

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Our 2022 Journey



*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives
through quality, impact, and care.*



UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



Content

Messages	4
Our story	6
University leadership	8
Institutional excellence	10
Leading learning	18
Focused research	30
Impactful engagement	44
Beneficial collaboration	50
Visibility and impact	56

WHO WE ARE





MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR



Prof Bonang Mohale
UFS Chancellor

Reflecting on the past year evokes concern for the prevailing global landscape. The inflamed geopolitical landscape due to the war in Ukraine, the global climate and cost of living crisis, and the political upheaval occurring almost everywhere, including our own doorstep, undoubtedly characterise 2022 as a period of political and economic uncertainty.

Amid this context, we have found appreciation for the stability in the academic year, which allowed for freer travel, face-to-face interactions with fellow students and colleagues, collaborating with other institutions, and in-person teaching.

Contemplating the challenges we face, it is difficult to overlook the potential of higher education as a catalyst of change and a means of serving the greater good. Indeed, this is the essence of education, wherein our collective success and enlightenment empower individuals to assume influential positions and drive positive transformations in society and in the world. The higher education sector has a unique opportunity to address the urgent changes required to alter the course of global affairs. Universities play a pivotal role in

scientific problem-solving, producing skilled scientists and creating value.

It is heartening to acknowledge the remarkable accomplishments of the UFS during this past year. Building upon years of excellence, the university has equipped students to become productive members of society, fostering the pursuit of knowledge and personal growth, and instilling passion for making a positive difference in the lives of others. Significant progress has been made in producing graduates in critical fields, while advancing research, impact, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The UFS has solidified its position among the top nine South African universities and has emerged as a leading institution on the continent and in the world. These achievements have engendered a greater external engagement and bolstered confidence in the UFS as a global player in the sector.

Looking ahead, I do not underestimate the university's dedication in upholding its credibility and investing in students who are dedicated to serving humanity in the manner that aligns with the needs of local, regional, and global communities. The possibilities are boundless.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL CHAIR



Mr David Noko
UFS Council Chair

Negotiating the aftermath of a global pandemic, incorporating innovative, groundbreaking technology in the higher education sphere, and increasingly embracing our society-focused role in order to work towards improving local and global societies, have been key characteristics of the UFS journey in 2022.

The theme of the UFS strategic plan for the past five years has been on widening and accelerating the scope of transformation. The plan reflected the commitment of the UFS to distinguish itself over a five-year period as an institution based in central South Africa,

which through academic excellence, diversity, and inclusivity and through innovative and transformative thought, pursues the delivery of excellent quality graduates and knowledge for the region, the continent, and the globe.

The strategic focus over the next strategy period will be on excellence, visibility, and impact. A strong thrust will be on raising the research and internationalisation profile of the UFS. This will involve reviewing the Academic Project to encourage multi-disciplinarity and the concomitant policies. Furthermore, this will be supported by our increased emphasis

MESSAGE FROM RECTOR AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

The year 2022 marked the renewal and re-imagination of the University of the Free State (UFS) to have a greater impact as a centre for innovation, research, dissemination and application, both locally and globally.

One of our focus areas over the past five years has been around developing and aligning policies, procedures, and systems towards improving undergraduate learning and teaching. During this period, coordinated efforts around enhancing student experience, academic quality, learning analytics and student tracking, as well as graduate attributes, have yielded positive results, providing for a holistic approach to student development. The UFS has also invested in its teaching and learning staff and placed strong emphasis on curriculum renewal during this period. There has been a renewed emphasis on academic qualifications, with systems in place for staff development, recognition, and reward.

The efficiency and effectiveness of UFS governance and support systems have improved over the past five years, mainly

through increased capacity for managing the policy environment, increasing student representation in institutional governance, and improving the integration of data systems and the credibility of management information. These have been underscored by investments in infrastructure, including both information technology and physical infrastructure. Using the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as our overarching yardstick, the UFS has been able to move beyond disciplinary boundaries in our quest to positively impact our wider local and global societies.

There has never been a more important time in modern history for great universities to make a meaningful contribution to society. In the light of this, our commitment was entrenched during 2022 to aspire to the very highest standards of education, research and engagement. We wish to do so in a way that continues to respect knowledge as being at the core of all that we do, but is also focused on the needs of our young people and of society at large.



Prof Francis Peterson
UFS Rector and
Vice-Chancellor

on internationally benchmarked peer assessment. We will further put in place the relevant systems and processes to facilitate impact and enhance our reputation. Ethical and empowering leadership will also be a focus to ensure that the university culture becomes more conducive to excellence and to the Academic Project. Emphasis will also be placed on freeing up resources to reinvest in research and innovation. This will require a review of the efficiency of academic programmes, reviewing the academic and support structures, and investing in academic

leaders and managers that will be needed to facilitate and enable this new direction.

This has been my first full year as UFS Council Chair. The continued, unwavering support of fellow Council members as well as the dedication and competence of our management team have been invaluable, and have ensured the completion of a meaningful and successful year. It remains an honour to be part of this esteemed institution on its exciting journey towards achieving its ultimate goal as an institution: To impart and generate new knowledge that impactfully supports societal development.

OUR STORY

The University of the Free State creates opportunities and growth through leading learning and teaching, focused research, and impactful engagement with society. Situated in the heart of South Africa, our character of caring and diversity translates into an outstanding university experience.

UFS IN NUMBERS



41 169
total students



1 081
international
students



59
satellite
campuses



2 599
permanent
staff members



127
departments



108 international
postdoctoral fellows
74 South African
postdoctoral fellows

OUR FACULTIES



Faculty of Economic and
Management Sciences



Faculty of Education



Faculty of
Health Sciences



Faculty of Law



Faculty of Natural and
Agricultural Sciences



Faculty of
The Humanities



Faculty of Theology
and Religion

Our campuses

The **Bloemfontein Campus** is situated in the capital of the Free State in central South Africa. Undergraduate and postgraduate studies in all seven faculties are presented here. All campus facilities are available in one location, characterised by unique architecture and artworks, modern sports facilities as well as eco-friendly waterwise gardens.



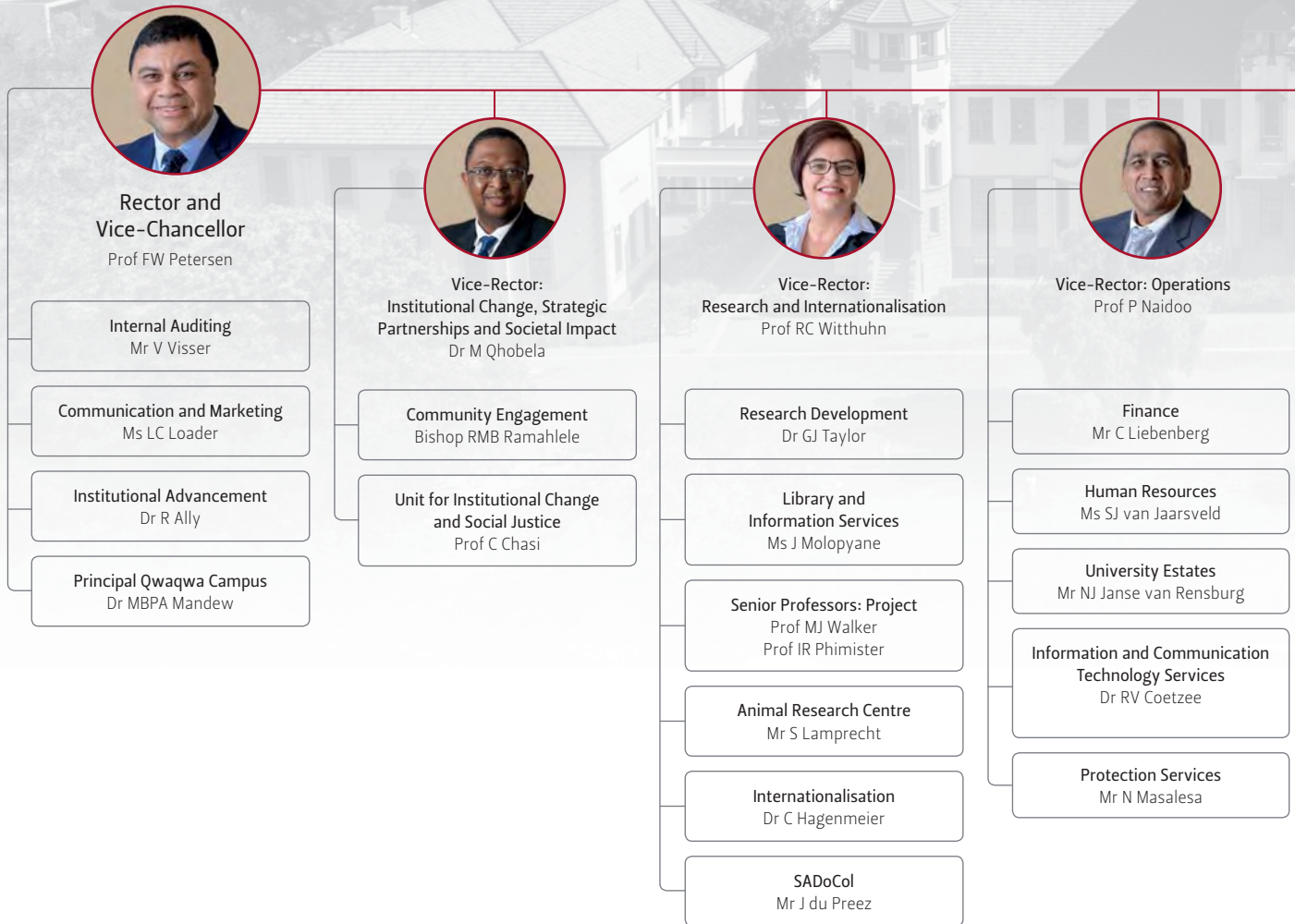
The **Qwaqwa Campus** in the scenic Eastern Free State, at the foot of the Maloti-Drakensberg mountains, is home to cutting-edge engaged science, inter- and multi-disciplinary research, and innovation tailored to meet the needs of its surrounding community and beyond.



The **South Campus**, nestled in the hills to the south of Bloemfontein, is home to the university's Blended Learning Innovation and Support Services (BLISS), with the primary goal of providing holistic, integrated services and support towards a new blended learning future for the UFS.



UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP



STRATEGIC GOALS



Goal 1:

Improve student success and well-being.



Goal 2:

Renew and transform the curriculum.



Goal 3:

Increase UFS contribution to local, regional, and global knowledge.



Goal 4:

Support development and social justice through engaged scholarship.



Goal 5:

Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems.



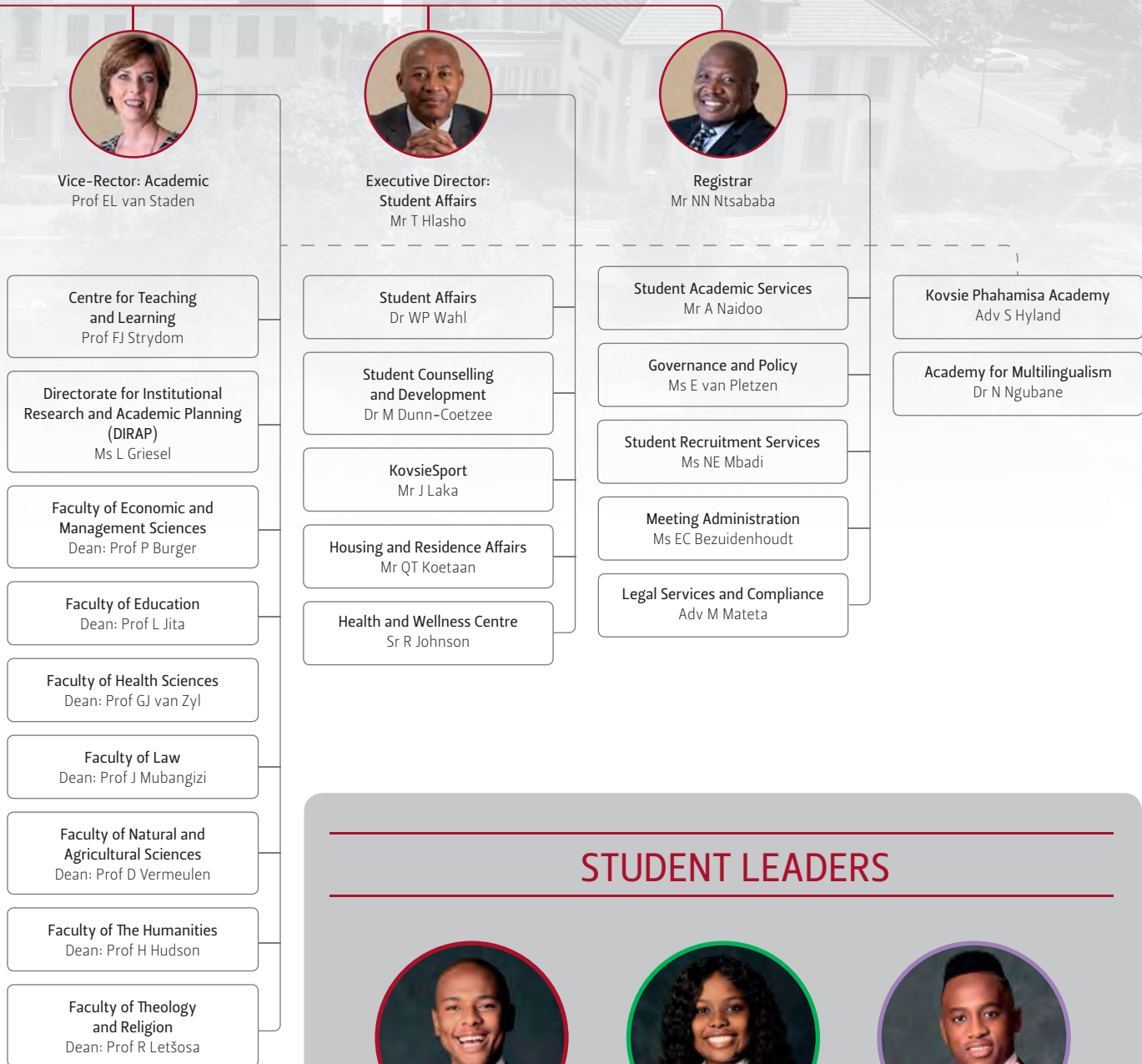
Goal 6:

Achieve financial sustainability.



Goal 7:

Advance an institutional culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS.



STUDENT LEADERS



SRC PRESIDENT
Bloemfontein Campus
Luvuyo Jacobs



SRC PRESIDENT
Qwaqwa Campus
Simphiwe Dube



SRC PRESIDENT
South Campus
Livhuwani Ramalisa



INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE



INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

The strategic intent and direction of the UFS is contextualised in a world that is facing many socio-economic, environmental, and political challenges. These challenges place an increased expectation on universities to fulfil their roles as institutions promoting the 'public good' as they impactfully support societal development and the communities that they serve.

During 2022, the UFS continued to produce relevant skills and knowledge, building the economy, solving persistent and emerging social problems, and transforming the post-apartheid society. Through its robust planning regime, the institution commits to continuously renew itself, and to grow and extend its influence and impact locally, regionally, and globally.

LAUNCH OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES PRESS

On 24 May 2022, coinciding with Africa Month celebrations, the UFS launched the first ever African Languages University Press in South Africa and Africa.

Under the auspices of the UFS Department of African Languages, high-quality original African language monographs and research will be published in order to promote access, preservation, and use of marginalised African languages. As a broad academic publisher, the African Languages Press will be working across a number of markets, all presenting challenges and opportunities for established and engaged university presses.

Institutional goals



To improve academic excellence, reputation, and impact

To promote an environment of agility, flexibility, and responsiveness based on trust and accountability



To advance a transformational institutional culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS

To promote stewardship and the prioritisation of institutional resources for strategic intent



UFS AMONG WORLD'S BEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE RANKING

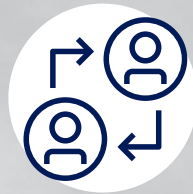
The UFS entered the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for the first time in 2022, and emerged in the 801-1000 range. This ranking includes 1 799 institutions from 104 countries and is the largest and most diverse ranking of its kind. Institutions were measured across 13 separate performance categories, providing the most comprehensive report of excellence among world-class research universities.

University of the Free State
RANKED 801-1000



www.thewur.com

2022 in numbers



16 external
quality reviews



14,2% of
income generated
through third-
stream funding

67,4%
policy revision rate



15% increase
in Council-
controlled
income



Prof Sithole on UNESCO advisory board

Prof Pearl Sithole, Qwaqwa Campus Vice-Principal: Academic and Research, was appointed as the newest member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Management of Social Transformation scientific advisory board. The board is concerned with the critical role of social sciences in influencing policies in the international space as a key strategic focus, and is composed of nine internationally recognised experts representing various disciplines in the social sciences.

NAMBITHA MANQOLA GETS NATIONAL LIBRARIAN AWARD

Nambitha Manqola, Chief Officer in Library and Information Services on the Bloemfontein Campus, won the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) Nevada LMS Emerging Librarian Award at the association's national conference hosted in Gauteng. This accolade recognises the achievements and accomplishments of emerging, inspiring, and exceptional public, academic, school, and special librarians who have earned their LIS qualification within the past five years.



Prof Francis Smit elected as member of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery



Prof Francis E Smit, Head of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery, has become only the third person from sub-Saharan Africa to receive the honour of being elected as a member of the American Association for Thoracic Surgery (AATS). The AATS is an august international academic organisation founded more than a century ago by the earliest pioneers in the field of thoracic surgery, to which members are elected according to merit. Currently, the association has more than 1 400 active members from 41 countries. Around 30 to 40 new members are accepted annually, of which only 10 to 15 reside outside the USA and Canada.

Thuso Lempetje goes from service worker to Business School graduate

Thuso Lempetje, who had been working as a cleaner in the Centre for Business Dynamics since 2012, graduated with a Bachelor of Management Leadership (BML) from the UFS Business School in April 2022. An avid reader, he had been borrowing books to learn more about the business world, and was then given an opportunity by the centre to participate in the Management Development Programme, before enrolling for the BML degree.



Dr Munyaradzi Mushonga appointed to lead global network on decoloniality

Dr Munyaradzi Mushonga of the Centre for Gender and Africa Studies, a leading voice and scholar on decolonialisation, was appointed Global Academic Director of the Decolonial International Network (DIN). He will be involved with establishing a Centre for Decolonising The Mind, which will use 21st-century technologies to achieve the ideal of decolonialisation. The aim is also to work towards a decolonial textbook on the history of Africa.



UFS artists' work on exhibition at world-famous NIROX Sculpture Park



Artists from the Department of Fine Arts had the opportunity to have their work exhibited at the internationally acclaimed NIROX Sculpture Park in Johannesburg as part of the park's Good Neighbours exhibition. The exhibition reflected the relationship that South Africans have with their neighbours amid global instability. The curated group of artworks by Fine Arts lecturers, alumni, and postgraduate students was titled Fluid Imaginaries, and were drawn from the unique characteristics of the playful and creative imagination.



Prof Matsabisa addresses UN Science Summit

Prof Motlalepula Matsabisa, Director of Pharmacology, was invited to give a keynote speech on Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Health during a session at the eighth edition of the UNGA77 Science Summit at the 77th United Nations General Assembly. His message was around a call for investment in scientific research and development of traditional medicines. The summit brought together thought leaders, scientists, technologists, innovators, policy makers, financiers, philanthropists, journalists, and community leaders with the aim of increasing health science and citizen collaboration across a broad spectrum of themes.

2022 in numbers



108

media statements
released in
mainstream media

805

comments by UFS
experts in national
media



166

published opinion
articles by UFS
experts

R191
million

Advertising Value
Equivalent





UFS communication campaigns recognised by IABC and MACE

The Department of Communication and Marketing won an International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Africa Silver Quill Award of Excellence for *Communication Research for*

Narrative Building Storytelling. The department also won four Excellence Awards at the 2022 Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education (MACE) Excellence Awards.

Moleboheng Moshe-Bereng honoured at Southern Region Women in Media Awards



Moleboheng Moshe-Bereng, Senior Marketing Officer in the University of the Free State School of Financial Planning Law, was honoured at the Southern Region Women in Media Awards for her outstanding and inspiring work to encourage excellence in academics. The awards were established by the Free State Empowerment Institute for Women in 2021 as a means to develop and empower women in the media.

TOBIAS VAN DEN BERG TO LEAD MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES

Tobias van den Bergh, Counselling Psychologist at the UFS, was appointed as the President of the Southern African Association for Counselling and Development in Higher Education (SAACDHE). The organisation represents members of several higher education counselling and career development centres from the SADC region, with a mission to promote, guide, and advance best practices at institutions of higher education.





LEADING LEARNING





LEADING LEARNING

As an integral part of a high-performance 21st-century African university that is nationally, continentally and globally relevant, the UFS Learning and Teaching component has to undergo continuous and substantial transformation and realignment. During 2022, the university deliberately moved to a growing focus on transforming learning and teaching through greater emphasis on the digitalisation of systems and processes, including investment in digital infrastructure to support blended learning and teaching. An important priority was on ensuring increased collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, enabling the UFS to align better with the needs of employers and the job market.

2022 in numbers



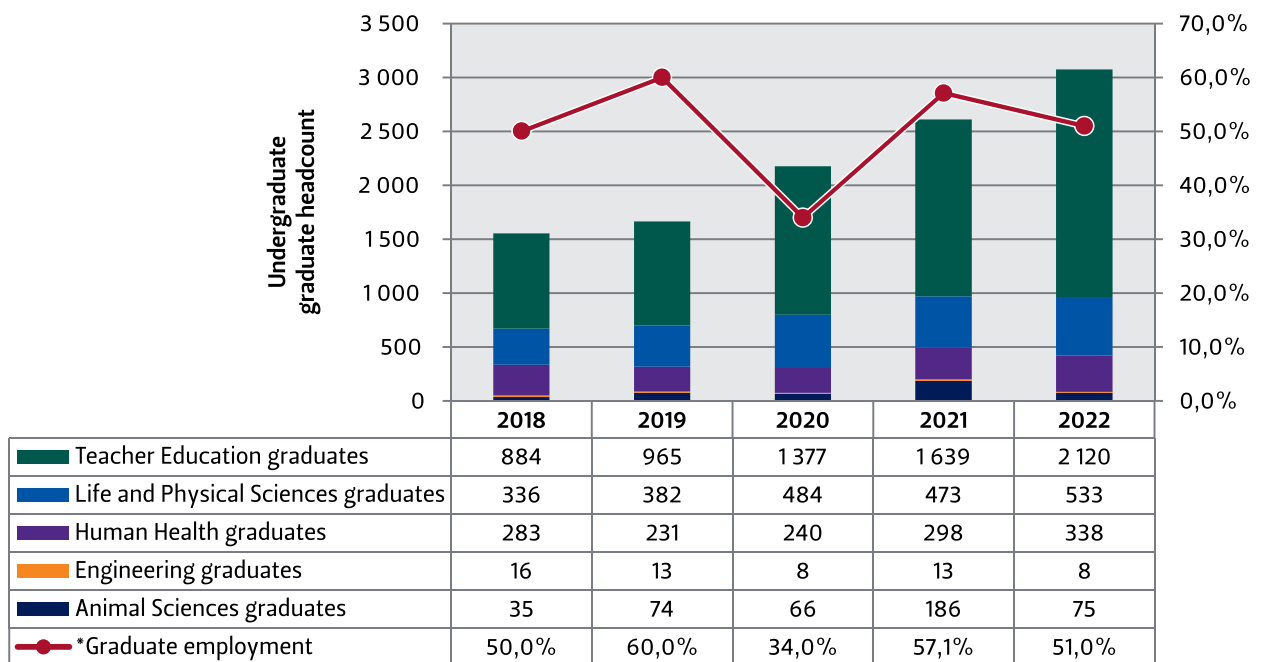
82,7%
total success rate



10 015
graduates



17 new academic
programmes developed



Pathways to graduate employment (KPA 2.2) – scarce skills graduates and employment rates, 2018 to 2022



CTL CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

The Centre for Teaching and Learning has been instrumental in ensuring a consistent high institutional success rate at the UFS. The centre has grown from only four staff members on the Qwaqwa Campus in 2012, to 21 permanent staff members on all three campuses in 2022. Through its innovative campaigns, the centre has successfully and continuously managed to adapt to the strategic changes in the environment and the learning and teaching needs of faculties and students, responding with unique, innovative programmes. Its scholarship-driven approach is built on research and evidence-based practice in all its work.

CTL has been involved in various high-impact practice (HIP) programmes and projects that have increased impact and exposure:

- **The South African Surveys of Student Engagement (SASSE)** – a recognised robust, longitudinal research project that has helped put students at the centre of institutional design.
- The **Siyaphumelela Network**, which focuses on improving student success.
- The **A_STEP Tutorial Programme**, which employs an average of 450 students annually, empowering them to support 13 000 of their peers to succeed and preparing them to be more employable.
- The **Academic Language and Literacy Development** team, which helps an average of 20 000 students per year through literacy courses and the Write Site.

CTL output over 10 years:



223 national
conference papers



288
research reports



52
international
conference papers



35
postgraduate
students

Department of Economics and Finance receives prestigious CFA accreditation

The *Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences* was welcomed into the world's largest association of investment professionals, the CFA Institute University Affiliation Programme. The CFA designation is globally recognised as the gold standard in the investment field. Accreditation by this respected source of knowledge in investment and portfolio management reflects the rigour and value of the UFS BCom Investment Management and Banking (IMB) degree – housed in the more than a century-old Department of Economics and Finance. Only five universities in South Africa are affiliated with the CFA Institute.

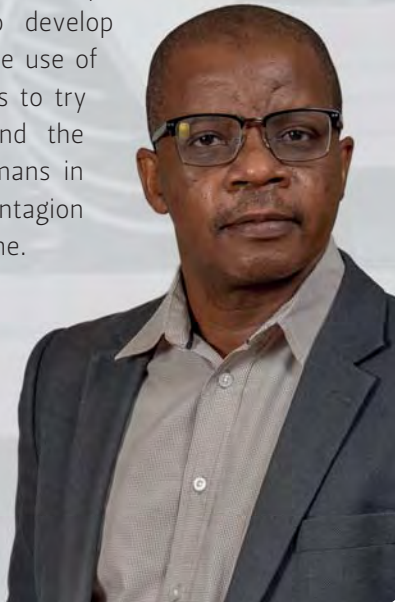
Dr Dube advancing decoloniality agenda



Dr Bekithemba Dube, Senior Lecturer in the *Faculty of Education* on the Qwaqwa Campus, visited the Appalachian State University in North Carolina as part of the university's staff exchange programme. The visit significantly contributed to intellectual diversity, including broadening understanding of the world, and new conversations around global scholarship, advancing the agenda of decoloniality studies on a global scale.

Prof Manase co-edits special issue of *Journal of Literary Studies*

Prof Irikidzayi Manase from the *Department of English*, together with Prof Thabisani Ndlovu from the Department of English at Walter Sisulu University, co-edited the 2022 published *Journal of Literary Studies* special issue, titled '*Pandemic Literatures and Being Human in Times of Mass Infection and Catastrophe: Some African Perspectives*'. The purpose of this special issue was to develop intellect on the use of literary studies to try and understand the nature of humans in times of contagion and catastrophe.



UFS academics honoured by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns



Prof Hendrik Swart, Senior Professor in the *Department of Physics*, received the prestigious Havenga Prize for Physical Sciences for 2022, presented by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns.



The 2022 NP van Wyk Louw Medal was awarded to **Prof Hennie van Coller**, emeritus outstanding professor in the *Faculty of The Humanities* and UFS research fellow at the university, for his creative contributions to the exploitation, organisation, and continuous development of a section of the humanities.

2022 in numbers:



123 staff
members completing
Curriculum Renewal
Programmes



109
individual plans
compiled to assist
staff development



Quantity Surveying programmes get SACQSP stamp of approval

The *Department of Quantity Surveying and Construction Management* in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences received full accreditation for the BSc Quantity Surveying Level 7 (undergraduate) and the BSc Quantity Surveying Level 8 (honours degree) from the South African Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession (SACQSP) for the period 2018–2022. This makes the UFS one of only five institutions of higher learning in the country offering degree courses with full accreditation.



PROF LUES ELECTED AS A BOARD MEMBER OF IASIA

Prof Liezel Lues, Professor of Public Administration and Management in the *Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences*, was elected as a board member of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) – an association of organisations and individuals whose activities and interests focus on the education and training of public administrators and managers – strengthening the growing international footprint of the faculty. This position will allow sharing international best practices with students and colleagues in the Department of Public Administration and Management.

Dr Namakula addresses World Council of Churches

Dr Catherine Namakula, Senior Lecturer in *Public Law* delivered an address at the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC). She spoke in her capacity as Chairperson of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. The focus of her address was on combating racism and racial discrimination against minorities, as well as on the human rights concerns of people of African descent.



UFS academics joining University of Michigan's prestigious scholar programme

Prof **Rodwell Makombe**, Associate Professor in the *Department of English* on the university's Qwaqwa Campus, and **Dr Sevias Guvuriro** from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences on the Bloemfontein Campus, joined a prestigious group of academics from African universities for the 2022 University of Michigan African Presidential Scholars (UMAPS) fellowship programme. Each year, the programme hosts more than 180 academics from different universities in Africa for a five-month fellowship, providing access to research libraries and facilities, on-campus housing, health insurance, and a stipend to cover living expenses.

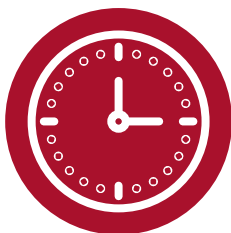


Prof Rodwell Makombe



Dr Sevias Guvuriro

2022 in numbers



75 Short Learning Programmes offered



2 837 participants in Short Learning Programmes

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2022, the UFS continued to invest substantially in student success, throughput, and overall student well-being strategies. Among these were additional tutoring, improved academic advising and mentoring, as well as programmes and initiatives that promote student engagement. A key investment was in professional counselling to address the growing mental health needs of students, while a key focus was on ensuring a thriving campus life to promote a welcoming and inclusive campus environment, contributing significantly to a positive student experience.

Aoate Tsimatsima leads student-sourcing antibiotic discovery network

Aoate Tsimatsima (fourth from the right), a master's student in the *Applied Environmental Microbiology Group* (AEMG) in the Department of Microbiology and Biochemistry, was appointed as the first Tiny Earth Partner Instructor (TEPI) in South Africa. Her role included forming a

student-sourcing antibiotic discovery network. The Tiny Earth network has a database, created by students from around the world, with information about bacteria that can produce compounds that exhibit antimicrobial activity against significant pathogens.

Alina Ntsiapane runner-up in International Livestock Research Challenge

Alina Ntsiapane, a PhD student in the *Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems*, obtained second place in the partners category of the International Livestock Research Institute's (ILRI) CapDev Grand Challenge research pitching contest. The pitching contest was the first part of a 10-month process aimed at equipping scientists with the necessary skills to contribute to new research.



Founder of Next Chapter honoured for advocacy work



Tshepang Mahlatsi, a former UFS Law student, was honoured for his advocacy work at the first Annual Free State Premier's Top 50 Most Inspirational Youth Awards. Mahlatsi was recognised and awarded in the community development category for his work in the mental health advocacy organisation, *Next Chapter*, which he founded while studying at the UFS.

2022 in numbers



9%
achievement gap
between white
and black students



10% of students
made use of individual
counselling services for
psychological, emotional
and developmental support



Katleho Nkosi scoops second place in national design competition

Katleho Nkosi, a fourth-year Education student, was runner-up in a national design competition hosted virtually by Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE). The competition formed part of the launch of the Student Entrepreneurship Week 2022, which took place at the University of Venda.

LETSATSI LEKHOOA ATTENDS COP27 SIMULATION MODEL IN EGYPT

Letsatsi Lekhooa, a master's student in Science, specialising in Climate Change, was part of a group of 150 students from across the world who attended the COP27 Simulation Model, which is organised by the British University in Egypt along with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It is a worldwide climate conference led by and targeted at the youth.



Pieter Bruwer named Agriculturalist of the Year

Pieter Bruwer (pictured here with his three children), a doctoral student in the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Extension and Rural Development, was announced the Agricultural Writers SA (AWSA) Agriculturalist of the Year. The focus of this award, recognising excellence in the agricultural sector in South Africa, was on extension services in agriculture and the important role of disseminating information throughout the industry.



2022 in numbers:



78,6% student
participation in selected
governance structures



75,5%
student perceptions of
UFS support for student
well-being

Siphilangenkosi Dlamini named one of South Africa's 100 Shining Stars

Siphilangenkosi Dlamini, a fourth-year Governance and Political Transformation student, was selected as one of South Africa's 100 Shining Stars for 2022 by *Inside Education*, in partnership with the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). He was chosen from a pool of 800 applicants for his remarkable work with the Help a Student initiative, aimed at curbing food insecurity through the provision of food parcels to UFS students who were in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.





FOCUSED RESEARCH



FOCUSED RESEARCH

The UFS' research goals are to increase its contribution to local, regional and global knowledge, to address fundamental and strategically important developmental questions, and to make an economic, social and cultural impact at regional, national and international levels.

During 2022, the UFS research strategy was to focus resource allocation for research and innovation on UFS areas of strength and distinctiveness; transform the profile and increase the diversity of researchers; and increase research impact, uptake and focus on the African continent.

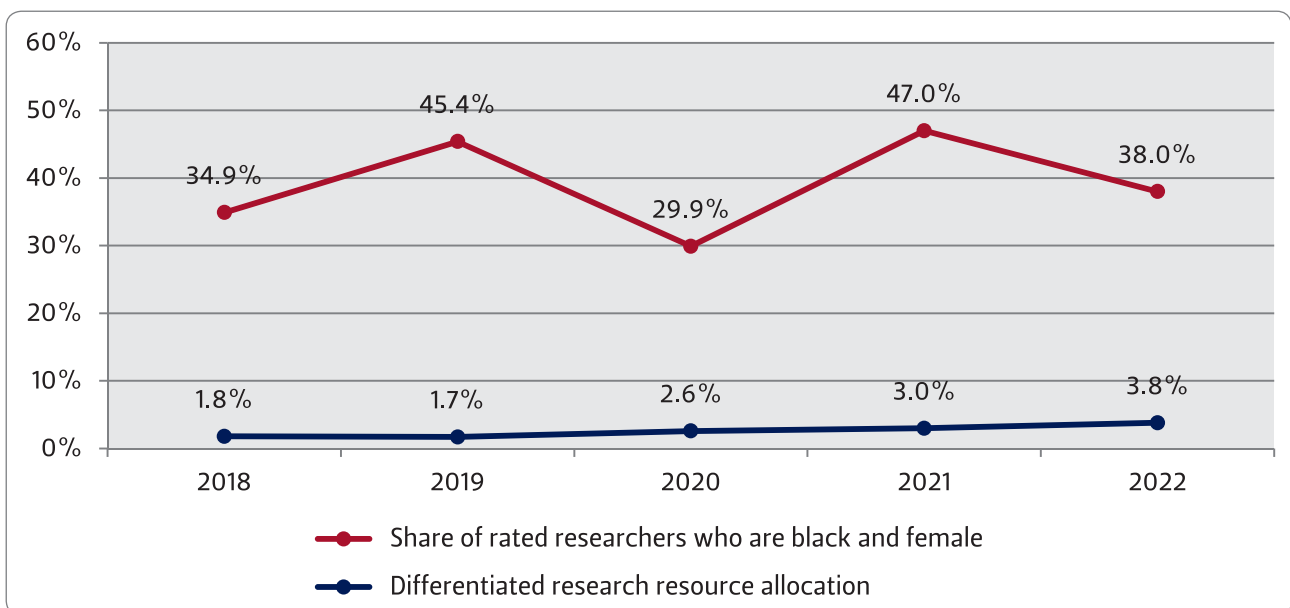
UFS research was characterised by mutually beneficial research collaborations as well as multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary inputs, to produce new knowledge that is globally, continentally and regionally relevant and applicable.



38% of research funds allocated for niche research



87 research grants and contracts signed with a cumulative value of **R107 537 744**

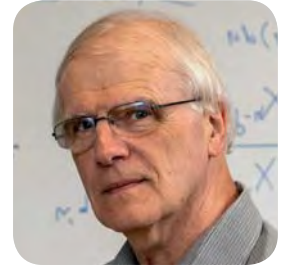


TOP RATED SCHOLARS



Prof Melanie Walker (A-rated) holds an A-rating from the NRF in the field of higher education and human development. Her two most recent books from the selection of more than 140 books she has authored, focus on higher education and human development, as well as educating ‘public good’ professionals. She is also the Global South’s first President of the Human Development and Capability Association (HDCA).

Prof Maxim Finkelstein (A-rated), a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Mathematical Statistics and Actuarial Science, is the only researcher with an A1-rating in South Africa in probability, statistics, and operational research – recognising him as a world leader in his discipline. Prof Finkelstein’s area of expertise is the modelling of random events and quantifying probabilities of their occurrence.



Prof Willem Boshoff (A-rated) is a conceptual artist who primarily engages with text and language. For more than four decades, his visual artworks have commented on established language systems and how these function in society to empower or to exclude. His artistic practice involves extensive interdisciplinary research in the fields of lexicography, botany, philosophy, as well as music, with a special interest in contemporary New Music composers.

Dr Matteo Grilli (P-rated) is a historian from the UFS International Studies Group and a P-rated scientist in the field of political history. He specialises in the political history of Ghana and Southern Africa, as well as in the history of Italian communities in Africa. He has published articles in *History in Africa* and the *South African Historical Journal* and his first monograph, *Nkrumaism and African Nationalism*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018.



2022 NUMBERS



211 NRF-rated researchers

178 postdoctoral fellows appointed



2,5 research output units per academic

1 581,5 research output units generated from publications



SARCHI RESEARCH CHAIRS

Higher Education and Human Development: Prof Melanie Walker

FOCUS: Using the capabilities approach to understand education and human development concerns in South Africa.



Urban-Regional Economics: Prof Ivan Turok

FOCUS: Urban systems (demographics and economics), economic sectors in space, dynamic places, and strategic urban assets.

Vector-borne and Zoonotic Pathogens: Prof Felicity Burt

FOCUS: Host immune responses to arboviral and zoonotic infections, as well as raising awareness of these viruses, defining associated diseases, and developing tools for surveillance programmes.



Disease Resistance and Quality in Field Crops: Prof Maryke Labuschagne

FOCUS: The genetic improvement of the nutritional quality of staple crops in Africa.



Pathogenic Yeasts: Prof Carolina Pohl-Albertyn

FOCUS: The role of fatty acids and the production of immunomodulatory lipid metabolites (e.g. prostaglandins) in pathogenic yeasts.

Solid-state Luminescent and Advanced Materials: Prof Hendrik C Swart

FOCUS: The improvement of luminescent materials for applications in flat panel displays, solar cells, solid-state lighting, dosimetry, and thermometry.



SANRAL RESEARCH CHAIR



Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology Education: Prof Loyiso Jita

FOCUS: Training teachers, supporting student-teacher interns, and incentivising education results so that participating schools become centres of excellence.

Prof Atangana SA's top-ranked scientist in Mathematics



Prof Abdon Atangana, Professor of Applied Mathematics in the *Institute for Groundwater Studies*, was ranked No 1 in the world in Mathematics, No 186 in the world in all the fields, and No 1 in Africa in all the fields, according to the Stanford list of 2% single-year table. He was also named among the top 1% of scientists on the global Clarivate Web of Science list. Less than 6 200 or 0,1% of the world's researchers were included on this list in 2019, 2020 and 2021, with less than 10 of the scientists hailing from South Africa.

Prof Atangana also released a groundbreaking publication in collaboration with one of his students on the flow of groundwater, suggesting several new and modified models to better predict anomalous behaviours of the flow and the movement of pollution within complex geological formations.

Another milestone was reached with postdoctoral student, Dr Seda Igret Araz, introducing a new concept that can be used to test whether a new outbreak of Ebola virus disease will have one or several waves.

Wheat rust specialist contributes to paper in *Nature Genetics*

Prof **Willem Boshoff**, Associate Professor in the *Department of Plant Sciences*, was one of the authors of an article: 'Long-read genome sequencing of bread wheat facilitates disease resistance gene cloning', which was published in the prestigious science publication, *Nature Genetics*. This research contributes towards establishing crops with genetic resistance to diseases, leading to a lower risk of epidemic outbreaks and lower input costs – ultimately working towards ensuring Zero Hunger, a United Nations Sustainable Development Goal.





Magic mushrooms, a first formal study

Dr Marieka Gryzenhout, Senior Lecturer and researcher in the *Department of Genetics*, undertook the first-ever formal study on magic mushrooms in South Africa. Her study group helps amateur mycologists to verify identities of the various psychedelic mushroom species, and to build the biodiversity knowledge regarding magic mushrooms for South Africa, based on scientific evidence.

Prof Walker's Miratho project yields results

The Miratho research project conducted between 2016 and 2021 by the *Higher Education and Human Development (HEHD)* group, led by Prof Melanie Walker, SARChI Chair in Higher Education and Human Development, concluded that the inequalities and exclusion of the labour market and pathways to further study must be addressed by wider economic and social policies for 'inclusive learning outcomes' to be meaningful.



Prof Buckley contributes to discovery published in *Nature Astronomy*



Prof David Buckley, Affiliated Professor in the *Department of Physics*, published an article in the prestigious science journal, *Nature Astronomy*, together with an international team of 20 authors. The article, titled: '*Discovery of a radio-emitting neutron star with an ultra-long spin period of 76 seconds*', was about the detection of an extremely slowly rotating pulsar.

Prostate cancer treatment success in Department of Nuclear Medicine

The *Department of Nuclear Medicine* recorded the successful treatment outcome of a patient with metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer (MCRPC) – an advanced stage of prostate cancer – by using Lutetium 177 PSMA (Lu-177 PSMA) therapy. This was a case of advanced stage prostate cancer, which had failed first-line chemotherapy, leaving little to no other treatment options.

The team of doctors in the Department of Nuclear Medicine behind the success story are, from the left (standing): Dr Osayande Evbuomwan, nuclear medicine specialist and Senior Lecturer; Dr Gerrit Engelbrecht, Clinical Head of the Department of Nuclear Medicine; and Dr Walter Endres, nuclear medicine registrar. In front is Dr Tebatso Tebeila, nuclear medicine registrar.



Cyanotic heart disease research to restructure health care

Prof Stephen Brown, Principal Specialist and Head of the *Division of Paediatric Cardiology* in the *Department of Paediatrics and Child Health* in the Faculty of Health Sciences, and his master's degree researcher, Marius van Jaarsveld, conducted a research project into cyanotic heart disease that claims the lives of many newborns from poor and rural areas in central South Africa. Their results will assist health authorities in central South Africa to restructure healthcare services and do better health planning to save more lives.



Microbiology research in prestigious *Infection and Immunity* journal

Prof Carolina Pohl-Albertyn from the *Department of Microbiology and Biochemistry* and SARCHI Research Chair in Pathogenic Yeasts, had an article published in the prestigious international science journal *Infection and Immunity* (IAI). The journal, published by the American Society for Microbiology, focuses on the interaction between various disease-causing microbes and their hosts and includes articles on infections caused by pathogenic bacteria, fungi, and parasites as well as the development of vaccines against non-viral pathogens.



ISG fellows receive international grant



Dr Miyanda Simabwachi



Dr Jennifer Chansa



Dr Honest Koke

Drs Miyanda Simabwachi, Jennifer Chansa, and Honest Koke from the *International Studies Group* have been awarded the international African Humanities Grant, presented by the American Council of Learned Societies and funded through

the Carnegie Foundation. The grant will allow them to revise their PhD theses into books, and conduct additional research and fieldwork to supplement their dissertations and to publish comprehensive monographs.

UFS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES FIRST SOLAR CHALLENGE

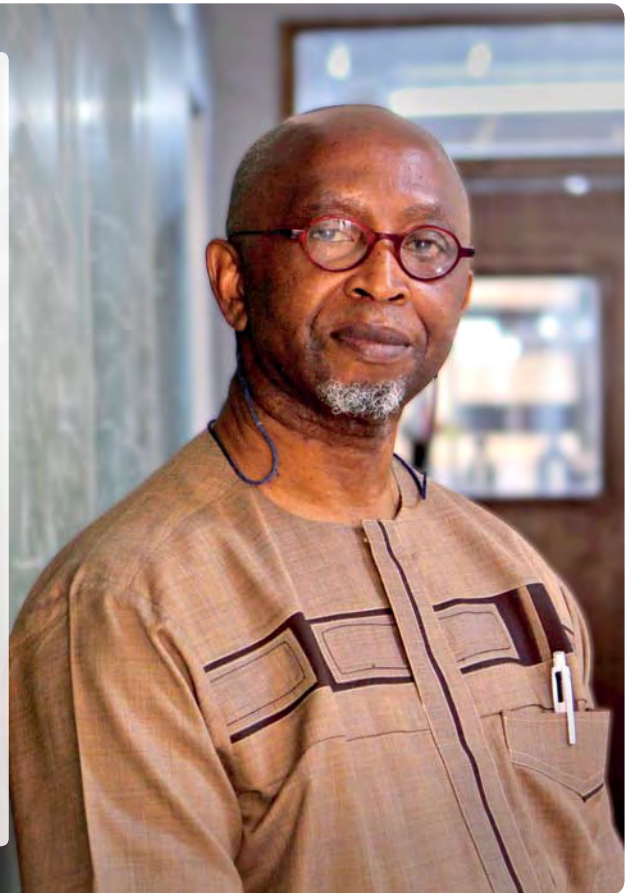
The *Department of Physics* entered the Sasol Solar Challenge – a biennial competition that has been running since 2008 – for the first time in 2022. Team UFS competed against seven other teams representing local and international

universities, high schools, and engineering teams, sharing the public roads of South Africa with trucks and regular traffic. The challenge tests technological input and innovation, as well as human perseverance, over an eight-day period.



UFS hosts country's first Indigenous Knowledge and Bio-Trade Indaba

The inaugural international Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Bio-Trade Indaba was hosted by the *UFS African Medicines Innovation and Technology Development Platform* under **Prof Motlalepula Matsabisa**, in collaboration with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) – an entity of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). It was a platform for various stakeholders to network and share knowledge on current developments in indigenous knowledge research and product development, biodiversity, conservation, innovation, and commercialisation of the IK-based researched products.



CLINICAL TRIALS TO CONFIRM PLANT-BASED TREATMENT FOR COVID-19

The *Department of Pharmacology* and *FARMOVS*, the UFS' internationally renowned clinical research facility, collaborated to conduct the first South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA)-approved multi-centre controlled clinical trial of a plant-based product, PHELA, on mild to moderate COVID-19 patients. The medication is believed to work as an immune modulator to modulate cytokine storm due to COVID-19 and also restores and normalises the patient's immune system.



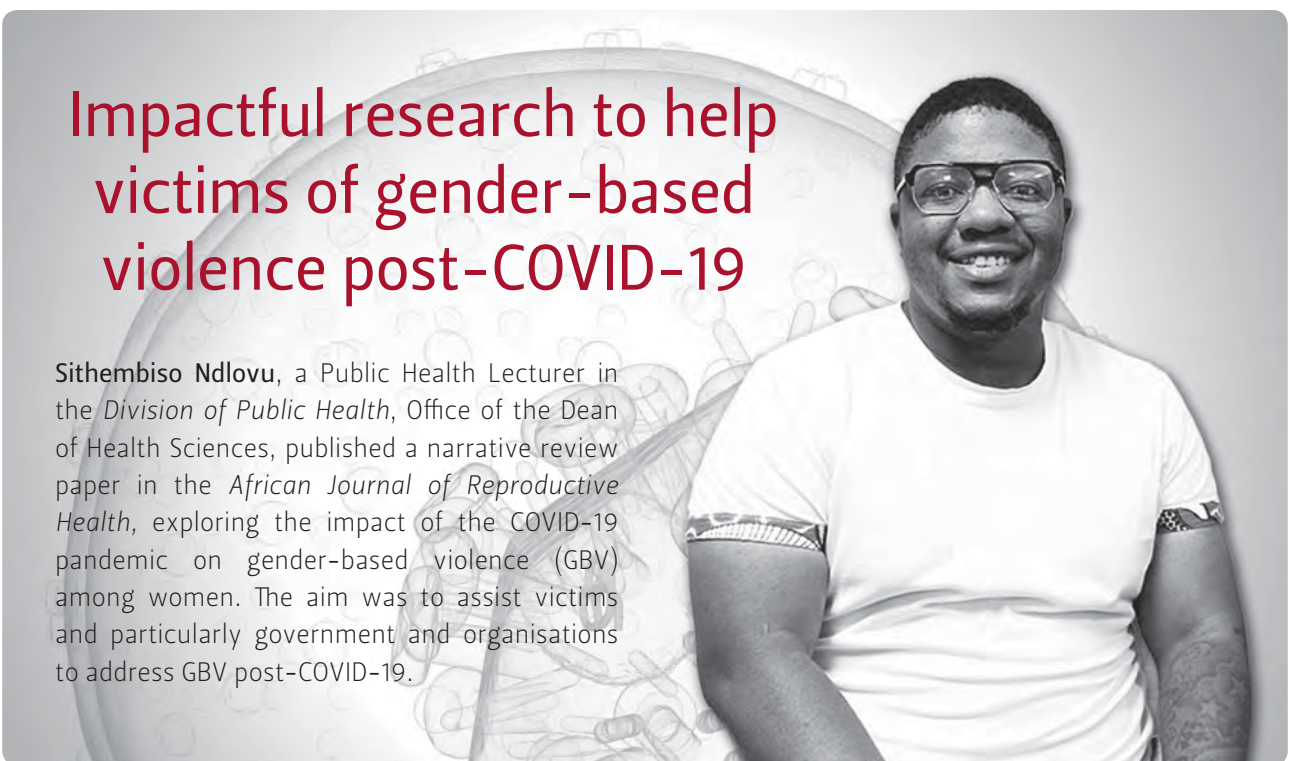
UFS researchers part of major continental study on the evolution of SARS-CoV-2



Researchers from the *Next Generation Sequencing* (UFS-NGS) Unit and the *Division of Virology/ National Health Laboratory Service* (NHLS) were part of a major publication featuring hundreds of authors from Africa who did research on the evolution of SARS-

CoV-2. It was the first collaborative study of this nature conducted in Africa during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Among them was **Prof Martin Nyaga**, Associate Professor in the UFS-NGS and Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre.

Impactful research to help victims of gender-based violence post-COVID-19



Sithembiso Ndlovu, a Public Health Lecturer in the *Division of Public Health*, Office of the Dean of Health Sciences, published a narrative review paper in the *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender-based violence (GBV) among women. The aim was to assist victims and particularly government and organisations to address GBV post-COVID-19.

Hans Merensky Foundation agreement for drone-based geological imaging



The President of the Hans Merensky Foundation, **Dr Khotso Mokhele**, signed an R11 million five-year research grant agreement with the UFS. The grant was allocated to research in drone-based

geological imaging by the UFS MAGIC (Merensky Group for Aerial Geological Image Classification) Lab, which has a specific focus on mineral and groundwater exploration endeavours.

Dr Ngang appointed UNDP Human Rights Research Chair



Dr Carol Chi Ngang, research fellow in the *Free State Centre for Human Rights*, was appointed as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Rights Research Chair at the National University of Lesotho, where he is currently affiliated. The Human Rights Chair was established with the broad mandate to undertake and promote cutting-edge policy research, curriculum development, and community engagement.

Prof Oberholster inaugurated by Academy of Science

Prof Paul Oberholster, Director of the *Centre for Environmental Management*, was inaugurated as a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf). The academy honours the country's most outstanding scholars, and draws members from the full spectrum of disciplines, with new members elected each year in recognition of scholarly achievement.



Geographical research expedition to Marion Island

Marike Stander, Lecturer in the *Department of Geography*, formed part of the Sub-Antarctic Landscape-Climate Interactions (SANAP-LCI) Research Group on their annual visit to Marion Island in the sub-Antarctic Indian Ocean, where she assisted with fieldwork and data collection. One of the group's research objectives - to explore the viability of using geochemical tracers in the substrate on Marion Island - formed the focus of Stander's doctoral research.



Landscape studies on Gough Island illuminate climate change

Dr Liezel Rudolph, a lecturer in the *Department of Geography*, formed part of an expedition to Gough Island in the South Atlantic Ocean, supported by the South African National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, the National Research Foundation, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Her research forms part of a SANAP-NRF-funded project, Sub-Antarctic Landscape Climate Interactions, which aims to better understand the landscape evolution of some subantarctic islands and their response to long-term climate change.



IMPACTFUL ENGAGEMENT





ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

The Engaged Scholarship Strategy attempts to bring together faculties, staff and the wider communities that the UFS serves to address real-world challenges and create meaningful social impact.

This strategy goes beyond traditional academic research by actively involving communities, industry partners, policy makers, and the public. It aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice, promoting collaborative problem-solving, knowledge exchange, and mutual learning. Positive societal change is achieved,

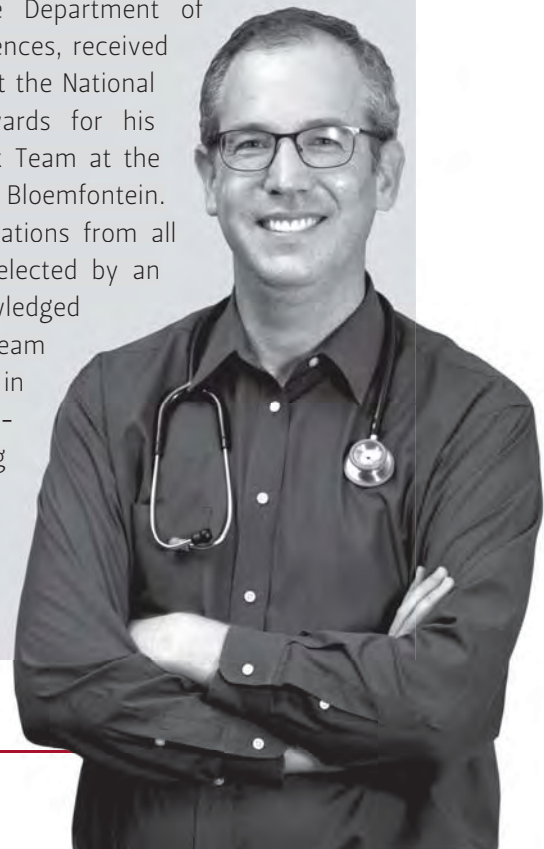
which enhances the relevance and impact of UFS research and helps to prepare students to become active and responsible citizens.

In 2022, the focus of the UFS was to create a mutual understanding of engaged scholarship and its interrelatedness with teaching and research.

Dr Pearce named Doctor of the Year in Batho Pele Awards



Dr **Nicholas Pearce**, Head of the Department of Surgery in the Faculty of Health Sciences, received the Best Doctor of the Year award at the National Annual Batho Pele Excellence Awards for his work as head of the COVID-19 Task Team at the Universitas Academic Hospital in Bloemfontein. This national award receives nominations from all over the country, with a winner selected by an independent panel. Dr Pearce acknowledged the role his multi-disciplinary team of committed UFS experts played in winning the award. This enabled an all-encompassing battle plan, allowing them to use the challenges presented by the pandemic to secure resources and training – ultimately impacting the entire province.



Enactus students planting seeds of hope in Qwaqwa community



A group of students from different study fields on the Qwaqwa Campus used the Enactus platform to uplift local communities. Their projects include the development of an app that assists students with mental health challenges, and an agricultural enterprise that seeks to address the agricultural difficulties of a farm in the Qwaqwa area. Enactus is an international non-profit organisation that equips students to improve the world through entrepreneurial action by providing a platform for teams of outstanding students to create community development projects that put communities at the centre of improving their own livelihoods.

CREATIVE CLUBS THRIVING IN 2022



The Creative Clubs concept, an initiative of *UFS Social Responsibility Projects*, enjoyed growing support among township schools around Bloemfontein in 2022. Grade 9 learners were given the opportunity to learn more about mathematics, science, coding, and to prepare for science expo projects. This is an upstream intervention focusing on the stimulation of academically stronger performing learners, and providing an environment to develop their problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and higher-order reasoning.

2022 in numbers



66% student
participation in
service learning

80% increase in
academics' participation
in engaged scholarship



71 000 learners
reached every week
through the UFS Internet
Broadcast Project

100 Grade 9
learners taking part
in the UFS Creative
Clubs programme



New UFS Science Education facility aims to inspire and empower

The UFS Sci-Ed Centre, the only science education centre in central South Africa, was officially launched at the end of 2022. Its mission is the advancement of innovative and effective mathematics and science teaching and learning. The centre will benefit student teachers, in-service teachers, learners, parents, and the public at large. Its main objective is to create a

STEAM+ (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics, and related areas) environment in the South African context, where innovative and 21st-century science education can thrive. One of the priorities of the centre, which features interactive exhibits and outdoor displays, is the promotion of parental and family involvement in children's learning.



Prof Loyisa Jita, Prof Francis Petersen, Dr Cobus van Breda, and the late Dr Tate Makgoe, former Free State MEC for Education

Supporting Jagersfontein community after sludge disaster

Following the devastating effects of the sludge tragedy in Jagersfontein in September, students and staff from various departments jumped on board to lend a helping hand, contributing clothes and bedding and sharing expertise. In order to maximise the impact of available resources, initiatives were streamlined and integrated under the 'Give' Donations Drive. This included counselling and assistance provided by the *Department of Social Work* and the *Department of Psychology*, as well as the *Centre for Mineral Biogeochemistry* establishing the potential damage caused to soil.



OUTREACH PROGRAMME BENEFITS DEAF COMMUNITY

The *Department of South African Sign Language and Deaf Studies* hosted the Bartimea School for the Deaf and Blind on 1 September 2022 for a day of learning, fun, and lots of games to kickstart #DeafAwarenessMonth. This formed part of the engaged scholarship relationship the UFS has with Bartimea, as well as the Thiboloha School for the Deaf in Phuthaditjhaba, whereby UFS students gain a better understanding of the Deaf culture and sign language, while assisting schools with fundraising initiatives.



Encouraging a reading culture among high school learners in the Free State



The UFS, in collaboration with Zubeida Jaffer, award-winning South African journalist, author, and activist and former UFS staff member, donated books to various secondary schools in the Fezile Dabi district. This formed part of a wider drive by *UFS Social Responsibility Projects* to encourage a reading culture and provide the required resources to enhance reading skills on community level.

BENEFICIAL COLLABORATION





BENEFICIAL COLLABORATION

In 2022, the UFS continued to support and build a conducive, collaborative research environment through international engagements and partnerships. The university refined its approach to strategic partnerships and identified linkages that could be developed into new strategic partnerships, based on existing academic collaborations. It also fostered a conducive environment where academics could network and explore new collaborations. Overall, the partnership development activities in the year under review strengthened the epistemic diversity of ideas, perspectives, and methodological approaches at the UFS.

Between 2016 and 2022:



3 005

international institutions
collaborated with



7 467

co-authored publications
with international
researchers produced

Celebrating ties with Appalachian State University and the United States

The US Consul General and the Associate Vice-Chancellor of the Appalachian State University in North Carolina in the US, visited various UFS projects supported by US grants, scholarships, and exchange programmes. The United States, and the Appalachian State University in particular, are longstanding, cherished collaboration partners from the Global North. Through key strategic partnerships such as these, the UFS celebrates knowledge exchange and the value of different perspectives, contributing to a better university.



Among the examples of US-UFS collaboration, are the university's two historic observatories, both of which have US origins. Pictured at the Boyden Observatory are from the left: Mr Vincent Spera; Prof Francis Petersen; Dr Khotso Mokhele; Helene Szegedi, Lecturer in the UFS Department of Physics; Prof Jesse Lutabingwa; Prof Pieter Meintjes, Senior Professor in the UFS Department of Physics; and Dr Cornelius Hagenmeier, Director of the UFS International Office.

Ground-breaking partnership for Southern African mountain regions



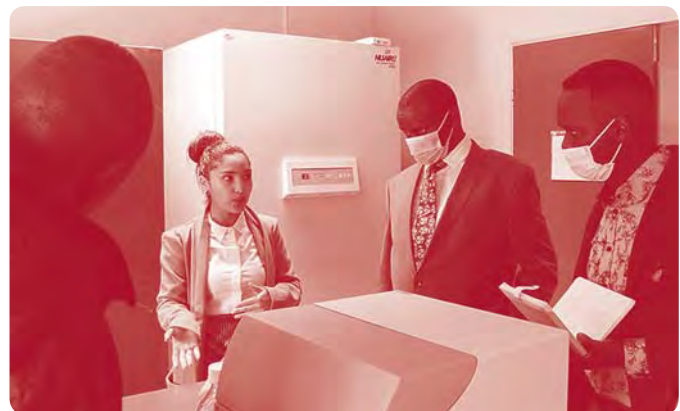
African Mountain Research Foundation founder, Alex Hickman (left), and Dr Ralph Clark, Director of the UFS Afromontane Research Unit

The *Afromontane Research Unit (ARU)* on the Qwaqwa Campus was granted the unique opportunity to host a departmental licence that will facilitate a groundbreaking partnership between the African Mountain Research Foundation (AMRF) and Planet Land, a California-based company that operates the largest privately-owned fleet of satellites in the world, used for monitoring the earth's surface on a daily basis. The partnership will provide 100 students, scientists, and researchers based in the Southern African region with access to geospatial data on how tree coverings, water levels, and soil are changing on a daily basis, as well as on a long-term basis.

Working together to boost isiZulu and Sesotho

A Language Collaboration Memorandum of Understanding between the UFS and the University of KwaZulu-Natal was signed to promote the two provinces' most widely spoken languages, Sesotho and IsiZulu. This historic collaboration will see these institutions employing their skills, expertise, and resources to advance the development of Sesotho and IsiZulu as academic languages through the development of terminology for various disciplines and research collaborations.

COLLABORATION AGREEMENT WITH UGANDAN UNIVERSITY



Recardia Schoeman, Scientific Officer in the Department of Pharmacology, gave Prof Paul Waako, Dr Samuel Baker Obakiro, and Dr Richard Oriko Owor from the Busitema University a tour of the department and its laboratories.

A promising collaboration agreement with the Busitema University in Uganda was signed, enabling the two institutions to work together and exchange expertise and innovation in the area of local manufacturing of pharmaceuticals.

UFS researchers contribute to cost-effective genetic testing for breast and ovarian cancer

Dr Nerina van der Merwe, a principal medical scientist in the *Division of Human Genetics* within the *Faculty of Health Sciences* and the *National Health Laboratory Service*, and PhD candidate Jaco Oosthuizen, were involved in a collaborative project with a research group from Stellenbosch University. This could lead to the implementation of a new diagnostic test for familial breast and ovarian cancer – using new technology based on rapid point-of-care (POC) testing – which will reach more communities and hopefully contribute to saving more lives.



Partnership with ZZ2 generates functional knowledge



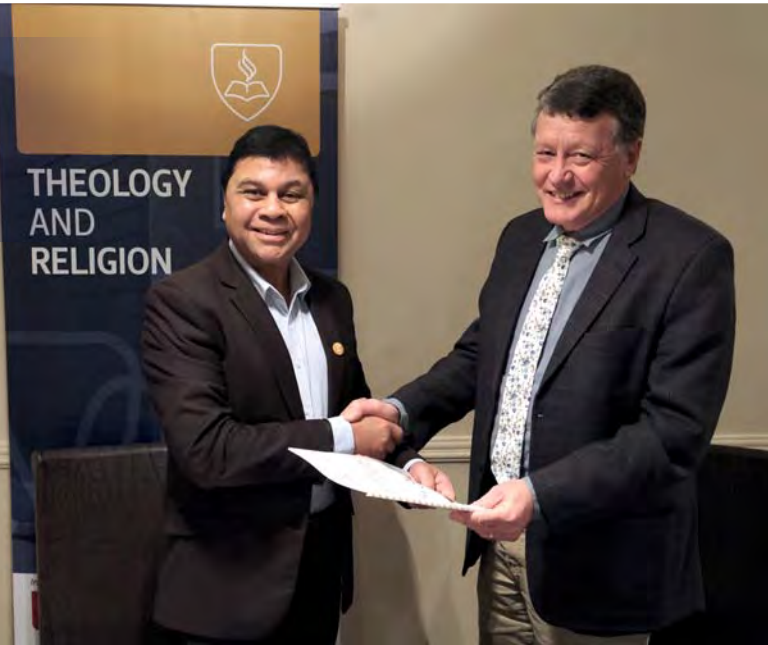
The UFS launched a partnership with ZZ2 – a well-known South African farming and fresh produce company. The partnership includes the establishment of a company, *FreeFarm Innovation*, as a vehicle for combined outputs of the university and ZZ2's diverse, but complementary capabilities, skills, and resources. Several opportunities relating to research, commercialisation, and the enhancement of various agricultural products have been identified and will form part of the operations of *FreeFarm Innovation*.

The collaboration includes a **traditional art** component, with the UFS adding academic value and insight to the culturally significant art collection that ZZ2 is the custodian of. The collection consists of predominantly Tsonga, Venda, and Pedi art and artefacts from the eastern Limpopo area.

The UFS and DRC Free State renew memorandum of understanding

The *Faculty of Theology and Religion* and the Dutch Reformed Church Free State (DRC FS) signed a memorandum of understanding for increased collaboration. Under the agreement, the UFS will offer theological training to DRC FS ministers to ensure that their education includes current industry trends, while the DRC FS will in turn invest in formal, accredited academic education and training.

THEOLOGY
AND
RELIGION



International collaboration for Dr Nyoni in prestigious Lancet journal



Dr Champion Nyoni, Senior Researcher in the *School of Nursing*, together with other researchers from Brazil, Singapore, and the United Kingdom, was invited by *The Lancet* to write a paper related to the Frenk et al. publication on 'Transforming health professionals' education' – which has significantly influenced health professions education and research over the past decade.

Collaboration with Friedrich Schiller University to create innovation agriculture cluster

A group of academic staff and PhD students visited the Friedrich Schiller University Jena (FSU) in Germany for a three-week regional innovation training workshop and job shadowing. With this training, various industry partners aim to build a regional innovation cluster for agriculture in the South African perspective that drives innovation, technology advancement, and trade methodology among academic institutions, the government, and industries.

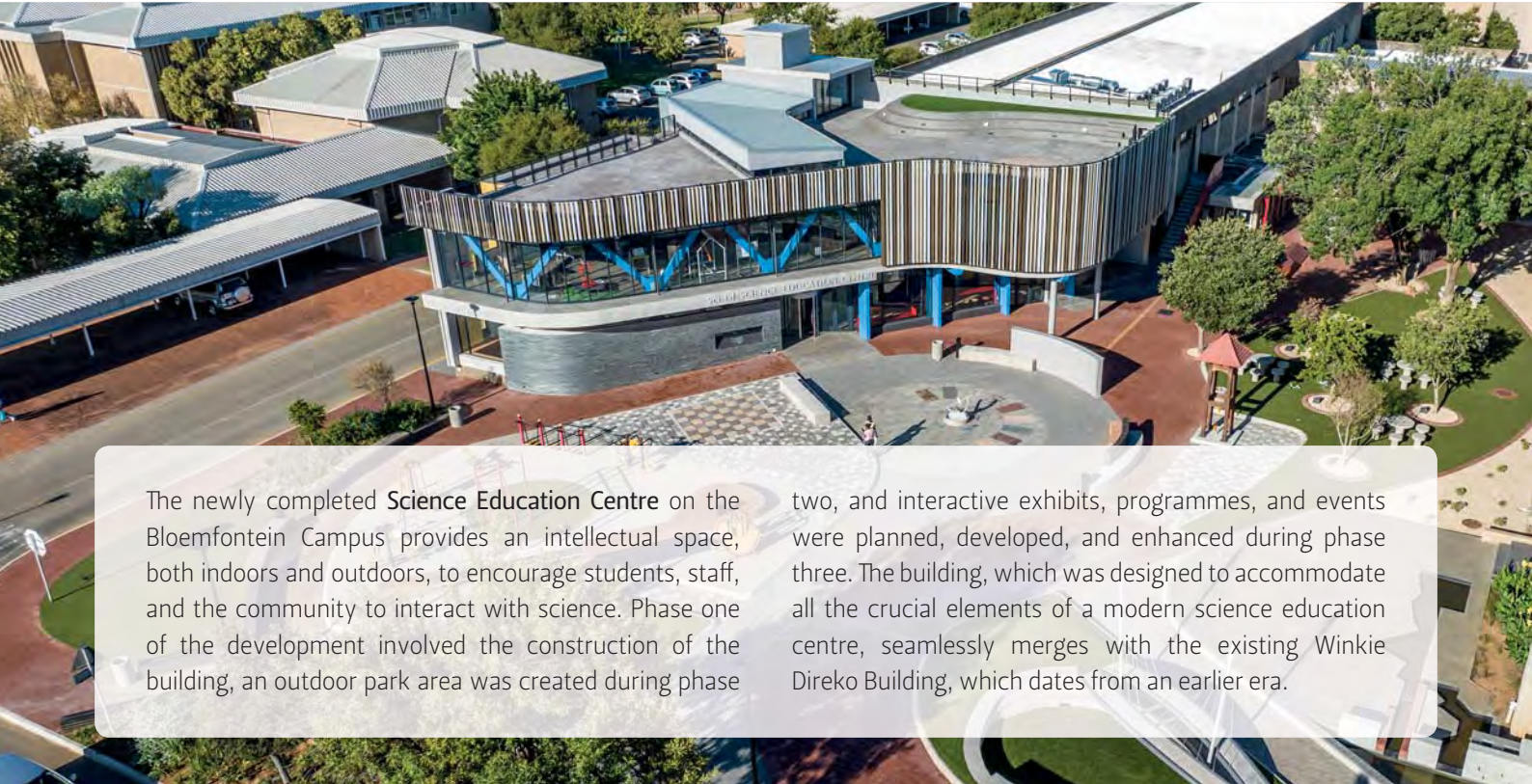


VISIBILITY AND IMPACT





INCLUSIVE SPACES



The newly completed **Science Education Centre** on the Bloemfontein Campus provides an intellectual space, both indoors and outdoors, to encourage students, staff, and the community to interact with science. Phase one of the development involved the construction of the building, an outdoor park area was created during phase

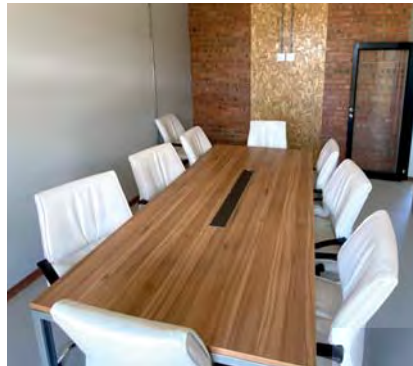
two, and interactive exhibits, programmes, and events were planned, developed, and enhanced during phase three. The building, which was designed to accommodate all the crucial elements of a modern science education centre, seamlessly merges with the existing Winkie Direko Building, which dates from an earlier era.

South Campus 24/7 Study Space

A new **24/7 Study Facility** was completed on the South Campus. It includes an open-air study space, security office, chill space and ablution facilities.



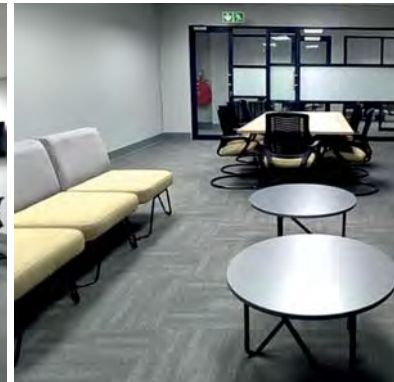
Former bus parking area converted into new office space



The former bus parking area on the Qwaqwa Campus was converted into the new **University Estates Building**, consisting of fully functional offices, with additional provision for roaming personnel and visiting colleagues from other campuses. A unique industrial construction theme was implemented, celebrating the building and infrastructure development environment.

LIBRARY RENOVATIONS

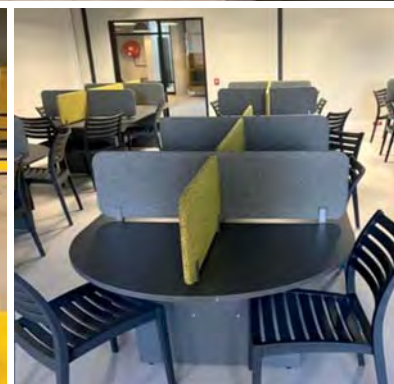
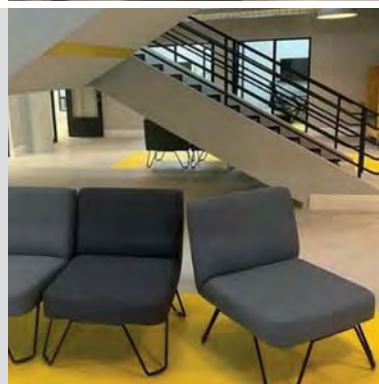
The five-year strategic revitalisation plan of the **Sasol Library on the Bloemfontein Campus** was concluded in 2022. The final stage of the revitalisation process included relocating book stacks to the centre of the floor, opening up large areas of study space along the perimeter, as well as moving subject collections to a storage section and replacing the air-conditioning system.



The **Neville Alexander Library on the South Campus** was also revitalised, which included consolidating book stacks, opening up study and collaborative spaces, and installing new floor covering, electrical fittings as well as paintwork.



At the **TK Mopeli Library on the Qwaqwa Campus**, the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) was consolidated into one space on the ground floor. The facility provides for various modes of teaching and learning, including collaborative spaces, a postgrad lounge, an auditorium seating 90 people, as well as office spaces and boardrooms.



New Commuter Lounge provides a home away from home

The newly constructed **Commuter Lounge on the Qwaqwa Campus** provides day students with a home away from home – with a large lounge area featuring interactive media facilities and various seating options, where students can do collaborative study between lectures. The facility features a laundry – assisting students with effective time management.

SPORTING CHAMPIONS

Kovsies among winners at SA Sports Awards



Former Shimla *Rassie Erasmus* was named Coach of the Year at the 15th South African Sports Awards. Erasmus is South Africa's Director of Rugby and was the 45th Springbok produced by the UFS. He helped the Boks achieve success in 2021, including a series victory over the British and Irish Lions.



Talented young athlete *Miné de Klerk* was named Newcomer of the Year. De Klerk won gold (shot put) and silver (discus) medals at the World Athletics U20 Championships in 2021.



The Team of the Year award went to the Springboks, in which many former Kovsies like Jacques Nienaber (Head Coach), Daan Human (Scrum Coach) and Ox Nché (prop) are involved.



Louzanne Coetzee makes history at Two Oceans

Double Paralympics medal winner and Residence Head of Acacia, Louzanne Coetzee, became the first blind athlete to be a pacemaker in the Two Oceans marathon, when she and her guide, Claus Kempen (also member of Kovsie Athletics) set the pace for runners wanting to finish the 21,1 km race within two hours



UFS alumnus and Blitzboks claim another Commonwealth gold

The South African sevens side (Blitzboks) won a gold medal in the 2022 Commonwealth Games, under the guidance of head coach and UFS alumnus, Neil Powell. The Blitzboks, under Powell, also claimed the top spot in 2014.

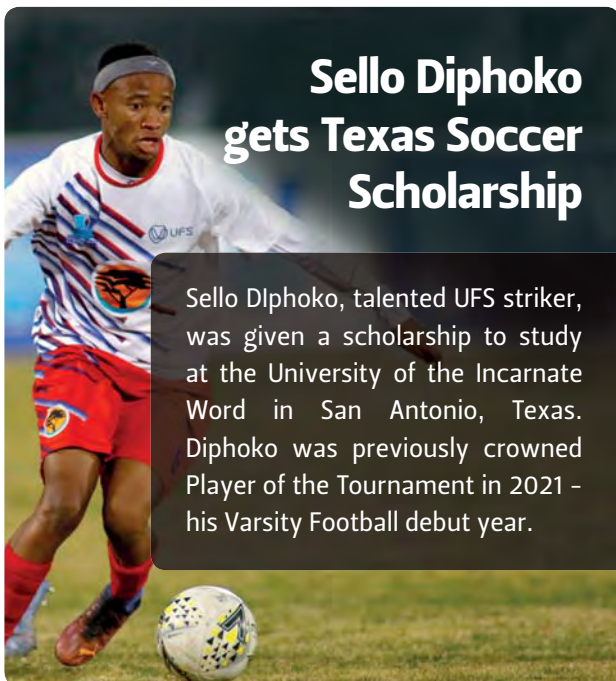
Simmons play in Hockey World Cup

Shindré-Lee Simmons became the 22nd UFS women's hockey player to represent South Africa when she made her debut at the African Cup of Nations in January. She also scored her first international goal and played in her first International Hockey Federation World Cup in 2022.



Sello Diphoko gets Texas Soccer Scholarship

Sello Diphoko, talented UFS striker, was given a scholarship to study at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. Diphoko was previously crowned Player of the Tournament in 2021 - his Varsity Football debut year.



Peter Makgato nabs two medals

Promising UFS long jumper, Peter Makgato, claimed a bronze medal at the South African Championships, plus another bronze at the University Sports South Africa championships. This after he had been out of action for a year, having had to learn to walk again after a serious Achilles tendon injury.



INSPIRING ALUMNI

Grace Hamauka serving on the Namibian 4IR Presidential Task Force



Grace Hamauka, principal economist at the Bank of Namibia, was appointed to the eight-member Namibian Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) Task Force to assist the Namibian government

in preparing the country for the 4IR over a period of twelve months. She heads the work stream on Policy, Regulations and Governance that needs to ensure that the legal environment is conducive to 4IR and that laws become accommodative for technologies.

Uyleta Nel-Marais takes Mrs Universe SA crown

Uyleta Nel-Marais, a former Law student who graduated in 2015, was crowned Mrs Universe South Africa 2022 and represented South Africa at the Mrs Universe finals in South Korea. Nel-Marais is the founder of the One Nation: Our Women and Children against Gender-Based Violence initiative, a practising attorney, and director at a law firm in Bloemfontein.



Crystal-Donna Roberts releases debut children's novel

Presenter and television, theatre and film actress, Crystal-Donna Roberts, released her first children's novel, *Speurder Sammi: Die blou steen* (published by Tafelberg) after participating in the Jakes Gerwel mentorship programme for upcoming authors. Roberts graduated with a BA in Drama and Theatre Arts at the UFS in 2005.



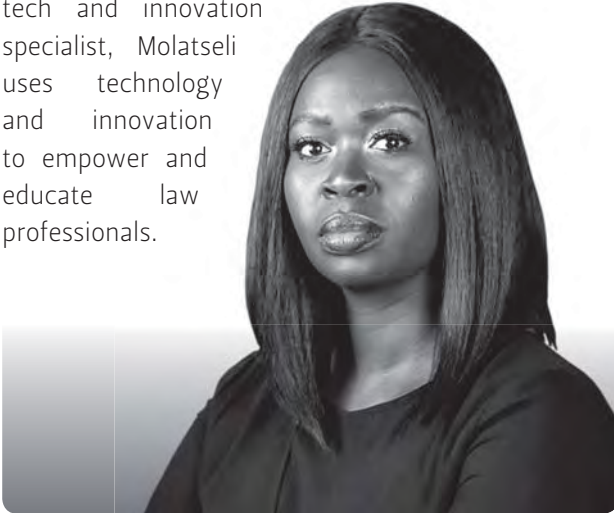
Margaret Nienaber appointed Standard Bank COO

UFS alumna Margaret Nienaber was appointed as Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Standard Bank. This BCompt (Hons) graduate has been with the Standard Bank Group since 2010, having worked as CEO of Client Solutions before becoming COO.



LEAH MOLATSELI HONOURED BY THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Leah Molatseli – alumna and UFS Council member – became the first African woman to be recognised by the American Bar Association in its list of Women of Legal Tech for her contribution and influence in the legal tech industry. A lawyer by profession, published legal tech author and speaker, as well as legal tech and innovation specialist, Molatseli uses technology and innovation to empower and educate law professionals.



Prof Stulting gets MBA at 73



Prof Andries Stulting, former Head of the Department of Ophthalmology, obtained his Master of Business Administration degree at the age of 73. Prof Stulting, who retired after a career of 31 years at the UFS, believes the degree equipped him well for his new position as Hospital Clinical Manager at a private healthcare facility in the Northern Cape.

Vuyelwa Vumendlini appointed as IMF Director

Economics graduate, Vuyelwa Vumendlini, was appointed as Alternate Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington DC, after high-profile positions at National Treasury and the World Bank. As an IMF executive board member, she represents 23 English-speaking African countries.



Rehan Greeff raises funds through endurance events

Rehan Greeff, chartered accountant and philanthropist based in London, has raised R2 million towards ForAfrika, an NGO that provides food security to vulnerable school children, by completing various annual ultra-running challenges. In 2022, this included three Ironman-equivalent triathlons over five days in South Africa, Uganda, and the UK.



VISION

The UFS is a research-led, student-centred,
and regionally engaged university
that contributes to development and social justice
through the production of
globally competitive graduates and knowledge.





Visibility and Impact

Compiled by

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