Hein Marais delivers a theoretically powerful, impressively documented, timely and urgent case for radical wealth redistribution. Crucially, the book supports a basic income not as a policy fix, but as a far-reaching political and imaginative response to the steady collapse of a wage-centered social order. This is a book destined to have lasting influence.

– Franco Barchiesi, Associate Professor, Ohio State University, author of Precarious Liberation: Workers, the State, and Contested Social Citizenship in Post-apartheid South Africa

This book is a major contribution to our understanding of the possibility for policies to achieve more equitable levels of well-being in the contemporary political economy of South Africa and the world beyond.

– Peter B. Evans, Professor Emeritus Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley

This is a must-read, narrative-changing book on a universal basic income (UBI).

– Ferial Haffajee, Associate Editor, Daily Maverick

Highly topical and distinctive in its approach, In the Balance: The Case for a Universal Basic Income in South Africa and Beyond offers a robust and critical examination of a universal basic income.

Placing the debate in the urgent context of the crisis of work, floundering economies, global warming and social upheaval, Hein Marais’s approach shows the relevance of a UBI in conditions of gross inequality and pinpoints what it will take to implement and sustain such a policy.

Marais probes the social, political and economic implications of a basic income, discusses financing options and presents cost estimates for different versions. Using the most current research evidence, this incisive study advances our understanding of the prospects for a UBI and its potential for shaping a more just and equitable society.

HEIN MARAIS is an independent writer specialising in political economy, development and public health. His previous books include Pushed to the Limit: The Political Economy of Change (2011); South Africa: Limits to Change – The Political Economy of Transition (2001), as well as Buckling: The Impact of AIDS in South Africa (2005).