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Communications & Marketing Editorial Team

Mpho Makanyane	- Editor-in-Chief	mmakanyane@cut.ac.za
Lesego Modisenyane	- Editor	lmodisenyane@cut.ac.za
Asiphile Buthongo	- Communications Intern (Welkom Campus)	
Nokuzola Ngophe	- Photographer and picture editor	
Malete Malete	- Intern Photographer	

Publisher

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)
 Private Bag X20539
 Bloemfontein
 Tel: +27 (0) 51 507 3053
 Tel: +27 (0) 51 507 3500



Prof. Pamela Dube's Three-Year Reflection: 2023-2026

On 17 February 2023, Central University of Technology, Free State entered a defining new chapter with the inauguration of Professor Pamela Zibuyile Dube as its first woman Vice-Chancellor and Principal. Her appointment was more than symbolic. It marked a decisive shift in direction, one grounded in transformation, strategic clarity and courageous leadership. At a time when higher education institutions across the globe are navigating uncertainty and disruption, Professor Dube positioned CUT not simply to respond to change, but to lead through it.

Guided by Vision 2030, she embarked on a deliberate process of institutional renewal anchored in trust, accountability and inclusive governance. She strengthened relationships across the university community, repositioned the CUT brand with confidence and confronted organisational culture with honesty and purpose. Through Institutional Renewal and Transformation dialogues, engagements with labour and student leadership, and transparent conversations following the KLM culture survey, she cultivated a leadership culture rooted in collaboration, empathy and shared responsibility. Her message was clear: meaningful transformation cannot happen in isolation, it must be collective, intentional and sustained.

As the 2023-2026 strategic cycle, Charting the New Path for CUT, drew to a close, the impact of her leadership became unmistakable. This period stands among the most progressive and transformative in the university's history defined by digital acceleration, academic renewal and a sharpened commitment to inclusive excellence. Under her leadership, strategy evolved beyond policy into an active force driving innovation, institutional cohesion and future relevance.

CUT emerged stronger, more agile and strategically aligned. Academic offerings expanded and diversified, research and innovation sharpened their societal impact, infrastructure modernised and partnerships deepened to advance social and economic transformation. Sustainability shifted from aspiration to embedded institutional practice, while the

university strengthened its identity as a future-focused, student-centred and socially responsive University of Technology.

The launch of the 2026-2030 strategy further reinforces Professor Dube's visionary leadership. Building on firm foundations, the strategy positions CUT as a leading University of Technology committed to changing lives, transforming society and shaping the future. The institution now moves from expansion to intentional integration, aligning academic, operational and administrative priorities to unlock the full value of previous investments. The strategic focus is clear, to strengthen student success, produce work-ready graduates with entrepreneurial capability and deepen the university's national and global relevance.

Professor Dube's tenure has been defined by a bold repositioning of CUT as a transformative institution with meaningful impact on national development and global innovation. Her emphasis on digital transformation, academic renewal and stakeholder engagement strengthened institutional competitiveness while deepening social impact. She challenged legacy systems, redefined institutional culture and fostered an environment of accountability, recognition and excellence across academic and professional staff.

Academic excellence gained renewed momentum under her leadership. CUT refined its academic portfolio to ensure programmes remain responsive to industry demands and societal needs. The adoption of blended learning models, coupled with sustained professional development, positioned the university at the forefront of adaptive higher education delivery. Interdisciplinary collaboration expanded, while flexible learning pathways responded to the growing demand for lifelong learning and workforce upskilling. Through its partnership with Higher Education Partners Africa, CUT accelerated its digital ambition, widening access through fully online qualifications and redefining student-centred learning for the twenty-first century. New online programmes in Human Resources Management, Health Management and Information

Technology marked the beginning of a transformative new era in digital learning.

Research and innovation also advanced significantly. New research centres and innovation hubs strengthened the university's ability to generate solutions-driven knowledge addressing pressing societal challenges. Research outputs increased in both quality and scale, underpinned by a strong emphasis on applied and multidisciplinary innovation. Strategic collaborations enabled academics to translate scholarship into tangible impact across manufacturing technology, renewable energy, health innovation and sustainable development.

A landmark achievement during her tenure was the awarding of a National Research Foundation Research Chair under the South African Research Chairs Initiative in Medical Product Development through Additive Manufacturing, which later elevated to Tier 1 status. The milestone affirmed the university's growing stature in advanced manufacturing and innovation-led research, while positioning it as an emerging leader in technology-driven solutions for societal advancement.

Yet CUT's rise under Prof. Dube reflects more than strategic leadership. It speaks to the power of collaborative, women-led transformation. Her success has never been defined by individual advancement alone, but by her commitment to lifting others as she rises. She cultivated an environment where women leaders are not merely represented, but empowered to lead, influence and shape institutional direction alongside her. Through this collective approach, she has fostered a culture of shared leadership, visibility and purposeful empowerment.

Her leadership philosophy is deeply human-centred. It is rooted in inclusion, opportunity creation and a belief that institutions thrive when people do. This is most visible in her unwavering commitment to student success and inclusive growth. She embedded a student-centred ethos focused on holistic development through strengthened academic support, expanded mental health services and enriched co-curricular opportunities. Under her reign, initiatives such as Siyaphumelela and partnerships with the Western Alliance for Expanding Student Opportunity sharpened CUT's student success strategies while strengthening global collaboration and institutional learning.

Under her stewardship, she secured more than R4.3 million in funding from The Kresge Foundation, a significant vote of confidence in the university's strategic direction and commitment to student success. The funding strengthened targeted interventions focused on student retention, academic success and holistic development, reinforcing CUT's mission to create an inclusive and enabling learning environment.

This momentum was further strengthened through sustained support from the Saville Foundation, alongside expanding partnerships with Old Mutual, government, SETAs, the Industrial Development Corporation, and Tshikululu Social Investments. It was further amplified by the launch of a transformative scholarship initiative designed to support financially vulnerable students and address historical student debt. Together, these collaborations broadened access to educational opportunities, restored dignity to students burdened by longstanding debt, and enabled thousands to graduate with renewed confidence, hope, and the prospect of a brighter future.

Reflecting her deeply human-centred leadership approach, Professor Dube also personally contributed R182 725.57



towards the launch of the CUT Student Food Bank, an initiative aimed at addressing food insecurity among disadvantaged students. Beyond financial support, the initiative symbolised a leadership philosophy grounded in compassion, dignity and action, ensuring that no student is left behind because of financial hardship or lack of necessities.

For Dube, leadership is measured not by title or position, but by impact. Her vision of success extends beyond institutional metrics and qualifications; it is rooted in creating pathways for mobility, opening doors for others and ensuring that transformation remains meaningful, human and sustainable. This philosophy continues to shape her leadership approach and redefine women's leadership in higher education not as individual achievement, but as collective advancement grounded in purpose, compassion and courage.

Central to this commitment is the launch of the Student Women Economic Empowerment Programme (SWEPP), an initiative designed to equip young women with entrepreneurial skills, strengthen economic participation and confront systemic gender inequality. Through SWEPP, Professor Dube has reinforced the importance of empowering women not only academically, but economically and socially, cultivating a new generation of confident, innovative and self-sufficient women leaders prepared to shape their own futures and contribute meaningfully to society.

Her influence extends far beyond CUT. Her appointment as Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Technological Higher Education Network South Africa (THENSA) for the 2026–2028

term reflects growing recognition of her strategic vision, thought leadership and commitment to advancing technology-focused higher education across South Africa and beyond. The appointment positions her as a leading voice shaping conversations around innovation, policy and the evolving role of Universities of Technology in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing global landscape.

Her impact within higher education leadership has also been recognised through the prestigious 2023 SAASSAP Presidency Lifetime Award, honouring the significant contribution she has made to student affairs and services both in South Africa and internationally, including her academic work in Germany. The award affirmed her longstanding commitment to student development, inclusive education and transformative leadership within the higher education sector.

Professor Dube has also played a strategic leadership role within the South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF), contributing to the shaping of its 2025-2030 vision while strengthening CUT's international footprint and expanding collaborative global partnerships. Her active participation in global higher education networks such as World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED) and World Access to Higher Education Network (WAHEN) further reflects her commitment to advancing equity, access and inclusion in higher education on a global scale.

In 2025, her influence and leadership within the sector received further national recognition through her appointment as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Universities South Africa (USAf) for the 2026-2027 term. The appointment affirmed her growing stature as a respected higher education leader shaping the future direction of the sector in South Africa.

Under her leadership, CUT also achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first African university to receive recognition from the Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities (ACCEU). The recognition reinforced the university's commitment to innovation, entrepreneurship and socially responsive higher education, while positioning CUT among globally engaged institutions driving transformative impact through knowledge, research and community engagement.

Through these strategic leadership roles, institutional achievements and international engagements, Prof. Dube continues to position CUT as a globally connected university, one that contributes meaningfully to international knowledge exchange, innovation and a more inclusive and socially responsive higher education landscape.

Yet what distinguishes her most is not only strategy or institutional achievement, but presence. She has consistently demonstrated that leadership is about showing up, standing alongside students and staff in moments of triumph and challenge, and modelling unity where division could easily emerge. Her leadership reflects a deep understanding that institutional culture is not built through policy alone, but through empathy, visibility and shared purpose.

An accomplished international academic and transformational leader, Professor Dube continues to articulate a bold vision for CUT's future, one anchored in innovation, global relevance and human-centred technological advancement. Central to this vision is the establishment of a pioneering research centre focused on the human-technology interface, a concept she introduced during her inaugural address as Vice-Chancellor in 2023. Through this strategic direction, she positions CUT not simply as a participant in

technological advancement, but as a leading University of Technology – changing lives, transforming society and shaping the future.

In an increasingly constrained higher education environment, her prudent governance ensured institutional stability and sustained growth. CUT maintained a strong financial footing while continuing to invest in infrastructure, academic quality and digital transformation. Governance reforms strengthened accountability and responsiveness, while alignment with the Department of Higher Education and Training and progress on the Independent Assessor's recommendations reinforced institutional credibility and trust.

Infrastructure and digital transformation became visible markers of her forward-looking agenda. More than R1.2 billion was invested in modern facilities across campuses, including upgraded laboratories, new student residences and specialised academic buildings. High-speed connectivity now spans teaching and residence spaces, enabling seamless hybrid learning and strengthening digital access. Sustainability commitments translated into measurable impact through energy-efficient systems and solar installations that reduced energy consumption per student by 30%.

Since Autumn 2023, Professor Dube has conferred qualifications on more than 15 000 graduates, including master's and doctoral candidates, milestones that represent not only academic achievement, but institutional renewal and expanded possibility. She has awarded honorary degrees, introduced new academic regalia and overseen the induction of new governance structures, symbolising continuity, transformation and institutional pride.

As CUT advances into its next chapter, priorities including financial sustainability, infrastructure renewal, enrolment planning, staff and student experience and the repositioning of the Welkom Campus remain firmly in focus. Through strategic clarity, disciplined execution and deeply values-driven leadership, Prof. Dube has done far more than lead an institution, she has reshaped it. Her leadership journey stands as a defining chapter in the history of Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), positioning the university as a resilient, innovative and socially responsive force in higher education, while leaving a legacy rooted in transformation, empowerment and lasting impact.

Looking back, the tenure of Professor Pamela Dube will be remembered not simply as a period of institutional progress, but as a defining era of transformation, courage and purposeful leadership for Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT). Through strategic vision, inclusive leadership and an unwavering commitment to people, she has repositioned the university as a resilient, innovative and socially responsive institution with growing national and global relevance. Her legacy is reflected not only in strengthened systems, expanded opportunities and institutional milestones, but in the lives empowered, leaders cultivated and futures transformed.

As CUT advances into a new chapter, it does so on foundations shaped by a leader who understood that true leadership is not about standing above others but about bringing others along in the journey toward collective excellence and lasting impact.

Meanwhile, Professor Pamela Dube, was appointed as Chairperson of the Technological Higher Education Network South Africa (THENSA) Board of Directors, from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028. This prestigious appointment is a testament to Professor Dube's exemplary leadership, strategic vision, and

unwavering commitment to advancing technology-focused higher education in South Africa and beyond.

In her role as Chairperson, Prof. Dube will provide strategic oversight and leadership to the Board. She will also play a pivotal role in advancing innovation, fostering collaboration among institutions, and championing impactful initiatives that empower students and academic communities.

She follows in the distinguished footsteps of former CUT Vice-Chancellors, including Professor Henk de Jager, current Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of THENSA, and Professor Thandwa Mthembu, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the Durban University of Technology (DUT). This further highlights the institution's strong legacy of leadership in the higher education sector.

Vice-Chancellor contributes to global discussion on widening access and student success

CUT Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, joined higher education leaders from around the world in a global webinar hosted by University World News (UWN) in partnership with the World Access to Higher Education Network (WAHEN) and quality assurance agency ABET to examine how universities can expand access while ensuring student success.

The webinar addressed one of the sector's most pressing challenges facing higher education. Although access to higher education has increased significantly, inequalities persist. Panellists agreed that increasing enrolment is no longer sufficient. Universities must also ensure that students succeed, graduate, and acquire the knowledge and skills needed to participate meaningfully in society and the economy.

Speaking within the South African higher education context, Prof. Dube argued that institutions must move beyond simply opening their doors. "The challenge is not access alone but access to relevant, future-orientated education that translates into meaningful opportunities."

She emphasised that no university could address these challenges in isolation, calling for stronger partnerships between higher education institutions, government and industry to improve funding, student support and graduate readiness.

Drawing on CUT's experience, Prof. Dube outlined how strategic partnerships have expanded student access to funding, digital devices and affordable connectivity. She also spoke about the university's commitment to developing artificial intelligence (AI) literacy among both students and staff, ensuring they are equipped to use emerging technologies responsibly and effectively.

She further explained that AI has the potential to transform teaching and learning through personalised education, multilingual learning environments, adaptive tutoring and targeted academic support, particularly for first-generation and underprepared students. At the same time, she acknowledged that the cost of advanced AI platforms remains a significant challenge, highlighting the need for collaborative licensing models that make these technologies more accessible.

The discussion also explored the importance of flexible learning pathways, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), stackable micro-credentials, joint and dual degree programmes, and stronger collaboration between schools, universities and industry. Prof. Dube noted that while these approaches create new opportunities for students, closer engagement with accreditation and quality assurance bodies is essential to

streamline programme recognition and credit transfer.

International higher education expert Dr Jamil Salmi identified financial exclusion as one of the greatest barriers to student success. "The bottom line for improving student access and success is to eliminate the financial barrier," he said.

Dr Graeme Atherton of the University of West London added that widening participation extends beyond tuition costs and requires sustained academic and social support throughout a student's educational journey. Ms Roberta Malee Bassett, Global Lead for Tertiary Education at the World Bank Group, reinforced this view, noting that widening participation is ultimately about expanding who has the opportunity to benefit from higher education, not simply increasing enrolment numbers.

The webinar reinforced a clear message that widening participation can no longer be measured by access alone. Student success, equitable opportunities and meaningful graduate outcomes are equally essential to building higher education systems that are inclusive, responsive and future-focused.

The screenshot shows a webinar interface. On the left is a vertical grid of five video thumbnails for participants: Brendan O'Malley, Roberta Malee Bassett, Professor Pamela Dube, and Jamil Salmi. The main area on the right displays a presentation slide for Professor Pamela Dube, Vice-chancellor and principal of the Central University of Technology (CUT) in the Free State, South Africa. The slide features her photo and the text 'Innovating to widen access and success in higher education'. At the bottom of the slide are logos for ABET, University World News, and the date '25 June 2026'.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, showcasing CUT's leadership in advancing global conversations on widening access and student success during the international webinar hosted by University World News (UWN).

Prof. Kanzumba Kusakana appointed NRF SARCHI Tier 1 Research Chair in Smart and Sustainable Energy Systems



At a time when Africa's energy future demands bold thinking, world-class research and transformative leadership, the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) has achieved a landmark milestone. The appointment of Prof. Kanzumba Kusakana as the recipient of the prestigious DSTI/NRF SARCHI Tier 1 Research Chair in Smart and Sustainable Energy Systems not only recognises his internationally acclaimed research excellence but also positions CUT at the forefront of innovation in intelligent, renewable and resilient energy solutions. As South Africa and the continent accelerate the transition to cleaner, more sustainable power systems, this milestone signals the university's growing influence in shaping technologies, talent and partnerships that will define the future of energy for generations to come.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) is proud to announce that Prof. Kanzumba Kusakana has been awarded the prestigious DSTI/NRF SARCHI Tier 1 Research Chair in Smart and Sustainable Energy Systems. The South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARCHI), administered by the National Research Foundation, is a flagship programme that recognises and supports sustained research excellence. A Tier 1 Chair denotes internationally recognised leadership and research impact and provides a strategic platform to accelerate innovation, training and collaboration in a field critical to South Africa's future.

The global energy sector is undergoing a profound transformation as nations transition toward cleaner, more resilient and sustainable energy systems. In South Africa and across the African continent, this shift presents both urgent challenges and significant opportunities. The SARCHI Chair in

Smart and Sustainable Energy Systems at CUT will lead research that develops intelligent, grid-interactive renewable energy solutions tailored to regional needs and realities.

Under Prof. Kusakana's leadership, the Chair will advance a multidisciplinary research programme that tackles core challenges in modern energy systems. The programme focuses on renewable energy integration through methods that incorporate variable renewable resources reliably into existing power systems. It emphasises intelligent power systems and control by developing data-driven control strategies and AI-enabled optimisation for hybrid systems and smart grids. Research on energy storage and emerging solutions, including battery systems, system-level storage strategies and nascent technologies such as green hydrogen, will complement efforts to optimise energy networks, creating tools that improve reliability, affordability and operational efficiency for utilities and distributed energy resources.

"Our research focuses on developing advanced, AI-driven optimisation and control frameworks for hybrid energy systems that integrate renewable energy sources, energy storage, and emerging solutions such as hydrogen. Through this work, we aim to address critical challenges related to energy reliability, affordability and sustainability, while contributing to national and continental priorities in energy security and climate change mitigation," said Prof. Kusakana.

A core objective of the Chair is to build lasting research capacity and catalyse real-world impact. The programme is structured around three strategic pillars. First, it will prioritise human capacity development by strengthening postgraduate

Continued from page 5



The appointment of the DSTI/NRF SARCHI Tier 1 Chair in Smart and Sustainable Energy Systems strengthens CUT's commitment to addressing pressing national and continental energy challenges. Through research excellence, capacity building and strategic collaboration, the Chair will help shape a more resilient, affordable and low-carbon energy future for South Africa and the wider region.

and postdoctoral training and mentoring early-career academics to create a pipeline of skilled researchers and practitioners in advanced energy-systems engineering. Second, the Chair will forge strategic partnerships with industry, government and international research institutions to translate discoveries into practical technologies, pilot projects and policy-relevant solutions. Third, it will develop scalable decision-support platforms and technologies that can be adopted across Africa and other developing regions, ensuring benefits persist beyond the initial funding cycle.

These mechanisms are designed to ensure the Chair not only produces cutting-edge research but also nurtures an innovation ecosystem that supports long-term sustainability, local relevance and socioeconomic development. By combining engineering innovation, data-driven control and interdisciplinary collaboration, the Chair aims to develop solutions that improve energy reliability, affordability and sustainability in South Africa and across the continent.

Prof. Kanzumba Kusakana is an electrical engineer with extensive experience in energy-systems modelling, optimisation and the integration of renewable energy technologies. His work centres on intelligent energy management solutions for hybrid renewable systems, smart grids and energy storage, areas of high importance for developing regions facing energy access and reliability challenges. His leadership of the SARCHI Chair positions CUT as a growing hub for research excellence in smart and sustainable energy across Africa.

"The vision of the Chair is to become a leading research hub in Africa for intelligent and sustainable energy systems that support the transition toward resilient and low-carbon energy infrastructures. Our goal is simple but ambitious—to engineer intelligent energy systems that enable a resilient and sustainable energy future for Africa and beyond," Prof. Kusakana said.

Fun facts about Prof. Kanzumba Kusakana

Did you know?

Outside academia, Prof. Kusakana enjoys playing and following basketball, a sport that has taught him the importance of teamwork, discipline and perseverance.

He has a lifelong passion for music. Interestingly, before pursuing an academic career, he worked as a DJ, an experience that strengthened his creativity, confidence and ability to connect with people from diverse backgrounds.

He also enjoys travelling, exploring different cultures, and spending quality time with his family. Prof. Kusakana believes that maintaining a balance between professional excellence and personal interests helps foster creativity, resilience and a broader perspective on life.

Prof. Zenzile Peter Khetsha driving sustainable agricultural innovation through applied research



Prof. Zenzile Peter Khetsha is steadily positioning himself as a leading voice in sustainable agricultural innovation through impactful, solution-driven research that addresses critical global challenges related to food security, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability.

As a specialist in Agriculture and Plant Production, his expertise integrates horticultural science, plant physiology, biostimulant technologies, and emerging digital innovations to develop practical agricultural solutions that respond to the evolving needs of both industry and society. Through his growing research portfolio, postgraduate supervision, and multidisciplinary collaborations, Prof. Khetsha continues to strengthen CUT's commitment to applied research, innovation, and transformative societal impact.

His research interest focuses on bio stimulants as innovative strategies to enhance crop resilience under abiotic and multi-stress conditions. His work spans several key areas including sustainable horticulture, essential oil crop production, plant stress physiology, interactions between soil and water quality, phytoremediation, and food safety. He is also actively involved in interdisciplinary research focusing on agriprenueurship, climate-resilient agriculture, and the integration of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence into agricultural systems. This research is strongly aligned with applied, solution-driven approaches targeting food security, environmental sustainability, and climate change adaptation.

Supported through National Research Foundation (NRF) funding, including the prestigious Thuthuka and BAAP grants, Prof. Khetsha currently leads and supervises several applied research

projects that continue to expand the boundaries of agricultural innovation. These projects include studies on rose geranium, lettuce, beetroot, kale, and tomato production systems, with a particular emphasis on improving yield and stress tolerance through sustainable interventions. His work further extends into environmental remediation, where he explores phytoremediation strategies using plant-based bio stimulants to rehabilitate contaminated soil and water systems. Additional projects investigate eco-organic soilless production systems and sustainable agriprenueurship models within BRICS economies through collaborative initiatives with India.

Beyond research, Prof. Khetsha is deeply committed to postgraduate supervision and capacity development. His supervision portfolio reflects a multidisciplinary approach that includes agricultural production systems, environmental health, food systems, and artificial intelligence applications in agriculture. Through this work, he continues to contribute to the development of highly skilled, research-driven graduates equipped to address future agricultural challenges.

His growing scholarly impact is reflected in an extensive publication record in accredited international journals, including Applied Ecology and Environmental Research, Frontiers, Agronomy, Foods, Agrochemicals, Water SA, and Acta Horticulturae. His research contributions in plant stress physiology, sustainable agriculture, environmental remediation, and food safety have gained increasing recognition both nationally and internationally.

Prof. Khetsha has also presented his research at leading national and international conferences and remains actively involved in the scientific

community through professional memberships and registrations with organisations such as SACNASP, FERTASA, ISHS, and SASHS. In addition, he contributes to academic scholarship through editorial board participation and peer-review activities.

His scholarly influence is further demonstrated through H-index scores of 7 on Scopus, 8 on Google Scholar, and 9 on ResearchGate, highlighting the growing visibility and impact of his research across international academic platforms.

Importantly, Prof. Khetsha's work aligns strongly with the CUT Strategy 2030 vision of becoming a leading university of technology that changes lives, transforms society, and shapes the future through applied research and innovation. His research strengthens the university's applied research capacity by generating industry-relevant knowledge and practical solutions that directly address regional socio-economic challenges, particularly within food security and environmental sustainability.

Through his work on sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, digital transformation, and entrepreneurship, Prof. Khetsha continues to position CUT at the forefront of impactful, future-focused agricultural research. By linking innovation, postgraduate training, industry relevance, and community engagement, he is helping to build stronger research ecosystems while developing graduates equipped for the evolving demands of the modern agricultural sector.

His work not only advances scientific knowledge but also reinforces CUT's growing reputation as an institution committed to innovation, societal impact, and sustainable development.



Prof. Khetsha carefully tends to delicate plants in the greenhouse, ensuring they receive the attention and care needed to thrive.

CUT (PDTs) supports the successful development and commercialisation of a precision surgical Bulldog Clamp



Hlulani Baloyi, PDTs Engineer- Project Assistant (Advanced Machining), programmes the injection moulding machine used to manufacture precision plastic components by injecting molten plastic into specially designed moulds, ensuring accuracy, consistency and high-quality production.

Product Development Technology Station (PDTs) recently played a significant role in the development and production of a precision surgical instrument known as a bulldog clamp. This medical device is designed to temporarily occlude blood vessels during surgical procedures, enabling surgeons to control blood flow and maintain a clear operating field. Bulldog clamps are widely used in cardiovascular, transplant, and microsurgical procedures where precision and reliability are essential.

This project was undertaken in collaboration with COBA, who served as the client. The engagement demonstrates PDTs's commitment to supporting industry-led innovation in the healthcare sector by providing product development expertise that bridges the gap between concept and commercialization.

The bulldog clamp is a sterile, single-use surgical instrument designed to grasp, compress, and support blood vessels and soft tissue during procedures. Its self-retaining jaw mechanism allows for secure vascular clamping while minimizing tissue trauma. The device is supplied sterile and ready for use in operating theatres.

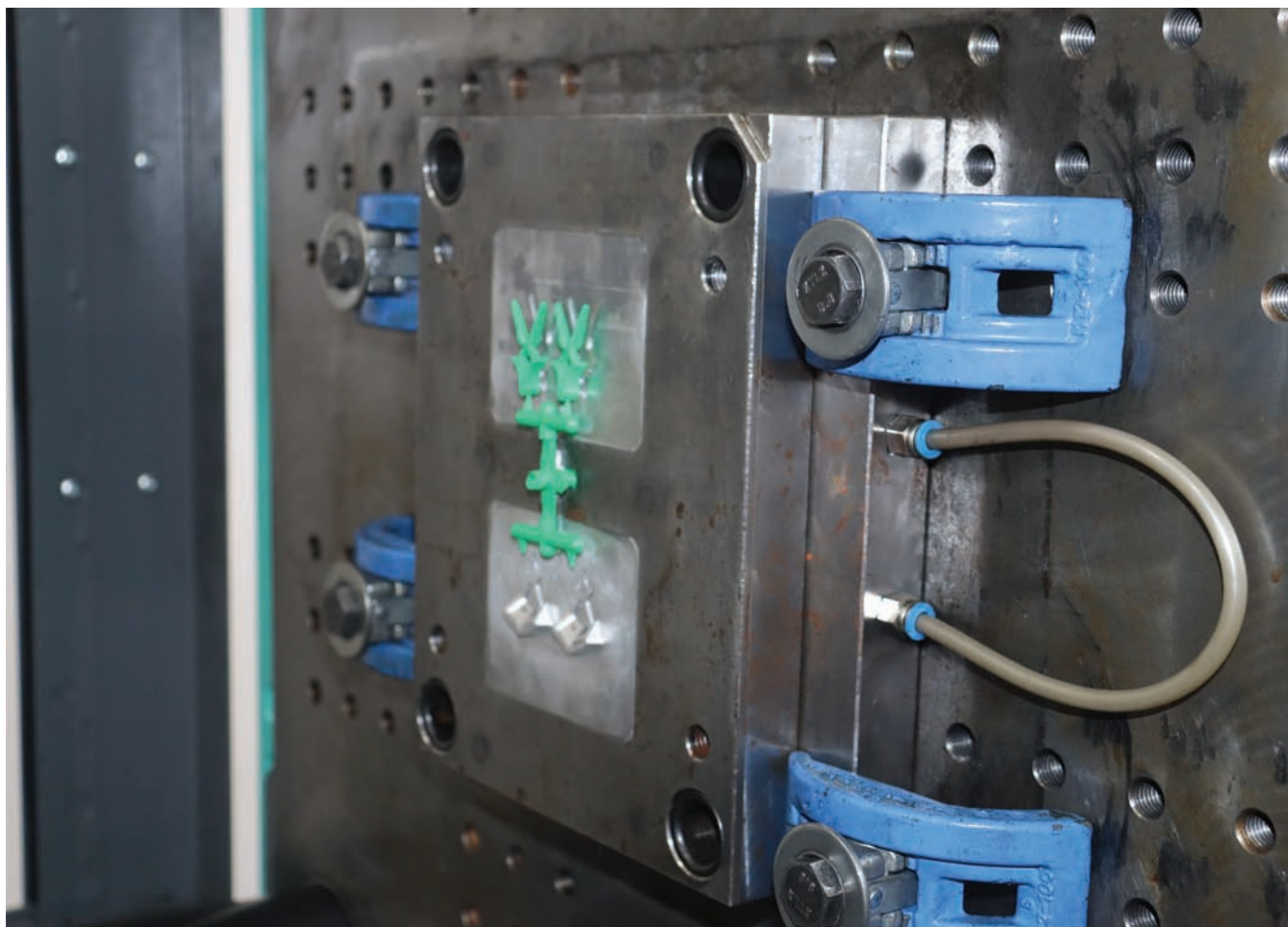
The successful development of this product required careful attention to design, functionality, manufacturability, and quality assurance. The engineers at PDTs, from the Advanced Machining and Tooling Unit (AMTU), played a critical role throughout the process by applying their technical expertise in precision manufacturing, tooling development, and process optimisation to ensure that the final product met strict performance and industry standards.

PDTs contributed to the project by supporting the manufacturing stages,

ensuring that the final product met performance requirements and industry standards.

The mould design was developed by COBA, while PDTs and the Advanced Machining and Tooling Unit (AMTU) were responsible for the machining of the mould and the injection moulding of the final components. The team manufactured the mould using precision machining processes to ensure dimensional accuracy, proper alignment, and a high-quality surface finish, all of which are critical for consistent and repeatable production.

Once the mould was completed, PDTs carried out the injection moulding process. This involved heating polymer material until it reached a molten state and injecting it under controlled pressure into the mould cavity. The material was then allowed to cool and solidify, taking



A precision-engineered Bulldog Clamp, used to temporarily occlude blood vessels during surgery, helps surgeons control blood flow and maintain a clear operating field.



the exact shape of the mould. After cooling, the mould was opened and the finished components were ejected. This cycle was carefully controlled to ensure consistency, dimensional accuracy, and high-quality surface finish across all produced parts.

All products are manufactured under a quality management system aligned with ISO 13485 certification, ensuring compliance with internationally recognized standards for medical device manufacturing.

This project highlights PDTs's ability, together with the Advanced Machining and Tooling Unit (AMTU), to support clients such as COBA in transforming innovative ideas into functional, manufacturable medical devices. Through such collaborations, PDTs continues to advance innovation, strengthen local manufacturing capabilities, and deliver technology-driven solutions that contribute to improved healthcare outcomes.

The bulldog clamp has successfully been commercialised, marking a significant milestone in the transition from product development to market-ready medical device production.

PDTS and Childline Free State partner to turn innovation into impact



Computer-Aided Design (CAD) model of a Rocket Ship Teething Toy created by the Advanced Machining and Tooling Unit, demonstrating the precision and innovation behind advanced product development.

Innovation with purpose comes to life when technology, design and community impact converge. Through the collaboration between the Product Development Technology Station (PDTS) and Childline Free State, an idea was transformed into a market-ready solution that supports child welfare initiatives while demonstrating the power of advanced manufacturing. From concept development and engineering design to tooling, production, branding and packaging, the Rocket Ship Teething Toy project showcases how university-driven innovation can bridge the gap between creativity and commercialisation, creating products that deliver both social value and real-world impact.

The Product Development Technology Station (PDTS) partnered with Childline Free State to design, develop, manufacture, brand, and package the Rocket Ship Teething Toy, delivering a 400-unit production run that supports child welfare and community initiatives. The teething toys were produced from medical-grade silicone using injection moulding, with PDTS employing rapid (limit-run) tooling methods to make the required tooling inserts efficiently. This project exemplifies how collaborative innovation can convert an idea into a market-ready product with social impact.

ROCKETSHIP
TEETHING TOY

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The Rocket Ship Teething Toy project, delivered through a 400-unit production run, demonstrates how university-driven innovation can bridge creativity and commercialisation while creating products that support child welfare initiatives and deliver meaningful social impact.

PDTS is a dynamic hub for end-to-end product development. Comprising five specialised units, PDTS offers customised services across product design, prototyping, tooling, manufacturing, branding, and short-run production. These units work together through interdisciplinary collaboration to create innovative, market-ready solutions.

PDTS's mission is to transform innovative ideas into functional products and to enhance existing ones through careful engineering and design. The unit supports businesses, innovators, and individuals across the product development journey, from concept through to short-run manufacturing and branding. Projects like the Rocket Ship Teething Toy highlight the value of university-based innovation units in fostering skills development, driving innovation, and enabling commercialisation, while delivering tangible benefits to the community.

Driven by purpose: Keletso Zitho's Journey from NESP scholar to emerging research leader



Empowered by the Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP), Keletso Zitho described her journey as deeply rewarding.

Mrs. Keletso Zitho, currently pursuing her PhD in Management Sciences: Hospitality and Business Administration, has steadily built a strong academic and professional profile in the hospitality industry. She holds a Master of Management Sciences in Tourism and Hospitality Management, achieved through the prestigious Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP), funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Her master's research, which examined occupational injuries experienced by housekeeping staff in all-star graded hotels in the Free State, resulted in a published article titled "The influence of workplace injury occurrences on productivity: A housekeeping manager's perspective." Her work was further recognised internationally, as she presented at the International Conference on Tourism Research and Hospitality, strengthening her growing research footprint.

Beyond her postgraduate qualifications, Keletso also holds a Diploma and BTech in Hospitality Management and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, reflecting a balanced fusion of industry knowledge and academic vocation.

A journey of growth through NESP

Reflecting on her time as a NESP intern and master's student, Keletso describes her journey as both challenging and deeply rewarding. She highlights how the programme demanded exceptional discipline, particularly during the demanding data-collection phase. However, it was during this period that she experienced some of her most significant personal and academic growth.

Initially planning to conduct her study solely in Bloemfontein, Keletso had to broaden her sample to the wider Free State Province when several hotels declined to participate. This

required additional travel, logistics planning, and timeline adjustments, an experience she says strengthened her adaptability, problem-solving skills, and confidence as a researcher.

Keletso attributes much of her successful journey to the comprehensive support provided by NESP. She describes the assistance as holistic and impactful, extending well beyond financial aid. Her supervisor, Dr Dalene Crowther, played a pivotal role, offering consistent mentorship, constructive feedback, and academic guidance that enabled her to progress steadily.

She also acknowledges the Special Projects Office at CUT, the unit responsible for managing NESP for its accessibility, administrative efficiency, and ongoing support. According to Keletso, the combination of mentorship, academic exposure, resources, and financial assistance was more than sufficient in enabling her to thrive.

The main challenge Keletso faced was navigating the complexities of data collection. Hotel participation hurdles forced her to redesign her approach and travel extensively across the province. "Balancing academic demands with logistical challenges required perseverance, but with strong mentorship and institutional support, she was able to overcome these obstacles and become more resilient."

Having completed her master's degree and internship, Keletso aims to continue bridging the gap between academic research and practical improvements within the hospitality sector. She hopes to translate her findings on workplace injuries into actionable safety strategies that hotels can implement to better support their staff. Her long-term goal is to contribute to the field of occupational health within hospitality, collaborate with fellow researchers, and strengthen academic discourse through impactful, practice-driven research.

Reflections and Recommendations for Future Scholars

Keletso believes the most valuable aspects of NESP were its mentorship opportunities, academic exposure, workshops, and financial stability. These components, she notes, played a crucial role in shaping her professional identity and supporting her success.

Looking ahead, she recommends that NESP revive a network of current and past scholars. Such a community, she says, would offer mentorship, peer support, and opportunities for shared learning, enriching the experience for future beneficiaries.

To current NESP scholars, her advice is clear, "plan effectively, manage your workload, and embrace every opportunity the programme offers." She reminded fellow beneficiaries that being part of NESP is a privilege, one that can profoundly influence their academic and professional trajectories when used wisely.

Doctoral Success highlights the transformative impact of nGAP



Two Doctoral success stories inspire the future of higher education. Dr Rotondwa Nemakhavhani (left) and Dr Moabi Saul Kompi stand as powerful examples of what can be accomplished when talent is matched with opportunity, determination and institutional support

In a higher education landscape where developing academic talent is critical to the future of teaching, research and innovation, the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) continues to demonstrate its transformative impact. Designed to nurture emerging scholars and strengthen the academic pipeline in South Africa, the programme provides promising academics with the time, mentorship and support needed to thrive as researchers, educators and leaders.

The doctoral achievements of Dr Rotondwa Nemakhavhani and Dr Moabi Saul Kompi stand as powerful examples of what can be accomplished when talent is matched with opportunity, determination and institutional support. Their journeys reflect not only personal triumphs over significant challenges, but also the broader success of a programme committed to cultivating a new generation of academics whose work advances knowledge, drives innovation and contributes meaningfully to society.

For Rotondwa Nemakhavhani and Moabi Saul Kompi, completing doctoral degrees through the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) was more than a milestone; it was the fulfilment of long-held visions shaped by perseverance, purpose and a commitment to driving sustainable change through research and teaching.

Dr Nemakhavhani's journey with the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) began in 2022, although his career at the Central University of Technology (CUT) started much earlier when he served as a student assistant up until a Senior Technical Assistant in the Department of Built Environment. Joining the nGAP programme marked the beginning of a transformative chapter in his academic career, providing him with the opportunity to grow as a researcher, educator, and academic leader.

A defining milestone of this journey was the successful completion of his PhD in Construction Management at the University of

Johannesburg on 23 July 2025. More than an academic qualification, the achievement represented the fulfilment of a vision shaped by perseverance, resilience, and a commitment to advancing sustainable development. Completing the doctorate within four years of the six-year nGAP programme stands as a testament to his dedication and disciplined approach to academic excellence.

Reflecting on the achievement, Dr Nemakhavhani described the experience as both demanding and deeply rewarding. "This achievement represents years of commitment, sacrifice, and personal growth," he said. "There were moments of pressure and uncertainty, but I remained calm and focused on the bigger picture, understanding that my knowledge and research could make a meaningful contribution to both the construction industry and society."

His doctoral research explored how servitized business model innovation and product-service systems can accelerate the transition towards a circular economy within the property development sector. The study sought to bridge the gap between academic theory and industry practice by identifying practical strategies to improve resource efficiency, minimise waste, strengthen climate resilience, and contribute towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"I wanted my research to go beyond theory," he explained. "The construction sector has a major role to play in sustainability, and I wanted to contribute solutions that are practical, relevant, and capable of making a lasting impact on our communities and the built environment."

Dr Nemakhavhani credits the nGAP programme for providing the support and opportunities that enabled his academic development. The reduced teaching workload created dedicated time for research, while mentorship and funding

opportunities strengthened his research capacity and professional growth.

"The mentorship I received was invaluable," he reflected. "It sharpened my research thinking, academic writing, and publication skills, while the financial support made it possible to attend conferences, conduct fieldwork, and fully immerse myself in the research process."

Like many doctoral candidates, the journey was not without challenges. Balancing teaching responsibilities, administrative commitments, leadership roles, and research deadlines required careful planning and resilience. Conducting research within the construction industry also presented practical challenges, particularly during the data collection phase.

"There were moments when the workload felt overwhelming," he admitted. "However, careful planning, the support of my supervisors and mentors, and remaining committed to my purpose kept me moving forward. I learned that resilience, consistency, and discipline are just as important as intelligence during a doctoral journey."

The opportunities created through the nGAP programme also paved the way for significant career advancement. In January 2026, Dr Nemakhavhani was promoted to the position of Senior Lecturer in the Department of Built Environment. Six months later, in July 2026, he was appointed Assistant Dean: Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT).

Speaking about these milestones, he said, "It is truly an honour to see how this journey has prepared me for greater responsibilities. These appointments have reinforced my belief that hard work, continuous learning, and remaining committed to one's purpose create opportunities for growth and service."

In his current role as Assistant Dean: Teaching and Learning, Dr Nemakhavhani provides strategic leadership in advancing teaching excellence, curriculum development, quality assurance, student success, and academic innovation across the faculty. His daily responsibilities include supporting academic staff, strengthening teaching and learning practices, driving digital transformation initiatives, promoting curriculum enhancement, overseeing quality assurance processes, and contributing to institutional strategic priorities. Alongside these responsibilities, he remains actively involved in undergraduate teaching, postgraduate supervision, research, and community engagement initiatives.

Looking ahead, Dr Nemakhavhani is committed to building on his research by advancing sustainable construction practices, digital innovation, and policy-relevant research that contributes to the transformation of the built environment. He is equally passionate about mentoring emerging researchers and strengthening postgraduate supervision. One of his upcoming milestones is the publication of his first academic book, developed from his doctoral research, which is expected to be launched before the end of the year.

"I want to continue producing research that has real impact and prepares graduates for the future of the construction industry," he said. "Sustainability can no longer be optional; it must become central to how we design, build, and develop our communities."

Beyond his professional responsibilities, Dr Nemakhavhani is passionate about leadership development, community engagement, and creating opportunities that empower others to succeed. He believes that higher education should extend beyond the classroom by producing graduates, research, and partnerships that make a meaningful contribution to society.

Offering advice to current and future nGAP beneficiaries, he encouraged them to embrace every opportunity presented by the programme. "Engage with your mentors, collaborate with

colleagues across disciplines, and never allow setbacks to discourage you," he said. "Every challenge forms part of the growth process. Most importantly, break down silos and never work in isolation. The greatest impact is achieved through collaboration."

Outside of academia, Dr Nemakhavhani is a devoted husband and father who values spending quality time with his family. Whether going for walks, cycling together, or simply enjoying family time, he believes these moments provide balance and perspective. He also plays soccer three evenings a week to maintain both his physical and mental well-being. An avid reader beyond his academic discipline, he enjoys exploring topics that broaden his worldview. Music is another important part of his life, serving as a source of inspiration and grounding. He believes that maintaining a healthy balance between professional commitments, family life, and personal interests is essential to sustained success and overall well-being and it helps him stay connected to the world and remain aware of what is happening around him.

Dr Moabi Saul Kompi's doctoral journey similarly reflects steadfast dedication. As an nGAP lecturer from Phase 2 and a member of the programme's inaugural cohort, he was conferred with a PhD in Information Technology by the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) Welkom Campus on 20 March 2026, formally exiting the nGAP programme after completing the required six years and two years of plough-back service.

His research produced a Smartness Assessment Framework to evaluate South African municipalities' readiness to transition into smart cities. By integrating digital solutions, sustainability and community-driven approaches, the framework addresses practical challenges in waste management and service delivery and demonstrates how technology can improve quality of life at municipal scale.

Dr Kompi's path was marked by considerable adversity, including balancing professional duties with academic demands and coping with the devastating loss of his home to a fire. Despite these hardships, he remained resolute, drawing strength from mentors, colleagues and an academic network that supported his recovery and scholarly progress. He acknowledges that nGAP's evolving structure is providing dedicated research time, financial assistance, mentorship and access to academic development was instrumental in enabling his achievement.

Together, their stories illustrate the dual promise of nGAP: to cultivate a new generation of academics who combine research excellence with teaching capacity, and to translate scholarly work into tangible societal benefit. Both scholars emphasise that the programme's targeted support, reduced teaching loads, mentorship, funding and opportunities for professional development create vital conditions for doctoral completion while also preparing recipients to strengthen higher education and sectoral practice.

Their advice to current and future nGAP beneficiaries is grounded in hard-won experience: use the opportunities offered by the programme wisely, engage actively with mentors, collaborate with peers and treat setbacks as part of the growth process. "Every challenge is part of the growth process," Dr Nemakhavhani reflected. "The goal should always be to create impact beyond the qualification itself." Dr Kompi's journey reinforces this, showing that persistence and belief in one's goals can turn adversity into achievement.

As both doctors move into the next phases of their careers, they share a common purpose: to produce research that matters, to mentor the next generation of scholars and to embed sustainability and innovation into their respective fields. Their successes reaffirm the value of sustained investment in academic talent and the powerful role that programmes such as nGAP play in building institutional capacity, fostering resilience and generating research that serves society.

Graduation Highlights

CUT celebrated 3970 graduates at the 2026 Autumn Graduation ceremony



As a future-focused, student-centred University of Technology, CUT has been the vessel carrying its students through a transformative journey of growth, equipping them with knowledge as their compass, resilience as their anchor, and innovation as the wind that propels them towards new horizons. Pictured (front row, from left): Prof. Pamela Dube, Vice-Chancellor and Principal; Dr Vincent Maphai, Chancellor; and Prof. Wendy Setlalentoa, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, preside over the graduation ceremony as graduates take to the stage to celebrate the conferral of their qualifications.



A wave of celebration filled the air as CUT's newest graduates prepared to embark on the next chapter of their lives. With qualifications in hand and hope in their hearts, the Class of 2025 stepped confidently towards new horizons guided by resilience, inspired by possibility, and propelled by the knowledge, skills, and values cultivated throughout their journey at CUT.

Naspers CEO Conferred with an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration



At the Bloemfontein Campus, the celebration was further enriched by the conferral of an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration on Dr Phuthi Mahanyele-Dabengwa, whose leadership reflects the spirit of progress celebrated at CUT. In her address, she reminded graduates that graduation is not an endpoint but the beginning of lifelong learning, urging them to continuously grow in a rapidly evolving world shaped by innovation and artificial intelligence. Reflecting on her own journey, she emphasised the transformative power of education and challenged graduates to think boldly, lead with confidence, and seize opportunities without hesitation. Highlighting CUT's role in driving innovation and national development, she commended the institution's forward-thinking approach, while encouraging graduates, particularly women, to embrace leadership and act decisively. Her message underscored that in a changing world, success depends on courage, adaptability, and a commitment to continuous learning.

Never stop learning: Newly crowned Dr Phuthi Mahanyele-Dabengwa (centre) urged CUT graduates to lead boldly and embrace lifelong growth as she proudly holds her honorary certificate, joined by Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube (left) and CUT Chancellor, Dr Vincent Maphai.



CUT Chancellor, Dr Vincent Maphai, robes newly acclaimed alumna, Dr Phuthi Mahanyele Dabengwa, following the conferral of her Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration.

CUT Welkom Campus hosts landmark Professorial Inaugural Address by Prof. Bekithemba Dube



Professor Bekithemba Dube delivered his Professorial Inaugural Address at the Welkom Campus, sharing powerful reflections on curriculum, politics, religion, and the urgent need for decolonial thought in shaping Africa's future.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) marked another proud milestone in its academic journey as the Welkom Campus hosted the Professorial Inaugural Address of Professor Bekithemba Dube, Full Professor in Curriculum Studies and Director of the Centre for Diversity in Higher Education Research. Family, friends, colleagues, and distinguished guests gathered to celebrate a defining moment in both Prof. Dube's career and the university's academic legacy.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, set the tone for the evening, describing the Professorial Inaugural Address as one of academia's highest honours, a tradition that recognises sustained excellence in research, teaching, postgraduate supervision, and intellectual leadership. More than a ceremony, she noted, it is an opportunity for a scholar to share the ideas and experiences that have shaped their contribution to knowledge and society.

That contribution was powerfully evident in Prof. Dube's address, titled

"Does Humanity Matter, to Whom and Why? Intersectionality of Curriculum, Politics and Religion: Theorising from Postcolonial Thinking to the Decolonial Turn." In a lecture that was both intellectually rigorous and deeply reflective, he challenged the audience to confront an uncomfortable reality that curriculum, politics, and religion have too often been weaponised to sustain oppression, exclusion, and dehumanisation in postcolonial African societies, rather than serve as instruments of liberation.

Tracing his scholarly journey from the postcolonial thought of Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to the decolonial scholarship of Walter Dignolo, Anibal Quijano, and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Prof. Dube made a compelling case for placing decoloniality at the centre of African knowledge production. Echoing Paulo Freire's assertion that education is never neutral, he argued that scholars have a responsibility to ensure that curriculum, politics, and religion advance humanity rather than undermine it. "The mind of the oppressed is the greatest weapon of

the oppressor," he remarked, urging academics, political leaders, educators, and religious institutions to be held accountable through evidence-based research and critical engagement.

Reflecting on the meaning of attaining Full Professor status, Prof. Dube spoke with humility and conviction. For him, the professoriate is not merely a title, but a calling, a commitment to developing others, mentoring emerging scholars, amplifying silenced voices, and leading through service. "If you want to be the greatest, be a servant for all," he said.

With more than 200 peer-reviewed publications, an H-index of 22, seven edited books, prestigious international grants, and research collaborations spanning Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, and beyond, Prof. Bekithemba Dube continues to shape critical conversations on humanity, justice, decoloniality, and the future of knowledge in Africa. The university is honoured to count him among its distinguished scholars and intellectual leaders.



From left: Ms Sikhathale Dube (wife), Prof. Bekithemba Dube, and Dr Ritu Bhagwandeem, MSTE Departmental Manager during the celebration of Prof. Bekithemba Dube's Professorial Inaugural Address at the Welkom Campus.



Dr Clifford Nxomani, acting Campus Director- Welkom Campus (at the time), Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, Prof. Bekithemba Dube, inaugurated Prof. and Prof. Wendy Setlalentoa, (at the time) acting DVC: Teaching and Learning.

CUT brings global experts at inaugural Sustainable Smart Cities Conference



Academics, researchers, industry experts, policymakers, and students at the Inaugural International Conference on Sustainable Smart Cities.

CUT Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT) successfully hosted its inaugural International Conference on Sustainable Smart Cities from 16–17 April 2026 under the theme, Innovative Strategies for Integrating Technology, Infrastructure and Resilience.

Bringing together academics, researchers, industry experts, policymakers, and students, the conference created a dynamic platform to explore innovative solutions for building cities that are smarter, more sustainable, and resilient. More than an academic gathering, the event reflected CUT's growing leadership in smart city research and its commitment to developing solutions that respond to the realities of the Global South.

Opening the conference, FEBIT Dean Prof. Muthoni Masinde described the event as the beginning of a deliberate new academic direction for the faculty. While acknowledging that many institutions host engineering conferences, she emphasised that this initiative was intentionally designed to focus on practical, interdisciplinary solutions to complex urban challenges.

Prof. Masinde also highlighted the importance of positioning African researchers at the forefront of global smart city conversations. "African cities require African-led solutions. We must shape our own narratives and develop innovations that respond to our unique social, economic and environmental realities."



Prof. Johnson Kinyua, Associate Teaching Professor in the College of Information Sciences and Technology at Pennsylvania State University (USA), delivered his keynote address on the convergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and data analytics in shaping next-generation sustainable smart cities.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Johnson Kinyua, Associate Teaching Professor in the College of Information Sciences and Technology at Pennsylvania State University (USA), explored how Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, cloud computing, and edge technologies are transforming modern cities.

He explained that these technologies enable cities to convert vast amounts of data into actionable intelligence, improving urban planning, service delivery, infrastructure management, and climate resilience while supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Importantly, Prof. Kinyua stressed that technological advancement alone is not enough. "The future of smart cities lies in responsible, human-centred innovation that balances technology with sustainability, inclusion and long-term resilience."

The conference also demonstrated the value of interdisciplinary collaboration. Participants from engineering, information technology, agriculture, construction, and the legal profession shared perspectives that reinforced the need for integrated approaches to urban development.



Breaking Silos: Samuel Waters, Lecturer in Civil Engineering, highlighted the need for integrated thinking, noting that engineering, IT, and the Built Environment must work together to solve complex urban challenges.

Samuel Waters, a lecturer in CUT's Department of Civil Engineering, reflected on the importance of breaking down traditional disciplinary boundaries. "We can't work in silos anymore. Engineering, IT and the built environment are interconnected, and our solutions must reflect that."



Attendees from MW Gumede Roof and Tile Construction, Ms Shoeshoe Mokoena and Mr Tankiso Samuel.

Industry delegate Shoeshoe Mokoena, a legal professional in the roofing and tile construction sector, highlighted the urgent need for updated regulations, particularly around solar panel installations. She noted that outdated policies often slow innovation and create unnecessary challenges for the construction and renewable energy sectors.



Meeting of minds sparks new vision for sustainable smart cities: Lindiwe Nkoala, a horticulturist representing the Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environmental Affairs, encouraged planners and technologists to recognise agriculture as a fundamental component of smart city development, particularly in strengthening food security.

Offering a broader perspective, horticulturist Lindiwe Nkoala from the Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environmental Affairs reminded delegates that sustainable cities must also prioritise food systems and environmental stewardship. "Cities can't be sustainable without people and vegetation."

She encouraged planners to recognise agriculture as an essential component of smart city development and highlighted the potential of artificial intelligence to modernise farming and strengthen food security.

Throughout the two-day conference, one message that emerged consistently is the future of sustainable cities depends on collaboration. Whether integrating technology with infrastructure, aligning policy with innovation, or bringing together expertise from diverse disciplines, the conference demonstrated that no single field holds all the answers.

By convening leading scholars, industry professionals, policymakers, and students, CUT's inaugural International Conference on Sustainable Smart Cities has laid a strong foundation for future collaboration and knowledge exchange. It has also positioned the University as an emerging leader in advancing African-centred research and innovation for smarter, more inclusive, and more resilient cities.

CUT hosts National Cleantech Innovation Challenge to promote regenerative agriculture in the Free State



From left: Mr Frederick Matongo, Director: Innovation Technology Transfer, Dr Shelly Mona, Deputy Director: PDTs, Dr Kousar Hoorzook, Research Coordinator: Process Energy Environment Technology Station (UJ PEETS), Prof. Samson Mashele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research Innovation and Engagement, Ms Nickey Janse Van Rensburg, Station Manager: Sustainable Socio-technical Systems (UJ PEETS) and Mr Vusi Skosana, Senior Manager: South African Technology Innovation Agency (TIA).

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) hosted the National Cleantech Innovation Challenge (NCIC) engagement session, reinforcing its role as a strategic partner of the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and a key contributor to South Africa's cleantech innovation ecosystem.

Led by TIA in partnership with Network for Global Innovation (NGIN), regional hubs and international collaborators, the NCIC promotes low-carbon, climate-resilient technologies. In 2026, each province will host a sector-specific challenge, with the Free State focusing on regenerative agriculture in large-scale commercial farming.

As a major producer of maize, wheat and livestock, the Free State faces growing pressures from erratic rainfall, soil degradation and rising input costs. Regenerative agriculture, including reduced tillage, cover cropping and integrated livestock systems offers a strategic response by improving soil health, water retention and long-term productivity.

In his welcome address, Prof. Samson Mashele, CUT Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement, highlighted the university's applied mandate. He noted that CUT's innovation ecosystem including its Technology Transfer Office, Product Development and Technology Station (PDTs), FabLab and iGym enables collaboration between government, industry, researchers and funders to address shared challenges.

Dr Shelly Mona, Deputy Director: PDTs, showcased projects demonstrating CUT's capacity to support industry-aligned technology development. The programme is guided by the Quadruple Helix Model, uniting community, academia, industry and government to ensure cleantech solutions are technically robust, socially relevant and economically viable within local agricultural contexts.

CUT advances student success agenda at National ECP Summit



CUT academics from left: Dr Xolani Khohliso, Director: Curriculum and Academic Staff Development, Dr Lisa Nel, ECP Coordinator: Faculty of Humanities, Ms Lize Louw, ECP Coordinator: Management Sciences, and Dr Róan Slabbert, ECP Coordinator: Health and Environmental Sciences.

Academics from the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) joined colleagues from 21 South African universities in the first system-wide dialogue on Extended Curriculum Programme (ECP) policy, practice, and sustainability in over two decades. The Summit marked a significant milestone for what remains the largest student access and success intervention in South African higher education.

During the Summit, participating institutions presented critical reflections on their ECP offerings, governance models, resource allocations, and strategic challenges. CUT was strongly represented by a delegation comprising Prof Ntsoaki Malebo, Dean: Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences; Dr Róan Slabbert, ECP Coordinator for Health and Environmental Sciences; Dr Lisa Nel, ECP Coordinator for the Faculty of Humanities; Ms Lize Louw, ECP Coordinator for Management

Sciences; and Dr Xolani Khohliso, Director: Curriculum and Academic Staff Development.

In her presentation, Prof. Malebo outlined CUT's institutional approaches, emphasising the need for stronger integration of student support and high-impact pedagogies within ECP curriculum design and broader academic planning.

Despite a national investment exceeding R6.2 billion by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Summit highlighted persistent challenges facing ECPs. These include funding instability, staffing insecurity, fragmented governance, and the continued marginalisation of ECPs within institutional planning frameworks.

The Summit concluded with agreement on several key national priorities, including the establishment of a

coordinating structure; strengthened engagement with DHET; consolidation of ECP research; clarification of policy guidelines; and expanded sector-wide collaboration. A National ECP Steering Committee was constituted to sustain momentum. Notably, Dr Róan Slabbert was appointed as one of the Free State representatives, ensuring CUT's active participation in national ECP leadership and decision-making structures.

CUT's strong participation, leadership presence, and representation on national platforms signal a clear institutional commitment to positioning ECPs at the centre of academic planning and student success.

Free State Public Works MEC offers internships to CUT top achievers at the FEBIT Annual Prize Giving Ceremony



Thabiso Matsemela (middle), top master's student in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology, is flanked by Honourable Dibolelo Mance (left), MEC: Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, and Prof. Muthoni Masinde (right), Dean: Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology.

The Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT) celebrated its top achievers at the Annual Prize Giving Ceremony held on 24 March 2026. Delivering the keynote address, MEC for the Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, Ms Dibolelo Mance, proudly offered all award recipients internships to further their careers.

MEC Mance emphasised that government is increasingly focused on answering a critical question: "How do we ensure that education translates into economic participation? She said, "a qualification must not become an endpoint; it must become a gateway. This is why infrastructure development remains central to our policy priorities. Not only does infrastructure enable growth, but it also has the capacity to absorb skills, create employment, stimulate local economies and build long term resilience. To the students of FEBIT, you are not just graduates, you are part of the solution. You are the builders of the Free State's future. Go out and build with purpose, integrity and vision," she said.

Professor Muthoni Masinde, Dean of FEBIT, highlighted the remarkable growth the faculty has experienced in recent years. "I stand here with immense pride in this faculty. Our trajectory is nothing short of historic. In the 2025 academic year, FEBIT reached a record breaking 1,300 graduates, showing consistent growth from 1,170 in 2024 and 1,079 in 2023. What moves me most is our deepening commitment to high level research. We have seen our postgraduate success rise to 39, nearly doubling our 2024 figure of 22 and more than doubling the 19 recorded in 2023. This growth is not just a statistic; it is a testament to the relevance of our faculty. In a world that demands sustainable infrastructure and digital innovation, you are the answer."

The ceremony celebrated academic excellence and outstanding student achievements, bringing together university leadership, family members, academic staff, industry stakeholders and government representatives to recognise top-performing students for their dedication, hard work and innovation.

CUT Welkom Campus honours legacy of Dr Khotso Nkhatho at 5th Annual Public Lecture



Guest speaker Mr Tseliso Masolane delivering his address at the 5th Annual Dr Khotso Nkhatho Public Lecture, reflecting on the legacy of Dr Khotso Nkhatho and the importance of preserving heritage and supporting cultural practitioners.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) Welkom Campus, through its Faculty of Humanities and in partnership with the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, hosted the 5th Annual Dr Khotso Nkhatho Public Lecture on 15 May 2026. The event brought together academics, students, cultural practitioners and community stakeholders to honour and celebrate the life, legacy and contribution of Dr Khotso Nkhatho, a distinguished figure in Sesotho literary and performing arts.

Guest speaker Mr Tseliso Masolane from the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation paid tribute to Dr Nkhatho's exceptional acting and enduring impact on the

creative sector, describing his performances as "so remarkable that they are memorable till today." Framing the lecture as a celebration of a multi-talented man, Mr Masolane reflected on the deep relationship between creativity and lived experience, remarking that "pain is the sole reminder that you are still alive." He further emphasised Dr Nkhatho's profound respect for the creative trades and urged continued recognition and support for cultural practitioners who dedicate their lives to preserving heritage.

Ms Refiloe Makibi, a Sesotho lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities, highlighted the richness and cultural significance of the Sesotho language, noting that its continuous development is "crucial for its growth and preservation for the upcoming generation." Echoing this sentiment, Dr Lehlohonolo Motaake, Deputy Director of the Language Services Unit, described the public lecture as both a celebration of the Sesotho language and a fitting tribute to Dr Khotso Nkhatho, whose lifelong contribution to literature, drama and the performing arts played a vital role in preserving Sesotho heritage.

Dr Khotso Nkhatho's legacy stands as a powerful testament to the role of art and language in shaping a nation's identity. Through his plays, books, and performances, he gave Sesotho culture a vibrant and enduring voice that continues to resonate across generations. His work reminded all who gathered that preserving a language is, ultimately, preserving a people and their heritage.

The 5th Annual Dr Khotso Nkhatho Public Lecture reaffirmed CUT's commitment to cultural preservation, academic engagement and community partnership, uniting government, academia and cultural stakeholders in a shared effort to protect, promote and develop the Sesotho language and heritage for generations to come.



CUT strengthens Vision 2030 through transformative student support initiatives



CUT and SRC unite to break financial barriers and drive student success. Pictured here is CUT Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, joined by the Bloemfontein and Welkom Campus SRC at the launch of CUT's scholarship initiative supporting financially vulnerable students.

Financial hardship remains one of the most significant barriers to academic success in higher education. For many students, the pursuit of a qualification is accompanied by difficult choices between paying tuition fees, securing accommodation, purchasing learning materials, or meeting basic daily needs. Recognising that student success depends on more than access to education alone, the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) is intensifying its commitment to holistic student support through a range of transformative initiatives aimed at ensuring that no student's potential is limited by financial circumstances.

In a significant step towards realising its Vision 2030 of becoming a truly student-centred university, CUT Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, together with the Student Representative Council (SRC), has championed several interventions designed to promote both student access and student success. These initiatives reflect a shared commitment to creating an inclusive and enabling learning environment where students are empowered to thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

Most recently, the university and SRC launched a transformative scholarship initiative aimed at supporting financially vulnerable students and addressing historical student debt. The initiative forms part of a broader support framework that also includes mental health and wellness programmes, food security interventions, and targeted

funding opportunities. Together, these efforts demonstrate the university's understanding that academic achievement is closely linked to students' overall wellbeing.

Prof. Dube emphasised that the institution's responsibility extends beyond producing graduates.

"We must shape ethical leaders, innovators, and professionals who can contribute meaningfully to society. Yet talent alone is not enough when students are burdened by unpaid tuition, accommodation, and food insecurity. Supporting a student is not charity; it is an investment in a future graduate, a future leader, and ultimately, the future of our nation," said Prof. Dube.

The impact of these interventions is already being felt across the university community. Several beneficiaries have expressed gratitude for the support received, noting that it has eased the financial burden on their families and provided them with peace of mind, allowing them to focus fully on their studies and future aspirations.

The success of these initiatives has been strengthened through strategic partnerships with organisations committed to student development and skills advancement. Key contributors include W&RSETA, the ETDP SETA, the National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA), the Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA), and the Health and Welfare

Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA), all of which have played a vital role in expanding funding opportunities for deserving students.

At the same time, the university continues to prioritise food security through its long-standing Food Nutrition Programme. For the past 13 years, the programme has provided critical support to students facing financial hardship, particularly those who do not qualify for assistance through NSFAS, bursaries, or other funding schemes. As a key student support intervention, the programme ensures that hunger does not become a barrier to academic performance and success.

Complementing these efforts is the CUT Student Food Bank, an initiative established to address food insecurity among disadvantaged students. More than a source of nutritional support, the Food Bank embodies a leadership philosophy grounded in compassion, dignity, and action. Through this initiative, the university seeks to ensure that no student is left behind because of financial hardship or lack of basic necessities. The sustainability of the programme relies on collective community support, with 100% of funds raised

being directed towards the purchase of food parcels for students in need. Beyond meeting immediate needs, the initiative helps restore dignity and contributes to improved student wellbeing and academic outcomes.

As CUT advances towards its Vision 2030 commitment of becoming a truly student-centred university, the partnership between university leadership and the SRC marks a new chapter defined by empathy, collaboration, and measurable impact. By positioning students as active partners in developing solutions rather than passive recipients of support, the university continues to redefine student-centredness and strengthen its mission of creating opportunities for every student to succeed.

The university has also called on industry partners, donors, alumni, and stakeholders to invest meaningfully in student potential. Through collective action and sustained support, CUT aims to remove barriers to success, unlock opportunities for vulnerable students, and contribute to the development of future graduates who will drive social and economic progress in South Africa and beyond.



CUT strengthens student success through scholarships, food security initiatives, and strategic partnerships. As part of its commitment to student wellbeing and academic success, the university continues to support vulnerable students through its Food Bank initiative. The food parcels, containing essential grocery items, help alleviate food insecurity and ensure that no student is left behind because of financial hardship or a lack of basic necessities, empowering them to focus on their studies and achieve their full potential.

CUT signs landmark virtual MoU with Sigma University to advance global south collaboration



Pictured at CUT after the virtual MoU signing with Sigma University: Back row from left: Mr Qondakele Sompondo, Director: Institutional Advancement and Acting Director: Communications and Marketing, Prof. Freda van der Walt, Dean: Management Sciences, Dr Valindawo Dwayi, Senior Director: Centre for Global Engagement and Prof. Alfred Modise, Assistant Dean: Teaching and Learning.

Front row: Mr Hlomelang Metsing, Centre for Global Engagement, Prof. Wendy Setlalentoa, Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Prof. Pamela Dube, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Samson Mashele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement and Prof. Muthoni Masinde, Dean: Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) has successfully hosted its first fully online Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony with Sigma University, marking a significant milestone in the institution's internationalisation journey and its expansion within the Global South. The virtual ceremony brought together senior leadership from both universities, along with diplomatic representatives from the Consulate General of South Africa in India, highlighting the growing role of academic diplomacy and global collaboration.

In her address, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Pamela Dube, highlighted the strategic importance of the partnership. She noted that it builds on a series of deliberate engagements between the two institutions, with key areas of collaboration including Information Technology, Hospitality and Tourism, and Art and Design, fields aligned with CUT's Vision 2030 and its commitment to innovation-driven education. "Today, we celebrate more than the signing of an MoU; we mark the beginning of a transformative journey grounded in a shared vision, innovation, and a commitment to advancing higher education within the Global South," she said.

The Consul General of South Africa in India, Honourable Gedion Labane, emphasised the broader significance of the partnership, noting that such collaborations can translate diplomatic goodwill into tangible outcomes,

including partnerships, investment opportunities, and knowledge exchange. He further highlighted that higher education partnerships are increasingly serving as instruments of global cooperation, contributing to both academic advancement and strengthened economic relations.

Representing Sigma University, Vice-Chancellor Priyesh Gandhi described the agreement as a strategic step toward building meaningful academic synergies. He stated that the MoU lays the foundation for collaborative research, joint academic programmes, staff and student exchanges, and shared innovation initiatives across disciplines such as engineering, technology, design, and management.

The agreement formalises cooperation in teaching and learning, research, innovation, and capacity development. It also creates opportunities for student and staff mobility, joint curriculum development, and participation in international research platforms. This landmark virtual signing reflects CUT's ongoing commitment to leveraging digital platforms to enhance global engagement and extend partnerships beyond geographical boundaries.

The collaboration is expected to contribute to the development of globally competent graduates, foster innovation ecosystems, and strengthen South-South cooperation between Africa and Asia.

CUT strengthens global ties with French-South African technology partnership



Prof. Slim Turki, International Technical Expert, Applied Artificial Intelligence (ETI, F'SATI): Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho, and Malawi, Mr Hlomelang Metsing, CUT: Centre for Global Engagement, Prof. Leynet Aurelien, Attaché for science and academic cooperation: Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho, and Malawi, Prof. Samson Mashele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research Innovation and Engagement, Prof. Elisha Markus, Professor, Electrical Engineering and Interim Director: CUT Artificial Intelligence Hub, and Prof. Anish Kurien, Professor and Director: French-South African Institute of Technology (F'SATI) TUT.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) welcomed a delegation from the French-South African Institute of Technology (F'SATI) network. The delegation included Prof. Anish Kurien, Director of F'SATI at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Prof. Slim Turki, International Technical Expert in Applied Artificial Intelligence from the Embassy of France in South Africa, Lesotho and Malawi, and Prof. Aurélien Leynet, Attaché for Science and Academic Cooperation at the same embassy. The visit aimed to officially kickstart activities of the newly established CUT F'SATI node, following CUT's admission as an Associate Member of the F'SATI network in November 2025.

During the visit, the delegation toured CUT facilities and engaged with academic staff to explore opportunities for collaboration in teaching, research, mobility programmes, and applied innovation. Discussions centred on the development of joint academic programmes, research partnerships, particularly within CUT's Artificial Intelligence Hub, as well as future staff and student mobility initiatives aligned with F'SATI's applied technology mandate.

The university's relations with French higher education institutions date back to 2012 and have since evolved into a robust international partnership portfolio. Currently, CUT maintains partnerships with six French institutions: Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, École Centrale de Nantes,

École Centrale de Lyon ENISE, Strate School of Design, the University of Montpellier, and ESIGELEC School of Engineering. These collaborations support student and staff mobility, joint research, and academic exchange, with more than ten CUT students and staff having participated in mobility programmes to date.

Following the visit, CUT welcomed exchange students from Centrale Lyon ENISE who will spend a trimester at the university as part of the International Credit Mobility Programme. During their stay, they will collaborate with academics and students in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBIT) on two innovative engineering projects: Digital Twin Development (Mechanical Engineering) and Digital Twin Development (Electrical Engineering).



With a closer look at innovation in action, F'SATI delegates Prof. Leynet Aurelien and Prof. Slim Turki explored the Product Development Station and what it has to offer.



Pictured (from left): Titouan Richaud, Romain Pepino, Sekoele Ramajoe, Manager: International Student Recruitment Officer at CUT, Matteo Cerrone, and Joris Marcheboeuf. The four exchange students from Centrale Lyon ENISE, France.

34 CUT students empowered to shape the future of Artificial Intelligence



Antunisia Naledi Njamela and Nokukhanya Magwaza, Advanced Diploma students in Computer Networking and proud Samsung Innovation Campus achievers. With their newly honed skills, the digital world is theirs to shape.

In an era where digital innovation fuels economic growth, partnerships between academia and industry are essential to national development. The collaboration between Samsung Electronics and the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) demonstrates how strategic alliances can unlock opportunities for young people, particularly in high-demand fields where critical skills are scarce.

Through advanced training in coding, programming and Artificial Intelligence, the Samsung Innovation Campus (SIC) equips CUT students with in-demand digital competencies, giving them a distinct competitive edge. More than preparing them to participate in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the programme empowers them to actively shape and lead it.

Partners celebrated the third cohort of SIC graduates, with 34 students from the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment

and Information Technology completing advanced training in coding, programming and Artificial Intelligence (AI). This milestone brings the total number of graduates to 82 since the programme's launch in 2022.

More than a skills development initiative, the Samsung Innovation Campus (SIC) has become a powerful catalyst for employability and academic progression. According to Prof. Wendy Setlalentsoa, acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, 24% of graduates have already secured employment or paid internships, while 26% have advanced to further studies. Many are now building careers as data analysts and Python programmers at leading financial institutions, demonstrating the programme's measurable and meaningful impact.

Representing Samsung Africa President and CEO Mr Simon Lee, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager Ms Lefa Makgato described the partnership as a "beacon of hope" for young people in the Free State. By combining the global technological expertise of Samsung Electronics with the academic strength of the Central University of Technology, Free State, the initiative delivers internationally benchmarked training that advances digital inclusion, entrepreneurship and job readiness. She further highlighted the programme's commitment to meaningful female participation, reinforcing the importance of gender equity in the technology sector.

For graduates such as Antunisia Naledi Njamela and Nokukhanya Magwaza, Advanced Diploma students in Computer Networking, the journey has been transformative. What began as a foundational understanding of Artificial Intelligence has developed into a deeper appreciation of its practical applications across industries shaped by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, equipping them with the confidence and competence to pursue emerging opportunities in the digital economy.



A proud milestone: 34 graduates standing alongside the dignitaries whose leadership and partnership helped make their success possible.

CUT hosts 7th annual faculty-led Summer School with esteemed German partner



Celebrating success! Palmira Mofokeng, Phumlisa Magaqa, Asma Ul Haq and Alia Abouatie received their certificates after completing the Intercultural Management programme with a focus on Leadership and Tourism in Africa.

The Centre for Global Engagement (CGE) Staff and Student Mobility Unit, in partnership with the Faculty of Management Sciences, hosted the 7th annual faculty-led Summer School alongside Aalen University of Applied Sciences.

This year's programme marked another milestone in a collaboration spanning more than two decades, evolving from a simple mobility exchange into a strategic academic partnership rooted in internationalisation, intercultural learning, and shared knowledge creation.

The 2026 Summer School welcomed 26 students from diverse fields, including Business Psychology, Digital Business Management, Industrial Management, Mechanical Engineering, General Management, and Sustainable Vehicle Technologies. Centred on Intercultural Management, the programme explored Leadership in Africa, Doing Business in Africa, and Tourism in Africa. Students engaged critically with Africa's leadership dynamics, economic landscape, and tourism sector, enriched by their multidisciplinary backgrounds.

The intercultural experience was enhanced by the participation of four CUT students enrolled in the Advanced Diploma in Tourism Management. Their involvement grounded discussions in local realities and fostered meaningful peer exchange, advancing internationalisation at home.

Beyond the classroom, participants toured CUT's innovation ecosystem, including the Centre for Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing (CRPM), the Product Development Technology Station (PDTs), and the Centre for Applied Food Security and Biotechnology (CAFSaB). The tours showcased CUT's research strengths and applied technological capabilities, offering international students' valuable insight into the university's role in industry and community development.

Cultural immersion formed another important pillar of the programme. Students explored Bloemfontein through a city tour and curated excursions, linking academic content with local social and cultural contexts, an approach that continues to define the CUT's faculty-led Summer School model.

Students further earned academic credits while developing key global competencies such as adaptability, cross-cultural communication, and context-sensitive leadership. As higher education continues to globalise, initiatives like these strengthen international networks, deepen academic collaboration, and prepare graduates to lead in diverse and interconnected environments.

Through such programmes, CUT reinforces its position as an engaged, globally connected university committed to impactful internationalisation.

Below: Summer School participants from Aalen University and CUT celebrate completing the 2026 programme after an enriching two weeks of learning, collaboration, and cultural exploration.



CUT and the University of Siegen deepen global strategic partnership



CUT and University of Siegen deepen strategic academic partnership: back row from left: Ms Katharina Sommer, Head of the International Office (University of Siegen), Prof. Dr Daniel Stein, Dean: School of Humanities and Professor of North American Literary and Cultural Studies (University of Siegen), Mr Setumo Liale, Executive Director: Resources and Operations (CUT), Dr Valile Dwayi, Senior Director: Centre for Global Engagement and Ms Martina Moss, Deputy Director: Staff and Student Mobility (CUT).

Front row from left: Prof. Wendy Setlalentoa, acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning (CUT), Prof. Pamela Dube: Vice-Chancellor and Principal (CUT), Prof. Dr Petra M. Vogel, Prorector for Students and Junior Faculty Diversity and International Affairs (University of Siegen) and Prof. Samson Mashele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research Innovation and Engagement (CUT).

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) hosted a high-level delegation from the University of Siegen in Germany as part of the institutions' growing partnership and collaboration under the Erasmus Plus Programme KA131 171. The visit marked an important milestone in strengthening academic mobility, research cooperation, and broader institutional engagement between the two universities.

During the visit, Professor Dr Petra M Vogel, Prorector for Students and Junior Faculty Diversity and International Affairs at the University of Siegen, met with CUT leadership to assess progress and explore opportunities for expanding the collaboration. Discussions focused on extending the partnership beyond the Faculty of Humanities, strengthening faculty level connections, and pursuing additional international funding opportunities, including support from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service.

The partnership between CUT and the University of Siegen is rooted in leadership diplomacy and alumni connections. Following Professor Pamela Dube's appointment as Vice Chancellor and Principal, the University of Siegen, where she is an alumna, extended congratulations and expressed interest in deepening institutional ties.

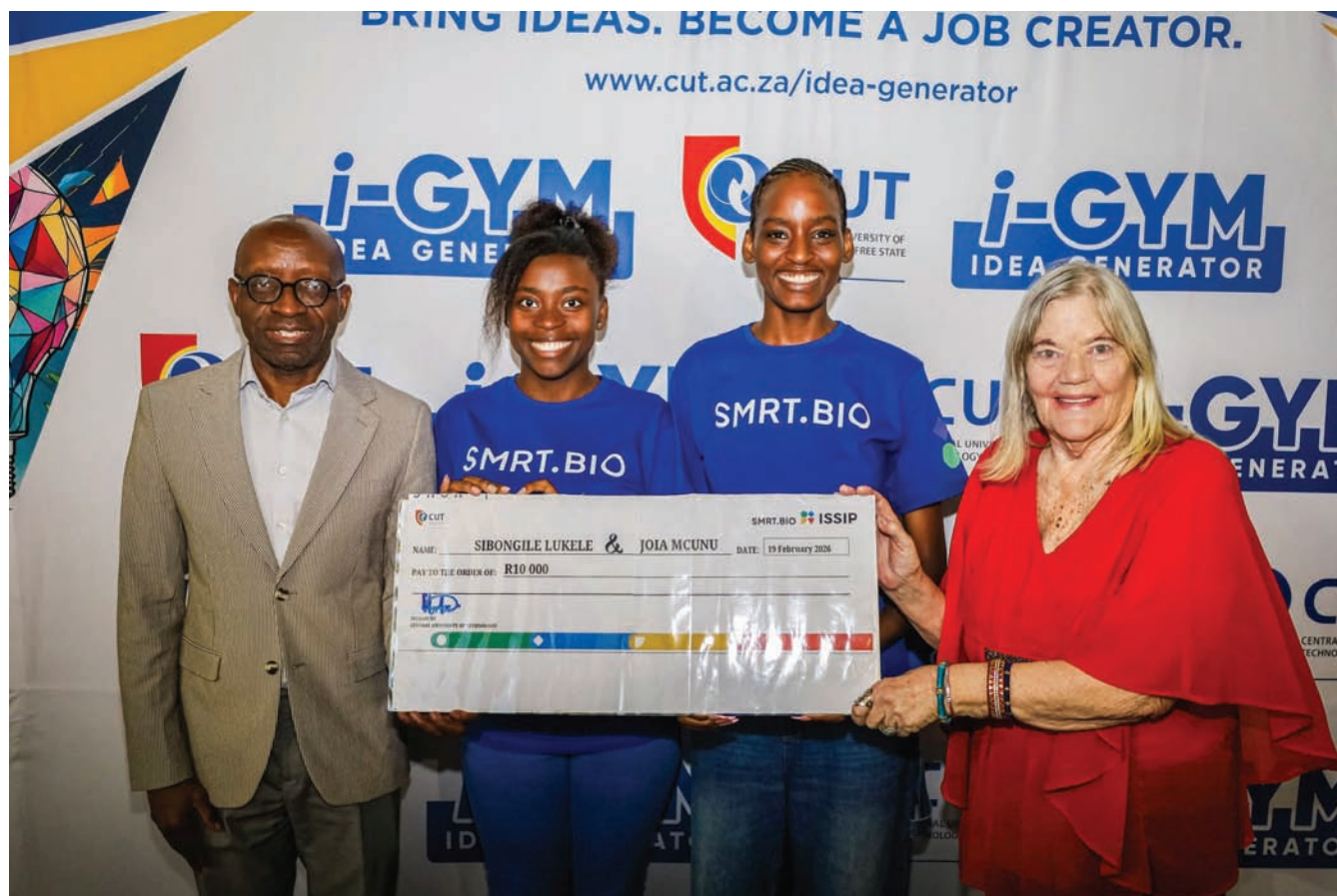
In 2023, both institutions engaged in a series of discussions to identify areas of mutual interest, including academic

exchange, joint research initiatives, and collaboration between professional support offices. These engagements led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2024, which established a formal framework for partnership and collaboration.

Building on this foundation, the two universities secured an Erasmus+ Inter- Institutional Agreement KA131 171, which became operational in September 2025. This agreement enables funded mobility for staff and students and has already produced tangible outcomes. CUT has sent two academic staff members from the Faculty of Humanities and a PhD candidate in Communication Science to the University of Siegen, while two Master of Education students are scheduled for mobility in March 2026. In return, two students from the University of Siegen will undertake internship mobility at CUT from September to December 2026.

This partnership and collaboration demonstrate how alumni networks and strategic internationalisation can evolve into meaningful institutional relationships. Through mobility programmes, joint research, and sustained academic exchange, the collaboration has enhanced learning opportunities, strengthened research capacity, and promoted intercultural engagement at both institutions. As CUT continues to expand its global footprint, partnerships of this nature remain central to advancing its internationalisation objectives and elevating its global academic profile.

CUT student innovators claim international ISSIP Student Innovation Award 2026



From left: Prof. Samson Mashele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement; Ms Sibongile Lukhele, CUT student and founder of Urban Harvest Bloem, a fresh produce and future-focused farming initiative envisioned to strengthen sustainable urban development in Bloemfontein and beyond; Ms Joia Mcunu, CUT student and founder of JRM CC, an innovative factory gas capture and separation system that reduces industrial emissions while converting recovered gases into commercially viable products; and Ms Nancy De Sousa, President of the Mangaung Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), in partnership with SMRT.BIO, placed Mangaung on the global innovation map by hosting the International Society for Service Innovation Professionals (ISSIP) Student Innovation Award 2026. The event showcased the success of CUT's Talent Implementation Model Entrepreneurs (TIME) initiative, which is transforming student ideas into market-ready, high-impact ventures. In its first year, the programme empowered thousands of students with AI-enabled entrepreneurship tools, strengthened industry partnerships, and supported the successful launch of innovative student ventures, including Joia Mcunu's JRM CC and Sibongile Lukhele's Urban Harvest Bloem. The initiative also contributed to the emergence of a graduate-led AI software company that now employs 12 CUT graduates, reinforcing the university's commitment to innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable socio-economic impact.



Front row from left: Ms. Nancy De Sousa, Ms. Sibongile Lukhele and Ms. Joia Mcunu. Back row from left: Mr. Tlhokomelo Direko, co-founder of SoftwareTalents, Mr. Fredrick Matongo, Director: Innovation and Technology Transfer, Professor Samson Mashele and Mr. Kutwane Kareli, Business Development Officer.

CUT ladies hockey team competes with pride at the 2026 USSA Hockey Tournament

- By Mandisa Lidziya



CUT congratulates the Ladies Hockey Team and Coach Tarrin Ramsden on their dedication, sportsmanship, and outstanding representation of the university. Their efforts embody the values of perseverance, teamwork, and excellence that continue to define CUT Sport.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) Ladies Hockey Team proudly represented the university at the 2026 USSA Hockey Tournament, held at Stellenbosch University from 29 June to 3 July. Competing in the fiercely contested B Section against eight other universities, the 17-player squad travelled from the Free State determined to test themselves against some of the country's top university hockey talent.

The tournament featured about 20 South African universities, along with one international institution, with teams

competing across the A, B and C Sections in one of the biggest events on the university hockey calendar.

Guided by head coach Tarrin

Ramsden, the CUT side delivered a spirited campaign, playing five matches and securing three impressive victories. Match after match, the team showcased resilience, discipline and grit, refusing to back down against tough opposition. Their determination on the field was matched by the strong sense of unity and sisterhood that defined the squad throughout the week. With the unwavering support of their coach and team manager, the players pushed one another to compete with confidence and pride.

CUT wrapped up the tournament in fifth place in the B Section. While the final standings fell short of the team's ultimate goal, the competition was marked by resilience, determination and steady growth. The squad demonstrated remarkable growth, impressive competitive spirit, teamwork and a never-say-die attitude throughout the tournament, gaining invaluable experience against quality opposition.



Match after match, the team showcased resilience, discipline and grit, refusing to back down against tough opposition.

CUT's Jade Muller selected for South African Under-20 Rugby team



Photocred: SA Rugby Union

Jade Muller (circled), a CUT athlete and Information Technology student, earned a spot in the South African Under-20 rugby team and played a key role in the team's historic victory at the SANZAAR Under-20 Rugby

Championship. His achievement reflects his dedication, discipline, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to excellence both on the field and in the classroom.



CUT makes history as host of the 2026 USSA Netball Championships



The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), Bloemfontein Campus made history by hosting the 2026 University Sport South Africa (USSA) Netball Tournament from 29 June to 3 July, becoming the first University of Technology (UoT) in South Africa to stage one of USSA's premier netball championships.

The tournament transformed the CUT Bloemfontein campus into the nation's netball hub, welcoming more than 900 student-athletes, coaches and officials representing 26 South African universities, three private institutions and one international institution, the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST). A total of 54 women's and men's teams battled it out over five days of elite university netball, showcasing exceptional talent, fierce competition and unwavering team spirit in pursuit of championship glory.

The ceremony was also attended by Netball South Africa President Ms Mami Diale, alongside representatives from the Mangaung Metro Netball Association, highlighting the significance of the tournament for university and national netball.

As the national governing body for university sport, University Sport South Africa (USSA) continues to drive the growth and development of competitive sport across the country's higher education institutions. Hosting the 2026 USSA Netball Tournament was a significant achievement for CUT, reaffirming its commitment to sporting excellence, student development and providing a world-class platform for the next generation of netball stars.

CUT student shatters SA record and wins gold at National Biathlon Championships 2026



CUT fourth-year Radiography student from the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, Ms Jayme-Sue Vermaas, delivered an outstanding performance by setting a new South African Biathlon record in the senior category. Breaking a national record that had stood since 2023, she claimed the gold medal and was ranked among the top three athletes overall across all age groups. She was also recognised as one of the event's top three swimmers. Her exceptional performance included completing the 800m run in 1:28 and the 100m swim in 1:06, highlighting her remarkable athleticism, determination, and versatility.

CUT Hospitality students crowned national champions at Future Leaders Challenge South Africa 2026



CUT's Advanced Diploma in Hospitality Management students were crowned champions of the Future Leaders Challenge South Africa 2026 after delivering an outstanding performance at the national finals in Johannesburg. The winning team, Mpumelelo Tsulo, Chantal Mothupi, Jessica Maseloa, and Naledi Modiri, demonstrated exceptional creativity, strategic thinking, and innovative solutions to real-world industry challenges under the mentorship of Dalene Crowther and Marus van Zyl. Their journey from runners-up in 2025 to national champions in 2026 reflects resilience, excellence, and CUT's commitment to developing future-ready graduates. The team will proudly represent CUT and South Africa at the Future Leaders Challenge international finals in Dubai in 2027.



Hospitality Management students demonstrated exceptional creativity, strategic thinking, and the ability to develop innovative, future-focused solutions to real challenges facing South Africa.

Enactus CUT President earns national recognition for entrepreneurial leadership



Mr Neo Moabi (right), a Master's student in Mechanical Engineering and President of Enactus CUT, receives the prestigious Enactus South Africa Evan Poulos Student Leadership Excellence Award from Ms Letitia de Wet, Chief Executive Officer and Country Director of Enactus South Africa, during the 2026 Enactus South Africa Annual Exposition held in Johannesburg.

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) continues to affirm its commitment to being a student-centred university that empowers students to lead, innovate and create sustainable solutions to societal challenges. Through platforms such as Enactus CUT, the university provides students with opportunities to develop entrepreneurial, leadership and professional skills that prepare them to make meaningful contributions both during their studies and beyond their university life. This commitment was once again demonstrated at the 2026 Enactus South Africa Annual Exposition, where Enactus CUT students received national recognition for their outstanding leadership and innovation.

The Enactus CUT team, under the tutelage of Prof. Crispin Chipunza, Prof. Patient Rambe and Ms Maraka Lefera, attended the 2026 Enactus South Africa Annual Exposition, held in Johannesburg from 23 to 24 July 2026.

A major highlight of the event was the recognition of Mr Neo Moabi, a master's student in Mechanical Engineering and President of Enactus CUT, who received the prestigious Enactus South Africa Evan Poulos Student Leadership Excellence Award. The award honours students who demonstrate exceptional leadership through their participation in Enactus, particularly in project and team leadership roles.

The achievement is especially significant as Enactus South Africa comprises students from 21 universities across the country. Under Moabi's leadership, Enactus CUT has strengthened its organisational operations while expanding its portfolio of student-owned enterprises. His leadership has been instrumental in creating an enabling environment that encourages student entrepreneurs to establish enterprises under the Enactus CUT umbrella while meeting the requirements of the Enactus South Africa programme.

The team's success has been evident throughout the year. Earlier in 2026, Enactus CUT emerged as the winner of the Enactus South Africa Summer Challenge. Beyond his leadership role within Enactus, Moabi is also the Co-founder of Airnergy and Tech Solutions Enterprise, which advanced to the semi-finals of the 2026 Enactus South Africa National Exposition.



Mr Neo Moabi (right), receives the second-place award in the Digital Transformation for Community Development category, sponsored by the MTN SA Foundation, from Mr Arthur Makhuvu, General Manager at MTN.

The enterprise further secured second place in the Digital Transformation for Community Development thematic award, sponsored by the MTN SA Foundation. The award recognises enterprises that effectively leverage technology to improve operational efficiency while creating sustainable solutions for community development.

Reflecting on the recognition, Moabi described the Evan Poulos Student Leadership Excellence Award as more than a personal achievement. "This award reflects strong leadership, consistency and teamwork. It also represents the journey I have taken within Enactus, from being a general team member to serving as Deputy President and now President of Enactus CUT. I feel incredibly proud and humbled by this recognition, especially knowing that my journey has been shaped by the people who trusted me, worked alongside me, challenged me and helped me grow as a leader."

For Moabi, leadership has never been about holding a title but about serving others, creating opportunities, supporting his team and building a lasting legacy. "Winning this award is a meaningful reminder of the impact we have made, and it motivates me to continue becoming the kind of leader who inspires others and creates lasting change."

His achievement further strengthens Enactus CUT's legacy of producing nationally recognised student leaders. Over the years, several Enactus CUT members have received prestigious leadership accolades, including Mr Taelo Matlala, Deputy President in 2023, who received the Enactus South Africa WV de Wet Student Leadership Excellence Award; Ms Yanelisa Giyose, President in 2022, who was named the Enactus South Africa Evan Poulos Student Leader of the Year; Mr Sizolwakhe Mtetwa, President in 2021, who was recognised through the Global Youth Innovators Programme; and Mr Thembisile Tyopo, Project Manager in 2019, who also received the Enactus South Africa WV de Wet Student Leadership Excellence Award.

Today, these alumni and students continue to excel in academia, industry and entrepreneurship, reflecting Enactus CUT's sustained commitment to developing future-ready graduates who are equipped to drive innovation, create employment opportunities and contribute meaningfully to society.

Enactus CUT crowned 2025/26 Enactus South Africa Summer Action Challenge Champions



Congratulations to the Enactus CUT team for being crowned champions of the 2025/26 Enactus Summer Action Challenge, outperforming 27 higher education institutions across South Africa. Their award-winning enterprise projects showcased outstanding

innovation, sustainability, and measurable community impact, earning the team its second Summer Action Challenge title. Led by President Neo Moabi and guided by Prof. Crispin Chipunza, Prof. Patient Rambe, and Ms Maraka Lefera, the team has also

secured a place in the 2026 Enactus South Africa National Expo semi-finals, further cementing CUT's reputation for excellence in student entrepreneurship and social innovation.

CUT Eco-Vehicle 2.0 team dominates Bluetooth Car Race ahead of 2026 title defence



The CUT Eco-Vehicle 2.0 Team reinforced its dominance by winning the 2025 Bluetooth Car Race, successfully defending its championship title against top university teams. Driver Neo Molai recorded the fastest lap of the competition in an impressive 1 minute and 30 seconds,

showcasing CUT's excellence in engineering, innovation, and fourth industrial revolution technologies. The victory highlights the team's technical expertise, collaboration, and commitment to sustainable mobility as they prepare to defend their title again at the 2026 Eco-Vehicle 2.0 Race.

The CUT Eco-Vehicle 2.0 Team demonstrated exceptional engineering expertise, innovation, and technical excellence during the Bluetooth Car Race, competing against teams from six participating institutions and reinforcing the university's reputation as a leader in advanced technology.

From Pain to Purpose: CUT alumnus takes South African art to the international stage



From the quiet village of Motlatla in Thaba-Nchu to international exhibition spaces in Italy, CUT alumnus and visual artist Ras Silas Motse is transforming personal pain into powerful artistic expression that resonates far beyond borders.

Rooted in healing, resilience, and African identity, his journey as an artist began long before international recognition. As a child growing up in a rural community, drawing became more than a hobby, it became a refuge. "I started as a young cartoonist, using drawing as a way to escape the realities around me," he reflects. "Art became my safe space where I could process emotions, dream beyond my environment, and create a world that felt calmer and more hopeful."

After losing both parents to HIV and AIDS at a young age, art evolved into a deeply personal tool for healing and self-discovery. Through sketches on brown paper using coloured pencils, he began documenting memories, emotions, and experiences connected to grief, identity, family, and belonging.

What started as childhood drawings gradually developed into a distinctive artistic language grounded in emotional storytelling, spirituality, and transformation.

Today, his work is recognised for its bold contemporary African geometric style, a signature fusion of realism, abstraction, symbolism, graffiti influences, layered textures, and expressive mark-making. Using mediums such as charcoal, acrylic paint, spray paint, soft pastels, and mixed media, his work explores themes of resilience, healing, ancestry, spirituality, and perseverance. "My work reflects the silent experiences, pain, strength, and resilience that many people carry within them," he explains. "I want viewers to understand that even through pain and darkness, beauty and growth are still possible."

His studies at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), played a critical role in refining both his technical ability and conceptual thinking. The university environment encouraged experimentation, discipline, research, and critical engagement with contemporary art practices. "CUT helped me believe that my voice and story mattered as an artist," he says. "The university shaped my confidence, discipline, and understanding of how art can exist both as personal expression and as a contribution to society."

The artist credits lecturers, peers, and the creative environment at CUT for helping shape his professional journey. Through collaboration, critique, and creative exchange, he developed a stronger sense of artistic identity and purpose.

A major turning point in his career came through his connection with Wadzanai Garwe, whose story deeply resonated with his own lived experiences. Their collaboration led to participation in the book project *Beyond and Behind the Faces of HIV and AIDS*, which brought together stories from people across South Africa and around the world affected by HIV and AIDS.

His contribution reflected on losing his parents to the disease and the lasting emotional impact it had on his life. "That process made me realise that while pain may be personal, healing can become collective," he says.

The experience inspired *Colours of Resilience*, a body of work centred on healing, identity, memory, and transformation. Combining portraiture, abstraction, symbolism, and emotional expression, the collection became the foundation for his international exhibition opportunity in Italy.



For the artist, showcasing his work internationally is both emotional and deeply affirming. "Coming from a background where opportunities were limited, having my work exhibited internationally is something I once only dreamed about," he shares. "To see my art travel from South Africa to Italy is proof that stories rooted in resilience and authenticity can resonate globally."

Motse's work contributes to broader global conversations around humanity, trauma, healing, spirituality, and transformation while offering authentic African perspectives within contemporary art spaces.

Importantly, he also uses unconventional materials in his practice, including ashes salvaged from artworks destroyed during a tragic studio fire in Langa, Cape Town. These materials now carry symbolic meaning within his work, representing destruction, rebirth, resilience, and renewal. "By incorporating these materials into my work, I am able to transform painful experiences into something meaningful and hopeful," he explains.

Despite growing international recognition, he remains deeply committed to uplifting young people and emerging creatives in South Africa. His future aspirations include publishing a memoir, expanding international exhibitions, mentoring emerging artists, and developing projects that merge



fine art, education, youth development, and community engagement.

Ras Silas Motse also dreams of one day creating a mural at CUT as a tribute to the institution that helped shape his artistic journey.

As a proud South African artist, he hopes his story inspires young creatives to dream beyond their circumstances. "I want young artists to know that their

voices matter, their stories matter, and their creativity have power," he says. "Your background does not define your limits. Where you come from should never stop you from dreaming globally."

Through resilience, authenticity, and unwavering dedication to his craft, this CUT alumnus continues to prove that art has the power not only to heal individuals but also to connect communities and inspire the world.



CUT appoints Prof. Mzikayise Shakespeare Binza as the new Welkom Campus Principal



The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), has appointed Professor Mzikayise Shakespeare Binza as the new Welkom Campus Principal, effective 01 July 2026.

Prof. Binza has been serving CUT as the Director: Academic Enterprise and Services since 01 February 2025, a role in which he is responsible for developing and ensuring the successful implementation of academic strategy, as well as enhancing the student learning and teaching experience and outcomes at the Welkom Campus. He also leads, manages and develops new niche programmes and research initiatives, coordinates internal and external partnership-based collaborations, and ensures alignment of the Welkom Campus academic project.

His qualifications include a PhD in Public Administration from Nelson Mandela University and a Certificate in Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) from the University of the Witwatersrand. He is currently enrolled in the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP) cohort offered by the International Association of Universities (IAU) in collaboration with UNESCO.

His work experience includes serving as Director of the Raymond Mhlaba Institute of Public Administration and Leadership at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research at Walter Sisulu University; and Dean of the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). He has also served as Chief Executive Officer of MZBIN Holdings (Pty) Ltd.

Prof. Binza's accolades include the Track Chair Award, presented by the Academy of World Business, Marketing and Management Development (AWBMAMD) at its conference held from 11–14 August 2014 at the University of Wollongong in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He also received the Associate Programme Chair Award in 2013 from the World Academy of Researchers, Educators and Scholars (WARES) and the Academy of World Finance, Banking, Management and IT (AWFBMIT). In addition, he was awarded an NRF rating of Category Y2 in 2010 and was recognised as a Top Twenty Researcher at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University for the period 2006–2008, among other achievements.

CUT looks forward to Prof. Binza applying his vast experience to advance the Strategy 2026–2030, which aims to deliver quality academic programmes and applied research, promote access with success, engage meaningfully with communities.

CUT appoints Prof. Mogomme Alpheus Masoga as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning



The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) has appointed Professor Mogomme Alpheus Masoga as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, effective from 1 August 2026.

Prof. Masoga holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) from the University of the Free State (UFS). He began his academic journey at the erstwhile University of Natal (UN), Pietermaritzburg Campus, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree, followed by two Honours degrees and a Master of Arts degree. He subsequently earned a second Master of Arts degree in Musicology, with distinction, from the University of South Africa (UNISA). In addition, Prof. Masoga completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

He has served in several senior academic leadership roles, including Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Free State (UFS), Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zululand (UNIZULU), and Research Professor in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Limpopo (UL), as well as in the School of Human and Social Sciences at the University of Venda (UNIVEN).

Prof. Masoga is a respected scholar and acclaimed researcher with a National Research Foundation (NRF) rating. He has maintained a coherent research trajectory with an extensive record of research and publications in the fields of oral history, Africanism, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems. His contributions include managing the NRF's Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Education Research portfolios, serving as Research Manager for Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and leading the School of Historical Sciences at the former University of the North. He also founded the African Renaissance Centre at the former University of the North and directed the Research Department of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL Rights Commission).

He is the book editor of the series publication titled Knowledge Pathing: Multi-, Inter-, and Trans-Disciplining in Social Sciences, published by AOSIS. He brings extensive and distinguished national and international experience, including substantial management expertise, with the past decade spent in senior leadership roles. He has served as Acting Academic Journal Editor at the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), supervised numerous postgraduate students, and acted as an external examiner for a wide range of postgraduate studies.

Given Prof. Masoga's scholarly and academic background, CUT warmly welcomes him to the University and looks forward to his leadership contributions as the institution advances the implementation of its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan. His appointment comes at an important time as CUT continues to strengthen a student-centred academic ecosystem, enhance student success and support, and position itself as a future-focused University of Technology distinguished by innovation, impactful research, and strong industry partnerships.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Doctor Of Philosophy In Information Technology

Dr Kompfi, Moabi, MIT (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. EMI Masinde, PhD (UCT)
Topic: "Development of a framework for assessing smart city readiness in South African municipalities: A case study of Matjhabeng Municipality"



Doctor Of Engineering In Mechanical Engineering

Dr Gaonwe, Tsholofelo Priscilla, MEng (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. K Kusakana, DTech (CUT)
Co-promoter: Dr PA Hohne, DEng (CUT)
Co-promoter: Prof. TCK Dzogbewu, DEng (CUT)
Topic: "Optimizing energy management of a dual-source renewable energy system with thermal storage for hot water production"



Doctor Of Engineering In Mechanical Engineering

Dr Nhlaplo, Nthabiseng, MTech (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. TCK Dzogbewu, DEng (CUT)
Co-promoter: Prof. O de Smidt, PhD (UFS)
Topic: "Laser powder bed fusion of TiCu alloy for biomedical applications"



Doctor Of Engineering In Civil Engineering

Dr Adedeji, Jacob Adebayo, MTech (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. MM Mostafa, PhD (University of Liverpool)
Co-promoter: Prof. YE Woyessa, PhD (UFS)
Topic: "Finite element approach for low volume roads using dynamic cone penetrometer results"



Doctor Of Engineering In Electrical Engineering

Dr Veldtsman, Peiter Stefanus, MTech (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. BJ Kotze, DTech (CUT)
Topic: "Development of an artificial intelligence deep neural network for the identification of individual animals"



Doctor Of Engineering In Electrical Engineering

Dr Shirinda, Khanyisa, MEng (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. K Kusakana, DTech (CUT)
Topic: "Optimal energy management for a grid-connected pumped hydro-battery hybrid storage system supplied by renewable energy"



Doctor Of Engineering In Civil Engineering

Nwodo, Julian Chizoba, MSc (UFH)
Promoter: Prof. OJ Gericke, PhD (UKZN)
Co-promoter: Prof. YE Woyessa, PhD (UFS)
Co-promoter: Prof SA Oke, PhD (UFS)
Topic: "Re-engineering of existing wastewater stabilisation ponds for improved contaminant removal"



Doctor Of Engineering In Electrical Engineering

Dr Conduah, Joseph Emingsang, MSc (VSTU)
Promoter: Prof. K Kusakana, DTech (CUT)
Co-promoter: Dr PA Hohne, DEng (CUT)
Topic: "Energy efficiency improvements in a micro-brewery in South Africa"



Doctor Of Engineering In Electrical Engineering

Dr Gericke, Gareth Andrew, MEng (CUT)
Promoter: Prof. RB Kuriakose, DEng (CUT)
Co-promoter: Prof. HJ Vermaak, PhD (Twente)
Topic: "Developing a communication architecture for improving production efficiency in smart manufacturing"

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Business Management)

Dr Ahorbo, Gerald Kojo
Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)
Topic: "Entrepreneurial competency and the performance outcomes of small manufacturing firm's manufacturing capability, strategic mode and strategy adoption"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Finance)

Dr Amenuku, Mary Abra
Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)
Co-Promoter: Dr Yakubu, PhD (CPUT)
Topic: "Socio-cultural orientation, financial disposition and the retirement planning attitude of self-employed informal sector workers in Ghana: Evidence from street hawkers in the Accra Metropolis"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Hospitality Business Management)

Dr Boadi, Mercy
Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)
Co-Promoter: Dr C Crowther, BTech FSM (CUT), BTech PSE (CUT), MA (UFS), DBA (CUT)
Topic: "The impacts of abusive customer behaviour and perceived supervisor support on frontline hotel employees' alienation and customer-oriented behaviour in Ghana"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Hospitality Business Management)

Dr Abayase, Rosemary
Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)
Co-Promoter: Dr C Crowther, BTech FSM (CUT), BTech PSE (CUT), MA (UFS), Doctor of Business Administration (CUT)
Co-Promoter: Dr VY Atiase, DBA (CUT); & PhD (Wolves, UK)
Topic: "Innovation adoption, adopter characteristics, and the performance of small-scale hospitality business in Ghana: a theory of planned behaviour perspective"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Hospitality Business Management)

Dr Zaazie, Perpetual
Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)
Co-Promoter: Dr C Crowther, BTech FSM (CUT), BTech PSE (CUT), MA (UFS), DBA (CUT)
Co-Promoter: Dr Y Yakubu, PhD (CPUT)
Topic: "Jay-customer behaviour and the customer-oriented behaviour of front-line workers: mediated moderation model for the Ghanaian hospitality industry"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Public Sector Management)

Dr Motsumi, Onkabetse Levy

Promoter: Prof T van Niekerk, MPA (US), D Tech (CUT)

Topic: "The impact of financial accountability on good governance and service delivery efficiency in selected provincial departments and municipalities in the Northern Cape Province"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Marketing Management)

Dr Nkoyi, Anele, MTech (NMU)

Promoter: Prof M. Tait, DCom (UPE)

Co-Promoter: Prof. F van der Walt, PhD (UP)

Topic: "Exploiting relationship marketing to augment electronic banking continuance usage: A moderated mediation study in a rural context"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Business Management)

Dr Adjei, Hayford

Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)

Co-Promoter: Dr VY Atiase, DBA (CUT); & PhD (Wolves, UK)

Topic: "Gold mining, corporate social responsibility and the sustainable well-being of host communities in the Ahafo Region, Ghana"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Human Capital Management)

Dr Adiasany, Lawrenda

Promoter: Prof. C Chipunza, DTech (NMU)

Topic: "Development and Testing of an Explanatory Employee Engagement Structural Model for Academics in Technical Universities in Ghana"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Project Management)

Dr Kornu, Reuben Kormla

Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)

Co-Promoter: Dr VY Atiase, DBA (CUT); & PhD (Wolves, UK)

Topic: "Impact of evaluation criteria compliance on construction project performance in Ghana"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Engineering Business Management)

Dr Obimpeh, Nana Asamoah

Promoter: Prof. TCK Dzogbewu, D Tech (CUT)

Co-Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)

Topic: "Workplace conditions and work-related well-being of engineering professionals at Ghana's seaports"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Management Sciences (Entrepreneurship)

Dr Ayibor, Michael Komla

Promoter: Dr VY Atiase, DBA (CUT); & PhD (Wolves, UK)

Co-Promoter: Prof DY Dzansi, MA (UFS), MBA (PU for CHE), PhD (UP)

Co-Promoter: Dr J Ameh, PhD (CUT)

Topic: "Examining the drivers of women entrepreneurs in Ghana: the interplay of finance, human capital and institutional factors"

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Doctor Of Education

Dr Halle, Vincente Antonio, BA Ed (CUEA), M Ed (UEM)

Promoter: Prof. L Schiebusch B. Com (Ed) B Com (Hons) M Ed PhD (CUT)

Co-Promoter: Prof W Setlalentoa, B Sc Ed, B Ed Hons (NWU), M Ed Didactics (Science) (UFS), PhD (CUT), PG Dip: Leadership Development (University of Stellenbosch Business School).

Co-Promoter: Dr N Swatz, PhD (CUT)

Topic: "Factors influencing the implementation of integrated e-learning and teaching in higher education: A multi-case study"



Doctor Of Education

Dr Mokone, Victoria Mahlape

Promoter: Prof. J Palmer, PhD (NWU)

Co-promoter: Dr W Thabane, PhD (CUT)

Topic: "Self-efficacy expectations of novice teachers: an induction support framework for improved teaching performance"



FACULTY OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Doctor Of Philosophy In Environmental Health

Dr Letuka, Pontso Letlotlo Joyce, MHSc (CUT)

Promoter: Prof. SJ Nkhebenyane, PhD (CUT)

Co-promoter: Dr Z Tywabi-Ngeva, PhD (DUT)

Topic: "Assessment of food safety of street-vended foods and the nutrient knowledge of street food vendors within the Mangaung Metro Municipality, Free State, South Africa"



Doctor Of Health Sciences In Clinical Technology

Dr Henema Musawenkosi Msizi Fairhope, MHSc (DUT)

Promoter: Prof. SC Brown, DMed (UFS)

Co-promoter: Dr L Botes, PhD (CUT); DTech (CUT)

Topic: "Multimodality profiling of pulmonary hypertension in a group of South African patients with congenital heart disease"



Doctor Of Health Sciences In Biomedical Technology

Dr Binyane -Motseki, Moleboheng Emily, MMedSc (UFS)

Promoter: Prof. PH Mfengwana, DHSc (CUT)

Co-promoter: Prof. SS Mashele, PhD (Medunsa)

Topic: "Antifungal activity and toxicity assessment of traditional medicinal plants commonly used in the treatment of respiratory diseases in South Africa"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Environmental Health

Dr Ngwenya, Mbongeni, MSc (UFS)

Promoter: Dr TP Gumede, PhD (UFS)

Co-promoter: Dr RA Perez Camargo, PhD (BCU)

Co-promoter: Dr B Motlout, PhD (SU)

Topic: "Development of eco-friendly bio-nanocomposites based on polycaprolactone, poly (lactic acid) and their blends with nanocellulose extracted from Saccharum officinarum for advanced applications"



Doctor Of Philosophy In Environmental Health

Dr Sikhosana, Sylvia Tlholohelo, MHSc (CUT)

Promoter: Prof. MJ Mochane, PhD (UFS)

Co-promoter: Prof. NJ Malebo, PhD (UFS)

Co-promoter: Dr TG Mofokeng, PhD (UJ)

Topic: "The effect of flame-retardant fillers on the inflammatory properties of environmentally friendly biopolymer(s)/sawdust fibre biocomposites"



