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Wikus van Niekerk is a Professor in the Department of Mechanical & Mechatronic Engineering at Stellenbosch University. He holds a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley. Prof van Niekerk is the Director of the Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies (CRSES) established in 2006 funded by the Department of Science and Technology, Eskom and Sasol. He has a keen interest in harvesting the energy from the sun, wind and ocean.

Prof van Niekerk is a registered professional engineer with the Engineering Council of South African and has been practising as a consultant to industry for sixteen years. He has published more than 30 articles in refereed international journals and presented a number of papers at international conferences. He is a fellow of the Southern African Acoustics Institute and the South African Academy of Engineers, and a fellow and president of the South African Institution for Mechanical Engineering; a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the Sustainable Energy Society of South Africa and the International Solar Energy Society. In 2014 Prof Van Niekerk received the SANE Energy Award.