



YEBO Final Conference - The Final Echo of YEBO! journey

The YEBO! journey started in December 2017, when the summer was at its height in Pretoria, and the snow was covering the streets of Montpellier. *YEBO!* meaning *YES!* in Zulu bridged two continents with fifteen partners for collaboration focusing on the internationalization of doctoral studies in South Africa.

The three and a half years journey started with great enthusiasm driven by the common desire amongst partners to build a sustainable ecosystem in the respective member universities to support the production of globally competitive PhD's. It is a globally recognised fact that PhD's are the foundation of academic life and a key driver of innovation. By focusing on the strengthening the internationalisation of PhD's studies, the YEBO Project presented an opportunity for mutual learning, and benchmarking for all partners.

YEBO's legacy

Throughout the YEBO project timeline, many interventions were undertaken to strengthen intercultural competencies, structural services to support international mobility and enhance the international quality, development of a toolbox for managing international collaborative PhD programmes, networking and exchange of the best practices amongst others. These interventions brought together all stakeholders in the PhD value-chain including academics/supervisors, administrators, university leaders, PhD candidates, early career academics and funders. Many moments of shared learning and growth were availed through these interventions. As the Covid – 19 pandemic upended our reality, the YEBO Project timeline was adjusted and new ways of working adopted. With all these challenges, the project achieved its objectives owing to the unwavering commitment of all the partners.

The Final Conference

From the 12th to 14th April 2021, the YEBO project will hold its final conference organised collaboratively by all partners and hosted online by the University of Pretoria and the University of Uppsala. The conference themed "*Internationalisation of the PhD: from possibilities of today to challenges of the future*" will include a set of great activities with a specific emphasis on core aspects of the Doctoral Studies: modernisation and supervision. Among all, we will have sessions involving speakers from YEBO partner institutions, from the South Africa Ministry of Higher Education Science

and Innovation, from the European Commission, government representatives, funding agencies representatives amongst others. Participants will also be given the chance to take part in a virtual collaborative activity called « World Café ». On the final day, PhD students will take on the challenge to present their thesis and research process with scientific posters or three-minute presentations in front of a very demanding crowd and jury.

As the final YEBO conference marks the end of the project, it also provides an opportunity to investigate YEBO development during its lifespan, its contribution to the South African national plan for doctoral education, the current position of the South African Doctorate and students and what challenges remain to address. We trust that thanks to YEBO's contribution, when the blue sky of Pretoria will welcome the summer light and the winter will cover the streets of Montpellier again, knowledge, methodologies and skills will have been developed to face remaining challenges and foster doctoral students and supervision with a strong internationalization focus for the future.

We encourage you to save the date and hope that you will be able to join us online for the final YEBO! Conference!

Register for the conference here: <https://rsvp.hubilo.com/yebofinalconference>

Find out the full programme here: [YEBO Conference Programme.pdf](#)