



# RE-POSITIONING THE UFS BUSINESS SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028



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through quality, impact, and care.*

UFS  BUSINESS SCHOOL  
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# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION



The University of the Free State Business School (UFSBS) was established in the late 1990s and is fully accredited by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) and the Central East European Management Development Association (CEEMAN). The UFSBS also holds membership with the Association of African Business Schools (AABS), The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Association of MBAs (AMBA), CEEMAN, The Education Quality Accreditation Agency (EQUAA) and the South African Association for Business Schools (SABSA). In addition, the UFSBS holds a 3 Palms award by EDUNIVERSAL and belongs to the third league of the top 1 000 Best Business Schools worldwide.

Since its inception, the School has operated as a boutique business school focusing on personal attention to students. The UFSBS focused mainly on the Free State Province and built a reputation as a business school that delivers high-quality management and executive education at affordable and competitive rates. The UFSBS also adapted its pedagogy to meet the needs of primarily adult, part-time learners who typically possess on-the-job experience. This focus on adult learners and the unique approach to smaller groups has allowed the UFSBS to apply adult learning principles in the teaching and learning environment. In this context, the prior experience and knowledge in the job context are reflected upon and discussed in the classroom. This creates a learning environment where both lecturer and student collaborate and mutually benefits.



*The UFSBS offers a comprehensive learning path to its students, which includes Short-Learning Programmes (SLPs for executive education); a Higher Certificate in Management Development (HCert); an undergraduate degree (Bachelor of Management Leadership (BML); a post-graduate diploma (PGDip in Business Administration); a Master of Business Administration (MBA); and a Doctoral degree (PhD in Business Administration). The Short-Learning Programmes (SLPs) are situated in the Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD) at the UFSBS. The CBD is the commercial/income-generation unit of the UFSBS offering a wide range of learning opportunities related to Functional Development, Leadership Development, Management Development, and Entrepreneurship. Some of these programmes are generic, while others are tailor-made for the specific needs of particular companies. Additionally, the CBD also offers programmes on behalf of the National School of Government (NSG), an entity entrusted with the professional development of the public sector.*



*“ Today, more than ever, the world of business is being transformed by technological innovation, the ubiquity of data, and the power of analytics. This transformation needs to be nurtured by responsible and ethical business leaders who challenge the traditional boundaries of academic disciplines, provide sound and rigorous intellectual leadership, and advance practical solutions to emerging problems and challenges. At the UFS Business School, we intend to educate the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs to become agents of change, and value co-creators for business and society. ”*

**Udesh Pillay**  
Director: UFSBS

In late 2021, the UFSBS appointed a new Director, Dr Udesh Pillay, with a mandate to fundamentally reposition and strategically re-orientate the Business School and to nurture its unique “boutique” offerings. In conjunction with the change in leadership, the UFSBS is embarking on a new strategic journey. With the international focus on developing ecosystems of entrepreneurialism; with the imperatives of the 4IR in mind; recognising the transition to a digital economy at an exponential rate; and embracing innovative and online learning technologies, re-positioning the UFSBS will ensure the School’s future relevance, value-add, sustainability, and profile. Additionally, the new strategic direction will allow the School to contribute towards the facilitation of economic development, job creation, a just energy transition, and renewed levels of global competitiveness. Despite the planned strategic changes, the UFSBS will retain its focus on its core business, namely the existing academic programmes cited above, administering these with rigor, a commitment to excellence, ensuring their relevance, while maintaining a constant process of decolonising our curricula.

# 2 ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES



## 2.1 Vision

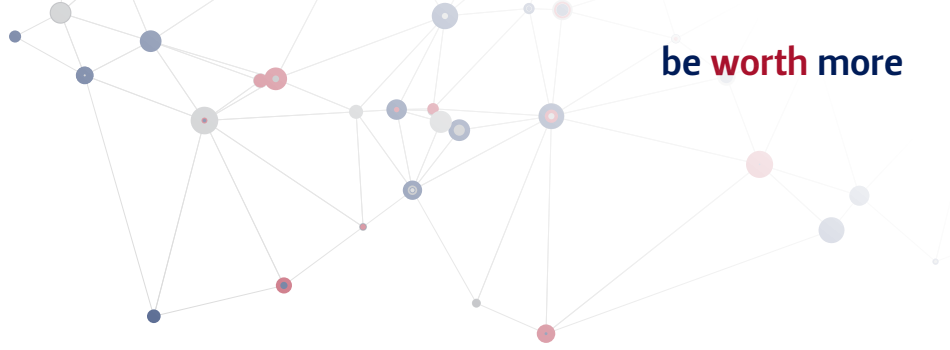
To become one of the top-ten Business Schools in South Africa over the next five-years by recurruculating our program offerings; decolonising the academic agenda; creating the conditions towards making a more practical contribution to the SME-sector locally and nationally; developing productive entrepreneurship; encouraging value-based leadership; and by positioning the Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD) as the premier Institute for Executive Education in South Africa.



## 2.2 Mission

- Develop and deliver successful programmes in the field of management and business education
- Teach and share our knowledge and convert learning into practice as a key value proposition
- Rigorous coaching and mentoring in an on-campus and online environment (blended learning)
- Empower individuals and organisations in an entrepreneurial context
- Maximise potential and achieve exceptional results and visible impact by showcasing how good science, technology and innovation contribute to responsible business practices, sustainability and resilience.

ANTICIPATED  
OUTCOMES



## 2.3 Cornerstones of a New Strategy at the UFSBS

The anticipated future direction of the UFSBS requires a new and differentiated strategic plan over the next five years (2023-2028). This plan will ensure that the UFSBS remains a premier academic institution and a contributor to the success of South Africa and its people. The strategic plan must address, amongst others, the establishment of a High-Growth Entrepreneurial Incubator (EI) and a Small Business Academy (SBA), without duplication of existing programmes offered at the Central University of Technology (CUT), and elsewhere. Additionally, the strategic plan will create opportunities for partnerships with other small business entities and initiatives, government agencies, funders, communities, and with national and international networks.

The plan therefore includes, but is not limited to:

- increasing student numbers, without losing the focus on personal development and personal touch from an administrative viewpoint, through focused marketing.
- the delivery of programmes in blended as well as full online modalities.
- the integration of the 4IR and the transition to a digital economy into all programmes and offerings.
- alignment of formal programmes with the new strategic direction of the UFSBS, as embedded in this document, while benchmarking with other business schools in terms of the core curriculum.
- the integration of inter-disciplinary research for the development of curricula in the UFSBS.
- the continuous personal development, growth and capacity enhancement of staff to enable them to achieve the outcomes of the strategy.
- the development and enhancement of academic and entrepreneurial capacity, and building a pivotal academic core.
- aligning the learning path open to students to the new strategic direction of the UFSBS.
- re-curriculating/refocusing the short learning programmes (SLPs) offered by the Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD) to include a focus on the development of entrepreneurial skills and training in strategic management, operations, marketing, business resilience, business continuity, and other critical business-related skills without duplicating existing offerings.
- the development of adjacencies to the current core business of the UFSBS, involving the broader mandate of the UFS and other significant contributors to the UFSBS' success. The adjacencies should contribute to an entrepreneurial ecosystem that focuses on:
  - the development of dynamic capabilities such as greater competency development
  - increased research-based practices
  - intellectual development
  - mentoring and coaching
  - start-up entities; spin-off ventures; patenting; commercialisation; technology transfer; access to financing; etc.
  - small business development and an increased focus on the agriculture, agro-business, and mining sectors.

- the continued alignment of the UFSBS as part of the larger academic fraternity at the UFS (and in alignment with the Vision 130 position paper), the Economic and Management Sciences Faculty (EMS) at the UFS, the Free State province, its people, and the local economy that it serves. This will be done without compromising the independence, nor autonomy, of the UFSBS
- working to obtain operational clarity around the UFSBS's future trajectory. The operational clarity should include closely anticipating the implications of the new strategy on:

- infrastructure, internal structures, processes, systems.
- the future appointment of staff.
- alignment of budgets to the strategy, and
- integration, alignment with, and synergy between constituents including, but not limited to, the Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD); the Commercialisation and Technology Transfer Office of the UFS; the Business Start-Up initiative located in the Business Management Department; the Directorate of Research Development at the UFS; the Digital Futures Program; the Central University of Technology (CUT); the Unemployment Insurance Fund; the Entrepreneurial Development and Incubation Program (EDIP); the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA); and the IDC.

- developing an automated dashboard to monitor, manage, and integrate finances and student progress, linked to existing systems of the UFS, and
- the geographical scope of the UFSBS strategic plan is intended to extend beyond the borders of the Free State province, and will potentially include other South African rurally-based provinces, (like the Northern Cape and Limpopo), and SADC countries.





## 3

### STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FREE STATE BUSINESS SCHOOL (2023–2028)



#### 3.1 Overview

The University of the Free State (UFS) is in a constant state of renewal in order to ensure the retention of our vitality and relevance. Beyond merely seeking to survive current and future changes, the UFS aims to continue to grow and extend its influence and impact locally, regionally, and globally. The University's new Vision 130 document is an elaboration of the strategic intent to reposition the institution for 2034, when the University will commemorate its 130th anniversary. The UFS subscribes to the values that shape and inform our culture and provides a framework for our actions and decisions. Our values are realised through the conduct of the wider university community. The UFS aspires to be a research-led, student-centered, and regionally-engaged University that contributes to development and social justice through the production of globally competitive graduates and knowledge. By 2034, the UFS wants to be recognised and acknowledged by peers and society as a top-tier University in South Africa. Our goal is to be ranked by appropriately chosen global ranking systems among the top-ten Universities in South Africa and among the top-600 globally. Consequently, important strategic imperatives of the UFS Business School going forward coalesce around:







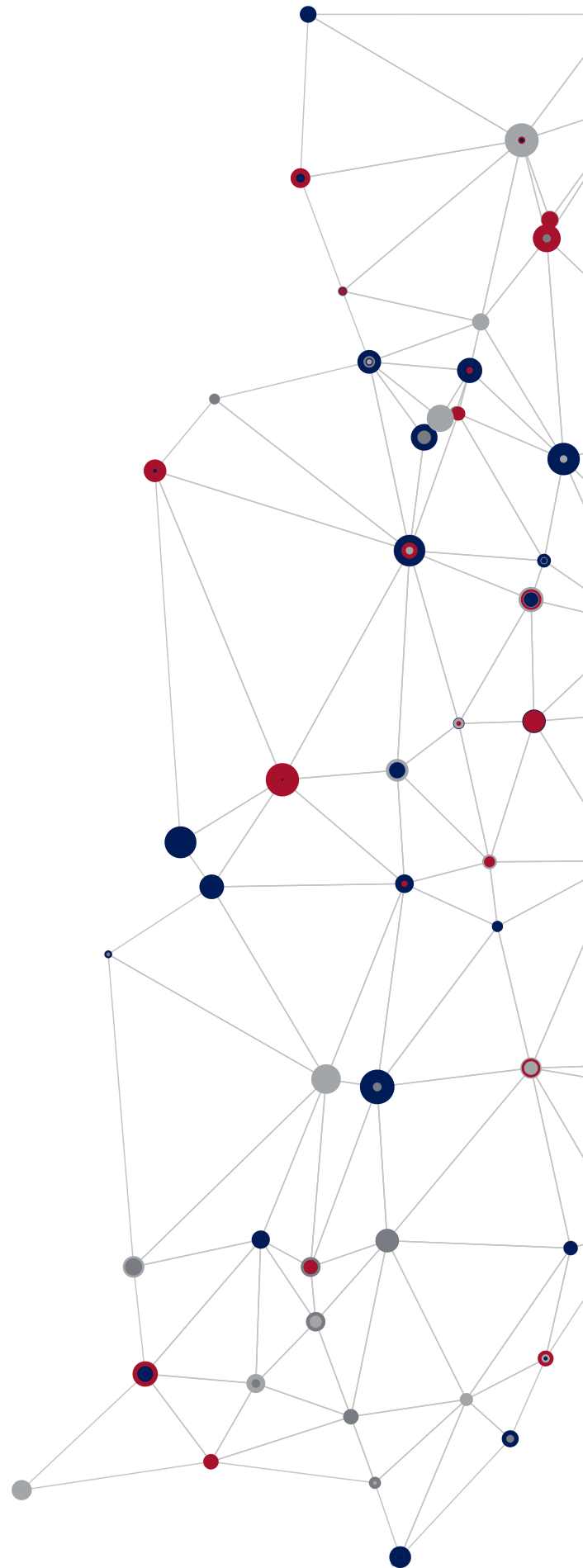


As previously stated, the strategic goals of the Business School need to align with those of the University as well as the faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS). Over the past several years, strategic priorities of the EMS Faculty include:

- to provide students with an opportunity to acquire economic, financial, management and other skills to succeed in today and tomorrow's fast-changing, fast-paced, highly globalised and competitive 4th Industrial economy.
- to combine the imperative to meet, shape and adjust to the challenges of the 4th Industrial Revolution with the imperative to improve inclusivity in a society and economy that still excludes millions, and to do so in a single, unified approach that leapfrogs students coming from excluded communities right into the 4th Industrial World.
- to provide an environment in which EMS academics can develop their careers in a forward-looking manner that provides support each step of the way, but doing so in a way that allows individual academics to take charge of and responsibility for their own career development.

The EMS Faculty is currently in the process of recalibrating its 5-year strategy. Salient features include:

-  Internationalisation
-  Industry with a focus on faculty specialisation
-  Pedagogy and digitalisation
-  Career development and research chairs





The slogan of the  
UFS Business School,  
**BE WORTH MORE,**  
embodies what we  
*strive for.*


We inspire our students to better themselves academically, but also in other spheres of their lives. Internally, we strive to offer programmes that add value to our academic offerings, while providing a safe environment in which people can grow and develop as human beings. Given the history of South Africa, it is of utmost importance to empower people to add value, particularly in the field of business and management leadership. This slogan **BE WORTH MORE** is used for all external communication, promotional material, and formal internal documentation at the UFS Business School.


## ... Business Schools need to align to ensure that students are equipped with relevant knowledge and skills...

In the case of the University of the Free State Business School (UFSBS), the strategic journey has been underway for some time and a number of important guiding principles informing the newly developed strategy are listed below:

- 

The current business model underpinning the UFSBS is clearly unsustainable. The UFSBS needs to reposition itself to remain relevant, value-adding and sustainable in its contribution to the University, its broader ecosystem, as well as the local Free State constituency and economy that it serves. This is a predominantly rural business community with 'sunset' industries such as mining and agriculture still playing an important part, but with the strong emergence of SMEs as vital elements in the economy.
- 

The global Business School community is rethinking and transforming many of the elements of traditional dogma that inform the mandate of business schools, their strategies, business models and learning delivery technologies. UFSBS is no exception to this important trend and the new strategy elevates this.
- 

Globally, the advent of the 4IR has catalysed processes of digital transformation in business, to which Business Schools need to align to ensure that students / learners are equipped with relevant knowledge and skills in a fast-changing, technology-enabled world.
- 

Sustainability and climate change are significant influencers on the future world and will offer up both opportunities and challenges to entrepreneurs. As such, the UFSBS will need to be able to actively contribute to their mitigation through exposing entrepreneurs to learning opportunities in these fields.



### 3.2 Key points of departure in the strategic plan include:

- As discussed above, the UFBS will retain its focus on its existing core programmes (SLPs, HCert., BML, PGDip, MBA, PhD, etc). However, the way the curricula and pedagogy are constructed, as well as the operating model underpinning the execution of these programmes, will be innovated going forward. In these respects, they remain in scope.
- It is important to develop adjacencies to the current core of the UFBS that are both value-adding to the broader mandate of the University and the UFSBS, as well as significant contributors to its future desirability, feasibility and viability. These elements will ultimately determine the sustainability of the UFSBS as a premier academic institution in South Africa and a valued contributor to the success of South Africa and its people.
- The confirmed primary adjacency focus is the development of a dynamic capability to contribute to an 'ecosystem of entrepreneurialism'. This includes the more traditional academic programmes based upon competency, research and intellectual development, as well as supplementary 'opportunity-driven initiatives' such as consulting support, mentoring & coaching, start-up creation, patenting, licensing, access to partners, venture capital and incubation / acceleration services.
- Key players in this ecosystem are SMEs and the entrepreneurs who contribute to the growth of the Free State economy and are likely to be important future creators of wealth and employers. It is likely that they will be the future market focus of this adjacency, although funding mechanisms will need to be found to ensure financial viability and sustainability.

The academic program, how and when it is delivered, as well as modes of delivery will all need to innovate to ensure that they are aligned to the lifestyle and work requirements of these entrepreneurs. The geographic scope of this market will be beyond merely the confines of the Free State province, and will include other rural provinces as well as neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia.

- Future innovation and growth are likely to be fueled by 4IR technology advances and, as such, digital entrepreneurship is an important capability to be built.
- Other competencies such as the leadership and technical / managerial requirements of the public sector will also be considered important.
- The UFSBS will need to manage the ongoing tensions between independence – being an autonomous unit separate from the EMS faculty and interdependence – being a part of the greater University whole, leveraging off the University's resources, facilities, branding and other important assets. The transition to the new strategic plan represents a significant change that impacts people, their perceptions, anxieties, hopes and fears. Change-enablement must therefore be embedded into this strategic process to successfully manage the tensions between the important polarities of 'continuity' and 'change' going forward. This will be essential to reduce any potential resistance to change and harness it as a positive force for momentum.
- The strategy will also need to respond to internal dynamics including the need for integration, alignment with, and synergy between its constituent 'parts'.

## 3.3 Key elements of the UFS Business School Strategic Plan

### 3.3.1 Governance

Giving effect to governance as a strategic priority will require the establishment of expanded governance structures and creating management continuity with respect to institutional memory and decision-making capacity.

- Establishment of expanded governance structures should complement industry-academic interaction in the form of an advisory board (see below).
- Creating management continuity will require the establishment of decision lines complemented by mentoring and coaching of dedicated people into such roles.
- The management team of the Business School is being reconstituted and an Advisory Panel will soon be appointed.
- The ultimate outcome of governance as a strategic priority is to increase industry collaboration and create business continuity during a time of anticipated leadership change.

### 3.3.2 Research

In order to give effect to research as a strategic priority, a refined PhD administration process, as well as a multidisciplinary research initiative, must be implemented.

- The refined PhD process should lead to students going through title registration in one year, followed by practical workshops to increase throughput.
- The multidisciplinary research initiative aims to, initially, focus on UFS academics to start with, but to eventually be open to unlimited collaboration, to produce expanded research thinking.
- The ultimate outcome of research as a strategic priority is to increase research capacity and the volume of publishable research; the latter to be fed back into the Business School's Learning Path.
- Research as strategic priority is considered to be a long-term strategic driver and it is viewed as a major future differentiator for the brand.





### 3.3.3 Teaching and Learning

Giving effect to teaching and learning as a strategic priority will require commitment to curriculum design that is relevant, as well as the deployment of technology to support and enhance the delivery of the existing high quality of education.

- Continuous curriculum innovation, informed by Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) and research, is seen as a strategic priority.
- Optimisation of current education technology should enhance current physical infrastructure capacity, as well as provide for students who will not, in the future, have the luxury of attending contact sessions.
- The ultimate outcome of the teaching and learning strategic priority is to deliver relevant curriculum through various modes of delivery, and develop well-rounded students, whilst maintaining reasonable throughput.
- Teaching and learning as a strategic priority is a continuous strategic driver, as it remains at the core of the value proposition.

### 3.3.4 Executive Education

Giving effect to executive education as a strategic priority will require creating a link between informal and formal learning, by focusing on interaction between industry and the academic environment, involving industry experts in executive education, and continuous professional development as a focus, whilst remaining profitable.

- The link between informal and formal learning should involve a structured feedback loop that informs formal programmes of industry developments.
- The utilisation of industry experts and community engagement for the purpose of building relationships and enriching collaboration should be consolidated between formal and informal programmes and expanded on.
- Continuous professional development will remain focused on management and leadership development, aligned with the learning path.
- The ultimate outcome of executive education as a strategic priority is to market the Business School brand and to generate revenue.

### 3.3.5 Collaboration

Giving effect to collaboration as a strategic priority will require enabling relationships for the purposes of building the Business School brand and increasing its footprint.

- To grow the footprint, building relationships with internal and external stakeholders should be targeted and focused.
- The existing network of alumni should be leveraged, and collaboration within this network should be a focus.
- The ultimate outcome of collaboration as strategic priority is to complement the outcomes of the other strategic priorities.
- Collaboration as a strategic priority is a continuous strategic driver.

*Invest in your career and*  
**Be Worth More**





# 4 NEW DIRECTIONS AT THE UFS BUSINESS SCHOOL



## 4.1 Overview

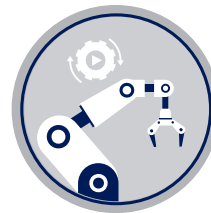
The UFS Business School is repositioning itself to make a more meaningful practical contribution to the SME sector in particular, one in which ‘opportunity-driven initiatives’ (like the establishment of incubation services and start-up/venture creation initiatives), complement the formal offerings of the School. Ultimately, the idea is to enable a program of values-based leadership that will allow for continued excellence in content delivery and research output. As mentioned above, the Business School also supports the overall objectives of the UFS going forward to increase its visibility and impact, while being people-centered and committed to the principles of social justice. We want to gain increasing prominence as knowledge innovators and actors, which is key to competitiveness, while serving as the catalyst for economic growth and wealth creation. Business Schools need to take moral responsibility to disseminate the necessary knowledge, values and skills, and awareness to create a sustainable and fair future.

The role of Business Schools as agents of economic development has been well documented. Business Schools need to gain increasing prominence as knowledge innovators and actors, which is key to competitiveness, while serving as the catalyst for economic growth and wealth creation. Such entities need to take moral responsibility to disseminate the necessary knowledge, values and skills, and awareness to create a sustainable and fair future.

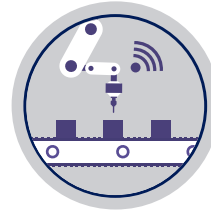


The UFS Business School intends to move towards building an ecosystem of entrepreneurialism, one in which ‘third’ mission objectives continue to resonate and be elevated. As mentioned the role that the UFS Business School intends to play in ‘opportunity-driven’ initiatives (start-up creation, patenting, licensing, venture capital formation, incubation facilities), technology transfer, and the commercialisation of intellectual property, will feature as key considerations going forward. Our capacity to continually create and innovate and forge university-industry linkages will continue apace, and increased value will be created through these kinds of partnerships, allowing for new ideas to inform and permeate the academic research agenda, while addressing scientific concerns as well as practical problems, thus increasing the UFS Business School’s financial independence through its own income-generating capabilities. As mentioned previously, the imperative of The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) will also provide important touchpoints for consideration.

This thus allows for heightened levels of sustainable economic development and societal advancement and speaks additionally and directly to a just energy transition. Ultimately, the underlying argument in favour of engagement in science-based innovation activities at universities is the facilitation of economic development, job creation, a just energy transition, and renewed levels of global competitiveness. Our nascent academic entrepreneurs and students need to acquire entrepreneurial skills and competencies to create successful spin-offs and venture-formation initiatives, especially among a cross-section of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It is well known that entrepreneurial competencies are linked to venture performance. Essentially, the UFS Business School (to reiterate) intends to become an entrepreneurial ecosystem committed to responsible science and the generation of credible knowledge strong in integrity and high in relevance, thus ensuring that the interface between theory and praxis is properly fulfilled.



**Automation**



**Robotics**



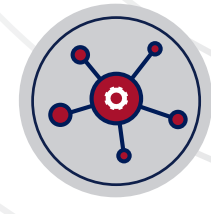
**Cloud computing**



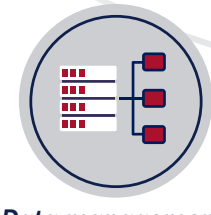
**Big data**



**Artificial Intelligence**



**IOT**

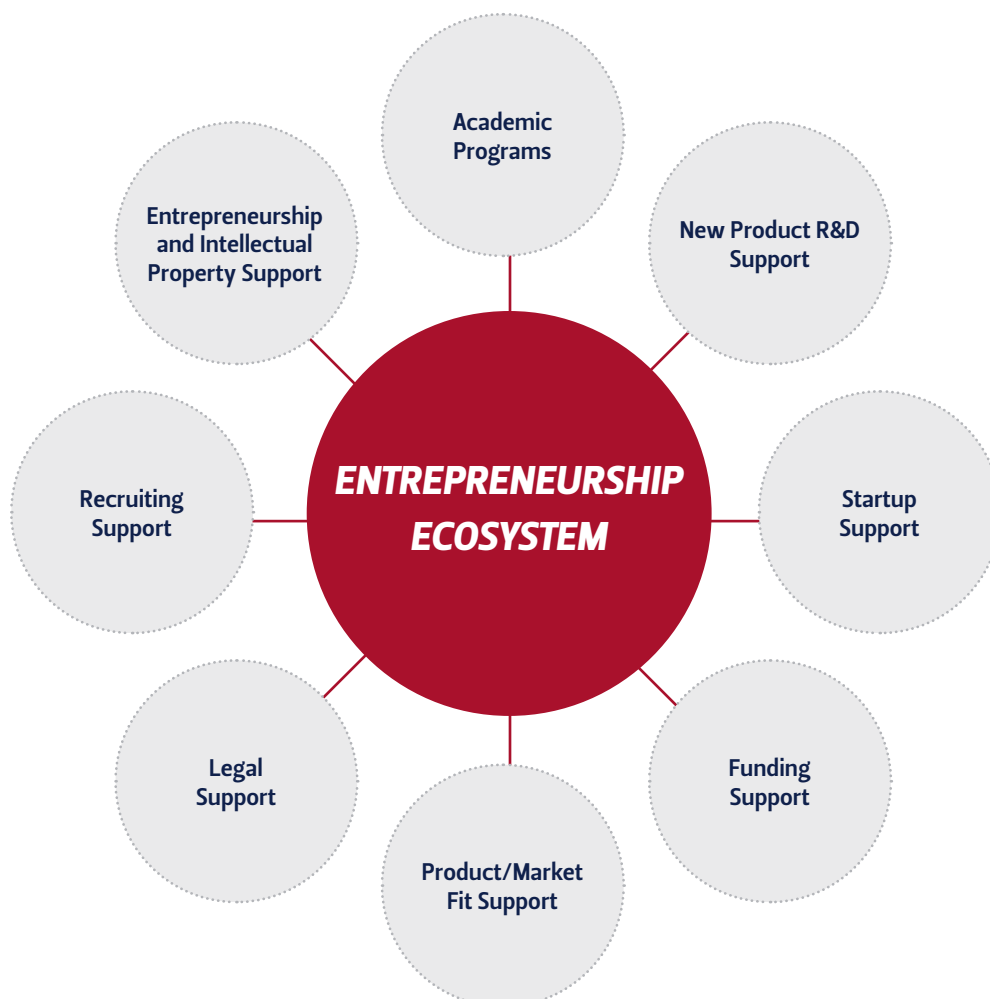


**Data management**



As mentioned above, specific focus will coalesce around the SME environment, and the UFS Business School will attempt to ensure that small businesses get to work with academics, policy makers, regulators, and the private sector in creating an environment that is conducive to growth and competitiveness. The UFS Business School envisages a South Africa where small and medium-sized businesses are supported by thoughtful, evidence-based policy that limits obstacles to their success and sustainability, and works to eliminate structural impediments to competition, access to markets, and effective entry into supply chains. SMEs need to be supported in legislation, regulation, and procurement.

Consulting and incubation services will feature prominently in the UFS Business School landscape going forward, focusing, *inter alia* on the business resilience of SMEs in challenging economic conditions, and ensuring that premium services are provided to start-ups with high growth potential (for example partnerships with venture capitalists). The Business School also intends (in addition to its formal offerings – see above) to build a more focused short-learning programme menu, thus developing a distinct reputation for specialised SME expertise that can serve as a brand on the basis of which it can expand its business. An additional focus will be on the delivery of premium services to start-ups with high growth potential. It is also not lost on the UFS Business School, as mentioned previously, that it needs to expand its repertoire of services and offerings to academically undeserved rural provinces (and small towns) where SMEs dominate the economy and where the issue of business resilience, particularly during periods of economic distress, is a key concern.



A focus of the Business School, aligned with the articulation above, will be the commencement of a number of initiatives to increase our students' exposure to climate-smart and inclusive innovations, thus exploring systemic pathways and solutions towards addressing the enormous challenges presented by climate change and energy sustainability. We need to foster thinking about how we can begin to engage with new and differentiated approaches in tackling these challenges. We need to rethink our relationship with nature, shift human behaviour, and reimagine the vital systems that underpin our societies. Our youth in particular are calling for renewable energy, green jobs, and climate finance that open new opportunities to strengthen economic security while accelerating climate change action. The UFS Business School will attempt to create truly transformational change and accelerate the transition to a sustainable green economy through greater co-operation, collaboration, and cross-sector partnerships with all constituencies in the value chain.

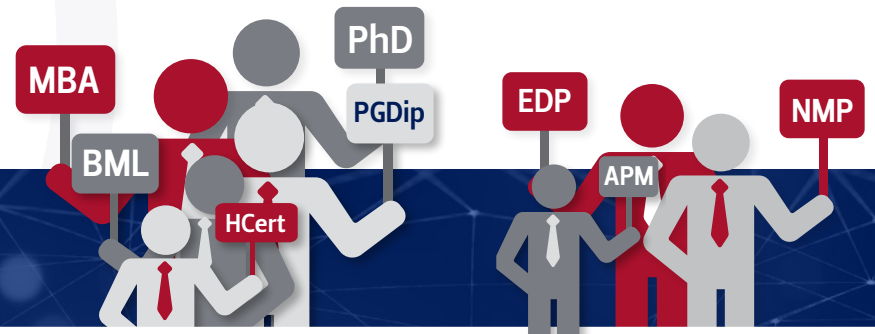
The UFS Business School thus intends to begin a series of entrepreneurship training programmes that focus, to reiterate, on equipping individuals in the SME sector in particular with the knowledge and skills to launch and operate business ventures. The Business School is of the strong and unfettered opinion that entrepreneurship training is a key practical means to create new business and venture formation. Indeed, meta-analytic research has provided incontrovertible evidence that entrepreneurship training is effective in promoting cognitive and motivational outcomes, resulting in more start-ups and higher performance. There is a compelling need in South Africa, and in the higher education sector in particular, to activate entrepreneurial scholars as agents of change.

Over the past few years, external organisations and entities have shown a significant appetite to partner with the UFS in recognition of its new and visionary leadership; its commitment to academic, scholarly, and research excellence; its vision of fulfilling the imperatives of a 'just transition'; its commitment to making a measurable contribution to addressing the issues of poverty, inequality, and employment through rigorous scholarship and research; as well as its undertaking to address the needs of marginalised and peripheralised communities that rarely feature in our debates and discourses on development. At the UFS, and the Business School in particular, we want to support emerging entrepreneurs in sectors that are not often fully recognised, and who find themselves in geographically dispersed and disparate peri-urban and rural areas. Needless to say, the UFS has also made huge strides in fulfilling its transformation objectives.

“ **The UFS Business School will attempt to create truly transformational change and accelerate the transition to a sustainable green economy through greater co-operation, collaboration, and cross-sector partnerships with all constituencies in the value chain.** ”



# PROGRAMMES ON OFFER



## 4.2 Formal Programmes

### SLP's

Short Learning Programmes

Recognition through RPL

Several Leadership, Management, Functional and Entrepreneurship SLP's are accredited with the UFS. Refer to the value proposition for executive education.

### HCert

Higher Certificate in Management Development

NQF level 5  
1 Year

The Higher Certificate in Management Development is a formal higher certificate, accredited by SAQA. In 2024, this qualification will be replaced with a SLP in management development.

### BML

Bachelor of Management Leadership

NQF level 7  
4 Years

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Management Leadership, or any other first degree, students may apply for the Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration.

### PGDip

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration

NQF level 8  
1 Year

Upon completion of the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration, or any relevant Honors Degree, students may apply for the Master of Business Administration.

### MBA

Master of Business Administration

NQF level 9  
2 Years

Upon completion of the Master of Business Administration, students may apply for the PhD.

### PhD

Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Business Administration

NQF level 10  
3 Years

Upon completion of the PhD the students contribute to the field via authoritative research articles and presentations.

### 4.2.1 Higher Certificate in Management Development (HCert.)

The Business School has established itself as a leader in South Africa in the provision of management programmes. A dynamic supplement to this spectrum of management programmes on offer is a Higher Certificate in Management Development. The Higher Certificate emphasises leadership development, the broadening of insight by exposure to the most important management disciplines and its integration into a total management approach. This tailor-made qualification has been designed to assist institutions in both the private and public sectors. It is aimed at developing employees, especially focused on the middle management group level, to become enterprising and professional managers. In 2024, the HCert will be replaced by a SLP on management development that will articulate to the BML (see below).



### 4.2.2 Bachelor of Management and Leadership (BML)

The Bachelor of Management Leadership is a management and leadership degree program for working adult students following an experiential learning teaching strategy and the assessment and recognition of prior learning. It incorporates learning from experiences to support the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed as educated managerial leaders. The purpose is carried out through a set of components designed to facilitate adult learning:

- A dynamic curriculum that engages adults in diverse learning experiences in management leadership.
- A competence framework that recognises valid prior learning, provides for diverse goals, and believes in different learning styles.
- A committee monitoring each students' progress and assisting them develop conceptual and methodoligal frameworks.
- Counsellors that assist and support students with challenges that they might experience.
- A commitment to dialogue and negotiation that enables the adult student to own their learning.





### 4.2.3 Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration (PGDip)

The Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration provides a valuable articulation route to students with a relevant undergraduate degree, enabling them then to register for an MBA in future. In other words, on completion of the PGDip in Business Administration, or any relevant honours degree, students may apply for the MBA.



### 4.2.4 Master of Business Administration (MBA)

The program content of the UFS Business School MBA enhances and develops managers and leaders, broadly covering all aspects and challenges which managers and leaders might face in today's ever-changing business environment. Graduates of our MBA program will be able to compete in both the global economic and business environment. We consider the MBA to be a career investment, with our aim being to train and develop skilled high-level managers in the field of general business management, whilst also providing a new generation of managers in those fields where expertise is in short supply. Upon completion of the MBA, students may apply for a PhD.

### 4.2.4 Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Business Administration (PhD)

The PhD represents the equivalent of full-time research of at least two years. The content of the PhD is defined as original research work and should make a distinct contribution of the knowledge base of and insight into the particular discipline.

A PhD thesis requires a high level of competence, methodological and conceptual skills, clarity in exposition and development of argument, sound judgement, interpretation and originality. A substantial part of the thesis should merit publication in peer-reviewed journals of repute.

### 4.3 The Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD)

The commercial arm of the UFS Business School is situated at the Centre for Business Dynamics (CBD). The Centre's core business is to offer SLPs (Executive Education), including open and in-house training programmes. In order to grow, the CBD needs access to a very competitive national market, with Gauteng as the focus. However, other more rurally-based provinces will increasingly become target markets, as will countries that constitute the SADC region. The market requires that SLPs be customised to individual requirements and delivered within relatively short turn-around times. Given the limited/constrained permanent academic capacity of the Business School, a strategic decision was made to cooperate with credible private institutions to enter this market and gain access to the existing intellectual property residing at such private institutions, which could be quality assured, accredited and certified by the UFS. Over the past several years, the CBD has developed a specific competency to deliver value to clients through strategic partnerships.

The CBD has recently been fundamentally overhauled in order to:

- refocus and rationalise its short learning programme offerings
- improve revenue and profitability
- to make a meaningful contribution of the economy of the Free State and other underserved rural regions like the Northern Cape and Limpopo
- produce reference sites and clients which will assist with future sales activities
- provide feedback to the UFS short-learning program developers, the UFS Business School, and the Kopsie Phamisa Academy on current business trends and future market needs, and
- to get more predictable sales which are forecast in advance.

CBD's value-proposition enables decision-makers to become complexity-and-future-fit, focusing on a set of meta-skills that will ensure adaptive capacity, and the ability to respond to situations of flux and uncertainty. (see overleaf).

CBD strives to assist clients in ensuring continuity between skills needed and training required by:

- effecting strategic partnerships with clients to provide optimised training solutions
- conducting pre-assessments/discussions to identify red flag areas and customise the content of programmes
- utilising and contextualising findings within appropriate theoretical/conceptual frameworks.
- forming execution/implementation solutions, customised for company-specific needs, as part of participant assessment in training programmes (assignments to be aligned with specific company needs)
- establishing continuity and sustainability of skills development by creating a learning path – recognition of prior learning of SLPs to formal programmes is available, and
- increasing our return on investment of revenue spent on skills development



**Over the past several years, the Centre for Business Dynamics has developed a specific competency to deliver value to clients through strategic partnerships.**

# THE EXECUTIVE EDUCATION JOURNEY...





## 5

### SMALL BUSINESS ACADEMY (SBA), HIGH-GROWTH INCUBATOR AND THE PARADYS EXPERIMENTAL FARM



#### 5.1. Small Business Academy (SBA)

In order to create employment for over nine million people without work, policy makers and regulators must support an environment that is conducive to the growth and competitiveness of South Africa's small and medium enterprises. The SBA commits to the President's nation-building injunction of "Thuma Mina", and will seek to influence the creation of an enabling environment for the SME segment of the economy, which traverses all sectors. The idea behind the SBA at the UFSBS is to positively influence the environment for SMEs in South Africa. Small and medium size enterprises create jobs and power economies. We envisage growing SMEs, creating jobs, and providing ethical leadership. We envision a country where small- and medium-sized businesses are supported by thoughtful, evidence-based policy that limits obstacles to their success and sustainability, and where the private sector works to eliminate structural obstacles to competition, access to markets, and effective entry into supply chains. The SBA will advocate for policy makers and big businesses to 'think small first'. We intend to lobby government to consider and support the sustainability of SMEs in legislation, regulation, and procurement policies. The SBA will also engage big businesses where SME-supportive supply chain management and payment terms contribute to a thriving sector.

The premise is that successful small businesses can stimulate broader job creation and economic growth. Given South Africa's low level of entrepreneurship compared with other developing countries, small businesses are generally not achieving the growth required for increased job creation. The SBA hopes to transform the viability of such business by building business skills, in the process promoting a strong culture of entrepreneurship, innovation, and business ownership. It will do this by providing counselling and practical training to small businesses, including working with the SBA to develop and provide informational tools to support business start-ups and existing business expansion.

The SBA at the UFSBS will offer professional, high-quality individualised business advisory and technical assistance to existing small businesses and pre-venture entrepreneurs. The SBA will provide problem-solving assistance to help small businesses access capital, develop and exchange new technologies, improve business planning, strategy, operations, financial management, personnel administration, marketing, export assistance, and sales.

It is envisaged that the SBA will be established in early 2024 after a proper due diligence is done. There are no small business institutes attached to any Business School in South Africa, so this development is a particularly important one. The SBA in its concpetiulaisation also aligns closely and strategically with the formal prorams at the UFSBS, as well as with the mandate of the CBD.



## 5.2 High-Growth Business Incubator

In today's disruptive and fast-changing business environment, more of us than ever will experience the challenge and opportunity of embracing entrepreneurship, building ecosystems of innovation, and launching a new business venture.

Whether one joins a newly formed business as a key employee; decides to start one's own business venture; pursues new opportunities within your organisation; or chooses to invest personally in innovation, embracing entrepreneurship is a unique chance to realise organisational objectives and personal goals – thus contributing appreciably to addressing the development challenges that beset many developing countries and emerging economies. But launching, growing, and managing a new business venture is not easy. And while more often than not even seasoned entrepreneurs fail, these should not be obstacles that set one back personally and professionally. Mastering a set of core entrepreneurial skills and competencies, and building the right mindset in a context where the world is innovating and co-creating, is critical in determining the prosperity of one's venture – and setting one on a path to success.

The High-Growth Small Business Incubator that is in the process of being established as a collaborative venture between the Business School and the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) at the Paradys Experimental Farm (as part of a fundamental "repositioning" of the UFSBS) will attempt to introduce both students completing their degrees at the Business School and other Faculties, and other young entrepreneurs externally located, to the skills, concepts, knowledge, and actions needed to build a successful new business venture.



From exploring how to generate and develop "game-changing" ideas; to recruiting and managing the right team; to identifying and engaging with investors; to understanding how to survive in times of economic distress and external shocks; and by developing practical skills in business resilience and continuity, the overall intention will be to engage with and master the most important steps of the entrepreneurial journey to success. This entails moving away from the confines of the classroom, and translating well-established business and management theory and models into practice via real-world, and real-time, experience in either dealing with potential customers and/or pitching ideas to actual investors. The objective is to change, or recalibrate, the learning path for graduating students, and entrepreneurs at the formative stages of their careers located outside of the university system.

Thinking like an entrepreneur, especially in a context where the world is embracing the imperatives of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and acclimatising to the transition to a digital economy, will be a core focus of the proposed Incubator to be co-hosted by the Business School. Acuity of vision will be key, as will the ability to be agile, resilient, and adaptable. Core focus areas will include, inter alia:

- understanding where the best ideas come from
- appreciating (by learning) how underperforming actors and agents can transform themselves to become successful competitors in the global market
- knowing when growth is crucial for survival, but a recognition too of the inherent dangers of growing too fast, for example
- determining how entrepreneurs should think
- learning to steer and navigate teams, and
- developing the tools to lead staff/board meetings; raise venture capital; enable branding and marketing strategies; assessing risk – while constantly ideating, innovating, and inspiring.

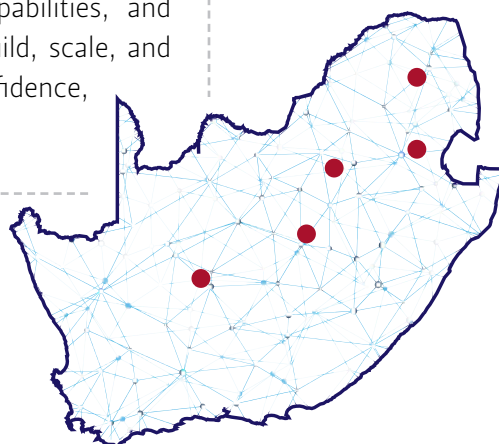
Drawing on the most recent literature, best-practice experience/s, competitor intelligence insights, and thought leadership, the UFS Business School/NAS Incubator intends to enable a transformative learning experience in a “working space” that will equip graduate students and emerging entrepreneurs with the tools, capabilities, and practical instruments needed to build, scale, and grow their business ideas with confidence, clarity, and centrality of purpose.

### Important adjunct benefits include:

- Exploring how to generate, identify, and test new business ideas
- Learning how to attract and build a formidable team to drive specific types of venture
- Building and transforming networking and relationship-building skills to interact effectively and confidently with investors and partners
- Discovering how to organise, scale, and grow a cross-section of business ventures
- Gaining the knowledge to sell/market ideas effectively through pitching and persuading

### Potential participants include:

- Leaders of high-growth start-ups (especially in the SME-sector) who are ready to take their venture to the next level
- Executives/Senior managers who want to learn how to be more entrepreneurial and/or build an entrepreneurial business culture
- Executives/Senior managers leading a venture capital initiative within an organisation – executives charged with driving intrapreneurial small business development, for instance
- Young and emerging entrepreneurs who want to start up a new business from scratch
- Students transitioning from the UFS Business School (and other Faculties) who are engaging with ideas to start their own small businesses after their formal academic training
- Small Business investors and consultants working with start-ups and/or entrepreneurial business ventures, and
- Small family businesses



### Geographic and Target Market:

- Primarily Mangaung and the Free State Province
- Rurally, under-served provinces and peri-urban economies (Limpopo; NW; Mpumalanga; NC) – over time

### 5.3 Paradys Experimental Farm

As stated above, the Business School will be working closely with the NAS Faculty in the establishment of the business incubator. This incubator will be located at the Paradys Experimental farm. An Experimental farm is a significant training and research facility that any university will be proud of – in the case of this facility in Paradys, it currently provides training opportunities across a broad spectrum of agricultural disciplines, with the aim being to create opportunities for young entrepreneurially-minded students and small business owners across a range of disciplines going forward. Multi-disciplinary research is not only critical for industry, but is also fundamental in the creation of new knowledge, improving existing technologies, and developing new ones. The Business School will be partnering with the Experimental Farm in providing leadership capacity, business and management advisory services, and strategic advice and guidance. Collaboration has already begun.



# MARKETING COMMUNICATION



## 6

### MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



In order to achieve the strategic objectives cited above, a well-conceived and thought-through marketing and communication strategy is needed, together with a dedicated resource overseeing this Department-wide activity. Such a strategy is in the process of being developed and will be rolled out together with the Strategic Plan in 2023. The following elements are considered critical and salient to such a strategy:

# MARKET COMMU

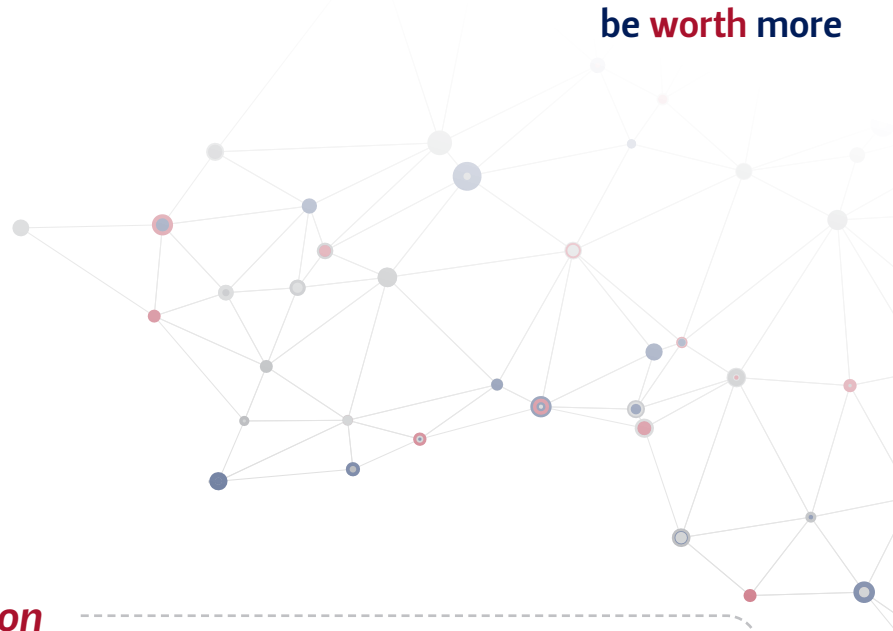
## MARKETING STRATEGY EXECUTION



## 6.1 Marketing strategy

- Set clear marketing objectives for the entire Business School
- Link marketing strategy with sales targets
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy
- Develop and manage the marketing budget

## 6.2 Marketing strategy execution



### Brand awareness

- Copywriting and generation of content
- Maintain contact with alumni and keep alumni database updated
- Assist with profiling relevant business cases and getting faculty to write articles of relevance
- Develop a corporate identity in line with the university guidelines



### Events

- Attend relevant marketing events/expos
- Promote and arrange publicity events such as networking events



### Finances

- Monitor the marketing budget and ensure the budget spend is delivering a return on investment



### Link with sales strategy

- Researching and analysing market trends and competitors
- Assistance with meeting student number targets
- Update customer details on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
- Assist with profiling student successes
- Lead market research efforts to uncover the

viability of current and existing programmes



### Marketing campaigns

- Generate and follow up on leads from campaigns
- Write content for newsletters
- Manage the content on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram + LinkedIn)
- Oversee all marketing-related campaigns
- Track effectiveness of marketing campaigns
- Increasing the overall brand awareness of the Business School



### Marketing material

- Manage the design and production of marketing material
- Oversee advertising and branding on all relevant media platforms
- Procure branding equipment - banners, corporate gifts, stationery
- Assist with developing banner advertisements and staff signatures



### Website




- Constantly Update the UFS website as the major platform for inbound marketing
- A new UFSBS was launched in June 2022





# 7 CONCLUSION

As critical bridges between academia and business, Business Schools are uniquely poised to reimagine a better future for businesses and society in general – one that is more diverse and inclusive, and one that is not only fueled by massive amounts of data and technology, but also guided by human beings. However, we all need to think about a common vision for an intelligent future, premised on three key understandings:

-  the intelligent future is data-informed
-  the intelligent future is collaborative
-  the intelligent future is innovative

CONCLUSION

## The future of business is heading toward us at warp speed, whether we like it or not.

In our quickly changing world, business as usual no longer exists. Formulaic solutions no longer suffice. If Business Schools hope to create value for the business community and for society as a whole, we must embrace more data-informed, collaborative, and innovative approaches to educating business leaders. The future of business is heading toward us at warp speed, whether we like it or not. With the right mindset and an effective strategy, we can make it an intelligent future.

The role of business schools as agents of economic development has been well documented. Business schools need to gain increasing prominence as knowledge innovators and actors, which is key to competitiveness, while serving as the catalyst for economic growth and wealth creation. Such entities need to take moral responsibility to disseminate the necessary knowledge, values and skills, and awareness to create a sustainable and fair future. In summary, the UFS lists its primary strategic aspirations going forward over the next 5-years (2023-2028) as:

- remaining relevant to both society and the business community
- paying acute attention to continued excellence in content delivery and research output in the field of business and management sciences
- nurturing academic excellence in the trans-disciplinary themes of emerging market solutions and small business development
- introducing flagship centres (see above) that address pressing challenges in relation to the South Africa economy, while enhancing the imperative towards sustainable development and a “just” energy transition
- nurturing thought-leadership towards the generation of research output of the highest quality, in a culture of robust academic debate
- attempting to maintain and enhance the UFS Business School’s several global rankings in management education locally, in Africa, and globally
- addressing transformation and inequality in ultimately ensuring the UFS Business School remains societally relevant, and
- enabling a program of values-based leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship.

There are unprecedented challenges facing Business Schools globally at the moment in the form of financial sustainability; the waning demand for MBA courses; staff retrenchments; the proliferation of open online programmes; the imperatives of digitalisation; the transition to a digital economy and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR); greater competition for students and faculty; and dealing with the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The new strategy of the UFS Business School, consequently, hopes to provide both the intellectual and operational medium to realise the many ambitious goals and aspirations cited above and, in doing so, to make an appreciable (and immediate) contribution to South Africa and the Continent's development goals and challenges, while subscribing to the principles enunciated in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals that builds on the mantra of "leaving no one behind", while emphasising a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development for all.

We want to create more value-add for stakeholders; work on pedagogical improvements; renew our focus on leadership, problem-framing and integrative thinking; strike a curriculum balance between domain knowledge and those of 'practical' problem-solving; and enable the synthesis necessary to operate in an often ambiguous and multi-disciplinary management environment. The Business School wants to ensure a closer working relation between the Business School and public institutions, business and industry, and communities and civil society by focusing on designing relevant programmes for training and education in the field of business and management sciences. The strategy presented in this document attempts to reconfigure the discipline to become more global, market-responsive, co-operative, innovative, entrepreneurial and inclusive. The UFS Business School aims to provide rigorous academic/scholarly training and guidance on how future leaders should approach the pressing global issues such as the uneven distribution of wealth locally and globally; the diverging population trends between developed and developing nations; the willingness of countries to deal with environmental and ecological issues; and the differences in social and ethical standards between nations.



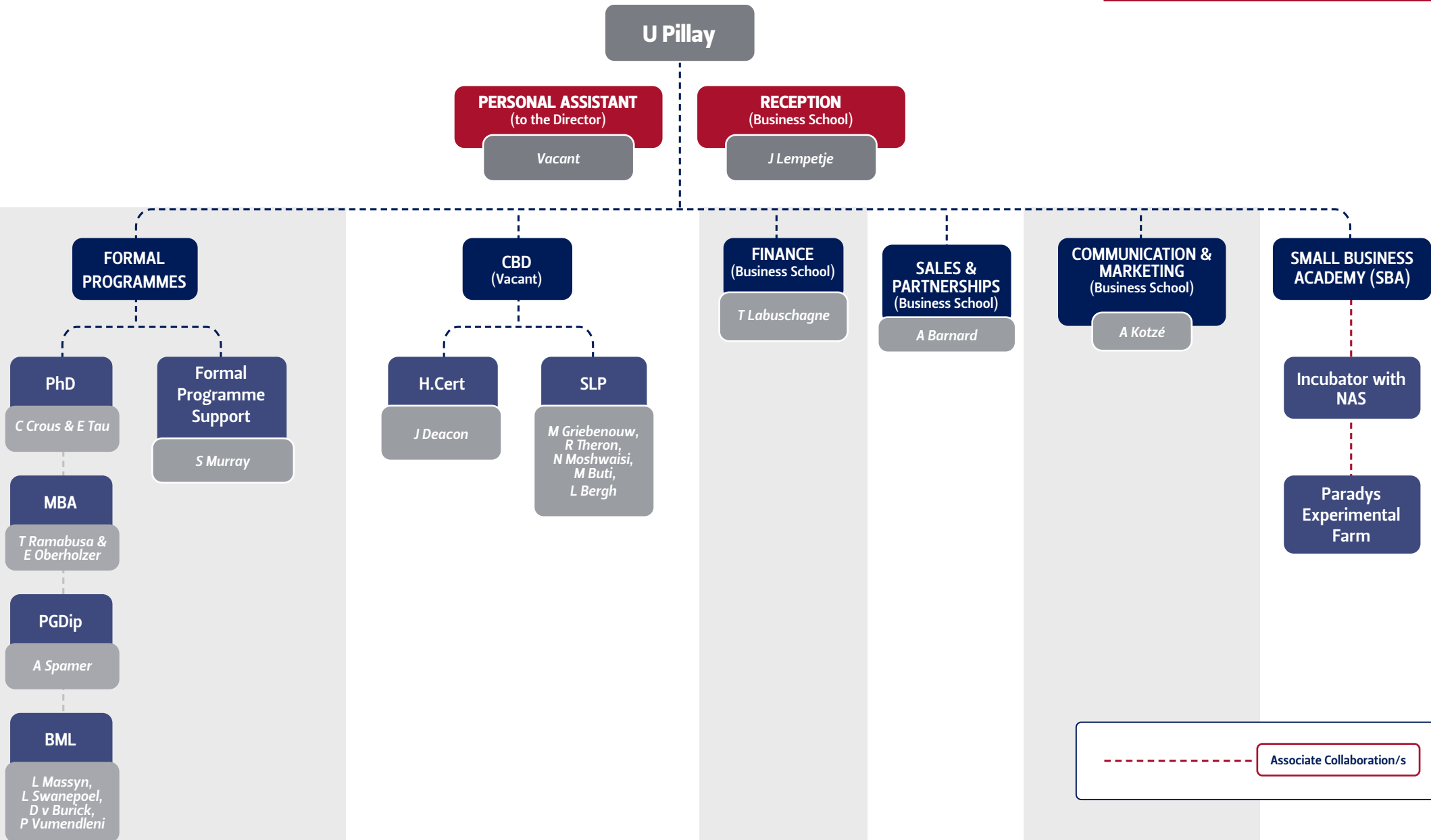
Business Schools thus need to be populated by inspiring academics whom are broad-based thinkers able to look BEYOND their subject areas. Global competition, global sourcing, and global customers have heightened the need to educate managers who possess cross-cultural understanding/s, sensitivity, common practices, and values. We will strive at the UFS Business School to sharpen our focus and clarity on the role that we need to be playing going forward in a novel and innovative way, bypassing ‘mimicry’ and the mere attainment of standards imposed by external agencies. We want to become more agile in response to changing market conditions and want to encourage the development of structures that facilitate different forms of co-operation among Business Schools. The five-year (2023-2028) strategy presented in this document attempts to do precisely this.



*Invest in your career and*  
**Be Worth More**



# UFS BUSINESS SCHOOL 2023 - 2028 ORGANOGRAM AND THE TEAM





CAUTION STAIRS

CAUTION STAIRS

CAUTION STAIRS

CAUTION STAIRS