration.

Adriana has always dreamed about living on another planet and is one of 100 Mars One Project astronaut candidates in line to move to Mars in the coming decade.