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RECTOR'S MANAGEMENT REPORT TO COUNCIL

Monday 30 November 2020

Prof WJS de Villiers,
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **final Council meeting of 2020**. As with our previous meetings, we are again convening online due to COVID-19.

As this report was being compiled, we received the distressing news that one of our students had been found dead in his residence on our Stellenbosch campus. As a University community, we are deeply saddened by this loss, and acutely reminded of our responsibility to stand by each **other in difficult times**. We provide **psychotherapeutic support services** to both students and staff, and efforts to improve these are ongoing (see the sections on a new **policy on mental health** at SU and a draft **health and wellbeing plan** in **theme 6** below).

This year will rightly be remembered as **especially challenging**. What started off as a proverbial “year of perfect vision” soon turned into one fraught with uncertainty, which indeed required acuity of vision to hold firm and stick to our strategic direction and operational goals.

In my previous reports to Council, I gave detailed feedback on the agile institutional management processes that had flowed from the coordinated and integrated work of our Institutional Committee for Business Continuity (ICBC). I also reported on the innovation and nimbleness of our staff, who united in a successful strategy to keep our academic project on course.

The start of our fourth term on 21 September coincided with the easing of the national lockdown to **level 1**. Despite the further relaxation of restrictions, physical distancing regulations and other external factors made it very difficult to invite significant student numbers back to our campuses.

We decided to err on the side of caution, and not rush the process of returning staff and students to our campuses. This was based on our assessment of what was **practicable** within the facilities and human resources capacity of the University.

And just when things appeared to be pivoting back to normal, reports of a **resurgence** in infections in the Western Cape and elsewhere in the country started surfacing, raising the possibility of a return to a higher level of lockdown, which would naturally affect our academic activities.

Moreover, in mid-October, reports of **irresponsible behaviour** by some students prompted me to urge the entire student body to continue adhering to guidelines on social distancing and mask wearing, and not to jeopardise their academic year so close to the finish line (read message [here](#)).

All things considered, Senate’s decision to **continue** with emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment (**ERTLA**) for the rest of the academic year turned out to be a wise one. With the possibility of a second wave of infections, we might need to carry on in this way, at least for the first term of 2021.

Yet, notwithstanding all the uncertainties and challenges we have had to face as an institution in the course of this year, **SU has further cemented its place** internationally as a leading institution in Africa that improves lives, not only in South Africa, but across the world.

Over the past three months, SU achieved the remarkable feat of being listed among the world’s top universities on **three different international rankings**. In October, the 2021 US News & World Report Best Global Universities rankings placed us third in South Africa. In September, we maintained our position in the 251–300 band on the Times Higher Education World University Rankings for 2021. And in August, we consolidated our place on the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), also known as the Shanghai rankings.

While our focus is on academic and research excellence, we do appreciate the importance of rankings in the overall perception of an institution’s standing. At the same time, it is a complicated and often controversial matter, as reflected in the [in-depth report on rankings](#) that served at the previous Council meeting.

Elsewhere in this report, I share information on the impact of our research initiatives (**see theme 5**). With due recognition and acknowledgement of the phenomenal work of all our colleagues, I would like to end this year with a special mention of pioneering work at SU that is having an enormous impact on the lives of our people who live with tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/Aids.

I am referring to the work of **Prof Mark Cotton**, distinguished professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, who has received a large award from the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) for a project to evaluate the efficacy and safety of MTBVAC, a novel TB vaccine. SU forms part of a consortium of nine international institutions working on this project. The award in euro amounts to over R162 million. It is aimed at reducing the social and economic burden of poverty-related diseases in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, by accelerating the clinical development of effective, safe, accessible, suitable and affordable medical interventions for HIV/Aids, TB, malaria and neglected infectious diseases, specifically in children.

This follows on the heels of a similar award made to **Prof Anneke Hesselting**, director of the paediatric TB research programme at our Desmond Tutu TB Centre, late last year. Her Unitaaid award of R280 million is for the design and evaluation of improved and safe TB preventative and treatment strategies in children.

Awards of this nature undoubtedly place SU at the forefront of research aimed at drastically reducing the mortality rate among children suffering from multidrug-resistant TB and Aids-related infections.

Against the backdrop of the multiple other research programmes led by our impressive list of distinguished professors (**see 6.6**) and research teams, this recognition demonstrates that we are firmly on our way to **realise our vision** of becoming Africa's leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society. This is also evident from indications that SU's research productivity for 2020 to date has been higher than for the corresponding period last year (**see 5.3**).

To sustain and give further momentum to our research endeavours, SU will be investing **R120 million in postgraduate bursaries** over the next three years to make up for the recent decline in National Research Foundation (NRF) bursary funding (**see 5.3**). In this way, the University will ensure that our centres of excellence and research chairs can continue to make a significant impact on society.

Similar levels of achievement also characterise our learning and teaching portfolio, which is headed by **Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel**. This will no doubt be reflected in his report to Council about activities in his responsibility centre. (In this overarching management report, I highlight only a few learning and teaching developments; please consult his report for more detailed information.) This will be Prof Schoonwinkel's last report to Council, as he will be retiring at the end of the year. Let me take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for his sterling contribution, over many years in various capacities, to the success of our institution and the development of our students and staff. At the same time, I would, in advance, like to welcome his successor, [Prof Deresh Ramjugernath](#), who will be taking over from Prof Schoonwinkel in the new year.

This report covers the period **7 August to 10 November 2020**, unless stated otherwise. My fellow members of management and I welcome this opportunity to engage with our colleagues in Council.

THEME 1: A THRIVING STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

In our [Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024](#) (click on the link for the complete document), we state the following in relation to this core strategic theme: “To make SU **a thriving organisation**, we envisage a **vibrant, prosperous and systemically sustainable** university (with ‘thriving’ defined as ‘being successful or making steady progress; prospering; flourishing’).

SU recognises the major challenges associated with developing into a thriving university. We acknowledge that we need to be both responsive and proactive in shaping the future of the University. We are committed to systemic sustainability, which includes people, place (social), prosperity (economic) and the environment and compels responsible corporate governance.”

1.1 Institutional Committee for Business Continuity (ICBC)

The Institutional Committee for Business Continuity (ICBC), led by Chief Operating Officer **Prof Stan du Plessis**, is overseeing and synthesising input from its substructures, which comprise seven workstreams and a Medical Advisory Committee. Summary reports of their activities in the reporting period (**7 August to 10 November 2020**) follow below.

Workstream 1: Student services

Chair: Dr Ronel Retief

The workstream for student services (WSS) presented the ICBC with a report on the support that would be required for differently prepared **first-years in 2021**. The report contained proposals regarding a holistic onboarding programme for first-years, programme-specific academic support, as well as additional support for lecturers. It was subsequently tabled at the Committee for Learning and Teaching (CLT), who has accepted it for implementation under the auspices of the Division of Learning and Teaching Enhancement.

The WSS also appointed a working group consisting of colleagues from both the WSS and the workstream for learning and teaching to draft a framework for **Almanac 2021**, taking into account the date of the release of the 2020 matric results (23 February 2021) and the guidelines provided by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The ICBC subsequently approved the framework and published it on the SU homepage ([click here](#)). At the time of writing, the draft Almanac 2021 was being discussed with institutional stakeholders for finalisation by mid-November.

Proposals regarding the dates for the 2021 application and admission cycle (with a view to the **2022 intake**), the academic results to be taken into account for admission decisions as well as the use of the National Benchmark Test (NBTs) were also tabled at both the ICBC and the CLT. Specific consideration was given to the impact of the lockdown on this year’s Grade 11s. The proposals have been accepted for implementation.

Planning for the **December 2020 graduation ceremonies** has also started in all earnest. We will have small physical ceremonies to award honorary doctorates and PhDs (covering both March/April and December 2020). These will take place on 14, 15 and 16 December, and will adhere to all social distancing protocols and the regulations concerning venue capacity. Since we now have more time to prepare than we had in March/April, we plan on conferring the remaining qualifications in online graduation ceremonies by faculty. (**See 4.4 below**, and visit the [graduation webpage](#) for updates.)

Workstream 2: Learning and teaching

Chair: Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel

The workstream for learning and teaching (WLT) focuses on the continuation and adaptation of learning and teaching amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and on student care. Risks are reported to the ICBC and SU’s Audit and Risk Committee as they arise. The WLT meets approximately every second week to determine which learning and teaching-related approaches need to be adjusted and what information is to be communicated to students and staff.

Issues dealt with by the WLT in the reporting period:

- Students will be receiving free data via mobile network operators until the end of the year. Residence students who were affected by loadshedding have also been receiving data bundles since September.

- Arrangements have been made for sit-down invigilated examinations in November and December for final-year students in certain programmes and faculties. These examinations will be administered in fulfilment of practical work requirements or to comply with the provisions of professional bodies, and will take place at venues both on and off campus.
- Although more students are allowed to return to campus under lockdown level 1, faculties have decided to stick to their earlier announcement about modules that will be presented online for the remainder of the year. The remaining COVID-19 restrictions on the number of people allowed in venues at any one time as well as physical distancing were determining factors in this decision.
- A lecturer at the Faculty of Engineering has developed a software application to enable synchronised test/exam writing during loadshedding. The software is currently being piloted.
- Decisions have been made on the categories of students who will receive access to A4 exams in January 2021 based on underperformance in the June/July examination this year. Faculty planning is under way to help these students prepare. A decision has been made not to have any further examinations in February 2021 for students who are unsuccessful in the November/December 2020 exams. Instead, faculties are providing support to promote success during exam opportunities A3 and A4.
- Thanks to various requests from the WLT to make computer user areas more accessible to students, a working group was established, who has subsequently developed institutional regulations for access to study venues. Planning is under way to identify staff and financial resources to allow extended hours of operation.
- The **late start of the 2021 academic year on 15 March** (as Grade 12 results will only be known on 23 February) means fewer available class days as well as condensed assessment periods. The WLT discussed the implications this would have for both SU's learning and teaching offering and the format/duration of assessments.

Workstream 3: Staff (human resources, health and well-being)

Chair: Prof Nico Koopman

The workstream for staff (WS) has continued advising on staff matters against the backdrop of COVID-19, and within the framework of the University's values of excellence, compassion, accountability, respect and equity. A communiqué sent on 2 October encouraged staff to take leave for the sake of their health and well-being.

Levels 1 and 2: Despite the further relaxation of the lockdown, physical distancing regulations and other measures still affect arrangements for staff to return to the workplace.

The ICBC has approved the WS's recommendation for staff to continue to work from home as far as possible, as arranged with their respective line managers. Where environments and line managers require staff to return to the office, health and safety measures and protocols are to be put in place.

SU's two main aims for the remainder of 2020 are to complete the academic programme and ensure institutional sustainability. The assumption is that where line managers require staff to return to the office, this will be for the purpose of advancing these two aims.

2021 academic year: Preparing for the 2021 academic year might require staff to return to campus. However, a specific return date is not being pursued. Instead, a number of factors seem to suggest that a phased and diversified return to campus in various environments and by different individuals would be the best option.

Workstream 4: Communications, social impact and external relations

Chair: Prof Hester Klopper

The workstream for communications, social impact and external relations (WCSIER) contributed several protocols and recommendations to the ICBC during the reporting period:

- Recommendations on support for international students have been accepted by the ICBC. A protocol for international travel to attend conferences has also been approved, and will be updated as travel restrictions change.
- Based on SU's bereavement protocol for students, a process flow for reporting student deaths has been compiled.
- After numerous requests for **SU-branded masks**, the WCSIER made a recommendation in this regard, which the ICBC approved. The Matie Shop will now be selling branded masks, while Purchasing will provide unbranded ones.
- [SU's dedicated COVID-19 webpage](#), including the section with frequently asked questions, is updated regularly by the Corporate Communication and Marketing Division (CCMD). We have received praise for the comprehensive, up-to-date information shared on this page.
- CCMD also maintains a grid used to improve the scheduling of communication to staff and students. The same grid is used for SU's reporting to the DHET.

In a survey on lessons learnt from this year's experience, WCSIER members said that the workstream has created synergy and opportunities for cross-functional collaboration and team operations.

Workstream 5: Campus operations

Chair: Ms Nicolette van den Eijkel

The workstream for campus operations has primarily been involved in ensuring that SU complies with lockdown regulations, and readying our campuses for the return of staff and students.

Workplace plans and protocols have been amended in line with lockdown level 1. An increase has been noted in the number of staff and students on SU's campuses, but daily numbers remain relatively low. A major concern is **compliance with social distancing and mask wearing**.

The workstream has introduced a booking system to open computer user areas to students who have not been formally invited back to campus. This allows those who live nearby and whose home environments are not conducive to studying to access these facilities.

Academic buildings have reported a number of COVID-positive cases, but the infections did not originate on campus. In terms of residence students, there have been ten cases who tested positive for COVID since the start of lockdown, and the relevant protocols are working well.

Workstream 6: Finance and legal

Chair: Mr Manie Lombard

The mandate of the workstream for finance and legal is to manage the financial and legal implications of COVID-19 for SU.

Student fees: In May, several mitigation measures student fees were announced, which included that no levies would be charged for student parking, sports clubs, house cash fees and Private Student Organisation (PSO) activities. Following the easing of the lockdown and the gradual resumption of activities, these levies were discussed with the relevant student and other governing bodies. The ICBC has subsequently approved the charging of new levies to student accounts.

Cash flow and financial sustainability: Cash flow forecasts continue to be managed on a daily, monthly and annual basis as new information on COVID-19 becomes available. Management is satisfied that the measures taken to date are sufficient to ensure financial sustainability over a six-year planning horizon.

Workstream 7: Research/Medical Advisory Committee

Chair: Prof Eugene Cloete

Travel: This committee has advised the ICBC that national air travel for business purposes may be approved, as long as protocols are observed and health checks done. Small conferences/meetings may be permitted, but with strict adherence to all protocols.

Face-to-face interviews for research purposes: A new protocol has been adopted for in-person research interviews. The different research ethics committees should approve applications.

1.2 Legal services in the time of COVID-19

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Legal Services Division shifted its focus to the legislative framework published by government to manage the pandemic. Internal stakeholders were provided with guidance, advice and input on various **COVID-19 related queries**. More than 20 legal notes have been drafted to date, explaining pandemic-related legislative matters and providing direction on related legal issues. Some of these have been updated several times as the legal landscape changed through the various levels of lockdown.

Commercial Contracts initially experienced a slight decrease in workload. However, as restrictions were eased and SU environments started implementing new ways of working, the pace picked up dramatically. This was in large part due to a sharp increase in the number of loan agreements enabling students to book out SU assets so as to continue with their studies remotely. Having to go digital all of a sudden initially proved somewhat challenging, but new processes and procedures have since been implemented.

When the lockdown was implemented, some **student disciplinary hearings** needed to be postponed, as not all information was available and accessible, which resulted in backlogs. Challenges such as poor or no internet connectivity, software incompatibility and difficulties with securing students and staff members' consent for online hearings further contributed to delays. Fortunately, most of these issues have been resolved. But cases are increasing as online classes and examinations have seen a surge in student disciplinary matters regarding academic misconduct.

Another focus during the reporting period has been to amend the **Disciplinary Code for Students**. Stakeholders are currently being consulted. The code will also be digitised with a view to the new SUNStudent system.

1.3 COVID-19-related internal communication

Webpage: The dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#) on the University's website was created to function as a hub for all our communication relating to the coronavirus disease. Links to the page are included in various other forms of communication as a matter of course. As the situation and related communication needs unfolded, the webpage has been adapted to meet requirements. From 25 June to 30 September, the English page received 16 915 visitors, of whom 10 172 were regulars, while the Afrikaans page had 1 680 visitors, of whom 1 024 were regulars.

Mailers: For this reporting period, CCDM distributed ten mass mailers to staff and students. These communiqués were well received and opening rates ranged between 62,4% and 75%, well above the industry standard. In some instances, the mailers were followed by SMSs referring students to important information in the mailers and on our COVID-19 page. The weekly staff e-newsletters, info@StellenboschUni and news@stellenboschuni, continue to be used to consolidate the latest COVID-19-related news.

Social media: Social media posts are used to reinforce our COVID-19 messaging, and to direct stakeholders to more comprehensive information on our dedicated webpage. COVID-19 messages, especially those relating to academic matters, have been received



with great interest on SU's social media channels.

As some students started returning to campus, CCMD launched a **#backtocampus** awareness campaign on social media (examples above). The campaign, which highlights COVID-19 safety measures, had already reached 285 003 people at the time of writing.

1.4 SU in the news (27 Aug–26 Oct 2020)

*(All items in **blue** below are hyperlinked; please click to access.)*

According to media monitoring agency PEAR, SU generated the **highest number of newsclips** of all South African universities in October (up from second in September and fourth in August), with UCT and UJ in second and third place respectively. The subset “**research and innovation**” was the main contributor (here too, SU ended first in October, up from second in September and third in August). With regard to **faculty**-related coverage, Economic and Management Sciences took the lead in terms of overall volume for October, followed by Medicine and Health Sciences.

In the time of **COVID-19**, our experts continued to provide the media with valuable content and comment, further cementing the University's reputation as an innovative and socially responsible institution. For instance, the latest [NIDS-CRAM](#) report was distributed to the media on 30 September, and again resulted in extensive media coverage in [Daily Maverick](#), [Weekend Argus](#), [Business Day](#) and [Mail & Guardian](#), as well as on [SABC News](#), [Bizcommunity](#), [Transafrica Radio.net](#) and [The Conversation](#), among others.

[Quintin the robot](#) too generated some great publicity for the University. The innovation was reported on in [Cape Times](#), [Sowetan](#), [The Herald](#) and [Die Burger](#), as well as on [IOL](#), [Times Live](#), [Maroela Media](#), [SABC News \(web\)](#), [SABC News \(TV\)](#) and Cape Talk ([insert 1](#) and [insert 2](#)).

Other COVID-19 related examples include the following:

- [Innovative Covid-19 treatment saves lives and healthcare resources](#) (Cape Times, Cape Argus, CCFM, Engineering News, IOL, Yiba, Health24, MatieMedia)
- [Stellenbosch University involved in testing a promising Covid-19 vaccine](#) (Die Burger, Eikestadnuus, Tygerburger, Smile FM, CCFM, Bush Radio, IOL, Yiba, BizNews)

Of course, being a leading research-intensive institution, SU also continued with various **other research efforts** over the past while. Many of them attracted significant media attention:

- [Small fish species from the Serengeti named after Sir David Attenborough](#) (Cape Times, Beeld, Star, Witness, Beeld, Cape Talk, RSG, Maroela Media)
- [Water retention and recycling initiatives can alleviate water scarcity](#) (Cape Argus, Die Burger, Cape Talk, Engineering News, IOL)
- [World's largest experiment shows shack fires move with devastating speed](#) (Mail & Guardian, Cape Argus, Citizen, Daily Dispatch, Star, Daily Maverick, IOL, CCFM, Cape Talk, Times Live, The South African)
- [Sustainable wood-based housing market possible in SA](#) (Daily Voice, Mercury, Cape Times, Cape Argus, Die Burger, Pretoria News, Smile FM, Business Insider, Engineering News, Cape Talk, 702)
- [Research dives deep to understand climate impacts on whales](#) (Die Burger, Cape Argus, Tygerburger, Business Standard, Yiba, Moneyweb)
- [Impact of solar towers on birds investigated](#) (Citizen, Noordkaap Bulletin, Times Live, Dispatch Live, Sfrica24, Engineering News, Cape Talk, Yiba)
- [Individual dolphin calls used to estimate population size and movement in the wild](#)

(The Witness, Sunday Times, Cape Times, Mercury, Cape Argus, Beeld, Mail & Guardian, Cape Talk, IOL, Times Live, RSG, Business Insider)

Institutional news that featured in the media included the following:

- [SU among world’s best for research excellence and innovation](#) (Eikestadnuus, Businesstech, capetownetc, The Careers Portal, Africa Feeds)
- [Stellenbosch University strengthens academic and psychosocial support for students](#) (Cape Argus early edition, Cape Argus late edition, News24, Yiba, Bizcommunity, Smile FM)
- [SU partners with the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation to drive student success](#) (Bizcommunity, Yiba, News24, SA Life, 360News, MatieMedia)
- [Prof Deresh Ramjugernath appointed as SU’s new Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching](#) (Die Burger, Netwerk24, MatieMedia)
- [New SRC chair vows to address student issues](#) (Die Burger, Cape Argus, The Star, Eikestadnuus, Netwerk24, stellenboschnews.com, The Daily Vox)
- [#Train4Fees campaign crosses the finish line](#) (Eikestadnuus, Die Burger, Weekend Argus, Helderberg Gazette, Cape Times, Cape Argus, Yiba, IOL)

Thought leadership: Our academic staff continue to make SU research accessible to external audiences by writing thought leadership pieces for [The Conversation](#). Over the reporting period, 18 of our contributors produced 16 articles, which collectively yielded just over 300 000 reads.

Human capital: According to PEAR’s media tracking of individuals at SU, 239 media clippings in October referred to the University’s human capital. This is seen as a key contributor to media coverage, especially in the “Research and innovation” subset.

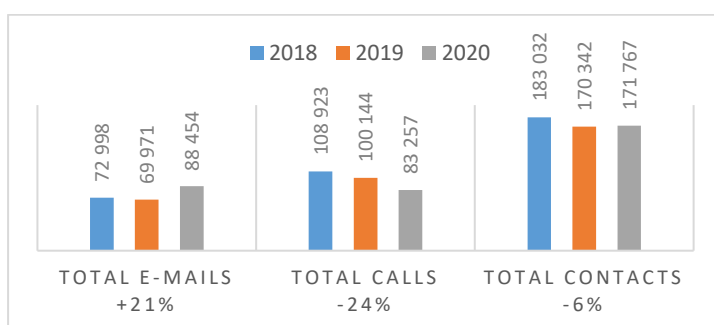
In addition, SU staff and students again produced a large number of **op-eds, features and columns** (see **ADDENDUM**). The Media Office also furnished the press with a **lists of experts** for Women’s Day, 9 August.

1.5 SU podcasts

SU’s podcast channel, [talks@stellenboschuni](#), offers our experts a platform to discuss their work outside the traditional forms of academic discourse. Since August, more than 20 episodes have been recorded, including conversations about [Women’s Month](#), [what to study](#) and [Heritage Day](#). Podcasts are available on the [SU website](#) via the following services: [Anchor](#), [iTunes](#), [Google](#), [Pocket Casts](#), [Breaker](#) and [Spotify](#).

1.6 Contact and Client Services Centre

Up to the end of September, the Contact and Client Services Centre attended to **more than 170 000** e-mails and phone calls for the year. Overall, this is more than last year but less than 2018, although mails have increased and phone calls have decreased (see below). On average, consultants attend to 100 contacts per day.



Clients served are predominantly students, whether prospective or currently enrolled. Calls from prospective students usually spike in January when the matric results are released, and again during the application cycle from March to June. For enrolled students, registration at the start of the year normally triggers enquiries in large numbers.

1.7 Campus health in the time of COVID-19

Our Campus Health Service (CHS) plays a key part in facilitating a safe return to campus for **staff and students** alike. Clinical personnel continue to provide assistance with performing health risk assessments of infrastructure, and to screen staff for co-morbidities.

CHS doctors participated in 16 coronavirus-related webinars on clinical matters in the reporting period. They also communicated on various platforms about limiting the spread of the virus.

1.8 Fundraising highlights

Donations received for the period January to September 2020 are **29% up** compared to the corresponding period in 2019.

During the second semester, our Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) Division worked closely with a variety of internal stakeholders to ensure that all relevant documents and processes are in place to receive the three approved **Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF)** grants (digitising the Tygerberg Hospital COVID-19 ICU, online student support, and the Dell Young Leaders programme).

DAR also facilitated a donation of R1,75 million from the **Oppenheimer Memorial Trust**. This is aimed at ensuring that our undergraduate students stay on track with their studies and are resilient within the changed context of emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment.

The **SIOC (Sishen Iron Ore Company) Community Development Trust** has donated R12,6 million since the beginning of 2020 to support the activities of the Stellenbosch University Centre for Pedagogy (SUNCEP), having made additional funding available to help counter the impact of the pandemic. In 2019, the trust was a first-time donor to the SU and donated R7,1 million for the year.

The **Allan Gray Orbis Foundation** donated R4,3 million for 56 full-cost bursaries, which represents an increase from last year's R3,5 million for 42 full-cost bursaries.

We have received R1,7 million of the R2,5 million pledged by the **Moshal Scholarship Program**. They will pay an additional R1,1 million to students directly.

Het Jan Marais Nationale Fonds has donated R4 520 000 this year – for the SU Woordfees and its WOW project, emergency fund bursaries, the SU Law Clinic, the SU Museum's schools outreach project, and for our Department of Afrikaans and Dutch.

Other highlights include the following:

- R2,1 million from the **Minerals Education Trust Fund** for a programme in Chinese studies offered by the Department of Modern Foreign Languages in our Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- R2,1 million from the **Albert Wessels Trust**, with the largest portion going to the Rector's Strategic Staff Fund and postgraduate bursaries in the Faculty of Education
- R1,4 million from **Gautrain** for TRAC, a Mathematics and Physical Science intervention
- R1,4 million from **Mediclinic** for postgraduate bursaries for SUNHEART, our specialist cardiology research centre. We also signed a new R5 million agreement with the hospital group that will start in 2021 and extend over three years.
- R1,3 million from **ABSA** for bursaries for ten AgriSciences first-years
- R790 000 from payment aggregator **Pay@** for student bursary support in line with broad-based black economic empowerment

#Train4Fees campaign

The ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has been felt far and wide. It also affected many of our student athletes, who lost their financial backing because of the economic damage inflicted on businesses, donors and families alike. In June, DAR and Maties Sport launched the #Train4Fees campaign to help student athletes cover their **student fees**.

The three-month campaign asked the public either to donate funds to various fundraisers who had volunteered for the initiative, or to join the campaign directly by running, cycling, skateboarding, powerwalking ... whatever fitness activity they enjoy.

Alumni, coaches, staff, students, companies, trust funds and other friends of the University worldwide supported the campaign, ensuring that our student athletes would be able to complete the 2020 academic year without having to worry about shortfalls in funding. Fundraisers included 82 Maties student athletes and 13 Maties Sport staff from various sporting codes.

By the end of the campaign, 109 people had actively fundraised for the campaign, and a collective **61 725 km** had been covered – a distance equal to **circling the planet one-and-a-half times!** The **nearly R1,9 million raised** through **481 donations** has provided at least **44 of our student athletes** with a lifeline in a year of unprecedented challenges. We are grateful towards each contributor.

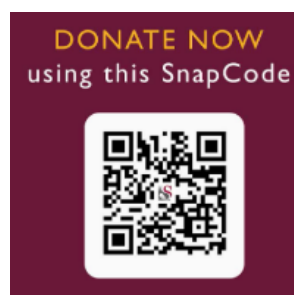
#MaskedMasterpieces campaign

On 1 August, outdoor artworks with a difference went up in five locations across Stellenbosch. All the figures depicted in the oversized (approximately 5 m x 3 m) copies of famous South African paintings are wearing superimposed masks to underline the importance of this preventative measure in combating coronavirus disease.

#MaskedMasterpieces is a public art project launched by DAR as a fundraising initiative for student **bursaries**. The other partners in this collaborative venture are the **Rupert Museum**, the **Norval Foundation**, **Delaire Graff**, **Investec** and our own **SU Museum**.



Pedestrians pass by one of the #MaskedMasterpieces in Stellenbosch. (Picture: Financial Mail, 31 August 2020)



The images provide a platform to donate by way of a SnapScan code next to each artwork. The donations will help fund students in the “**missing middle**” bracket – those who come from households who earn more than the cut-off for state funding, yet less than what is required to support a student at university. The economic impact of COVID-19 has made the plight of this group even worse. More than **R1 million** has been raised so far. Please feel free to contribute!

Thanks to CCMD’s efforts, the campaign has generated a lot of publicity. It featured on TV and radio, in print media and on social media. **Stellenbosch Municipality** has requested that the works remain up until 31 March 2021.

1.9 SU rebranding project

What started out as a brand refresh project for SU at the beginning of 2019, has since evolved into the development of a **new brand identity** for our institution.

The branding route has been adjusted based on **valuable input** gained from the previous institutional consultative phase, as well as the constructive input and appeals by **Senate** for a wider participatory process. A clear call has been made to ensure that the new visual identity reflects **SU's vision** to become "Africa's leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society". A new institutional logo should therefore reflect more than just a refreshed visual identity, as per the initial directive. Instead, it should unequivocally demonstrate SU's commitment to **transformation**.

CCMD has embarked on a revised **engagement process** in line with **Council's** decision of June 2020 that Council will finally approve the SU visual brand identity. The brand positioning strategy, visual brand identity and unified brand architecture will be embedded in SU's vision, mission, institutional values and core strategic themes. The amended process ensures **broad institutional participation**. It includes structured information-sharing and engagement sessions, facilitated workshops and an online survey, all aimed at consulting key institutional stakeholder groups.

In October, 17 interactive sessions were conducted on MS Teams with a broad range of stakeholders, including the Brand Reference Group, the Institutional Transformation Committee, the Visual Redress Committee, academic and non-academic staff from faculties, PASS staff, student leaders and alumni. Altogether **347 stakeholders participated** in these sessions, which were held in the spirit of inclusivity, consultation and joint sense-making.

Parallel to these sessions, another stakeholder engagement opportunity was provided in the form of an electronic questionnaire, which was available from 6 to 23 October. Staff, students, alumni and Council members were invited to participate and **775 responses** were received. The content of the electronic survey mirrored that of the interactive sessions.

The engagement parameters included the approved new brand **positioning strategy**, the brand **narrative** and the institutional **slogan**, "saam vorentoe, forward together, masiye phambili". The co-design parameters include the need for the new visual identity to be grounded in **Vision 2040** and aligned with our proposed **visual redress policy**. Because of brand equity, we will retain maroon as our primary **institutional colour**, supported by gold as a secondary colour.

The input solicited during the engagement process will inform the **design brief** to guide the appointed professional brand agency Boomtown in creating a new visual identity. To ensure sufficient time for engagement with students, staff and alumni, the plan is to table the final proposal for Council's approval in the new year. The engagement and approval process will follow the **statutory route** of recommendations, thus including submissions to the Institutional Forum and Senate, and engagement with the SRC, and ending with **Council for final approval**.

1.10 SU code of conduct

The first phase of creating a code of conduct for SU has commenced. The code will describe specific **behaviour and practices that are required, acceptable and limited/prohibited** in the pursuit of SU's values. A core working group has been constituted, and is currently working on a revised timeline as well as a framework document for consultation.

1.11 Transformation Indaba

SU's third Transformation Indaba was held online on 22 October. The annual event creates an opportunity for University stakeholders to reflect on and discuss issues of transformation.

The **keynote** speaker was **Prof André Keet**, SU Council member and the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC): Social Responsiveness and Transformation at Nelson Mandela University. He said that the higher education sector had the capacity to play a significant part in the pursuit of transformation and equality throughout South Africa. In his **welcoming** address, **Prof Nico Koopman**, SU's DVC: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel, confirmed that SU had committed itself to be a place of dignity, healing, justice, freedom and equality for all.

Topics explored include the rebranding of the University, visual redress, our COVID-19 response, the anti-GBV report, transformation as a staff KPA, the Siyakhula programme, and 'The Article'. A Transformation Indaba **report** will be compiled for circulation early next year.

Although this annual event is useful, Dr Claire Kelly, acting head of our Transformation Office, reminded us that **transformation was an ongoing effort**, requiring our attention all year round.

1.12 Campus renewal

Capital works on our campuses came to an abrupt halt when the COVID-19 lockdown was imposed on 27 March, but have since resumed in line with the new regulations. All construction sites and workers have **adjusted well** to the revised COVID-19 regulations and protocols, and none of our 38 construction sites reported any COVID-19 positive cases in the reporting period.

Nonetheless, the pandemic is affecting the entire construction industry in terms of availability of material and specialised equipment that has to be imported. The most significant impact at this stage is a shortage of all cementitious and steel sheeting products. The long lead times for these items are **delaying some of our projects** by up to 30 working days.

The Project Management Office is monitoring the situation closely and will register risks if the impact on our built environment gets any more severe. Updates on significant projects follow below.

Victoria Street NMT project

Construction on the Victoria Street non-motorised transport (NMT) project commenced on 3 June (pictured right). It entails new potable water mains, IT sleeves, manholes and paving.

The paving will improve the mobility experience of both students and the general public. A first of its kind on our Stellenbosch campus, the project will provide **pedestrian pathways**, tactile paving for persons with **impaired vision**, and **bicycle lanes – all in one**.



Decanting facility



Our new decanting facility in Hammanshand Road, opposite the Engineering complex, will serve as **temporary office space** for staff who need to vacate their buildings for renovation work. It is an impressive, modern building with state-of-the-art fittings and furniture (pictured left). The building consists of two identical blocks that are linked with an enclosed bridge. It can accommodate over 210 people. Ample parking is provided, along with beautiful landscaping. Finishing touches are being added in preparation for project completion.

Jan Mouton Learning Centre

The Jan Mouton Learning Centre is **99% complete** (pictured right). The business rescue practitioners have agreed to have a senior representative on-site three days a week, who will monitor progress in collaboration with two site managers. Practical and works completion is scheduled to be finalised by the end of November.

The tender for loose furniture for the lecture rooms was finalised and furniture delivery has commenced. The specifications for soft seating are being finalised, and will be put out to tender shortly.



Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering building



The Mechanical and Mechatronic (M&M) Engineering building renovation project reached practical completion on 9 September. Final systems commissioning and end-user training are in full swing. Works completion and final project close-out are scheduled for **February 2021**. The building will serve as a catalyst for further renewal projects in the Engineering complex.

The new M&M Building extends over six levels and includes a 311-seater computer user facility for students, three electronic classrooms with 469 seats, and a mechatronics laboratory with 51 workstations (pictured left).

Huis ten Bosch

The Huis ten Bosch fire repair and upgrade project is **46% complete**. The completion of levels 2 and 3 has been prioritised so that students can move into the bedrooms on these floors towards the end of January 2021. The priority list for completion also includes half of the dining room, as well as adequate access to all completed areas. The target completion date for all other work – level 1, the courtyards and other external areas – is March 2021.

Biomedical Research Institute (BMRI)

At the time of writing this report, BMRI phase 1, which includes the construction of the new building and the parking area to its north, was scheduled for completion by 6 November (pictured right). **Some occupants have already moved in.** Commissioning of systems, system demonstrations and training have commenced and are progressing well.



Phase 2 will comprise the refurbishment of levels 4 and 5 of the existing Fisan building, as well as of a plant room on level 6. The basement extension between the Clinical and Education buildings has been completed. Approval has been granted to proceed with landscaping on top.

New art installation celebrates Constitution



On 4 November, we unveiled a new art installation in front of our iconic Old Main Building (Ou Hoofgebou) in Ryneveld Street to celebrate the Constitution of South Africa. The installation comprises three metal plates that display the preamble to this ground-breaking document in three languages – **Afrikaans, English** and **isiXhosa**. It was designed by well-known landscape artist and sculptor **Strijdom van der Merwe**, who used water-jet technology to cut out the words.

The Constitution of South Africa, 1996, lays the foundation for a democratic and open society, and the principle of transformative constitutionalism is central to contemporary legal education. The 134-year-old Old Main Building has housed our Faculty of Law since the Faculty's inception in 1921, making it an appropriate site to pay homage to the "supreme law of the Republic".

The installation was conceptualised after a comprehensive engagement process. Stakeholders consulted include the SU Visual Redress Committee, Law Faculty staff and students, SU management as well as external stakeholders. It forms part of our drive to make SU a **more inclusive** institution.

At the unveiling, I said we wanted to **unite** the University community with symbols that **heal** the wounds of the past and help us move **forward** together. The installation will serve as a constant reminder that **we have come a long way**, as a country, town and university. However, that does not mean we have arrived – to the contrary. We have a **responsibility** to protect the Constitution and make sure the promises it contains are realised.

The historical significance of the Old Main Building extends much further than being home to our Law Faculty for the past nearly 100 years. Instead of erecting a traditional monument to celebrate **Stellenbosch's 200th anniversary in 1879**, the town – especially its women – raised money for the building, which was then donated to Stellenbosch College (which later became Victoria College, and, in 1918, the University of Stellenbosch).

1.13 Coetzenburg springs back to life

There were scenes of jubilation as the Maties Sport Coetzenburg site reopened for staff at the start of October. To comply with COVID-19 protocols, staff work according to a staggered attendance roster and alternate between work-from-home and work-from-office days.

The return to **training** for hockey, aquatics, tennis and athletics – albeit limited – was also greeted with great enthusiasm. The situation is being monitored in line with the guidelines of the relevant national health and sports authorities, including the SA Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee.



Sport makes an important contribution to the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of our student athletes. Resumption of activities will have a **positive impact** on SU as well as surrounding communities who access our facilities.

The Maties Sport COVID-19 return plan was drawn up in consultation with key stakeholders, including SU's Facilities Management Division, CHS and the Institute for Sport and Exercise Medicine (ISEM). In developing the framework for the resumption of sport activities, the directives of different national sport federations were used as a guide, as were the guidelines from the South African government and the World Health Organisation. The framework explains how the return to sport activities will be facilitated **cautiously** and methodically to ensure the safety of all involved. The top priority is to preserve public health and safety and minimise the risk of virus transmission.

1.14 Environmental sustainability

SU is the custodian of **Stellenbosch mountain, Duthie reserve, Koloniesland**, as well as the **Eerste** and **Krom rivers**. These are important conservation areas, contribute to the biodiversity of the area, and promote environmental sustainability on campus.

Our approach to ecological green spaces is to manage them as recreational and sports areas, while protecting nature and mitigating the risk of fire. To this end, we have initiated the following:

- A management plan to remove alien invasive species
- Erosion control on Stellenbosch mountain, including the planting of new trees
- Providing information signage on Stellenbosch mountain
- Cleaning up rivers as part of the "Adopt a River" programme of Stellenbosch Municipality and the Cape Winelands district

Property Services are also developing an **urban landscape plan** for each SU campus, with a special focus on including indigenous and endemic vegetation that mirrors the natural biome.

Waste management

An **integrated waste management and materials handling document** has been completed for our institution. The purpose of the document is to detail programmes and interventions for sorting, reducing, reusing and recycling waste in an attempt to eliminate it from our consumption stream. The aim is to sort waste into different streams at the source, from where it can be recycled or disposed of correctly. This will ultimately divert the waste away from landfill sites. Current data puts SU's average diversion rate (recycling) **away from landfill above 60%** for 2020.

1.15 Systems renewal

Coordination between the **SUNFin** and **SUNStudent** projects remains crucial – not only for their respective success, but also for the sake of overall systems renewal at SU.

IT has assigned 36 technical staff members to the two projects, either part-time or full-time. Included in this group are several ICT architects, who are making decisions about such aspects as information security, integration, connection resilience, data archiving as well as remnant legacy platform environments.

The revised SUNFin plan has been drawn up so as to minimise delays with SUNStudent. Lessons learnt with SUNFin have also triggered exploratory activities as part of SUNStudent to timeously identify links with other SU systems for testing and inclusion in the project plan.

SUNFin

In June, the Rectorate agreed to **extend the SUNFin go-live date by six months to July 2021**, based on several factors presented by the SUNFin steering committee.

The revised SUNFin project plan and budget were approved in October. These documents consider the lessons learnt in the project to date and are based on the assumption that key Finance personnel would be **released from their normal responsibilities to focus** on the project deliverables. The business optimisation team has significantly benefited from this and is finalising outstanding business decisions, mapping new processes and realigning policies, as required.

In the meantime, the SUNFin project team has continued to achieve project deliverables:

- IT provided resources for a relatively successful iteration-2 data migration. This helped identify data quality problems, which are currently being addressed.
- An iteration 3 has been added to the project plan to allow for further SU data cleaning, and to conduct another full data load to learn as many lessons as possible before migration.
- The team continued to make good progress in terms of the integration required between the SU peripheral legacy systems and Oracle Cloud Financials (OCF).
- For the remainder of 2020, the project team will finalise testing and training strategies.

The project team is working hard to achieve successful implementation on 1 July 2021, despite the numerous challenges experienced this year. Realignment of the **Finance Division's organisational structure** and a review of roles and responsibilities will be crucial.

SUNStudent

Training and testing activities for the phase-1 capabilities to **go live on 6 April 2021** were concluded from mid-August to early October 2020 by way of daily remote sessions on MS Teams. These capabilities include **textbook ordering, recruitment and admission**. Participants described the sessions as successful and were positive that the new system would meet their requirements.

Everyone is pulling out all the stops to have the blueprint documents for all remaining capabilities reviewed and signed off. These will then be prioritised for configuration as well as testing and training to be able to go live with some capabilities in phase 2 by November 2021.

A detailed implementation plan for phases 2 and 3 as well as short courses is being finalised, covering the period from the fourth quarter of 2020 to the first quarter of 2022.

Although all stakeholders have been putting in **long hours**, it remains a **difficult balancing act** to meet project deadlines while at the same time coping with increased workloads brought about by COVID-19 contingency measures.

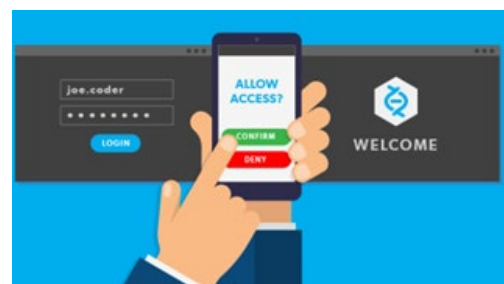
1.16 Managing ICT risks

When COVID-19 broke out, our IT Division went into overdrive to enable the rapid switch to emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment in support of our strategic theme of a thriving SU. At the same time, **cybersafety** had to remain top of mind. For this reason, two additional security functionalities – multi-factor authentication (MFA) and a secure virtual private network (VPN) – have been implemented.

MFA

Although SU had antivirus software, firewalls and encryption technology in place, it did not have MFA, which is necessity for protecting critical data.

MFA increases account security by requiring multiple forms of verification to prove a user's identity when signing into an application or a service. It was enabled on 30 July, and staff and students were asked to complete the registration process by mid-August. Registration has been voluntary to date, except for agents using the service management system for logging service requests, and for all users using the secure VPN. Thus far, **31 171 users** have registered for MFA.



Secure VPN platform



IT is responsible for enabling the University's workforce to function securely from outside the office environment. A secure VPN has been set up and installed for users to **safely connect** to the SU network from home, as if they were in their offices.

1.17 Seeking solutions for online challenges

Digital academic credentials: Our IT Division facilitated a request for a cloud solution to manage the issuing of various types of digital academic credentials. The immediate need is for short courses administered by Innovus, but a more comprehensive tender process will also deal with academic credentialing in general. Issues such as portability, security, lifelong access and open standards need to be addressed. Six international vendors have responded.

Digital signatures: IT also facilitated a request for digital signature solutions covering 11 environments across the University. Four vendors have responded and a process is under way to select and deploy the most suitable solutions.

Convocation meeting: Several options for online meetings with specific requirements – such as in-meeting motions – were tested and a product has been selected. Meeting rules also need to be revised in collaboration with the Registrar to accommodate online proceedings.

1.18 Strategic Fund

In **2019 and 2020**, a total of **R342 million** was allocated to new Strategic Fund projects, representing a huge investment by the University. The important task of **monitoring** active projects and providing regular updates to the Strategic Fund Committee (SFC) is a core function of the Division of Strategic Initiatives. Feedback occurs by means of a formal annual **status report**, which enables the committee to fulfil its governance role.

The first report was submitted to the SFC on 29 September. Although the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown have had an impact, **24 projects** (23 in category A, strategic initiatives, and one in category B, strategic high-rise projects) **could proceed** with implementation – albeit with delays. All category C projects (strategic appointments) have either been **completed** or are **in progress**. This confirms all project managers' commitment to deliver on the goals set out in their project plans.

Meanwhile, the process of reviewing our **Strategic Fund Regulation**, which was approved in 2019, has started. The regulation makes provision for applications in three main categories, one of which is further subdivided. The adoption of the regulation was followed by a period of adaptation, as well as a trial phase to evaluate the Strategic Fund processes. The current review seeks to ensure that lessons learnt are analysed and that the regulation is amended where necessary. This process will be finalised in November so that the revised regulation can take effect at the beginning of 2021.

1.19 Refinement of strategic management indicators

To refine our current set of strategic management indicators (SMIs), the Information Governance Division coordinated several detailed consultations with data owners and/or deans in the reporting period. These were aimed at performing historical analyses to serve as supplementary context for **improving existing SMI definitions** as well as data quality, completeness, applicability and availability. The SMI team also developed SMI and key performance indicator (KPI) templates with drill-down capabilities to offer **faculties and departments easy access** to data. The templates have since been distributed to deans to be used as management information.

1.20 Matie Shop

The Matie Shop, which falls under Innovus, has expanded its offering of SU merchandise (see examples below) on [Takealot](#) to make it accessible to staff, students, alumni and friends of the University countrywide. Merchandise includes clothing, bags, water bottles, zip folders, pens and keyrings. Nearly 30 cases of our special Centenary-edition Welgevallen Pinotage were sold on this platform after lockdown regulations were eased to allow for liquor sales.



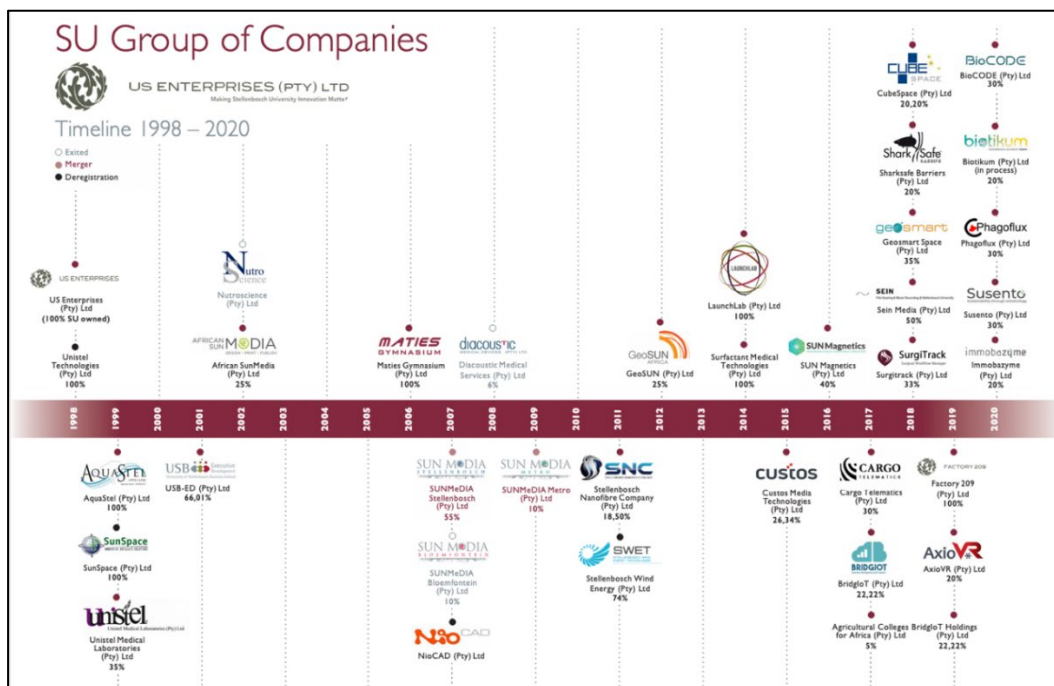
1.21 SU group of companies

Despite the COVID-19 lockdown, SU's technology transfer team has established **five new spinout** companies and raised a total investment of **R26 million** for SU projects in 2020 – all while working remotely. Measured against international standards, this is an outstanding achievement. The new companies are **BioCODE**, **Phagoflux**, **Susento**, **Biotikum** and **Immobazyme**.

The SU group of companies currently consists of **28 active companies** in various stages of development, several of which managed to pay dividends this year notwithstanding the pandemic.

Shareholding in SU spinout companies is held in **US Enterprises (Pty) Ltd**, previously known as Innovus Technology Transfer. The change was done to separate the activities of the SU division Innovus from the holding company through which SU holds equity in its group of companies.

The timeline below illustrates how start-up activity at SU has grown over the past two decades.



1.22 Annual external audit of staff and student data

This year's external audit of SU's 2019 student and staff data was completed towards the end of August, which is a bit later than usual. The audit, which commenced at the beginning of June, was conducted by a new audit firm and team. This, along with the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions, contributed to the delay. Nevertheless, SU once again received a **clean audit report**, with no factual findings in conflict with audit directives and/or DHET regulations.

THEME 2: A TRANSFORMATIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 states the following in relation to delivering a **transformative student experience**: “With this intention, we want to ensure that SU is accessible to qualifying students from all backgrounds, including to students who face barriers to participation in university education. We regard it as a journey – from our first contact with prospective students until they graduate and embrace the role of alumni.” It also entails “the provision of opportunities for growth to all undergraduate and postgraduate students, including guidance, support and services from SU to enable their success.”

2.1 Report of SU's joint working groups against gender-based violence (GBV)

The joint working groups established last year to combat gender-based violence (GBV) at our institution have completed their work and published a **final report**. This lays the foundation for all stakeholders to go forward together against this scourge on our campuses and broadly in society.

The report reiterates that SU has a **zero-tolerance** approach to gender-based violence and is committed to creating an environment and institutional culture free of gender violence and advancing **equal rights** and **social justice** for all. We condemn, and will not tolerate, GBV, which is why we are mustering all the resources at our disposal to fight it.

Let me briefly provide some background. Following nationwide protests against GBV and femicide in 2019, the Anti-GBV Movement SU handed over a **memorandum** to management, to which we **responded**. In subsequent meetings, **six joint working groups** were set up to act systemically to combat GBV and address the issues raised in the memorandum as well as the reply.

A member of the Rectorate served in each of the six working groups, which also comprised representatives from University structures most relevant to the topics under discussion, as well as from the student body. The working groups reported to the Rectorate, through the Senior Director: Student Affairs, **Dr Choice Makhetha**.

The work of the respective groups centred on (1) **values and principles**, (2) **procedures and processes**, (3) **residences and structures**, (4) **mental health and alcohol and substance abuse**, (5) **training and awareness**, and (6) **safety and security**. The groups were tasked to investigate the issues and requested to make specific and implementable recommendations linked to line functions.

The working groups set about gathering information by hosting **meetings** and **discussion forums** on our Stellenbosch and Tygerberg campuses, and distributing **questionnaires**. To broaden the process, all students and staff were invited to submit **written inputs**.

A **draft** report was submitted to the Rectorate, to which we provided feedback, followed by the final report, which has since been distilled into a **draft action plan** that aims to address GBV systemically across the University over the short to medium term.

The final report and draft action plan will be **discussed** with institutional bodies and other relevant role-players with a view to **finalise** the specifics of **implementation**, including **timeframes**. Both documents will then be published on the SU website.

This work will happen through the different **RCs** at the University and will be **integrated** into the **operational** facets of our institution. Regular progress reports will be submitted to the Rectorate.

I must stress that curbing GBV is the **joint responsibility** of the entire University community. As stated in the introduction to the report, this is not a fight any group can fight on its own or separately from others. Implementation of the action plan will be monitored on an ongoing basis and progress and achievements reported regularly to the University community.

The broader context of our fight against GBV is provided by the Constitution of South Africa, the Higher Education Act, other applicable legislation and the current SU Statute (published in 2019). The South African judicial system has the responsibility to deal with criminal procedures in terms of applicable legislation.

SU has educational and safety measures to curb violence as much as possible. The University has the mandate to act in accordance with our **Disciplinary Code for Students, Policy on Unfair Discrimination and Harassment, Use of Alcohol Policy**, as well as related processes. All of these will be reviewed in relation to the recommendations and shortcomings pointed out in the report of the joint working groups, as well as the key tenets of the DHET's recently published [Policy Framework to Address GBV in the Post-School Education and Training System](#).

All our actions are rooted in our **institutional values** of excellence, compassion, accountability, respect and equity. We are opposed to all forms of harm to the dignity and well-being of individual members of our university community.

While allowing for contextual differences, SU will strive to ensure **parity** on all our **campuses** with the implementation of various measures flowing from the action plan.

I would like to join Dr Makhetha in expressing my **gratitude** to all the staff members and students who have served on the working groups. We appreciate the work done by everyone involved not only to raise concerns and grievances, but also offer constructive suggestions. We remain **committed** to collaborating with all our staff and students to intensify the institutional efforts against GBV, and to address unacceptable behaviours and practices.

2.2 Students' Representative Council (SRC)

Induction training and handover processes for the new SRC and Tygerberg Student Council (TSR) were facilitated by the Student Governance Unit in the **Centre for Student Leadership, Experiential Education and Citizenship (CSLEEC)**. The CSLEEC was formerly known as the Centre for Student Leadership and Structures in the Division of Student Affairs.

The training programme included an emphasis on the work of the **ICBC**. It was considered essential for our student representatives to understand the workings of this important structure so that they could continue their predecessors' work in the different ICBC workstreams.

The SU Statute provides for the SRC as the body that represents the interests of the student community. The Statute further affords students formal representation in SU's statutory bodies – the **Institutional Forum, faculty boards, Senate and Council**. This occurs by way of representatives elected by the SRC from the broad student community. At the time of writing this report, Student Governance and the Registrar's Division were finalising the student representation in our different statutory bodies.

The regular scheduled meetings between the Rectorate and the SRC Executive Committee are also set to continue. Any issue may be raised and discussed at these meetings, and the Executive Committee members are encouraged to provide feedback to the student community.

2.3 Dell Young Leaders Programme

SU applied to become part of the Dell Young Leaders programme in 2019. This initiative provides wrap-around support to undergraduate students from low-income backgrounds. The support offering includes **financial assistance** as well as **academic and psychosocial support** to get students to graduation and into employment.

After several selection rounds, SU was finally chosen as a partner earlier this year (read the announcement [here](#)). The **Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF)** has pledged **R191 million** for this programme, which will seek to benefit **1 000 SU students** over the next **five years**. The long-term commitment to SU is for at least ten years. **SU Council** undertook to match the top-up scholarship component of the package, which amounts to R75 million.

The MSDF has now initiated the process to select the **first cohort of our students** to participate in the programme. In our application, we had to provide extensive data regarding student enrolments, academic performance (module results and throughput rates) as well as bursary and student fee information for various professional undergraduate programmes. Our Centre for Business Intelligence (CBI) provided this data, primarily drawing on the SUN-i business intelligence system. The CBI will continue to make available data to support the Dell Young Leaders programme at SU.

A list of potential candidates from whom the first cohort of students would be selected was provided to the foundation in September. In future, academic progress reports for Dell Young Leaders beneficiaries will be submitted, as per MSDF's requirements.

2.4 Top students honoured

SU's top students across various categories were again honoured at the Rector's Awards for Excellent Achievement, which this year took the form of an online event on 1 October.

From the 175 applications and nominations received, 76 were selected to receive awards. The bulk of the awards were made for **academics** (54, including nine top master's students), while the categories of **leadership, social impact, culture** and **service provision** accounted for a combined total of 22. Some of the recipients are pictured in the collage below. Radio and TV presenter Renaldo Schwarp received the SRC award for exceptional alumni from outgoing SRC chair Lewis Mboko. [Click here](#) for a full list, and [here](#) for a video of the event.



In my opening address, I pointed out that **student success** had been a **priority** for me since I started my first term in 2015. But just as there would be no university without students, there wouldn't be one without **staff** either. Ultimately, therefore, we need one another to make the most of the ample opportunities offered by higher education.

Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel congratulated all recipients and said that SU was proud to provide development opportunities to students **both inside and outside** the classroom.

2.5 Encouraging student innovation and entrepreneurship

The **post-COVID-19 world** will require significant innovation and entrepreneurship to adjust to our new normal. Preparing Maties to be part of the solution, SU recently hosted two events aimed at stirring an entrepreneurial spirit in its students.

Innovus hosted their annual **SU Hackathon** online over the weekend of 31 July to 2 August. The theme was to develop solutions that could help small businesses function efficiently in the new, remote economy. More than 80 participants competed for their share of the R30 000 prize money with innovations in the fields of data science and financial technology (“fintech”) respectively. The sponsors were **Capitec**, **Entersekt** and **Explore**.

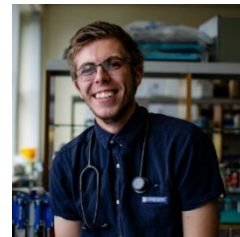


The winning **data science** team, *Designated Drivers* (see above), created an app called CAPITEC/AIR, which provides automated industry reports to help small businesses make better buying decisions. The winning entry in the **fintech challenge** belonged to *Horizon 12* (see left). Their mobile app called Skillchain enables small businesses to recruit vocationally uncertified workers into the formal economy using smart contracts and blockchain technology.

In addition, the Stellenbosch University LaunchLab hosted SU’s internal round of the **Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE)** annual intervarsity competition earlier this year. Entries chosen in this initial round – which Maties has dubbed **IdeaSmash** – go on to represent SU in the provincial and national rounds.

From the 46 entries, eight finalists were selected. Their **clever out-of-the-box ideas** ranged from a super-swift gift delivery service and a self-watering garden tray, to video-based extra classes, animal probiotics and offline banking software. All eight delivered outstanding pitches at the provincial competition hosted online in the first week of July.

SU’s **Keaton Harris** (pictured right), a medical student at Tygerberg campus, came out tops in the Western Cape for existing tech businesses. His **InforMed** is an **offline mobile healthcare translation tool** that seeks to break down language barriers between healthcare professionals and patients. At the time of writing this report, he was scheduled to represent SU at the national round in November. In addition, Keaton and his fellow SU finalists will each be receiving a share of R60 000 seed funding to develop their business ideas.



2.6 Chess, Maties!



Owing to excellent stakeholder engagement, coach Reuben Salimu enabled Maties Chess to host an **online national competition league** at a time when most other sporting codes found themselves stranded because of COVID-19 restrictions. Open to all schools and university chess clubs in South Africa, the tournament attracted **44 teams**. Run in partnership with an online chess platform, games were streamed live every Wednesday over a ten-week period and featured an MC, moderator and two commentators. Viewership exceeded 1 000, and increased as the league headed towards the final 16-team knock-out. Thanks to the publicity received as a result of this event, several groups in local communities have reached out to Maties Chess for assistance in setting up their own clubs. This is an outstanding outcome that will increase SU’s **social impact**.

SU boasts **South Africa’s senior chess champion, Daniel Barrish**, a first-year Computer Science student. He won the title at the age of 19 in December last year. We are very proud of him!

2.7 First online Global Week

SU International hosted its first online Global Week from 12 to 16 October. The purpose was to encourage **students** to take up available **mobility opportunities** – both physical and online – in 2021.

Every day had a specific theme on which the responsible coordinator delivered a presentation and facilitated a panel discussion with students via MS Teams. All sessions were recorded and uploaded to the [Global Week website](#) to allow for asynchronous engagement.

Partner institutions were requested to provide promotional material to share with SU students in preparation for the final day's live question-and-answer sessions with partner universities. These sessions facilitated direct engagement between interested students and more than 30 partner representatives. Various competitions encouraged student participation, and the programme even included an interactive online Chinese cooking class hosted by the Confucius Institute.

SU International has also started the process of developing a [hybrid mobility hub](#) to support virtual student exchanges in the future. The hub is an online support structure for staff, students and partner universities who take part in these types of engagements. Virtual exchanges will be piloted in 2021 and will be preceded by academic staff training opportunities in collaboration with the Division of Learning and Teaching Enhancement.

2.8 Residence placement

Residence placement usually concludes at the end of September. However, due to the COVID pandemic and the subsequent ICBC decision that HEMIS will not be used to determine residence replacement in 2021, the number of places available for the 2021 first-year intake has reduced by 20%. The placement cycle has also been affected by the extension of the reservation period. As a result, students are expected to be placed in their specific residences in **November** only.

2.9 Bursaries

Recruitment bursary project

SU's recruitment bursary funds the studies of academically deserving black, coloured, Indian and Asian (BCIA) candidates. Bursary offers are faculty-specific and take into account the academic composition of the application pool.

A total of 216 bursaries have been awarded with a view to **2021**, of which **195** have been **accepted** and 21 declined. All declined bursaries will be reallocated to deserving students.

Interestingly, candidates who declined the offer did so because:

- they could afford SU's fees and would be enrolling, and the bursary could therefore be given to candidates in greater financial need;
- they preferred studying closer to home and family;
- they had decided to take up an offer from another university; or
- a degree offered at another university was better suited to their planned careers.

Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme

The Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) was established as a funding model to cater for the higher education costs of South Africa's poor and "missing-middle" students (those falling in the household income brackets up to R300 000 and R600 000 respectively). The programme funds training for occupations in great demand that have been identified as critical to South Africa's economic development.

During 2020, SU received a third allocation of full-cost bursaries from ISFAP. A total of 37 offers were made to first-year SU students, of whom **ten accepted**. The 27 students who declined had already received other bursaries.

2.10 Student recruitment

School and learner engagement

Our Centre for Student Recruitment and Career Advice, in collaboration with CCMD, has found new and innovative ways to create value for learners, parents and educators in light of COVID-19.

Advisors have changed their offering from face-to-face to **online engagement**, in the form of pre-recorded videos and answers to frequently asked questions. Platforms such as MS Teams, Zoom and Google Meet allow advisors to continue with school presentations or expos, keeping the Centre connected to learners, parents and teachers, albeit not physically.

The Centre also partnered with the **Cape Career Exhibitions Association** on a joint digital marketing strategy (web, social media and YouTube), as their engagements too have gone online. And in partnership with the Western Cape Education Department, the Centre took part in a **Life Orientation** webinar aimed at Grade 11 and 12 learners, their parents and teachers.

In addition, the Centre hosted **webinars** aimed at Grade 9s (“Understanding how your subject choices may affect your future career”) and Grade 11s (“What sets SU apart, and understanding the application process”) to help learners and their parents make informed choices.

The fee for the Centre’s **psychometric assessment service** to prospective learners has been lowered out of consideration for many parents who are experiencing financial difficulties due to COVID-19. There is also a free career guidance programme on offer. Target schools have also been provided with detailed feedback and data regarding provisionally accepted learners.

Relationship building

Our Centre for Student Recruitment and Career Advice, in partnership with faculties and the rest of CCMD, presented the first online version of **Maties 101** on 29 October. As the name suggests, the event is an introduction to Maties, providing provisionally accepted students with valuable information to ease their transition to university life, which will be especially crucial for the 2021 intake. This is one of the tools we use to motivate prospective students to enrol.

In previous years, Maties 101 comprised two events hosted in Johannesburg and Stellenbosch respectively, but did not manage to reach all provisionally accepted students. The new format has broadened the reach of the initiative (see table below, showing statistics as at 2 November 2020).

The event was pre-recorded this year and consisted of one general and nine faculty videos. Links were shared with all provisionally accepted students and their parents, allowing them access as the inserts premiered. The links remain active, however, so those who had insufficient data at the time can view the videos once they gain internet access, for instance at a school or library.

VIDEO (click to view)	VIEWS	VIDEO (click to view)	VIEWS
General	7 618	Engineering	822
AgriSciences	783	Law	515
Arts and Social Sciences	1 000	Medicine and Health Sciences	815
Education	336	Science	1 000
Economic and Management Sciences	1 700	Theology	101

2.11 Scenario planning for 2022 intake

The application period for undergraduate applications with a view to 2022 will be moved from 1 March–30 June 2021 to **6 April to 31 July** to streamline the administrative processes in order to align with the national application cycle.

Grade 11 end-of-year results (obtained in **2020**) will still be used as the primary academic consideration for provisional offers. However, as these examinations may potentially be compromised due to COVID-19, applicants will have the option to submit their **Grade 12 mid-year** examination results (obtained in **2021**) if their Grade 11 examinations were indeed affected. Confirmation from affected schools will be required as part of the application requirements.

National benchmark tests (NBTs) will **not** be used as a **compulsory** institutional instrument for admission purposes, as this would exclude many of our applicants. There are two exceptions, however, namely (i) highly selective programmes, such as those in the faculties of Medicine and Health Sciences as well as Law, which might still want to use NBTs for the 2022 intake, and (ii) School of Tomorrow candidates applying to any SU faculty, who would also be required to write NBTs.

THEME 3: PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND INCLUSIVE NETWORKS

This core strategic theme is discussed as follows in [Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024](#): “As part of our mission, we at SU have declared our willingness to influence and change the world around us through collaboration, as well as to be responsive and embrace change ourselves. Central to the mission is the notion that what happens in the world shapes our research, teaching and learning as well as our engagement, and that what happens at our university matters to the world. As a university, we are committed to South Africa and Africa. At the same time, we are intensely aware of our role in and relation to the international arena. In order to inspire and be inspired, SU will **engage and collaborate** with **stakeholders**, the **communities** we serve, **industry, government** and our **university partners** at a **local, regional, continental** and **global** level. Our collaboration and engagement approach is congruent with our values, with specific reference to respect, compassion and equity.”

3.1 Social Impact Symposium

The Division of Social Impact (DSI) hosted its annual Social Impact Symposium online on 3 September. Staff, students and external partners tuned in.

The key objective was to explore the **effect of COVID-19** on social impact both locally and globally. Symposium participants delved into the challenges faced by practitioners and communities during this time, and discussed the opportunities created by, and lessons learned from, the crisis.

Dr Leslie van Rooi, senior director of Social Impact and Transformation, directed the programme and highlighted key social impact projects SU has been involved in throughout the pandemic.

One of SU’s major collaborations has been through the **#StellenboschUnite** aid action group, which was founded at the start of the pandemic to assist communities affected by the crisis. Other partners in this initiative are Stellenbosch Municipality, Visit Stellenbosch, the Stellenbosch Civil Advocacy Network (SCAN) and the Greater Stellenbosch Development Trust.

SU contributed R1,6 million, just over a third of the total financial donations received by #StellenboschUnite. More than 33 000 food parcels and nearly 100 000 litres of soup were distributed to vulnerable households and individuals.

For more information, please visit [SU’s Social Impact website](#).

3.2 Social Impact publication

In September, our Division of Social Impact published *Social Impact @ Stellenbosch University 2019*, an inspiring collection of success stories about collaboration between the University and various communities last year.

The publication looks at SU-wide contributions to the University’s [seven social impact themes](#). These themes align with the United Nations’ sustainable development goals, South Africa’s National Development Plan as well as the strategic goals of the Western Cape Provincial Government.

It also features articles on Matie Community Service, an innovative approach to battling tik abuse, the Kayamandi River Partnership, a school gardening partnership, youth entrepreneurship, and raising TB awareness through hip-hop and rap.

Click here for the online [English](#) version, and here for the [Afrikaans](#).

3.3 External transformation partnerships and networks

Dialogue on transformation

Our Transformation Office (TO) is a coordinating partner of the [Inclusive Practice Speaker Series](#), a collaboration between SU, the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The purpose of the seminar series is to encourage meaningful dialogue on transformation praxis between universities, civil society, business and government.

A seminar entitled “Beyond task teams, investigations and transformation committees: Confronting Racism in Higher Education?” was hosted online on 31 August. The speakers were Profs Thabo Msibi (UKZN), Nomusa Makhubu (UCT) and Desiree Lewis (UWC). The discussion was moderated by Dr Asanda Benya (UCT). [Click here for a recording](#).

Transformation Managers’ Forum (TMF) colloquium

The TO also helps coordinate the new **Transformation Managers’ Forum (TMF) colloquium**, which takes the form of seminars Friday mornings. The intention is to bring together transformation practitioners, functionaries and academics of higher education institutions.

The colloquium centres on the categories of the [Transformation Barometer](#), a benchmarking document for transformation practice in South African higher education. The first seminar on 2 October, which focused on institutional culture, featured a presentation by Prof Rozena Maart (UKZN) and was facilitated by TMF chair Mr George Mvalo.

3.4 Agreements and engagement with partner institutions

The following agreements were concluded with partner universities in the period August to October:

Institution	Country	Status	Content	Type
University of Bern	Switzerland	New	Summer school	Institutional
University of Passau	Germany	New	Student mobility	Faculty
West Virginia University	United States	Renewal	Memorandum of understanding, including student exchange	Institutional
George Mason University	United States	New	Student exchange	Institutional

SU has continued its external relations and partner engagements through online check-ins, bilateral research-focused meetings and virtual delegation visits – thereby overcoming COVID-19 travel restrictions. Details of recent engagements follow below.

Leiden University: SU and Leiden University have been partners since 1992, with strong links in the field of law. The partnership focuses predominantly on student mobility. An SU International meeting with Leiden counterparts on 17 August explored the challenges experienced during COVID-19, some technical and administrative aspects of student exchange, and additional support for joint PhDs and staff mobility.

Hamburg Network: SU and other partners of Hamburg University were invited to participate in a series of webinars as part of the Hamburg Network meetings, which had to move online in 2020. Four sessions have been hosted already. SU, Northwestern University and Hamburg University met on 10 September for a debriefing session and to discuss the way forward.

International Network of Universities: Also on 10 September, SU International met with the International Network of Universities (INU) to discuss SU's participation in this structure. Due to COVID-19, we have only observer status this year, but plans are afoot to activate our full membership next year.

TU Dresden: Water researchers at TU Dresden and counterparts from the SU Water Institute met on 15 September. Ideas were discussed and initial links explored. The aim was to identify synergies and potential joint research activities to collaborate on. Follow-up meetings with smaller, themed research groups were suggested, as well as identifying possible funding calls to respond to.

Leipzig University: SU takes part in several ongoing activities with Leipzig University, who has been our partner since 1998. A check-in took place on 28 September to maintain the connection between the two institutions. The meeting focused on virtual and hybrid mobility, opportunities for collaborative online international learning (COIL) and joint funding. While SU is still a novice in terms of COIL projects, Leipzig is keen to share with us the experience they have built up in this area. Opportunities were also identified for co-teaching on summer school programmes. Upcoming joint funding opportunities are being explored.

3.5 Intra-Africa Mobility

SU International's Centre for Collaboration in Africa (CCA) is facilitating two new intra-Africa mobility programmes, which are supported by the European Commission as part of its 2019/20 funding call.

The first programme, **Intra-Africa Education for Laser-based Manufacturing (ELbM)**, is coordinated by Botswana International University of Science and Technology. This consortium engages in research collaboration and educational outreach to develop postgraduate curricula for training in laser-based manufacturing technology relevant to the labour market. ELbM will offer 53 mobility opportunities for students (both full-time and exchanges at master's and PhD level) as well as staff.

The second programme, **Intra-Africa Mobility of African Scholars for Transformational Engineering Training (MASTET)**, is coordinated by the University of Buea in Cameroon. MASTET brings together higher education institutions with well-established postgraduate engineering programmes for mutual support, synergy and capacity building to help bridge gaps in engineering skills and technological development in Africa. This €1,4 million project is funded by the European Union for five years (2020–2024).

3.6 Alumni engagement via online events

Our Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) Division has been hosting a broad range of online engagement events. These provided our alumni, donors and friends with various opportunities to stay connected to SU despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on traditional, in-person events. The **shift towards the online space** has given DAR the chance to refine this aspect of its outreach efforts in a targeted and collaborative way. They plan on continuing with a hybrid model going into 2021, which will include both in-person and online events as part of SU's 2021 alumni calendar.

One of the highlights this reporting period was the launch of **SWAN** (Stellenbosch Women Alumni Network) as part of Women's Month in August, with Dr Marlene le Roux (also **see 4.4**) as the inaugural guest speaker. SWAN aims to bring together Matie women through mentorship programmes, leadership training, roundtable discussions and strategic conversations. A total of 421 alumnae tuned in for the launch event, making it the most popular online event to date.

Broad-based alumni-focused fundraising campaigns: DAR ran a series of mini-campaigns on social media in the reporting period to share relevant information on SU's response to COVID-19 with our alumni, donors and friends. These included #MatiesMakeADifference, #Train4Fees and #MaskedMasterpieces. The Division intends concluding the year with the project #Action4Inclusion in partnership with the research chair of social justice, the Social Impact and Transformation Division and the Registrar's Division.

Donor engagement: We embarked on a donor thank-you campaign in October, reaching out to our pool of loyal and committed donors. [Click here](#) for my video message.

Faculty alumni engagement: DAR hosted an online Alumni Relations faculty forum on 30 September and will collaborate further with faculties around the 2021 alumni engagement calendar.

Alumni and donor communication: In the reporting period, alumni and donors could opt in or out to (un)subscribe to various pieces of communication in line with the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act. By 30 September, 1 082 individuals had used the “Update your details” hyperlink. More than 50 mailers were distributed to various alumni groupings.

3.7 Woordfees, WOW and SU Choir

Due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a number of additional logistical factors, it is no longer possible to host next year’s **Toyota SU Woordfees** in early March, as originally planned. Therefore, a decision has been made to move the event to **17–24 September**.

WOW (Woorde Open Wêrelde) activities too had to be scaled down due to the pandemic. Both the annual spelling festival and theatre festival moved online. Moreover, the programme introduced the WOW Classrooms platform to help Grade 12 learners prepare for their final exams. More than 50 teachers have prepared lessons specifically for this platform.

During the reporting period, the **SU Choir** made the following performances available on their [YouTube](#) channel: [Joshua!](#), [De Profundis](#), [Salve Regina](#), [Angel](#), [I Lived](#) and [The Rainmaker](#).

3.8 ‘Healthy’ Partnerships



Our Campus Health Service (CHS) and Institute of Sport and Exercise Medicine (ISEM) have joined forces to provide sports medicine services to the **Stellenbosch Football Club** (SFC). The SFC plays in the Premier Soccer League (PSL) and is hosted at the Stellenbosch Academy of Sport (SAS). This relationship provides our CHS sports physicians with the opportunity to manage athletes’ safe return to competitive sport following the COVID-19 interruptions. CHS will also be providing emergency medical support at all PSL matches played at our Danie Craven stadium, which is the new match-day home of the SFC.

CHS is helping to establish a physiotherapy practice at **Winelands Orthopaedic Hospital** along with SAS physiotherapists as well as consultants from the Institute for Orthopaedics and Rheumatology. This creates a unique platform for clinical research and teaching. The first phase – developing protocols, processes and training – has been completed.

THEME 4: NETWORKED AND COLLABORATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to [Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024](#), this core strategic theme is about the following: “SU is embarking on a journey of **networked and collaborative teaching and learning** through the creation of learning communities where students, staff and alumni can experience meaningful learning. The University promotes a learning-centred approach to teaching that focuses on learning as a partnership, where students are seen as co-creators of knowledge and learning environments. Within a learning-centred approach, teaching activities facilitate knowledge-building and actively engage students in their own learning.

“SU has a holistic understanding of teaching and learning, which includes both individual and social benefits. SU’s teaching practices are deeply embedded in, shaped by and responsive to the contexts in which they take place. These approaches shape the University as a learning organisation, enabling the emergence of learning communities among students, staff and alumni in various configurations.

Networked and collaborative learning creates an environment that encourages intellectual inquisitiveness, being an essential skill for sustained critical and creative thinking.”

4.1 Extra support for emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment

We are fortunate to have received substantial funding to support emergency remote teaching, learning and assessment (ERTLA) at SU. The funders are the **Michael & Susan Dell Foundation**, the **Oppenheimer Memorial Trust** and the **Harry Crossley Foundation**.

The aim is to ensure that our students have the best possible support for academic success in the 2020 academic year, which has been severely affected by the unfolding effects of COVID-19.

The funding has enabled the University to embark on **extraordinary interventions** to offer students **wide-ranging academic and psychosocial support**. The project is located in the Division of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (DLTE) and is led by Dr Antoinette van der Merwe, with assistance from Ms Anneke Müller and Ms Christina Harvett.

With the funding received, SU has been able to expand its online support in the following ways:

- Assisting lecturers with the design of online teaching
- Developing online resources for lecturers
- Coordinating additional tutor activities in faculties
- Providing additional support to tutors
- Offering additional tutor sessions to students, either individually or in groups
- Additional language support for students
- Extended technical support for lecturers and students
- Academic counselling support
- Psychosocial support

The project provides faculties and PASS environments with much-needed **additional capacity** to effectively support students as this **demanding year** draws to a close. An added benefit is that the online resources developed now will remain relevant and **available for use in future**.

The services are being rolled out collaboratively by **14 environments at SU** (i.e. all our faculties except Military Science, along with the DLTE, the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Centre for Learning Technologies, the Language Centre and the Centre for Student Counselling and Development). Their regular feedback is being used to report back to the funders, as well as to continually improve the project. An **overall report** will be available by the **end of March 2021**.

We are **extremely grateful to the funders** for having enabled us to expand our support offering during this time of major adjustment for SU staff and students alike.

4.2 SUNLearn

The SUNLearn platform is being **upgraded** to improve stability under high user loads. This includes additional server nodes and load-balancing the database. The improvements are being tested.

In addition, IT's Learning Technology Systems team has started the first round of testing for analytics embedded in the learning management system (LMS). Given our reliance on SUNLearn for the majority of teaching and learning in 2020 and beyond, the potential to enable lecturers to identify **students who may need additional support** would be a valuable addition to academic planning.

Another project in its starting phase is to integrate the **Leganto library resource list management** system with SUNLearn. In this way, students will be able to access and use reading lists through and within academic modules on SUNLearn.

Extended SUNLearn **support hours** and delivery of **self-help options** for students and staff via the service desk have been implemented. The new support hours are 08:00–22:00 on Mondays to

Fridays, and 08:00–16:30 on Saturdays. The LearnHelp service desk now also includes exam-specific high-priority queues and a telephonic support service.

4.3 Examination security

The internal audit back in August 2016 found several weaknesses in our examination security controls. One particular aspect identified was the management of the **question paper submission** process. To address this risk, the Registrar's Division embarked on the development of a new online question paper submission system. This new system was successfully implemented in October 2020 and has significantly secured and streamlined the process.

Moreover, the introduction of **online proctored assessments** at the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB) (using RPNOW) has boosted the integrity of their assessments. While not all USB programmes have adopted this method yet, there has been definite progress in this regard.

4.4 December graduation ceremonies

We are preparing to celebrate the academic achievements of thousands of students who will be graduating in December. Graduation will occur in a format that complies with COVID-19 regulations and will not put the health and safety of graduands or their guests at risk. The Rectorate has approved a **hybrid graduation model** that consists of small face-to-face ceremonies from 14 to 16 December, as well as faculty-specific online ceremonies.

Twelve small **physical graduation ceremonies** (four per day) will be held in the Endler Hall of the Conservatoire. [Click here](#) for the schedule of ceremonies, which will be held for the conferral of:

- doctorates (including those from the March/April 2020 cycle);
- honorary doctorates;
- the Chancellor's Awards; and
- the Chancellor's Medal.

Faculty-specific online ceremonies will be held for the remainder of the categories of graduands, who will therefore receive their qualifications in absentia. The links to these ceremonies will be released at 09:00 on 14 December.

In addition, our **Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences** will hold two face-to-face pledge ceremonies – on 18 November and 14 December respectively. And our **Faculty of Military Science** will host a separate graduation ceremony on Saldanha campus on 2 December.

Please visit our dedicated [December graduation 2020 webpage](#) for more information and updates.

4.5 African Doctoral Academy

The four courses of the African Doctoral Academy (ADA) **online spring school** in September drew a total of **96 delegates from 13 countries** (Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Palestine, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe). The courses (on teaching in a digital world, supervising a PhD-by-publication, academic writing, and introduction to mixed-methods research) were facilitated by presenters from SU, KU Leuven and, for the first time, the University of Cambridge.

4.6 Global health short course

SU International's Centre for Collaboration in Africa (CCA) supported the short course "Introduction to Global Health" in the form of **24 scholarships** made possible through our **Africa Collaboration Grant**. The course, presented by the Department of Global Health of our Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS), drew participants from, among others, the universities of Botswana, Namibia, Rwanda, Ghana and Zimbabwe, as well as Makerere and Jomo

Kenyatta universities. It aims to provide academic staff, students, researchers, reviewers and editors with an understanding of global health in the African context and beyond.

4.7 Integrated health-and-leadership short course

The first online edition of the FVZS Institute's integrated [short course on health and leadership](#) (HealthyUS) was presented from August to October this year. Clinical personnel from CHS and the Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD) presented in the course, which aims to develop an understanding of the healthcare system as a reflection of broader political and historical socioeconomic developments, both nationally and globally. For the first time, students from our FMHS also took part in the lecturing. The course consisted of presentations on key themes, guided group discussions, and critical reflection. The module "Exercise is medicine" tied in with CHS's heart health awareness campaign.

4.8 Library learnings

Ms Ellen Tise, senior director of our Library and Information Service (LIS), was a panellist in an international [webinar](#) on libraries and the fight against online misinformation, organised by the **United Nations Library** on 13 August. She pointed out that although libraries were unable to eliminate this scourge, they could play a role in neutralising its worst effects by creating awareness, providing credible information, sensitising clients to the harmful impact of fake news, and empowering people to distinguish fact from fiction.

On 30 September, Ms Tise also made a presentation on open access at the **UWC research week**. Here she stressed that open science was the driving force behind scientific integrity and contributed to the democratisation of research by enabling equitable access to, and participation in, scholarly communication across the world.

Ms Naomi Visser, e-resources manager at LIS, was an invited speaker in an international [webinar](#) entitled "Librarian best practices ensure uninterrupted access to research and education" presented by **Elsevier** on 13 August. She emphasised the importance of infrastructure readiness in our Library's successful continuation of services during the lockdown. She also reported a **71% increase** in the use of the Library's databases between April and June 2020 compared to the corresponding period last year, which she ascribed to good **communication with users**.

4.9 SoTL goes online

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many difficulties for universities across the globe, and SU is no exception. In light of the restrictions on large gatherings, the organisers of SU's annual Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) conference decided to change this year's event to an online format.

The theme of the 2020 conference was "Celebrate, appreciate, reflect in the **e-environment**", abbreviated as "CARE". This underlined lecturers' need for support and encouragement in this demanding time of migrating to ERTLA.

The conference was coordinated by the Centre for Teaching and Learning, in collaboration with other centres in the Division of Learning and Teaching Enhancement. It offered a space for academics to reflect on and share innovative practices stemming from their current unique teaching circumstances. Delegates were able to share with one another their research findings and innovative ideas to make teaching and learning at SU the best it can be.

4.10 Experiential Education Conference

Our Co-curriculum Office had initially planned to host an international conference in June this year. Because of COVID-19 and international travel restrictions, however, the conference was repackaged into an online offering scheduled for 10–11 November.

The SU Experiential Education Conference ([SUEEC](#)) created an opportunity for our institution to establish itself internationally as a university providing **quality transformative learning experiences** in higher education. The event also encouraged new research, cooperation and investment partnerships and stimulated innovation.

Speakers included Prof Alice Kolb, president and CEO of Experience Based Learning Systems (EBLS); Mustafa Erdogan, president of the DeM Experiential Training Center in Turkey; Prof George Kuh, professor emeritus of Higher Education at Indiana University, USA; Dr Kay Peterson of the Institute for Experiential Learning, USA; and SU's Dr Choice Makhetha and Profs Arnold Schoonwinkel, Jonathan Jansen, Hester Klopper and Thuli Madonsela.

4.11 Online soccer coaching development

In September, Maties Sport hosted an introductory soccer coaching workshop. It was presented by Mr Abubakaar “Boebie” Solomons, the coaching director of SAFA Cape Town, a local affiliate of the South African Football Association that is committed to developing communities through soccer. The course was offered fully online over a four-week period and had **50 participants**.

The overwhelming initial response to the course points to the need for coaching development, not only in the Western Cape, but elsewhere in South Africa as well. While online coaching workshops do have some limitations, the benefit of this medium is that it transcends geographical boundaries, thereby expanding the range of participants. Similar opportunities will be explored in the future.

4.12 Maggie Laubser collection digitised

The SU Museum has digitised its substantial [Maggie Laubser collection](#). Having scanned the Laubser works in its possession, the museum now affords researchers across the world access to this rich collection of one of South Africa's foremost artists via the SU Library's [SUNDigital Collections](#) platform.

Maria Magdalena (Maggie) Laubser (1886–1973), pictured alongside in a 1924 self-portrait, was a painter and printmaker. Along with Irma Stern, she is generally considered to have introduced expressionism to South Africa. She was born on a farm near Malmesbury and came to Stellenbosch as a boarder at Bloemhof School, which then occupied the very building in Ryneveld Street now housing the SU Museum. In time, she would develop a special relationship with SU: In 1930, her first solo exhibition was staged in our Old Main Building (Ou Hoofgebou), and in her will, she **bequeathed** a large number of works in various media to SU.



(Source: Ballot, M. 2016. *Maggie Laubser, A Window on Always Light*. Stellenbosch: SUN MeDIA)

THEME 5: RESEARCH FOR IMPACT

According to [Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024](#), “**Research for impact** at SU implies optimising the scientific, economic, social, scholarly and cultural impact of our research. Our focus is on interdisciplinary research that benefits society on a national, continental and global scale. At the same time, we are committed to basic and disciplinary research excellence, as it forms the basis for applied and translational research.”

5.1 Senate Research Ethics Committee

Although they play a vital part in the research endeavour, the work of SU's research ethics committees (RECs) is mostly done behind the scenes. Due to the significant pressure on REC members to review large numbers of applications, we recently urged colleagues to volunteer their services for one of the five RECs. The request elicited a very **positive response**, as noted with gratitude by the Senate Research Ethics Committee (SREC) at its last meeting:

- Thirteen academics from disciplines such as Arts and Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, Law and Theology volunteered for the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education (SBE), and completed compulsory reviewer training.
- For the health research ethics committees (HRECs), four senior researchers volunteered to serve on a panel of experts for reviewing COVID-related clinical trials, and nine additional volunteers are completing their training as new HREC members.

There has been a **sharp increase in REC workloads** during COVID-19. The HRECs experienced a 30% increase compared to 2019, including the rapid review of **226 COVID-19-related** projects and amendments, and the standard review of 449 projects. The REC: SBE reviewed **32 COVID-19** projects, along with 809 other projects, progress reports and amendments. The REC: Biosafety and Environmental Ethics (BEE) reviewed 48 projects, and the REC: Animal Care and Use (ACU) 91.

The new volunteers are **improving the quality and depth of reviews** by adding new and unique competencies and expertise to the RECs, and have lightened workloads by increasing review capacity. We are **grateful** to all academic staff members who have made themselves available for this enormously important task.

5.2 Substantial boost for postgraduate bursaries

In line with SU's vision of becoming Africa's leading research-intensive university, we have decided to invest **R120 million** in postgraduate bursaries **over the next three years**. This will make up for the decline in bursary funding from the National Research Foundation (**NRF**) since last year. The bursaries will also ensure that our centres of excellence as well as our chairs under the South African Research Chairs Initiative (**SARChI**) continue delivering highly qualified postgraduates to industry, and still conduct relevant research in service of society. In addition, the initiative is in line with the goals of the National Development Plan to increase the number of doctoral graduates in the country.

The bursaries will be available on a competitive basis to **any student in South Africa** who is interested in studying at SU. We are convinced that this strategy will sustain the postgraduate student pipeline and research excellence we are known for.

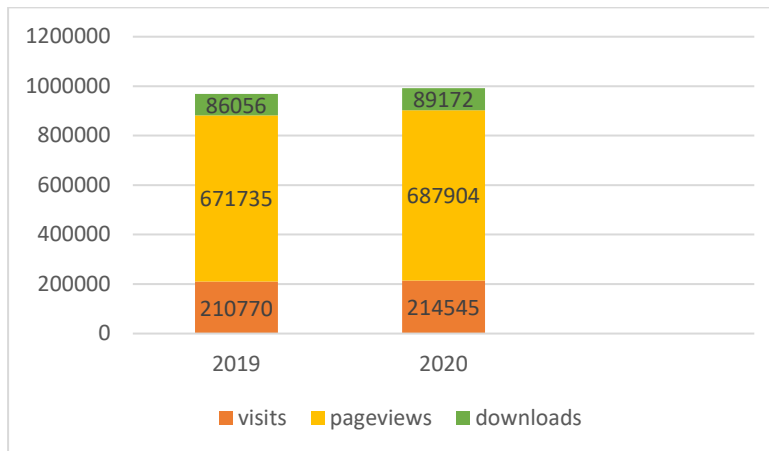
SU is host to six Department of Science and Innovation (DSI)/NRF centres of excellence and 28 SARChI chairs. Over the past five years, SU has made a major contribution to human development by delivering record numbers of PhD and master's graduates. This output has also resulted in an unprecedented number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and book publications.

5.3 SU research output for 2020 to date

According to data extracted from the **Scopus** database, SU research productivity (number of articles published) for 2020 to date is higher than for last year. In 2019, a total of 2 613 articles indexed in Scopus were published from January to October, compared to **this year's 2 763**.

From early April to October, our Library and Information Service picked up approximately 300 **COVID-19-related** articles by SU-associated authors on **Google Scholar**. They were viewed 19 716 times and downloaded 8 012 times in this period. This led to an impressive **524 citations** on Google Scholar.

Of these articles, 49 were uploaded to the **SUNScholar** institutional repository, making them freely accessible to the largest possible audience. SUNScholar use over this period was also higher compared to last year (see figure below). It is safe to assume that SU researchers' work on COVID-19 has had a significant scholarly and social impact.



General SUNScholar use, Apr–Oct 2019 and 2020

One specific contribution stands out. The article “[Parenting in a time of COVID-19](#)” by Cluver and colleagues, including SU’s **Prof Mark Tomlinson**, appeared in *The Lancet* (395:64). Since 29 April, the article has been cited 140 times, viewed 5 613 times and downloaded 4 843 times – much higher than the average figures per article (11,9 citations, 386,5 views and 157 downloads). This is probably because the article covers a topic of general public – instead of only academic – interest. It once again highlights the role of an open-access repository such as SUNScholar in making information accessible to all.

5.4 Submission to DHET on creative outputs

At the time of compiling this report, a submission on SU’s creative outputs for the period **2017 to 2019** was being prepared for the DHET, with a deadline of 15 November (having been extended from 30 June). The categories are **design, fine arts, music, theatre, performance and dance**, as well as **literary arts**.

We have not received feedback from the DHET on the first submission (submitted November 2019). It is expected that **funds** from the 2019 submission will be made available to higher education institutions in **2021** only.

The next submission will cover the period 2018 to 2020. We anticipate that its submission deadline will be 30 June 2021.

5.5 #Researchforimpact communication campaign

Following the publication of *Research at Stellenbosch University 2019* earlier this year, a communication campaign was conducted from August to November to highlight articles featured in this edition. Content from the publication was placed on SU’s website and shared on social media. [Click here](#) for a digital copy of the publication, and [here](#) for the “Research at Stellenbosch University” Facebook page.

5.6 Improving research with IT

The Academic IT team is collaborating with relevant internal stakeholders on a **dedicated** research IT **service desk**, where research-specific service requests can be logged. It will form part of IT’s larger service desk system that runs Jira – powerful project management software for team collaboration.

In addition, IT is collaborating with the Division of Research Development on a modern, fit-for-purpose solution to systematically collect, validate, present and report on SU's **research output**. Also in the pipeline is a reporting solution for **research contracts**.

5.7 Library Research Week

For the first time, the annual [Library Research Week](#) was presented online (24–28 August). The aim of the initiative is to inspire master's and PhD students as well as emerging researchers, and equip them with practical knowledge of research essentials. Participation this year exceeded expectations. A much wider audience was reached, including participants from our FMHS, USB and postgraduate students from across the country. In total, **802 stakeholders** participated, compared to 370 in 2019.

Guest speaker **Dr Balindiwe Sishi** (pictured right), senior lecturer in Physiological Sciences, opened the week's proceedings with a presentation on her own PhD journey ([click here](#) for a video recording).



THEME 6: EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

In [Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024](#) our people are listed as our first “enabler”, an element “that make everything possible”. In terms of staff, this is attached to a core strategic theme, which is unpacked as follows: “In support of SU's vision, mission, values and aspirations, it is imperative to support the health and wellbeing of our people. In SU's pursuit to be the **employer of choice**, we envisage an enabling environment that includes the principles of co-creation, co-ownership and appropriate participation, and embodies the characteristics of an inclusive campus culture.”

6.1 Support to staff during COVID-19

At this demanding time of COVID-19, it is good to know that the [Employee Wellness Unit](#) of our Human Resources Division provides ongoing support to staff. This includes debriefing sessions for those battling the pandemic on the front lines, as well as for other staff in both academic and PASS (professional administrative support services) environments.

Other regular sessions include the following:

- Basic mental health first-aid for line managers
- How to initiate critical conversations (line managers and general staff)
- Conflict management (line managers)
- Building effective workplace relationships (line managers)
- Substance misuse (line managers)
- Psychosocial support (trauma debriefing and counselling sessions)

6.2 New staff health and well-being programme

To strengthen SU's current Employee Assistance Programme, staff will soon have access to a **new, online** staff health and well-being programme by Life Employee Health Solutions (EHS), delivered by Careways. Support will comprise:

- **counselling** (for personal difficulties, relationship and family matters, addiction, stress, violence and trauma, HIV/Aids, grief and work-related matters);
- assistance with **financial matters** (such as debt counselling and management, budgets, blacklisting, retirement planning and loans);
- **health information** (general health and wellness tips, including dietary information); and

- **legal assistance** (professional telephonic legal support and basic legal documents, such as a last will and testament, power of attorney, residential leases and general sales agreements).

A marketing plan will be implemented to inform all staff of the services at their disposal.

6.3 Draft Staff Health and Wellbeing Plan

A draft Staff Health and Wellbeing Plan, which the Rectorate approved in April, is being discussed in all University environments. Consultation with faculties and PASS (professional administrative support services) environments started on 4 September. A common theme emerging from the feedback to date is the need for **peer-to-peer support** as well as proper training and guidance for **line managers** in terms of health and well-being. Feedback will be incorporated into an updated draft, which is to be submitted to the Rectorate on 24 November.

6.4 Draft Policy on Mental Health at SU

A draft Policy on Staff and Student Mental Health at SU has been circulated for comment ([click here](#)). The policy is aimed at adopting positive measures to help **prevent** mental health challenges at SU, as well as establishing procedures for **dealing** with mental health problems that do arise. Webinars will be hosted to allow for further discussion. Alternatively, feedback may be provided via a short online [survey](#), or by e-mail to mhpolicy@sun.ac.za. At the time of compiling this report, the deadline for comments was 27 November.

6.5 Well-being, Culture and Climate at Work survey

The SU Well-being, Culture and Climate at Work survey was completed by 1 095 staff members in October and November **2019**. This represented a **52% increase** compared to the 720 staff members who participated in the first survey conducted in 2017.

The Centre for Business Intelligence (CBI) in our Information Governance Division administered the survey, performed the (quantitative and qualitative) analysis and shared the results. Initial report-back sessions to the Rectorate and the Institutional Planning Forum took place in February 2020.

Joint **feedback sessions** by the CBI and Human Resources were subsequently held with the management teams of the respective responsibility centres and faculties between April and August. Due to COVID-19, these had to be conducted online via MS Teams.

Additional information sessions were also held by invitation for all other staff members (not only management) from different environments. Examples include SU International and the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

[Click here for a report](#) on the results of the survey, which the Rectorate adopted. An overview article that summarises the main survey findings was published in the e-newsletter for staff, [news@Stellenboschuni](mailto:news@ Stellenboschuni), on 18 September 2020.

The purpose of the SU Well-being, Culture and Climate at Work survey is to determine quantitatively staff's levels of well-being and "happiness at work", and to get their opinion on the culture and climate in the working environment.

The survey found that staff were generally **proud** to work at the University, felt **positive** about its future, and were well aware of Vision 2040. It is also encouraging to note that staff indicated that they enjoyed their work and felt it was meaningful, and that their contribution to SU was making a difference. Interestingly, staff **above 60** and **below 30** years of age recorded significantly higher happiness-at-work levels than their colleagues in other age brackets.

Several contributors to an **unhappy** work environment were also listed, however. These included poor **remuneration** rates, a lack of **recognition** for achievements, and poor **communication** by management. Staff further indicated that a lack of **promotion** opportunities affected their well-

being, and concerns were raised about **equal** treatment, promotion opportunities for women in particular, and **bullying**. While the results pointed to a positive attitude towards **transformation**, staff did also raise concerns about various transformation and inclusion matters at the University.

With the survey report now completed and adopted, the Rectorate and other institutional stakeholders have reliable data available to serve as a baseline for developing and measuring **interventions**. The recommendations flowing from the survey are as follows:

- That SU adopt a stronger focus on staff well-being through the implementation of various initiatives, including the final adoption and implementation of the draft **Staff Health and Well-being Plan**, which should also be sufficiently resourced.
- That existing initiatives and structures for **transformation** be strengthened.
- That the report of the task team for the **upward mobility of PASS staff** be finalised and its recommendations implemented, and that the affordability of academic promotions as well as equity with regard to the **promotion of women** be ensured.
- That the task team for incentivising complete its recommendations for the **recognition and appreciation of all staff**, and the recommendations be implemented.
- That structures and initiatives that focus on **inclusive equality** and overcoming bullying in the workplace, such as the Equality Unit, be strengthened.

Regular **feedback** will be provided on the implementation of these recommendations. And to measure our progress, we intend repeating the survey in 2022.

6.6 Distinguished professors

In October, we announced that SU has conferred the title of distinguished professor on 37 academics. These included **13 new appointments and 24 reappointments**. Congratulations to all!

The title of distinguished professor was created in 2014 to recognise our best academics who reach the pinnacle of achievement in their careers. They are leading researchers with **international stature** in their fields, as well as top achievers in higher education in terms of **research and publications, postgraduate study leadership, learning and teaching, and transformative social impact**.

All candidates have to meet stringent criteria to be appointed, and a thorough process is followed. The appointment is **valid for five years and re-appointment can be considered**. [Click here](#) for the full list of appointments.

6.7 Day care

The need for appropriate day care services on our Stellenbosch and Tygerberg campuses is receiving **ongoing attention**. Additional options, including possible lower-cost options for Tygerberg campus, are being explored.

6.8 Siyakhula, now online and in stereo

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated an adjustment to the delivery mode of the Siyakhula programme. Siyakhula, which means “we are growing”, consists of capacity-building workshops to equip staff with competencies for transformation, employment equity, inclusion and well-being. As the workshops could not take place in their traditional face-to-face format, a series of **18 webinars** were hosted on Friday mornings from July to October. The events addressed topics such as **religious and cultural inclusion, gender, women in the workplace, decolonisation, mediation and conflict resolution, transformational leadership and value-based decision making**.

In other news, the Transformation Office and the Employment Equity Directorate have launched *Siyakhula Live*, a **weekly radio show** featuring transformation-related content. It is broadcast on MFM on Wednesdays from 18:00 to 19:00, and the first episode aired on 2 September. The show

stimulates engagement in line with SU's aspiration to be a transformed and an integrated academic community that celebrates critical thinking, promotes debate and is committed to democracy, human rights and social justice.

6.9 Accelerating employment equity at SU

After Council's recent appointment of the next Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching, our Human Resources Division was requested to investigate ways to advance the recruitment of black African candidates. A preliminary report has since served at the Rectorate, prioritising the following existing and new measures:

- (a) Accelerate the implementation of the **Code for Employment Equity and Diversity**, which was approved earlier this year. The code spells out mandates and guidelines for the prioritisation and recruitment of various categories of staff.
- (b) Strengthen adherence to targets set in the University's newly adopted **Employment Equity Plan**. These targets will be revised on an annual basis.
- (c) The Rectorate recently adopted **recommendations** to advance the achievement of the set employment equity (EE) targets. These include the following:
 - i That environments do succession planning and launch recruitment processes **in line** with the institutional and environmental EE plans as well as the Code for Employment Equity and Diversity.
 - ii That the preferred candidate diversity **profile** may be stated in all advertisements to help create a more diverse candidate pool.
 - iii That the EE Office continue with regular **workshops** on the implementation of the Code for Employment Equity and Diversity for line managers, HR practitioners and EE representatives.
 - iv That **monitoring** mechanisms be developed and implemented to advance progress with achieving targets in each SU environment. This monitoring function should identify and address barriers to diversification.
 - v That **EE representatives** be involved in the filling of posts from the outset so as to ensure that EE obligations are fulfilled.
 - vi That the EE Office provide an annual **report** to the Rectorate about progress with achieving targets in all divisions of the University.
- (d) The existing recruitment processes through the **external recruitment agency** BMC will be intensified. SU's **chief director of Human Resources** will play an active part in the recruitment of senior staff in PASS environments in particular.
- (e) The barriers that BMC identified in terms of the recruitment and retention of black African staff should be addressed. One concrete way of doing this is to prioritise the transformation and renewal of our **institutional culture**. The recently revised **Siyakhula** ("We are growing") programme, which seeks to build transformation competencies among staff and students, will enjoy strong institutional support (**also see 1.11 and 6.8** above).
- (f) Human Resources and the Rectorate will identify and address areas where current regulations for the appointment and reappointment of senior PASS staff should be improved. These include guidelines to ensure that the **Senior Appointments Committee** is appropriately diversified and that greater clarity on the required academic level of candidates is provided timeously.

6.10 Exceptional staff achievements

In February 2021, KU Leuven in Belgium will award an honorary doctorate to **Prof Jimmy Volmink**, our Dean: Medicine and Health Sciences, in recognition of his “work in the fight against inequality in order to promote human dignity” and his “contribution to both science and practice to improve health and well-being”. ([Click here](#) to read more.) Prof Volmink fully deserves this honour, and we are immensely proud of him.

Ms Ilhaam Groenewald, chief director of Maties Sport, was elected as a board member of the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) on 7 November. ([Click here](#) to read more.) She brings a wealth of experience to the position, and we expect both the University and the country to benefit from her participation at this level.

Dr Cletos Mapiye of our Department of Animal Sciences has been recognised with a 2020 Young African Researchers award by Egypt’s Academy of Scientific Research and Technology. ([Click here](#) to read more.) He currently serves as the interim incumbent of the SARChI chair in meat sciences at SU.

The chair of the Department of Curriculum Studies in our Faculty of Education, **Prof Michael le Cordeur**, has been honoured with the 2020 Neville Alexander prestige award for the promotion of Afrikaans. ([Click here](#) to read more.) He received this accolade from the Afrikaans Language Museum and Monument, in association with the Foundation for Empowerment through Afrikaans (“Stigting vir Bemagtiging deur Afrikaans”).

CONCLUSION

In a year fraught with major challenges that had a significant impact on our activities, Team Stellenbosch University has managed to surmount the hurdles in our way through innovation and sheer hard work. It would seem that the end of the COVID-19 challenge is not in sight yet. However, with the lessons learnt from this tough year, I am convinced that we are well equipped to **remain focused** on our strategic objectives.



Prof Wim de Villiers,
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

ADDENDUM: OP-EDs AND COLUMNS

Opinion editorials (27 Aug–26 Oct 2020)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Arné Kruger	PGDip student (Theology)	'Maak tog vrede met Tinder. Jou kind gáán liefde aanlyn vind'	Netwerk24 (27 Aug)
Frederik van Dyk	Master's student (Law)	Roekelose ongeërgdheid	Netwerk24 (27 Aug)
Florence de Vries	Marketing and Communications (Medicine and Health Sciences)	Die vonkel in versiering: 'n verhaal oor die prys vir geduld	Vrye Weekblad (28 Aug)
Morgan Rothman	BA (Social Work) student	'Aanlyn leer maak my lewe baie makliker'	Netwerk24 (28 Aug)
Dr Mpho Tlale	Public Law	Xolobeni: Protecting vulnerable people's land against mineral rights grabs	Daily Maverick (28 Aug)
Prof Cas Wepener	Practical Theology and Missiology	Die moed om na woede te luister	Netwerk24 (29 Aug)
Dr Margaret Blackie Dr Hanelie Adendorff	Chemistry and Polymer Science Centre for Teaching and Learning	It is possible to decolonise science	Mail & Guardian (31 Aug)
Prof Aslam Fataar	Education Policy Studies	A sweet victory for urban spatial justice in Cape Town	Muslim Views (1 Sep)
Dane Isaacs Benita Moolman Catherine Ndinda	PhD student (Psychology) University of Cape Town Human Sciences Research Council	Perpetrators of gender-based violence don't have a specific personality type	IOL (1 Sep)
Tarien Riekert	BSc (Food Science) student	Is aanlyn leer werklik meer toeganklik?	Netwerk24 (2 Sep)
Prof Eugene Cloete Prof Kanshukan Rajaratnam	DVC: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies School for Data Science and Computational Thinking	Data in die tyd van Covid-19: Stel die ekonomie verder oop	Netwerk24 (3 Sep)
Dr Henry Asia	PhD-based article (Education Policy Studies)	Lesse in ubuntu vir almal	Netwerk24 (3 Sep)
Profs Wolfgang Preiser & Gert van Zyl	Medical Virology	How pooled testing can increase access to essential laboratory tests in Africa	The Conversation (3 Sep)
Prof Sheetal Silal Prof Gesine Meyer-Rath Prof Juliet Pulliam Dr Harry Moultrie	University of Cape Town Health Economics and Epidemiology Research Office (HE ² RO) SACEMA National Institute for Communicable Diseases	Uncertainty governs Covid-19 projections, so multidisciplinary research is vital	Business Live (3 Sep)
William Sezo	BEd student	Waar is die geregtigheid vir Nathaniel Julius?	Netwerk24 (3 Sep)
Prof Zsa-Zsa Temmers-Boggenpoel	Public Law	Yes, the homeless are also protected by the Constitution	Daily Maverick (3 Sep)
Prof Peter Rule	Centre for Higher and Adult Education	Covid-19 and the (ill-)health of literacies education in South Africa	Daily Maverick (4 Sep)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Anelisiwe Hatto	Master's student (Political Science)	More than military might needed to stop Boko Haram and al-Shabaab	News24 (5 Sep)
Nishai Moodley	Master's student (Sociology and Social Anthropology)	Three lessons for hybrid education in South Africa	Weekend Argus (5 Sep)
Prof Thuli Madonsela	Social Justice	Ethical leadership and collaborative thinking are what SA needs to weather the storms	City Press (6 Sep)
William Sezoe	BEd student	'Ag nee, Clicks! Julle is meer damaged as ons hare'	Netwerk24 (7 Sep)
Karel van der Vyver	LLB student	Covid-19 wys die wêreld is nie gereed vir toekoms	Netwerk24 (7 Sep)
Nicola Spingies	BA (Language and Culture) student	Moet ek gil of gril om terug te gaan kampus toe?	Netwerk24 (7 Sep)
Dr Phumla Kese	Curriculum Studies	Important role of literacy teachers in our post-Covid-19 learning	Cape Times (7 Sep)
Dr Zelda Barends	Curriculum Studies	A great literacy tapestry	Cape Argus (8 Sep)
Dr Pauline Hanekom	Centre for Pedagogy	Covid-19 exposes South Africa's digital literacy divide	Mail & Guardian (8 Sep)
Prof Jason Bantjes	Psychology	South African universities need to know why students' suicide risk is so high	The Conversation (8 Sep)
Prof Lizette Rabe	Journalism	When the going gets tough, make sure you get going	News24 (8 Sep)
Prof Lizette Rabe	Journalism	Covid-19 se ander pandemie: Waarom woorde saak maak	Netwerk24 (10 Sep)
Prof Thuli Madonsela	Social Justice	How did the EFF get it so wrong?	Business Live (10 Sep)
Dr Chris Jones	Unit for Moral Leadership	Democracy is under siege everywhere – we must defend and champion it	Daily Maverick (10 Sep)
Prof Hester Klopper	DVC: Strategy and Internationalisation	Internationalisation must go on, even if borders are closed	University World News (10 Sep)
Prof Johan Fourie	Economics	Die evolusie van tradisie	Rapport (13 Sep)
William Sezoe	BEd student	Die versugting van 'n student uit 'n donker kamer	Netwerk24 (14 Sep)
Prof Nicola de Jager	Political Science	The decline of freedom in democracies	News24 (15 Sep)
Anika Berning	Business Management	NPO sector needs rebranding badly to increase its impact	Business Live (16 Sep)
Prof Lindy Heinecken	Sociology and Social Anthropology	Speaking truce to power: The benefits of deploying female soldiers on foreign peacekeeping missions	Daily Maverick (16 Sep)
Alet Louw	BNurMid (Nursing) student	'Ons skuil agter ons selfone'	Netwerk24 (17 Sep)
Lucia Schoombee	Master's student (Arts)	Is the COVID-19 pandemic bringing out the best in science?	University World News (19 Sep)
Dr Penny Mograbi, Dr Alta de Vos, Prof Charlie Shackleton & Dr Joana Bezerra	Rhodes University	South Africa's land reform policies need to embrace social, economic and ecological sustainability	The Conversation (20 Sep)
Drs Hayley Clements & Kristi Maciejewski	Complex Systems in Transition		
Dr Kaera Coetzer	University of the Witwatersrand		
Craig Bailie	School for Security and Africa Studies	International Peace Day: Guns still fire in Africa	News24 (21 Sep)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Prof Michael le Cordeur	Curriculum Studies	'Jerusalema': Hoop vir 'n beter lewe	Netwerk24 (21 Sep)
Frederik van Dyk	Master's student (Law)	Ons moet kan saampraat oor helde uit ons diverse verlede	Netwerk24 (21 Sep)
Prof Nico Koopman	DVC: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel	On this Heritage Day, let's also celebrate our hybridity	Daily Maverick (21 Sep)
Dr Chris Jones	Unit for Moral Leadership	Ons skuld onself meer menslikheid	Netwerk24 (23 Sep)
Dr Nico Cloete	Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy	Can black academics be supported in toxic institutional cultures?	University World News (24 Sep)
Prof Nuraan Davids	Education Policy Studies	Human connection in a time of digitised university education	University World News (24 Sep)
Marietjie Booyens	Master's student (Law)	Erfenis spreek van 'n gedeelde geheue	Netwerk24 (24 Sep)
Prof Michael le Cordeur	Curriculum Studies	Dit moet ons strew wees	Netwerk24 (24 Sep)
Prof Cas Wepener	Practical Theology and Missiology	'n Erfenis-gelykenis	Netwerk24 (26 Sep)
Prof Dion Forster	Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology	Compassion fatigue is normal during abnormal times	Mail & Guardian (26 Sep)
Frederik van Dyk	Master's student (Law)	Is Huis Marais 'n piepende muis?	Netwerk24 (27 Sep)
Prof Jeffrey Dorfman	Medical Virology	How changing vaccine schedules can save costs and lives: findings from South Africa	The Conversation (28 Sep)
Dr Robyn Pharoah	Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction (RADAR)	Smoke alarms can save lives in informal settlements – if the design is right	The Conversation (28 Sep)
Dr Guy Lamb	Political Science	Kinnear killing: Firearms, police corruption and organised crime	News24 (29 Sep)
Prof Michael le Cordeur	Curriculum Studies	Danny Titus is 'vir die taal geleen'	Netwerk24 (29 Sep)
Prof Lindy Heinecken	Sociology and Social Anthropology	South Africa mulls future of its military to make it fit-for-purpose	The Conversation (29 Sep)
Neo Mokone	LLB student	Reform law firms' recruitment policies	Cape Argus (30 Sep)
Prof Ronelle Burger	Economics	Covid-19 is not over – wear a mask and keep your distance	Daily Maverick (30 Sep)
Leila Patel	University of Johannesburg	South Africa must redouble its policy and relief efforts to stave off hunger	Daily Maverick (30 Sep)
Prof Servaas van der Berg & Grace Bridgman	Economics		
Nic Spaull	Economics	SA's surreal lost decade	Business Live (30 Sep)
Nompumelelo Mohohlwane	PhD student (Education Policy Studies)	A testing time for schooling	Business Live (30 Sep)
Drs Stephan Taylor & Debra Shepherd	Economics		
Dr Gabrielle Wills & Jesal Kika-Mistry	Economics	SA's early childhood development sector in the balance	Business Live (30 Sep)
Janeli Kotzé	Department of Basic Education		
Dr Michelle Lim	Macquarie University	'You wake up with lab-engineered coffee': how our imaginations can help decide Earth's future	The Conversation (1 Oct)
Dr Carina Wyborn	Australian National University		
Dr Federico Davila	University of Technology, Sydney		
Dr Laura Pereira	Complex Systems in Transition		

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Prof Lizette Rabe	Journalism	Let's move for mental health	News24 (1 Oct)
Schalk Engelbrecht	Centre for Applied Ethics	Accounting ethics: Why character matters	Mail & Guardian (1 Oct)
Dr Laura Pereira	Complex Systems in Transition	Now's the time to share ideas about the future for people and nature	The Conversation (1 Oct)
Prof Maureen Robinson	Curriculum Studies	Student teachers learn new resilience	Mail & Guardian (2 Oct)
Dr Chris Jones	Unit for Moral Leadership	Om méer te deel	Rapport (4 Oct)
Tiaan de Swardt	BComHons student	Hoekom is meer vroue as mans tydens die inperking benadeel?	Netwerk24 (5 Oct)
Prof Eugene Cloete	DVC: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies	Covid-19: Reëls om 2de vlaag te vermy	Netwerk24 (5 Oct)
Prof Kanshukan Rajaratnam	School for Data Science and Computational Thinking		
Solange Durão	Centre for Evidence-Based Health Care	Covid-19 has increased hunger in SA: So what works best to improve access to food?	News24 (5 Oct)
Michelle Galloway	Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS)		
Vundli Ramokolo	SAMRC		
Prof Amanda Gouws	Political Science	Beware the 'politics of pity' when untangling racism from race trouble	Daily Maverick (5 Oct)
Prof Johann Kirsten	Bureau for Economic Research (BER)	Subdivision of agricultural properties could assist land reform programme	Business Live (5 Oct)
Prof Nick Vink	Agricultural Economics		
Francois Haupt	BA (Language & Culture) student	Die verlamming van depressie	Netwerk24 (5 Oct)
Patricia Zweig	RADAR	Vital to work with communities to stop killer fires	Cape Times (6 Oct)
Prof Sandra Liebenberg	Public Law	Why human rights should guide responses to the global pandemic	The Conversation (6 Oct)
Prof Jason Bantjes	Psychology	There's an app for that – mental health treatment has come a long way since the days of lobotomies	Daily Maverick (6 Oct)
Marietjie Booyens	Master's student (Law)	Dís wat ons alles by honde kan leer	Netwerk24 (7 Oct)
Dr Gerald Maarman	Centre for Cardiometabolic Research in Africa	Pulmonary hypertension: why creating awareness is key in Africa	The Conversation (8 Oct)
Dr Carina Venter	Music	An unconventional look at life in Lobito: beyond Angolan stereotypes	The Conversation (8 Oct)
Dr Jess Auerbach	North-West University		
Dr Jenny Edge	Surgical Sciences	Who cares for the carers? The virus and the violence against healthcare workers	Daily Maverick (8 Oct)
Dr Ines Buccimazza	University of KwaZulu-Natal		
Frederik van Dyk	Master's student (Law)	'n Energieke nuwe bries: Dekolonialiserende taalteorie aan die 2020 ILAF webinaar oor taal en die strafregstelsel	LitNet (8 Oct)
Frederik van Dyk	Master's student (Law)	Senekal: Politiek van oproer en empatie	Netwerk24 (9 Oct)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Prof Wolfgang Preiser Dr Rika Preiser	Medical Virology Complex Systems in Transition	Covid-19 peer-review of research: Integrity of science crucial in pandemic times	News24 (10 Oct)
Prof Soraya Seedat	Psychiatry	World Mental Health Day: Under-investment in mental health has never been more acutely felt	Health24 (10 Oct)
Prof Johan Fourie	Economics	Optimisme ... 'is hoop met 'n plan'	Rapport (11 Oct)
Prof Thuli Madonsela	Social Justice	We need to release all the adrenaline from Covid-19 anxieties	City Press (11 Oct)
Prof Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela	Historical Trauma and Transformation	Let's avoid the trap of black fragility: Tempering the right to express outrage with moral wisdom	Daily Maverick (12 Oct)
Steffani Magerman	BA (Social Work) student	Die dag toe die doodstyding kom	Netwerk24 (12 Oct)
Prof Mark Tomlinson	Institute for Life Course Health Research	What we have learnt: 19 lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic	Daily Maverick (12 Oct)
Dr Robyn Pharoah	RADAR	Disaster risk management mainly up to us	Cape Times (12 Oct)
Dr Chris Jones	Unit for Moral Leadership	Poverty, Covid-19 and the climate crisis – weathering the perfect storm	Daily Maverick (12 Oct)
Alet Louw	BNurMid (Nursing) student	Sal ons eers moet sien hoe lyk 'n land sonder boere?	Netwerk24 (14 Oct)
Prof Xikombiso Mbhenyane & Dr Bertrand Ayuk	Human Nutrition	Food security must be on nations' menu	Pretoria News (15 Oct)
Dr Nthabiseng Moleko	SU Business School	How to double GDP in 10 years: an alternative model of the state	Business Live (15 Oct)
Prof Mark Swilling	Complex Systems in Transition		
Dr Leslie van Rooi	Social Impact and Transformation	What to do as a final-year student during a pandemic	University World News (15 Oct)
Dr Scott Drimie	Southern Africa Food Lab	Building a sustainable food system for SA post Covid-19	News24 (16 Oct)
Prof Gunnar Sigge	Food Science	Processed food has bad press, but it's essential for nutrition security	Mail & Guardian (16 Oct)
Prof Lisanne du Plessis	Human Nutrition	Standing together to support breastfeeding for strong immunity	Health24 (16 Oct)
Prof Aslam Fataar	Education Policy Studies	Achieving gender justice: what can men and women do?	Al-Qalam (16 Oct)
Theo Boshoff & Wandile Sihlobo	Agricultural Business Chamber	Expropriation Bill still keeps expropriation as a last resort	Business Live (17 Oct)
Prof Johann Kirsten	BER		
Prof Cas Wepener	Practical Theology and Missiology	Dikker of dunner velle ná '20?	Netwerk24 (17 Oct)
Prof Njabulo Ndebele	STIAS	South Africa needs a fresh national imagination: here are some ideas	The Conversation (18 Oct)
Neo Mokone & Thembaletu Seyisi	LLB students	Economic reconstruction and recovery plan: Why it won't work	IOL (19 Oct)
Lethabo Sehlabane	BAcc student		

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Prof Michael le Cordeur	Curriculum Studies	'n Strategie vir die insluiting van Kaapse Afrikaans by die formele skoolkurrikulum	LitNet (19 Oct)
Dr Gawie Botma	Journalism	'First rough draft of history'	Cape Argus (20 Oct)
Drs Hanél Sadie-van Gijzen & Liske Kotze-Hörstmann	Centre for Cardiometabolic Research in Africa	Can tea really lower your blood sugar?	Health24 (20 Oct)
Prof Alex Welte	SACEMA	Herd (immunity) today, gone tomorrow	Spotlight (20 Oct)
Rozanne Bester	BA (Language & Culture) student	'Hoe kan ek op 21 voel dat ek reeds misluk het?'	Netwerk24 (21 Oct)
Prof Dion Forster	Systematic Theology and Ecclesiology	We must make moral choices about how we relate to social media apps	The Conversation (21 Oct)
Arné Kruger	PGDip student (Theology)	'Die dag toe ek besef ek is nie meer 'n student nie'	Netwerk24 (21 Oct)
Prof Cas Wepener	Practical Theology and Missiology	Senekal: 'n Drama	Netwerk24 (22 Oct)
Dr Nico Cloete	Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy	Castells, Calderon also raise questions about Africa's education	University World News (22 Oct)
Dr Roxana Chiappa	Rhodes University		
Wandile Sihlobo	Agricultural Business Chamber	What next for the land the government wants to distribute?	Business Live (22 Oct)
Prof Johann Kirsten	BER		
Dr James Blignaut	School of Public Leadership	The journey towards truth and reconciliation starts with respect	Daily Maverick (22 Oct)
Dr Lizabé Lambrechts	Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation	Dance to a different (archival) beat	Mail & Guardian (23 Oct)
Dr Jeanette de Klerk-Luttig	Unit for Moral Leadership	Skoolgaan is nie vir Boeties nie	Rapport (25 Oct)
Prof Ursula Hoadley	University of Cape Town	Pandemic has hit pupils hard: we can help them make up for lost time	Sunday Times (25 Oct)
Prof Servaas van der Berg	Economics		
Dr Jeanette de Klerk-Luttig	Unit for Moral Leadership	Hoe stuit ons al op skool morele verval?	Netwerk24 (26 Oct)

Columns (27 Aug–26 Oct 2020)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Prof Johan Fourie	Economics	For some, a little faith goes a long way	Finweek (27 Aug)
		Sin taxes: the devil is in the detail	Finweek (10 Sep)
		How big data is changing investment	Finweek (24 Sep)
		Hoe om 'n finansiële borrel te identifiseer	Finweek (2 Oct)
		Die mag van 'n goeie verwysing	Finweek (22 Oct)
Prof Amanda Gouws	Political Science	Suid-Afrika se slegte haardag	Netwerk24 (8 Sep)
		Ginsburg-dood verlies vir vroue	Netwerk24 (22 Sep)
		VSA sit met 'n grondwetkrisis	Netwerk24 (6 Oct)
		Dié 'manlikheid' lei tot geweld	Netwerk24 (20 Oct)
Prof Jonathan Jansen	Educational Psychology	Xenophobia is the enemy agent and we must be on high alert	Times Live (27 Aug)
		Certainty 1: matric exams will be a farce. Certainty 2: ANC will hide this	Times Live (3 Sep)
		We explode with rage over a racist ad, but still fall for white-hair lie	Times Live (10 Sep)
		A man, an octopus and lessons for our corona lives	Times Live (17 Sep)
		Behind the end-of-year exam plan is a big, ruinous lie	Times Live (24 Sep)
		Online exams are fertile ground for cheats. Here's how to fix them	Times Live (30 Sep)
		'Just suck it up': how a teacher's passion conquers a pandemic	Times Live (8 Oct)
		Jailing the corrupt big fish would give SA joy, but it has its dangers	Times Live (14 Oct)
		Look deeper and you'll see that both sides in Senekal have the same enemy	Times Live (21 Oct)
Dr Donald Katts	Practical Theology and Missiology	Geregtigheid kom ook die armstes toe	Netwerk24 (9 Sep)
		Kultuur van goedheid is nou nodig	Netwerk24 (7 Oct)
Prof Nico Koopman	DVC: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel	Gewone mense moet veg vir geregtigheid	Netwerk24 (2 Sep)
		Maak dit deel van nageslag se erflating	Netwerk24 (23 Sep)
		Dans dan met harte vol hoop	Netwerk24 (30 Sep)
Prof Michael le Cordeur	Curriculum Studies	Proefonderwys is deel van onderwys se ekosisteem	Netwerk24 (1 Sep)
		Die potloodtoets: Toets vir hare of geletterdheid?	Netwerk24 (15 Sep)
		Komorbiditeite: Dit is tyd vir 'n nuwe benadering	Netwerk24 (29 Sep)
		E-klaskamers bied verskeie uitdagings	Netwerk24 (13 Oct)
Prof Reggie Nel	Dean: Theology	In dié tye raak ons opnuut roepingsbewus	Netwerk24 (23 Sep)

AUTHOR	FROM (environment or division)	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION (click for article)
Hugo Pienaar	BER	'n Hupstoot uit Amerika, maar plaaslike hervormings bly kritiek	Vrye Weekblad (4 Sep)
		Baie is beslis fout, maar Suid-Afrika misluk darem nog nie	Vrye Weekblad (18 Sep)
Prof Anton van Niekerk	Philosophy	Onthou Andringastraat	Netwerk24 (1 Sep)
		Moet doodstraf ingestel word?	Netwerk24 (15 Sep)
		Die mens nie outonoom?	Netwerk24 (29 Sep)
		Moraliteit, etiek en reg verskil so	Netwerk24 (13 Oct)
Dr Leslie van Rooi	Senior Director: Social Impact and Transformation	Studente se verkiesings moet anders lyk	Netwerk24 (3 Sep)
		Hoe maak ons met ons erfenis?	Netwerk24 (24 Sep)
		Nader ons die einde van die era van sosiale media?	Netwerk24 (15 Oct)

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