

Practical Guide for Delegates

Stellenbosch: History and Significance

Stellenbosch is one of South Africa's oldest towns, founded in 1679. It is known for its wine industry, university life and mountain-framed scenery. The local economy centres on agriculture, tourism, education and professional services. The town has a diverse population of over 77 000 with income levels typical of South African urban areas.

Stellenbosch University

Founded in 1918, Stellenbosch University is a leading research institution with around 32 000 students. It consistently ranks among the top universities on the African continent and hosts an active international academic community.

Your Hosts

Bureau for Economic Research (BER)

Established in 1944 and housed within the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, the BER conducts business tendency and consumer opinion surveys, the inflation expectations survey and macroeconomic forecasting through its econometric model. It is self-funded and widely used by policymakers and the private sector.

South African Reserve Bank (SARB)

Founded in 1921, the SARB remains one of the few central banks with private shareholders. Its core functions include monetary policy and financial stability. It is also active in economic research, including business-cycle analysis and identifying turning points using a growth-cycle approach (without a formal dating committee).

Both the BER and SARB have long-standing involvement in CIRET.

Getting to Stellenbosch

Entry Requirements

- Citizens of many advanced economies, South American countries, and SADC nations are visa-exemptⁱ for up to 90 days in South Africa. Others should refer to the visa policy pageⁱⁱ to confirm whether they need an e-visaⁱⁱⁱ.
- No malaria or routine travel vaccines are needed unless travelling to the far northern Kruger Park region bordering Zimbabwe and Mozambique.
- A yellow-fever certificate is required if arriving from a country where yellow fever is endemic.

Flights

- Cape Town International Airport (CPT) is the main gateway, with daily non-stop flights from the US (Newark, Washington, Atlanta), Europe (London, Frankfurt, Munich, Amsterdam, Paris, Zurich), São Paulo (twice weekly) and neighbouring countries^{iv}.

- Indirect routes connect via Istanbul, Dubai, Doha, Addis Ababa and Nairobi.
- Travellers from the Far East (Singapore, Hong Kong), Australia, São Paulo (daily) and most of Africa typically connect via Johannesburg^v.

Mobile Data

Use eSIM providers such as Airalo. If your phone does not support eSIM, purchase a prepaid MTN or Vodacom SIM at their kiosks located at baggage claim^{vi}.

Airport Transfers

Stellenbosch is about 25 km (16 mi) from Cape Town International Airport. There is no direct public transport. Use Uber^{vii} from the airport or pre-book a transfer for groups^{viii}. For travellers without VISA/Mastercard cards or without access to the Uber app, use a registered operator such as Centurion, which has a kiosk after customs. Expect a 30–40 minute ride (approx. R160–R400 / \$9–\$23).

In Stellenbosch

Accommodation

Stellenbosch offers hotels, guesthouses and apartments across price ranges, see [here](#). Choose accommodation within 1 km (0.6 mi) of the historic centre for easy walking access to campus and restaurants.

Conference Venue

The conference will take place on campus, within the block bordered by Andringa, Merriman, Victoria and Bosman Streets. The exact building will be confirmed closer to the time and will depend on delegate numbers and parallel sessions. Venues offer disability access, standby electricity, audio-visual facilities, Wi-Fi and streaming capabilities.

Transport in Town

The town centre is compact and walkable. Parking is limited, especially on campus. If your accommodation is close to the venue, a rental car is unnecessary. Otherwise, use Uber^{ix}.

Electricity

South Africa uses Type M plugs (three round pins). Most venues provide adaptors for European Type C^x plugs. Bring an international plug or purchase an adaptor at the airport if needed.

Money

- South African Rand (ZAR) is the only legal tender.
- VISA and Mastercard credit/debit cards (chip + PIN) and mobile payments are widely accepted.
- Standard Bank supports UnionPay at ATMs and many merchants.
- Some small businesses are cashless and will display notices.
- Delegates without access to VISA, Mastercard or SWIFT should bring USD or EUR to exchange at the airport or in Stellenbosch (passport and return ticket required).

- VAT of 15% is included in retail prices; refunds for high-value items can be claimed at the airport.
- Restaurant tipping of 10–15% is standard.

Safety

- Tap water in Stellenbosch is safe to drink.
- Follow normal travel precautions: keep valuables out of sight and stay in central, formal areas.
- Avoid informal settlements. Security features such as burglar bars, alarms and private patrols are common.^{xi}
- In emergencies, contact private^{xii} or campus security^{xiii}; they will coordinate with police and emergency services.
- The conference takes place during the university spring break, so the town will be quieter than usual.
- English is widely spoken and understood.

Weather

September is spring: mild days (15–22°C/59–72°F), cool evenings, little wind and occasional short rain spells. Pack layers.

Pollen levels can be high; bring your usual hay-fever or sinus medication.

Medical Care

Stellenbosch has private doctors, dentists and the Mediclinic hospital, offering care comparable to advanced economies. Travel insurance is essential, as upfront payment is required.

Things To Do

For evenings or accompanying persons:

- The town offers art galleries, wine estates, fine dining, outdoor activities, shopping and tours. See [here](#) for more information.
- For safety, contact the local organiser^{xiv} if you would like to join a walking or jogging group in the surrounding mountains.
- Popular excursions and multi-day trips:
 - Cape Town and Franshoek (approx. 45 min by Uber, traffic dependent)
 - Garden Route (requires a rental car)
 - Kruger National Park (reachable via domestic flights from CPT or via Johannesburg)
- Local organisers can advise on your plans.

Presenting at the Conference

- Paper submissions are expected to open in January and close at the end of April 2026, with review outcomes released by early June
- Registration is expected to open in early May. Early-bird fees apply until end-June.
- Registration and payment are completed online in ZAR. Delegates without access to VISA, Mastercard or SWIFT should contact the organiser for alternatives.
- The fee covers venue hire, Wi-Fi, three lunches^{xv}, tea breaks, a welcome drink and the Saturday social excursion (transport, entrance fees, guide, tasting, lunch and drinks). Full-time students receive a reduced fee; the excursion is optional and charged separately for students and accompanying persons.
- Delegates are responsible for their own travel, accommodation and registration costs. Apart from full-time students, early-bird rates and corporate members, CIRET does not offer further discounts or financial support.
- English is the official language of the conference. All papers and abstracts must be written and presented in English.
- The conference, including keynotes and presentations, will be held in person. The special session will be available online for the OECD.
- Final papers and presentations must be submitted to CIRET by end-August. Slides must be in Microsoft PowerPoint or PDF. They will be pre-loaded but bring a memory stick as a backup. Technical support will be available.
- If many papers are accepted, sessions will run in parallel by theme. One presenter per session will be asked to act as chair. Presenters will receive another paper from their group in advance and will provide brief comments on it (no presentation required) before the session opens for discussion.

ⁱ Make sure the passport expiry date is at least 30 days (ideally six months) after your planned departure from South Africa. Also check that the passport has two consecutive blank visa pages.

ⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_South_Africa

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://eta.dha.gov.za/>

^{iv} <https://www.flightconnections.com/flights-to-cape-town-cpt>

^v <https://www.flightconnections.com/flights-to-johannesburg-jnb>

^{vi} <https://www.traveltomtom.net/destinations/africa/south-africa/sim-card-south-africa#online>

^{vii} Select Uber Comfort or Uber Black (premium) after exiting customs, then follow the signs to the e-hailing pick-up area. A ride usually arrives within 5–10 minutes, with no need to book in advance. Bolt operate in Cape Town, but usually don't take trips out to Stellenbosch

^{viii} <https://www.centuriontours.co.za/> or <https://www.shuttleup.co.za/>

^{ix} For trips within Stellenbosch, use the more affordable options such as Uber Go or UberX, as premium cars may take longer to arrive. Delegates without access to the Uber app or Visa/Mastercard can download the app in South Africa and purchase an Uber voucher from a retailer (such as Checkers) to load funds into the wallet.

^x <https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/south-africa/>

^{xi} <https://waylesstravelers.com/destinations-guide/south-africa-travel-guide/>

^{xii} ABC Security, ADT, Stellenbosch Watch, Netcare +27 82 911, ER24 +27 84 124

^{xiii} Tel +27 21 808 2333

^{xiv} George Kershoff gjkk@sun.ac.za

^{xv} A meat and vegetarian option would be available. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide halaal or kosher meals.