

Biography: Prof Philippe Burger

Prof Philippe Burger is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Pro-VC): Poverty, Inequality and Economic Development at the University of the Free State. This position aims to further the university's strategic focus on improving economic development and reducing poverty and inequality in society, particularly in the city of Bloemfontein and the Free State.

As Professor of Economics, Prof Burger has held several leadership positions, including Vice-Dean (Strategic Projects) of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences in 2019, Head of the Department of Economics at the UFS from 2002 to 2019, and acted as Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences from February 2018 to January 2019.

Prof Burger authored *Getting it right: A new economy for South Africa*, during his time as Fulbright exchange scholar at the Centre for Sustainable Development, Earth Institute, Columbia University in the USA during 2016/2017. He wrote three more books and numerous academic articles, and co-authored two International Monetary Fund (IMF) working papers. In 2009, he was a visiting scholar at the IMF and was seconded to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris several times. Prof Burger was President of the Economic Society of South Africa (2012-2014), co-authored a 20-year review of South African fiscal policy since 1994, and was one of the 20 participants in a roundtable meeting with President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018 on how to get economic growth in South Africa on a higher growth trajectory. He was also a member of the South African Statistics Council and a panel of experts of the South African National Treasury. Recently, he also became a member of the Lancet COVID-19 Commission's Task Force on Fiscal Policy and Financial Markets.

As Pro-VC, Prof Burger provides facilitative leadership to the Poverty, Inequality and Economic Development initiative, while strengthening research in this strategic field. A key role of the Pro-VC is to foster cooperation across faculties and to identify multidisciplinary engagement aimed at reducing poverty and inequality. This would entail, among others, that postgraduate students from multiple disciplines combine their research, leading to results that would stimulate entrepreneurship and the creation of new business start-ups.