

USING THE AFRETEC NETWORK COLLABORATION PLATFORM

SUMMARY INFORMATION

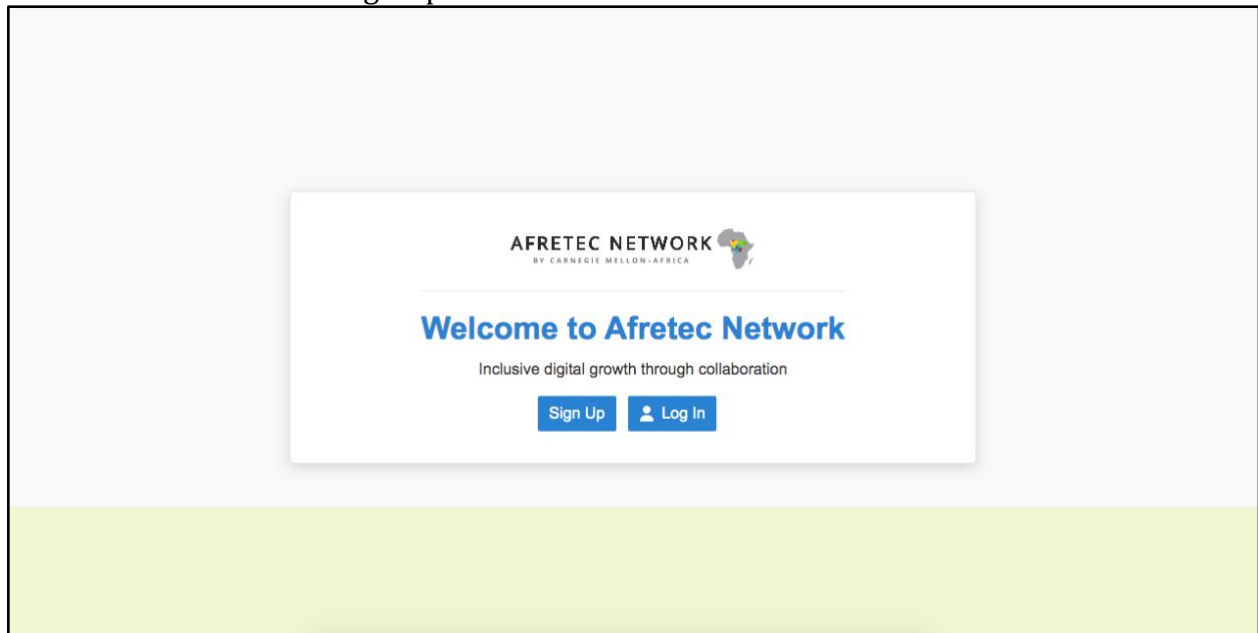
Owner:	The African Engineering and Technology Network
System Access Requirements:	None
Process ID # and Filename:	Afretec Network Collaboration Platform
Last Revised:	07/02/2025

DESCRIPTION

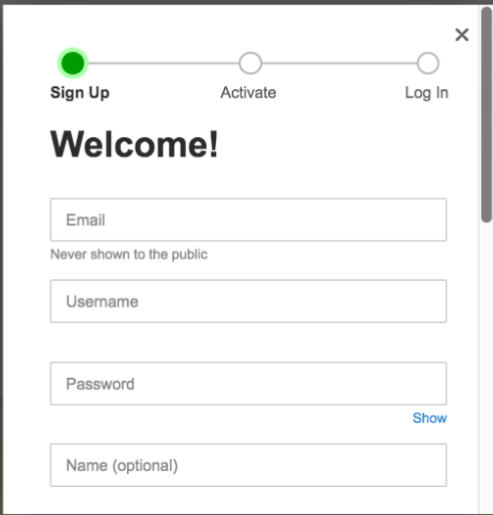
This document outlines how to create an account on the collaboration platform for the African Engineering and Technology Network and begin to connect with other users on the platform. The platform is intended to facilitate communication and collaboration between researchers within partner universities in the network

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

1. Go to <https://afretec.ms.wits.ac.za/login>.
2. Choose the blue “Sign Up” button to the left.



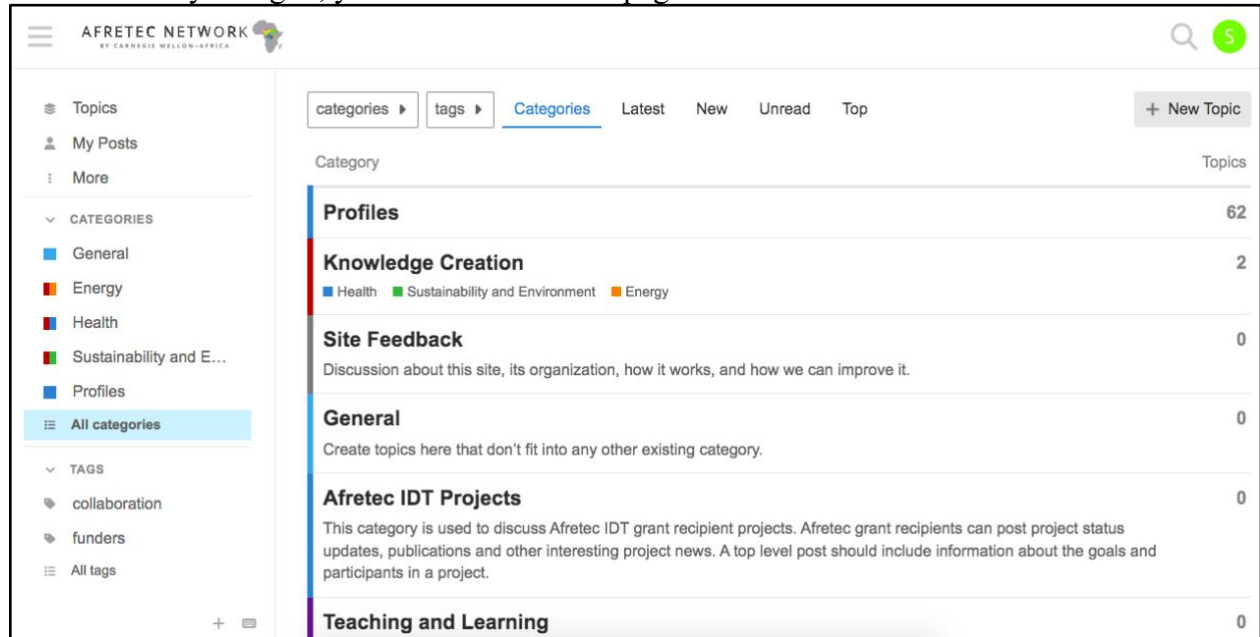
3. Fill out the form with information to create an account.



- a. Your Username and Name (if you write one) will be seen by other users, but your email will not be.
 - i. We recommend that you sign up using the email address given to you by your university institution.
 - b. You must select one or more options for Knowledge Creation Clusters and Affiliation in order to create your account. There will be no error text if you do not do this, but you will remain at the sign-up form until you do.
4. Once you complete the sign-up form, an email will be sent to your inbox with a link. Click on that link in order to activate your account.
 - a. If you do not receive an email in your inbox within a few minutes, check your spam folder to see if it was sent there instead.
5. When you activate your account, you may now log in using your email/username and password.

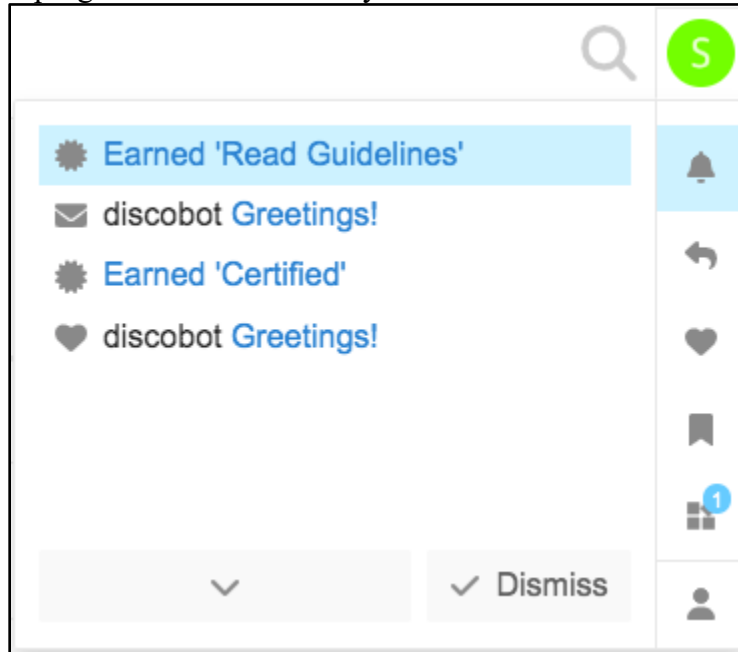
NAVIGATING THE WEBSITE

1. When you log in, you will see the home page for the Afretec Network.



2. The main, central section of this page includes the main categories in which topics can be posted. Currently, these are: Profiles, Knowledge Creation, Site Feedback, General, Afretec IDT Projects, Teaching and Learning, and Entrepreneurship. When you wish to post a topic and start a conversation, first determine which category is most appropriate.
3. The left bar shows some of the categories and subcategories you can post in, tags which you can add to topics to make them easier to find, and miscellaneous useful links. These links are:
 - a. Topics: See all of the topics posted since your last visit.
 - b. My Posts: See all of the activity on your topics and posts.
 - c. Click “More” to see more options.
 - i. Users: See a list of all recent users of the site.
 - ii. FAQ: View the community standards and expectations.
 - iii. About: Summarizes recent activity as well as a link to contact the administrators if there is an issue.
 - iv. Groups: View a list of current groups of users on the site.
 - v. Badges: See what badges are available to be earned by engaging with the site and its community in certain ways.

4. You can see a list of recent activity and interactions with your posts by clicking on the circle in the top right of the screen with your initial inside.



POSTING AND INTERACTING WITH TOPICS

1. To start a conversation, post a topic by clicking the gray “New Topic” button at the top right of the screen.
 - a. This can be done from the home page or once you have navigated to your desired category or sub-category.

2. The posting interface will appear. Give your topic a title, make sure it is posting to the correct category, and write your post. When you are finished, click the blue “Create Topic” button and your post will be viewable in the forum.

The screenshot shows the AFRETEC NETWORK forum interface. On the left is a sidebar with 'Topics', 'My Posts', and 'More'. The main area displays the 'General' category with tabs for 'General', 'tags', 'Latest', 'New', 'Unread', and 'Top'. Below these is a table with columns 'Topic', 'Replies', 'Views', and 'Activity'. A row shows 'About the General category' with 0 replies, 3 views, and a date of May 2024. A modal titled 'Create a new Topic' is open, featuring a text input for a brief sentence, a category dropdown set to 'General', and a field for optional tags. Below these is a rich text editor with various formatting tools and a 'Create Topic' button.

3. To reply to a topic or post and join a conversation, click the “Reply” button below it. A similar posting interface will appear.

The screenshot shows the AFRETEC NETWORK forum interface with a post titled 'Greetings!' by user 'D'. The post contains two bullet points about new user limitations and community behavior, followed by a message about learning more and bookmarking. Below the post are icons for heart, link, flag, bookmark, and a 'Reply' button. A modal titled 'Greetings!' is open, showing a rich text editor for replying. The modal has a 'Send Message' button and a 'Close' button.

4. There are several other ways of interacting with a post besides replying to it:
- If you agree with or enjoy the post but have nothing to add to it, click the heart to like it.
 - Click the chains to copy a link to the post to your clipboard.
 - Click the flag to report the post, and then choose the reason you are reporting it (spam, off-topic, inappropriate, etc.)
 - Click the bookmark to save the post so you can return to it later.

ACCESSING MORE ACTIVITIES

When you first create an account, you do not have access to every activity that is available to users on the site. In order to unlock these activities, you must gain trust by engaging with the community.

Initially, you do *not* have access to the following activities:

1. Flagging posts
2. Sending private messages to other users
3. Adding more than one image in a post
4. Post more than 3 topics
5. Post more than 10 replies
6. Mention more than 2 users in a post

These restrictions are designed to reduce spam from bots. You can gain access to these activities by achieving the next trust level. You can do this by:

1. Enter at least 5 topics
2. Read at least 30 posts
3. Spend a total of 10 minutes reading posts.

Once you achieve the first trust level, you will be able to:

1. Send private messages
2. Upload images and attachments
3. Flag posts
4. Mute other users