

## College of Fellows Young Researcher Award

### CITATION

Lauren Kohn

Department of Public Law

At just 39, Lauren Kohn has become a leading administrative and constitutional-law scholar in SA whose work consistently breaks new ground and has been widely endorsed by the courts (including the Constitutional Court) and academics, locally and abroad.

She attained her BBusSci (*Distinction, Law*); LLB (*Magna Cum Laude*); and LLM (*Distinction*) (UCT), all with a suite of class medals, special awards and scholarships, and is presently a PhD candidate (and fellow) at Leiden, pursuing a project that is already feeding into the governance-enhancing endeavour in SA.

The first in her family to enjoy the privilege of a tertiary education, Lauren has gone on to shatter one ceiling after another. Since joining academia in 2013, she has won three Law Faculty Research Prizes in under four years, with the anonymous judges each time commending her scholarship for its originality, insight, rigor and tangible impact on legal development, through judicial endorsements and policy reform.

Lauren is also an admitted Attorney of the High Court with over a decade of cutting-edge public-law advisory, and legislative drafting, contributions to her name (typically *pro bono*). She practiced at Webber Wentzel for several years before transitioning into academia, where she found her vocational passion and has taught (and convened), for nearly 9 consecutive years, at preliminary-; final-year; and LLM-level (in four public-law courses), and is currently supervising over 10 post-graduate students.

During her time in formal practice, Lauren fast became a specialist in her niche fields and attained Distinctions for all of her Bar Exams and the highest overall result for 'Court Practice'. She is a passionate educationalist and a dedicated social justice advocate who synergistically weaves her knowledge, and incisive understanding of the practical workings of the law into her research and teaching – the impact of which is felt in the lecture-hall and beyond with her scholarship prescribed in public-law curricula at universities across SA.

As a mother to three small children, Lauren is also dedicated to early childhood development research and has served on the Board of a Pre-Primary school (NPO). She is on the editorial board of *Constitutional Court Review*; a regular media commentator; has provided technical input for the HSRC on the Constitutional Justice Project (2013 – 2015); and has been Key-Note speaker (and presenter) at various conferences and colloquia. Most recently, Lauren partnered with a leading Dutch administrative lawyer in presenting their comparative study at the ICON-S (2021) World Conference. She was an inaugural recipient of the 'Women in Law (WOZA) Award' for being an academic 'thought leader and innovator'; a 'M&G Top 200 Young South African' (Law & Justice); a Winner of the 'Most Inspiring50-SA Women' (in recognition of her innovative scholarship, teaching of the law, and efforts to enhance access to justice; most notably through her role as Founder of SALegalAdvice.co.za). Lauren was also selected one of twenty 'Influential Women Leaders' from across Africa to participate in the 'Leading in Public Life: Women, Influence, Power Programme' given her deep commitment to fostering the rule of law and social justice in SA.