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From left to right: Prof Andre van der Merwe - Stellenbosch University; Ms Dilla Wright - Tshwane University of Technology; Ms. Philina Wittke - Head of the DAAD Information Centre in South Africa; Ms Refilwe Moleyane - Study Abroad Coordinator at the CUT International Office; Mr Logan Munsamy - Lecturer: Government Management and Prof Laetus Lategan - Dean: Research and Innovation.

2nd Annual Research and Development workshop

The Research and Development Unit presented on 12 June an R & D Workshop on postgraduate supervision. Participants were form DAAD, SATN, Stellenbosch University and CUT.

Thanks to their presentations and inputs we were able to entertain the most important institutional issues associated with postgraduate supervision. We could identify two important processes: the academic function (performed primarily by academics in Faculties) and the R & D support function.

During the workshop the following important indicators were identified:

- Understanding the university, scientific and grants environment.
- Understanding the triple helix relationship between supervisor (including mentors), students (including teams) and university (assessment, scholarships, partnerships, publication demand, etc.)
- The role of research teams, support services and institutional promotion
- The important role of learning (academic experience, industry relevance, engagement, etc.)

Compiled by Prof Laetus OK Lategan

More attention should be paid to Research Ethics and Integrity

4th WORLD CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY
Research Integrity, Science and its Reward Systems
BRAZIL, RIO DE JANEIRO
May 31-June 3, 2015

Prof. Laetus Lategan, Dean: Research and Innovation, attended the fourth World Conference on Research Integrity in Rio de Janeiro, 31 May – 3 June 2015.

From the conference the following important lessons were learnt. In the research integrity value chain there are different activities to be considered. Four important activities are:

- Basic guidelines on what constitute good and respectful research;
- Institutional regulations, compliance;
- National and international codes and
- Principles, values, norms, virtues.

Research integrity cannot be removed from research ethics (as field of study, as part of institutional ethos and as collective for research values, virtues, principles, norms, etc.)

We need to have a debate on what science is, what its foundations are and what kind of research are we engaging with. The remark on "sloppy research" – disrespectful research, scientific misconduct, fraud, etc. cannot be ignored. We should ask questions such as relevance, application, replication, etc.

During the conference there were two recurring discussions: What ethical guidelines do we require for the human and social science? How are researchers doing research in general?

Although there is much talk about the importance of research ethics and integrity, there is not enough education / training and role models. An important observation is the (old) observation: who is training the trainers?

During the months to come the Research Office will run a special project to introduce a Research Ethics and Integrity Desk for the university. The task of this desk will be to support, educate and train researchers and postgraduate students to conduct respectful and responsible research.
Compiled by Laetus OK Lategan

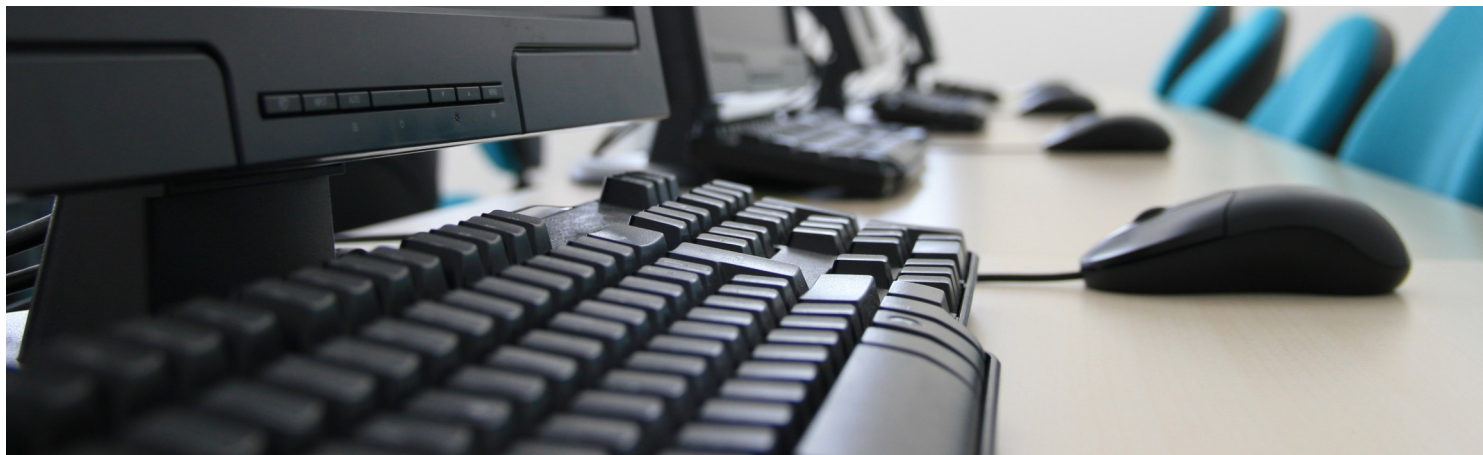## When applying for funding applications, be mindful off...

For some years now I have studied the challenges our researchers and students experience when applying for external funds. Through these years I noted the following feedback from funding agencies on applications submitted to them:

- Scope of the research – it is either to wide or has no specific focus at all;
- Relevance of the research – very often the debate on a topic has either been concluded or has progressed to another level.;
- Research question not clear – it is difficult to identify what the intention of the research is, what are the envisaged outcomes and how it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge or the contribution to the scientific discourse.
- Methodological challenges – the methodology is either not appropriate or cannot cover the scope of the research. In some cases the motivation for using a particular methodology is also lacking;
- Language editing – it is the responsibility of the applicants to see that their applications are language edited. There are too many spelling, grammar, concord errors etc. in some applications;
- The applications must follow the guidelines of a call. For example if the maximum amount for travel is R x you cannot apply for more than this amount and
- Applicants must be mindful of the stage of their research development. Applicants are advised to apply for grants fit for the respective category they are applying to.

May I encourage you all to continue with your funding applications but to be mindful of what are the expectations from the funding agencies.
Compiled by Laetus OK Lategan

Why have research information management systems become so important?

For many the concept of Research Information Management (RIM) means research related data listed on excel sheets. It has been done this way for many years and although very time consuming, it has produced satisfactory outcomes for those who use it. But some of this information may be fragmented across departments and faculties and gathering it to compile one document, for the purpose of data analysis for instance, can take up to several months. A more intelligent and technologically advanced method was produced and thus the birth of RIM. Various countries across the world are using their own versions of RIM and in South Africa the Department of Science and Technology has started the RIMS project which provides 23 Higher Education Institutions (including CUT) and nine Science Councils with research administrative and business intelligence services.

But what is the actual purpose of such a system? The overall purpose of a research information management system such as RIMS, is to synchronize institutional research data more efficiently and to provide more effective reporting on research related activities. Another important function is to increase the visibility of the institution's researchers and institutional research activities.

The administrative functions of the RIMS are compiled in the following categories:

- **Research Outputs** - an administrative process module that enables the reporting of research outputs to DHET and Science councils;
- **Grants and Contracts** - enables researchers and students to identify appropriate worldwide funding opportunities, administrators and financial officers to process funding applications and track progress;
- **Research Compliance** - ensures that compliance requirements in specific environments are adhered to;
- **Technology Transfer** - enables the management of all processes involved in technology transfer.

The opportunities available on RIMS are endless: Researchers can track or be tracked down by possible research collaborators across the globe as they build their online research profiles; The administration of research related committee meetings can become effortless as the system provides detailed committee administration controls (e.g. support of multiple committees; committee member appointments; reviewer assignment tracking; meeting management for recording notes, votes and determinations; etc.).

Following a standardised approach to the storing and management of research information at higher education institutions is proving to be more effective with added benefits for researchers!
Compiled by Ms Zenobia Louw

Above: Ms Zenobia Louw Research Officer for the NRF activities at CUT and Co-Editor of the Research and Innovation Newsletter.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
Newsletter

Upcoming Events

August

21   3rd Annual Research and Development workshop

September

7   FEIT 2nd research culture workshop: Journeys to Doctoral Degrees;

30   6th Annual NRF Research Administrators Workshop

From the Dean's desk...

The months of June and July were very eventful for the researchers. Apart from many individual activities aligned to researchers' programmes, the Research and Innovation Section guided the researchers and postgraduate students in doing research, applying for grants and to position themselves to compete with peers nationally and internationally. These activities marked an important characteristic of a Research Office: to serve as enabler, matchmaker and advocate for the research and integrity project.

From the events reported in this newsletter it is evident that our research contributes in building the knowledge base and therefor warrants strategic and operational support. From our own understanding more attention should be paid to human capacity building, grants administration and management, publication management and policy development.

May I invite you all to visit your Research Manager and express your research needs and support you are looking for. This will enable us to deliver quality management and administrative services.
Laetus OK Lategan

Central University of Technology, Free State