ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Responsibility Centre: Strategy and Internationalisation

Prof Hester C. Klopper
Stellenbosch University
September 2021

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UNIVERSITY

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

I am especially honoured to present this annual report of the Responsibility Centre (RC) for Strategy and Internationalisation as it is the final report of my first five-year term as Deputy-Vice Chancellor at Stellenbosch University (SU). Compiling this report has therefore been an opportunity for me to take stock, as it were, of this RC's contribution to SU thus far, while considering how to tackle the road ahead. It has been an enormous privilege for me to not only lead this RC over the past five year, but to have established and grown it into a portfolio that has a key role in ensuring that SU is systemically sustainable, facilitate alignment of the strategy across all entities, responsive and relevant in the ever-growing and changing global knowledge-economy. And I look forward to exploring new avenues to achieve the strategic goals and objectives SU has set for itself in looking towards the future.

With his appointment in April 2015, the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Wim de Villiers, expressed a vision to establish a new RC that would enable institutional uptake of our strategy and internationalisation. With my subsequent appointment in 2016, this new initiative became a reality. Over the past five years, I have endeavoured to lead with inspiration a team of committed staff members who are focused on steering SU on its future path based on a clear vision and strategy. I am proud that, with full recognition and appreciation for the work done in each of the divisions that form this RC and the team of senior directors and staff, the RC has had numerous achievements that have added value to SU as an African higher education institution with regional impact and global reach.

In terms of strategy, the RC was central in the development of *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*, the continued implementation thereof, and the subsequent alignment of the strategic implementation plans of RCs and faculties, as well as the revision of the institutional planning. The operationalisation of the strategy has led to more projects, including the "SU Score Card", a first for SU in monitoring the achievement of our strategy. Also, norms and standards have been created for academic environments, as well as an effectiveness model. Furthermore, in our aim to create effective processes and improved systems, our RC has led the revision of the Strategic Fund Regulation, as well as the establishment of oversight and management of the Fund. These projects have facilitated our journey towards a data-led university in its governance, strategies and tactics.

A major project for the RC in 2018 was the commemoration of SU's centenary. The adaptation of our brand into the SU100 brand for the centenary initiated yet another key project for the RC that has since led to the launch of the University's new brand in April 2021. The implementation and continued management of the SU brand is now a focus area for the RC. In terms of internationalisation, the launch of the reorganised division SU International set in motion a renewed emphasis on expanding the University's global footprint. This has been strengthened by the development of a new Internationalisation Strategy aimed at building global networks, as well as the establishment of the Institutional Advisory Committee for Internationalisation (IACI) in 2018.

Through these and many other innovative projects, the RC has indeed supported SU's vision and strategy, and will continue to play a vital role in the positioning of SU for the future. I am privileged to present this report as a culmination of my first term as DVC, but also as foundation for the RC's aspirations for the next five years.

Prof Hester C. Klopper
September 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge each and every staff member within the Responsibility Centre (RC): Strategy and Internationalisation for their hard work that is presented in this annual report. Without each of them, the successes that have been delivered over the past year would not be possible. The RC consists of diverse employees with specialised skills that collectively contribute immensely to attaining Stellenbosch University's Vision 2040 and the goals and objectives set in the *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*.

My appreciation also goes especially to the Senior Directors of the four division that comprise this RC for their commitment and support. I therefore want to acknowledge the Senior Directors in particular for their contributions: Prof Ian Cloete (Information Governance), Ms Christelle Feyt (Corporate Communication and Marketing), Mr Robert Kotzé (SU International), and Dr Barbara Pool (Strategic Initiatives).

In addition, thank you to my personal assistant, Ms Hazel Alexander, and the RC Manager and coordinator of this report, Dr Wayne Muller. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Prof Wim de Villiers, Rector and Vice-Chancellor, as well as my fellow Rectorate members for their support.

Photograph 1: *The management team of the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation*

INTRODUCTION

Stellenbosch University's (SU) *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024* sets a clear future path for the institution to realise its vision of becoming "Africa's leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society". The University aims to achieve the goals and objectives it has set for each of the six core strategic themes of its strategic framework, being (1) A thriving SU, (2) a transformative student experience, (3) purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks, (4) networked and collaborative teaching and learning, (5) research for impact, and (6) employer of choice. Each of the seven Responsibility Centres (RCs) within SU works towards ensuring the institution's systemic sustainability and that it remains agile, responsive and relevant in the ever-growing and changing knowledge economy.

Through its value-based approach, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation – comprising the divisions Strategic Initiatives, Information Governance, Corporate Communication and Marketing, and SU International – develops capabilities, uses skills, shares knowledge, and provides services that aim to support the University's *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*. To a greater or lesser extent, the work done by the RC contributes and adds value to the goals and objectives of each of the core strategic themes. Our work is cross-cutting across the university and encompasses all these themes, and it requires of the four divisions to work in an integrated manner to achieve the seven strategic priorities the RC has set for itself for 2021, which are the:

- Continued implementation and alignment of SU's strategy

- Strategic positioning and alignment of the new SU brand

- Implementation of an action plan for alignment with the SU Internationalisation Strategy

- Expansion of analytics and business intelligence for SU and work towards data and information integration for the SUN-i system

- Design and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of processes and structures that will focus on the Institutional Strategy Execution and Alignment

- Roll-out of phases 4, 5 and 6 of the Website Redevelopment Project

- Creating an institutional model for change enablement and a change enablement community of practice

During the reporting period, from September 2020 to August 2021, the RC led significant initiatives that were focused on realising these strategic priorities, which in turn continue to advance the University's institutional vision and strategy. Throughout, our approach has been to utilise the extensive skills and knowledge within all four divisions, and as a result the RC has not only ensured the identification and development of cross-divisional initiatives, but also enhanced the levels of synergy and alignment within the RC to facilitate greater levels of collaboration among the divisions. In addition, the RC plays a pivotal role in coordinating and facilitating processes to promote a matrix approach to collaboration with other RC's.

This report is structured according to the above-mentioned six core strategic themes, and provides an overview of the activities of the RC over the past year as a means of evaluating the value added to SU's *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*.

VALUE PROPOSITION

The RC: Strategy and Internationalisation's value proposition encompasses the following:

- Coordinating, planning and managing both strategy development and planning in an integrated way by planning and managing key strategic projects, along with strategic monitoring and evaluation that supports SU's vision and strategy.

- Leading analytics and business intelligence through integrating data from a variety of sources to expand SU's information repository, disseminating summarised information by providing score-card data, modelling, scenario development, business analysis, digitalisation, and process re-engineering. It supports organisational development and positioning, thereby facilitating a data-led SU in its governance, strategies and tactics.

- Designing and implementing integrated marketing, recruitment and communication strategies and related action plans for the development and promotion of a strong public image, an appealing institution for prospective students, and a positive reputation to create a climate conducive for the fostering of a thriving SU.

- Leading the development and implementation of the institutional Internationalisation Strategy, support alignment and provide internationalisation support throughout the institution.
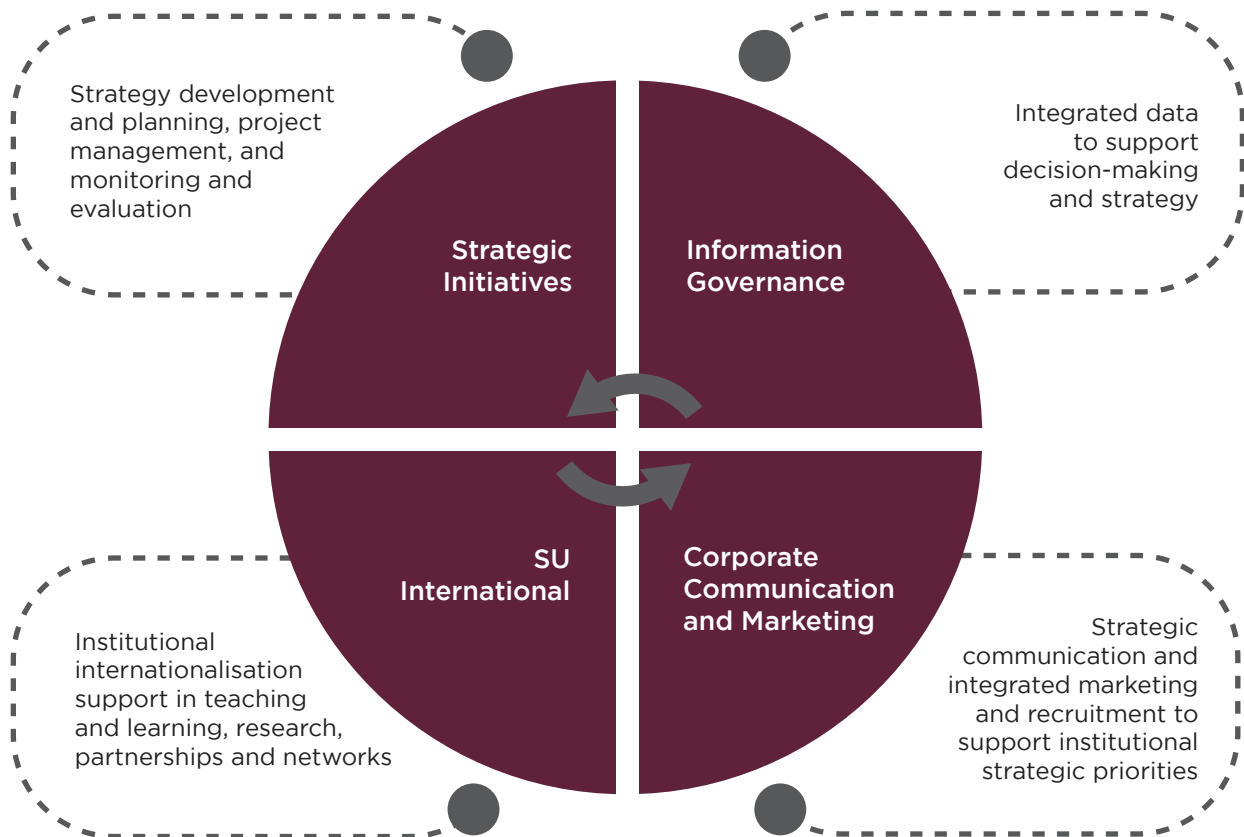
Figure 1: Visual presentation of the integrated value proposition of the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation

ORGANOGRAM

The RC: Strategy and Internationalisation consists of four division, namely Strategic Initiatives, Information Governance, Corporate Communication and Marketing, and SU International.
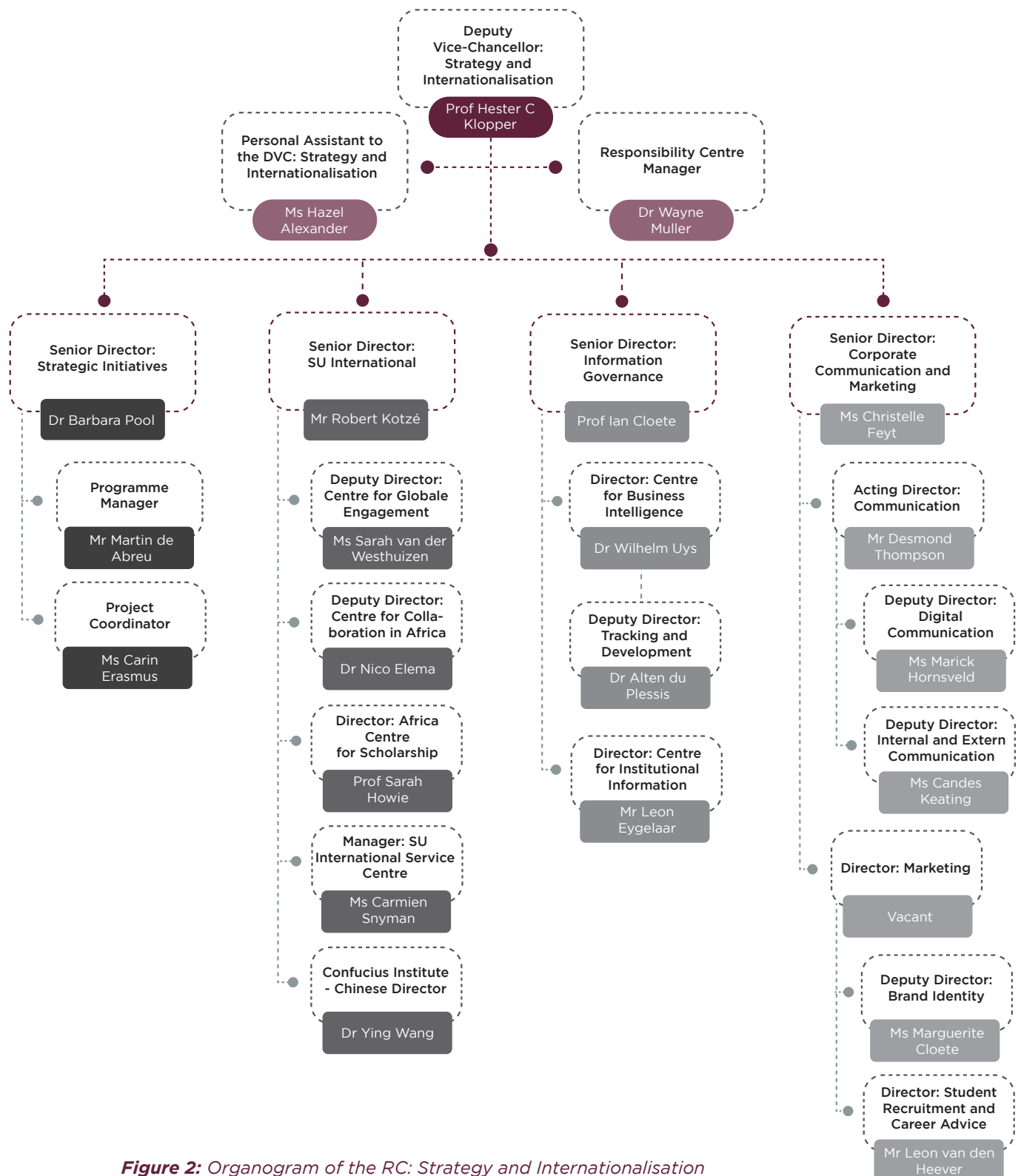
Figure 2: Organogram of the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 1

A thriving Stellenbosch University

The institutional goals for a thriving Stellenbosch University are:

- Cultivate an SU characterised by inclusivity, deep and intentional transformation, and diversity.

- Create opportunities for the advancement of multilingualism in academic, administrative, professional and social contexts, whilst recognising the intellectual wealth inherent in linguistic diversity.

- Change the size, shape and mix of our student population and of our academic programmes to mirror the strategic direction of our vision.

- Create a financially sustainable organisation.

- Raise the standard of the University's facilities and infrastructure to that of a world-class, research-intensive university, while embracing visual redress.

- Bring about profound and sustainable change and regeneration in all facets and functions of SU to be agile, adaptive and responsive.

- Aspire to be a leading, research-intensive university ranked amongst the top world universities by 2024.

- Create an entrepreneurial culture that advances innovation institutionally.

During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.

1.1. CREATING A NEW SU BRAND

In 2017, an institution-wide audit revealed that more than 170 logos are used by the various SU environments. This kick-started a "brand refresh" in 2019 to move towards a more unified brand. The first step was a brand valuation and perception audit by independent service provider Brand Finance, which showed that SU was not optimising its existing brand equity and needed a different brand positioning. Work on a new brand-positioning strategy began in November 2019 with the appointment of the brand agency Boomtown. SU's new brand positioning, "Pursue. Discover. Together", represents who we are, and guides our future outlook. To pursue and discover is our motivation, creating a culture of excitement and collaboration. And doing so together strengthens our ability to meet challenges, pooling our intellect, ideas and innovations to deliver hands-on solutions to real-world problems.

With this brand positioning in place, Boomtown set about its initial mandate to refresh SU's visual identity. However, as the process unfolded, our stakeholder groups increasingly felt that SU's new, future-oriented brand positioning would be best served by a completely new visual identity. Ultimately, the mandate changed from "refreshing" to "rebranding". As the rebranding process evolved, extensive engagement ensured that SU's stakeholders remained part of the process. Stakeholder consultation took place in two phases – one before the logo design started (concluded in November 2020), and another after a few options had been designed (January and February 2021).

Before design started, SU's faculties, the Visual Redress Committee, the Institutional Transformation Committee, the SRC and alumni were invited to online engagement sessions. These were conducted in an inclusive and consultative spirit. The sessions were followed by an electronic survey, which was open to all staff, students, alumni and Council members. A total of 1 075 stakeholders gave input before the logo design started, which served as the basis for establishing the creative design brief.

Figure 3: SU's new logo as approved by Council on 13 April 2021

PRE-DESIGN ENGAGEMENT

Sessions **297**: 27%

COMBINED TOTAL: 1 075

Survey **778**: 73%

N = 3 100

POST-DESIGN ENGAGEMENT

Sessions **201**: 10%

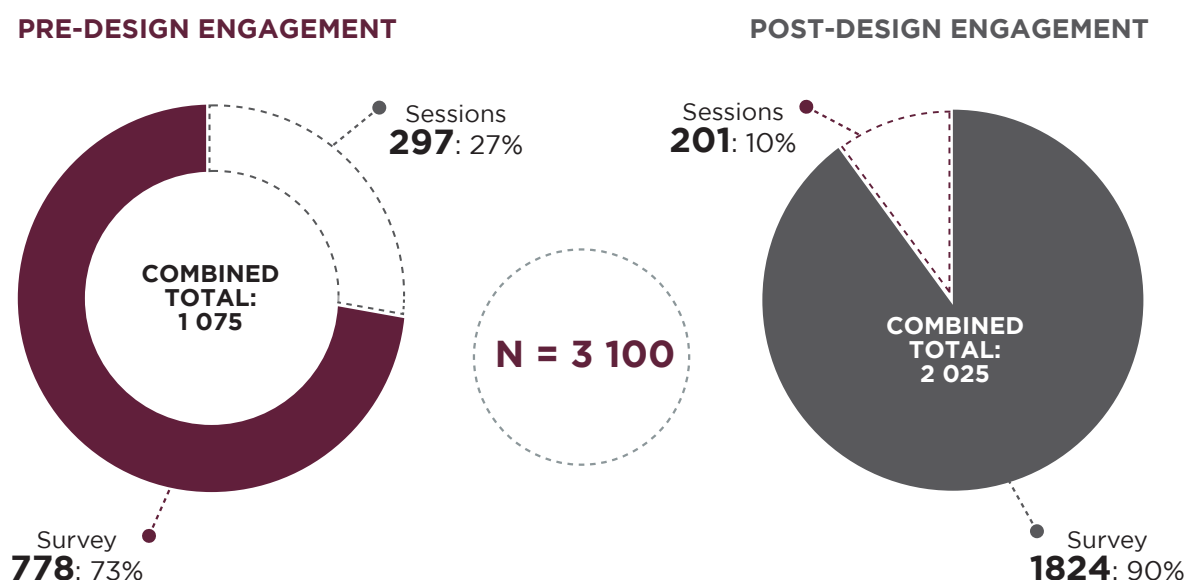COMBINED TOTAL: 2 025

Survey **1824**: 90%

Figure 4: Visual representation of the engagement process for the rebranding project

Based on the input received, the design team created three design options. The objective of the second engagement phase was to test these three proposals with key stakeholders, including students, staff and alumni. This again took place through online sessions and an electronic survey, and a total of 2 025 stakeholders participated. The insights obtained from this phase determined the final logo options, which went on to serve before SU's statutory bodies and culminated in the approval of the final visual identity by Council at its meeting of 13 April 2021. This includes a new logo and brand-positioning strategy that are aligned with *SU's Vision 2040* and S*trategic Framework 2019–2024*. The new logo will replace the "S"-leaf logo, which has been used since 2000.

During the consultative process, those who engaged with the SU branding team indicated the need for (1) a simple and modern yet striking and sophisticated design, portraying an institution of world-class academic stature;

(2) an abstract design to avoid cultural sensitivities, along with an element of "movement" to reflect ongoing transformation; and (3) a balance between heritage and tradition on the one hand and a focus on the future on the other, to ensure recognisability of the SU many have formed special ties with over decades, while also illustrating the future the University strives for. The result is a modern and streamlined, though classic and elegant design that illustrates *SU's Vision 2040*, namely to be Africa's leading research-intensive university that is globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, advancing knowledge in service of society.

The Council decision and new logo was revealed to all internal stakeholders and alumni via various communication channels, including emailers, social media, a media press release and a dedicated logo webpage. The final phases of the rebranding now follows, leading to an official launch of the new brand identity and university-wide roll-out and implementation.
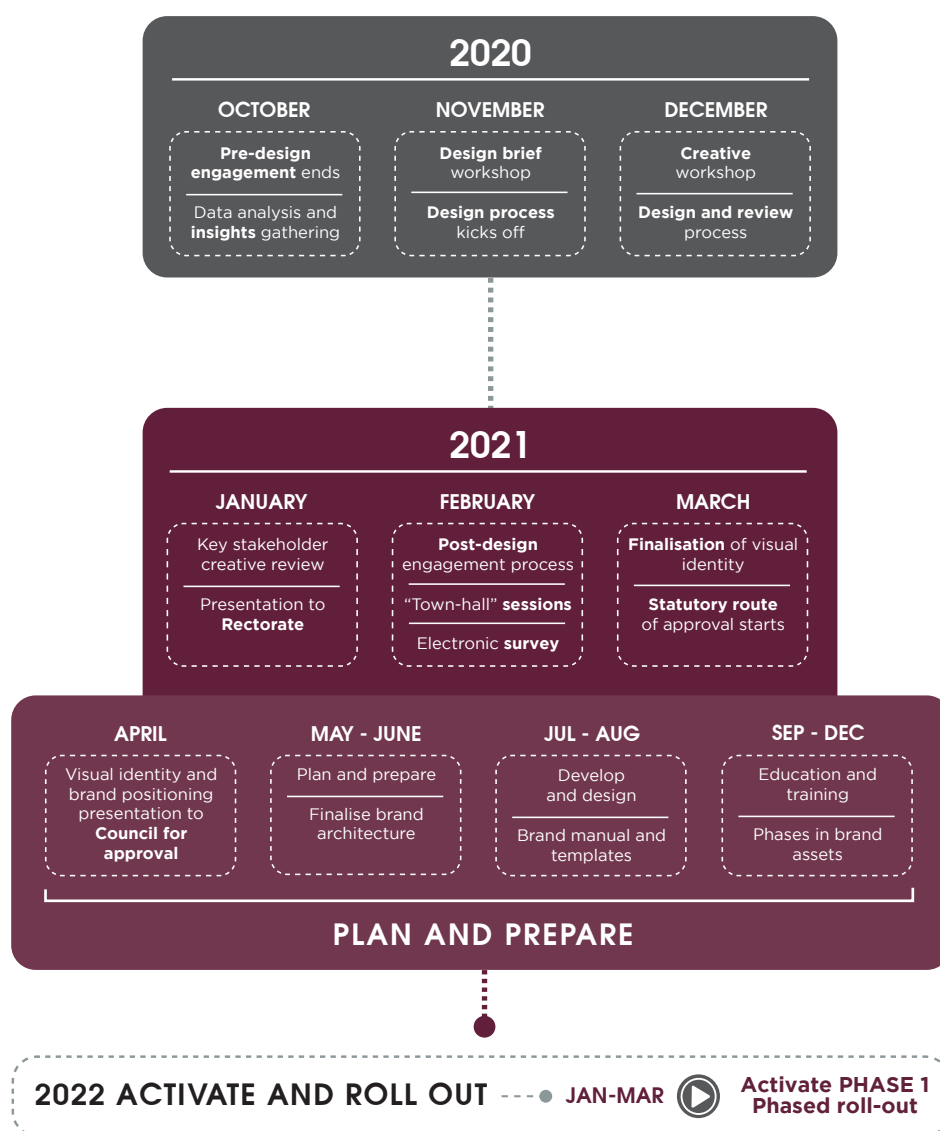

Figure 5: Visual representation of the rebranding process

1.2. ISSUE MANAGEMENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATION

Regularly, SU's stance on public issues such as race, gender-based violence and language receives wide coverage in the media. These issues often require timeous and well-conceptualised responses that may have far-reaching consequences for the University's reputation and the integrity of its process. Often different narratives run concurrently in both traditional and social media, and it requires focused and clear messaging to steer these narratives and cement SU's voice in order to counter, in many cases, inaccuracies and avoid reputational damage.

To ensure this, a structure was set up in my office that facilitates the coordination of issue and executive communication to ensure that there is unanimity in SU's key messages around particular issues and that the flow of information ensures that SU acts pro-actively to deliver effective responses. This structure created a direct reporting line to the DVC: Strategy and Internationalisation for the Manager: Media and the Specialist: Executive Communication to expedite urgent media communication. These two roles, however, remain part of the management team of the Corporate Communication and Marketing Division (CCMD) to ensure consistency and alignment. The RC: Manager, Dr Wayne Muller, forms part of the structure as coordinator.

The creation of this structure has brought about a shift from crisis communication to issue management, being an approach that addresses the communication around

> **"THE CREATION OF THIS STRUCTURE HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A SHIFT FROM CRISIS COMMUNICATION TO ISSUE MANAGEMENT, BEING AN APPROACH THAT ADDRESSES THE COMMUNICATION AROUND PUBLIC ISSUES IN A STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED MANNER."**

public issues in a strategic and coordinated manner. The issue management and executive communication structure has furthermore enabled a differentiation between "business unusual" ("crisis" communication around public issues in the media) and "business as usual" (day-to-day communication and marketing services) within the CCMD.

To this end, with the support of Baird's Communication Management Consultants (CMC), a strategy and communication plan for issue management was developed in April 2021. Subsequently, a strategic approach and methodology have been developed that provide structured thinking tools for the handling of issue management and executive communication. The strategic approach aims to allow SU to tell its story, which it is not a single story. Furthermore, it enables SU to provide timeous and well-conceptualised media responses that are critical, it steers SU's narratives and voice, and it helps the institution to develop an institutional narrative for various issues.

A key aspect of the strategy is the appointment of a spokesperson for the issue at hand. This spokesperson is essential in engagements and ensuring message consistency. To further support this endeavour and manage processes around issue management communication, a Specialist Project Manager (communication) was appointed on contract basis on 1 August 2021.

1.3. LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION

Since the start of the SU Language Policy revision process on 15 March 2021, the issues of language at SU and the "survival" of Afrikaans at the institution have been playing out in both the Afrikaans and English media. Several events relating to language at SU led to much negative reporting in especially the Afrikaans media. The alleged banning of Afrikaans in SU residences fuelled the start of the language debate in March, leading to the DA submitting a complaint to the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) and launching a petition. Subsequently an open letter by the Department of Afrikaans and Dutch created further media attention. Giving further momentum to the debate was a march by the DAK Netwerk on 9 April 2021 to hand over a memorandum to the University, as well as allegations of serenade groups banned from singing in Afrikaans. This required SU to respond to several media enquiries, while also ensuring that the scheduled communication of the Language Policy revision took place.

Subsequently, language communication was identified

as the first project for the issue management and executive communication structure. A six-point language communication plan was developed in collaboration with communication experts, and implemented in the build-up to the SAHRC public hearings in Stellenbosch, which commenced on 10 May 2021. As an overall goal, the six-point plan aimed to navigate the media narrative around language at SU and ensure that the University leads this narrative.

To coordinate the communication around language, the Language Communication Committee was established to strategically and proactively steer the communication. Dr Leslie van Rooi was appointed as the University's spokesperson on language.

While coverage on language initially continued to be critical of SU and impacted negatively on its reputation, the University's voice started coming out strongly after the implementation of the six-point plan, which ensured SU reacted openly to questions and maintained its

messaging around the institutional position on multilingualism. SU continued to proactively provide factual articles and stories on the successes of multilingualism to counter negative coverage. Considering the editorial space that the media have allotted to SU's responses, proactive articles and opinion editorials, the broadcast airtime we have received, and importantly the consistency of our messaging – which is key to start shifting the narrative and gaining public trust – SU has made progress in changing the narrative and being the dominant voice in the language debate.

This is also the conclusion of a report by SU's independent media monitor, which took into account data from the Professional Evaluation and Research (PEAR) traditional and social media list. To evaluate the implementation of the strategy and plan, two key periods were compared: Period 1 (before implementation) is 1 February to 13 April 2021, and Period 2 (after implementation) is 14 April to 20 July 2021.

562 media clippings across print, broadcast, and online media with regards to the language debate between February and July 2021,

representing **5%** of SU's media presence holistically for the same period.

Between February and July 2021, SU generated 562 media clippings across print, broadcast, and online media with regards to the language debate. This is only 5% of SU's media presence holistically for the same period. Print media led, with 56% of media coverage, followed by online media (33%), and then broadcast media (11%). Also evident is that 59% of coverage was from Afrikaans media and 41% was from English media, emphasizing a relatively balanced media presence. SU has been advocating the concept of inclusivity through multilingualism at the institution. According to the PEAR report, most of the media coverage is flagged as balanced (investigating all the different aspects and voices of the issue).

According to the PEAR report, SU maintained an active voice in the matter during Period 2. The sentiment ratio between Afrikaans and English media is similar, suggesting that there is not a tonality bias based on media language. The Afrikaans media's strong negative profile was closely linked to opinion pieces and, most significantly, readers' letters to newspapers. This is the key sentiment differentiator. Positive coverage was linked to SU's transparency around the language policy. Other than in Period 1, Period 2 is characterised by significant balanced coverage, with a strong analysis surrounding the language issues at SU.

The below graph compares sentiment of the media coverage on language at SU of Period 1 and Period 2. The analysis shows that since the implementation of the issue management strategy and six-point plan, there has been a shift in the sentiment of coverage on the language debate towards balanced reporting and, more importantly, a sharp decrease in negative sentiment in the media, implying that SU has progressed in its endeavours to change the media narrative around language.

The further implementation of the strategy and plan continues currently during the second round of public commentary on the Language Policy.

SENTIMENT COMPARISON BY CLIP COUNT

Period 1

Period 2
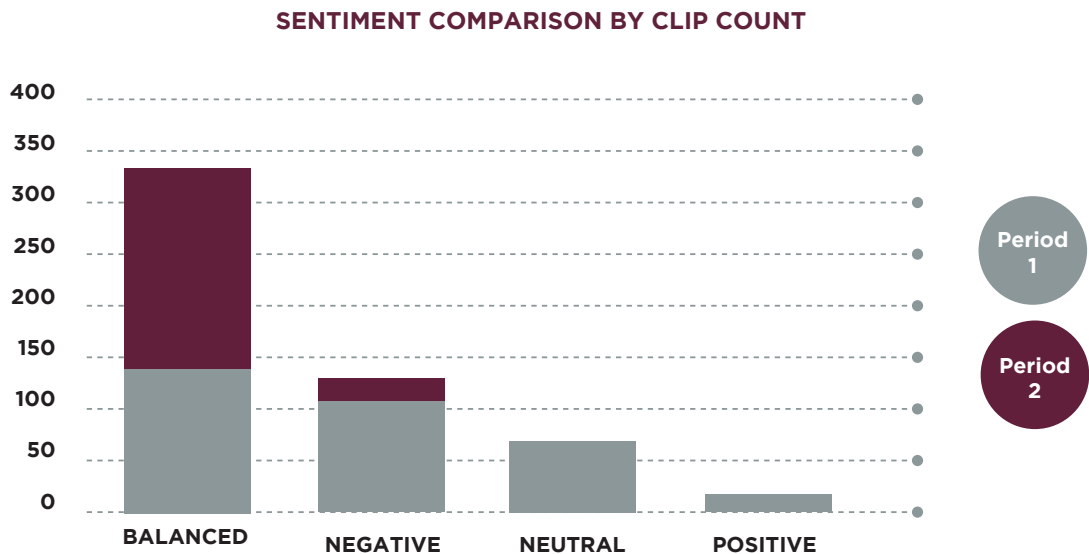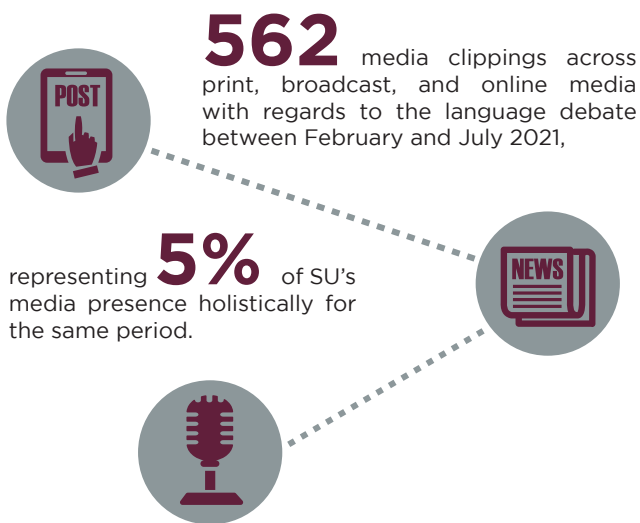
Graph 1: *Sentiment comparison by clip count*

1.4. STRATEGY PLANNING AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

On an institutional level, strategy planning has four key components annually, i.e. the Institutional Planning Forum (in February), the compilation of environment plans and strategy implementation plans (April to June), the Executive Planning Forum (in July/August), and (in December) the submission of the Institutional Plan to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

During the reporting period, the different platforms and planning documents were utilised to analyse progress regarding the implementation of SU's strategy, to assess and determine priorities, and to replan and refocus the University in the context of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on higher education. After extensive discussions, the participants reconfirmed the University's strategic focus, as set out in its strategy and strategy implementation plan. The objectives and actions are well on track, although there are areas where calibration is required.

The 2020 and 2021 priorities also confirmed, on the one hand, the consistency in focus, whilst on the other hand, indicating the subtle differences from year to year. The table below indicates these top priorities per core strategic theme.

Regarding the environment plans, 2021 brought a differentiation between environment plans and strategy implementation plans. The first provides a comprehensive plan for a faculty or responsibility centre, whilst the second focuses on value propositions and key priorities, as aligned with the strategy, measurement indicators, and high-level resources. These plans provide a high-level overview of the alignment between strategy and plans, serve as input to discussions about the budget, and provide the information required for the Institutional Plan.

EPF 2020 PRIORITIES	IPF 2021 PRIORITIES
1. A THRIVING STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY	
Institutional sustainability and continuity	Innovation and entrepreneurship
2. A TRANSFORMATIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE	
Institutional transformation	
3. PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND INCLUSIVE NETWORKS	
Partnerships and networks	Partnership mapping and management system
	Focus partnerships on achieving SDGs
	Internationalisation with hybrid approach
4. NETWORKED AND COLLABORATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING	
Hybrid learning	Hybrid learning:
Programme renewal	• Capture new student markets with hybrid L&T
	• Hybrid learning with good user experience
	Interdisciplinarity
	School for Data Science business model
5. RESEARCH FOR IMPACT	
Top-rated recruitment	Recruiting top researchers
Postgraduate output	More post docs
6. EMPLOYER OF CHOICE	
Staff planning	Automated and integrated HR processes
Staff wellness	Work-life balance

Table 1: *Top prioritiets per core strategic theme for EPF 2020 and IPF 2021*

1.5. SHAPING SU'S INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE BASED ON VALUES

One of the aspects forming part of phases 2 (integration) and 3 (alignment) of *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*, is SU's five values. These values are essential for both the implementation of SU's strategy and the shaping of its institutional culture. Because values are action guides for the kind of academic community the University aspires to be, they need to become integral to how individuals act and relate, how leaders lead and teams collaborate, how decisions are made and implemented, and how ethical challenges and dilemmas are dealt with. Values do not just supplement an institution's strategy but should be integrated into every aspect of the implementation thereof.

This integration was set to be facilitated by means of "values-in-action" workshops. Initially the national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic halted the implementation of these workshops, but they were subsequently redesigned to be suitable for online platforms. A pilot was done in July 2020 for the divisions within the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation. It proved successful, and has been presented to three faculties, three academic departments, two PASS divisions, and one responsibility centre. Simultaneously, other environments that are key role-players in values, culture and change were identified. These environments assisted with the refinement of the framework with the intent to achieve institutional alignment and accelerate the process.

The values integration process will now be enhanced by following a supportive and facilitative approach with a view towards building capacity for values integration and values-driven action. Building capacity for values integration will depend on the needs and objectives of those involved. It might be needed at the executive leadership end of the values integration spectrum, or somewhere in the middle where academic and operational units may want to integrate the institutional values into their actions, processes and relationships, or it might be at the front end where individual leaders, managers, staff and students find themselves in situations where they are confronted with values-based dilemmas.

Going forward, a diversified approach will be followed, consisting of three types of "values-in-action" experiences, namely (1) the basic "values-in-action" workshop as foundation; (2) leadership conversations for unit-based values integration; and (3) facilitator training for institution-wide values integration support.
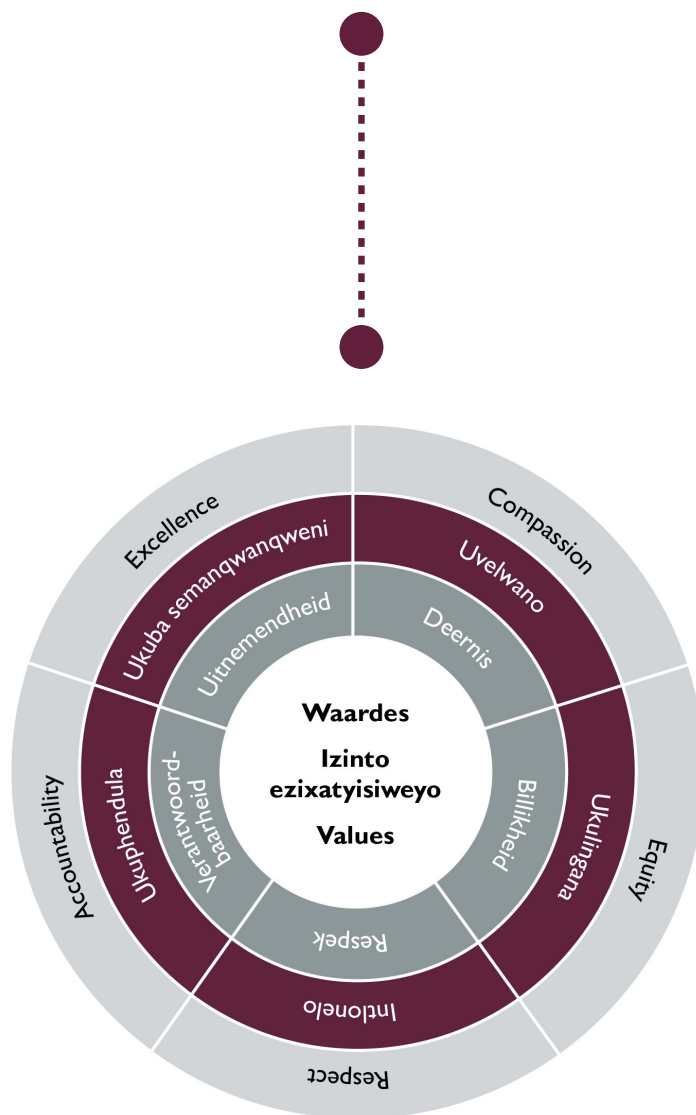

Figure 6: *Visual representation of SU's values*

1.6. SU'S CODE OF CONDUCT

In 2020, the process commenced to create an institutional Code of Conduct for the University that will describe specific behaviour and practices that are required, acceptable and limited or prohibited in support of SU's values. As the first step, a core working group of experts was established to compile a draft document for consultation. The members are: Profs Reggie Nel, Minka Woermann, Nuraan Davids, Aslam Fataar, Arnold Smit and Hester Klopper; Dr Barbara Pool; and Mss Tonia Overmeyr, Kira Alberts, Tshiamo Ngcobo, Ilse Cilliers and Sanet Koster.

Due to the national lockdown, the first in-person meeting could only take place in March 2021. At this meeting, the following key outcomes were reached:

- First, agreement was reached on where the Code of Conduct fits in. Strategy, culture and the brand are seen as the three sides of a triangle. Culture refers to the ideas, actions and social conduct of a specific community, in this case the wider University community. Within culture lies the University's values, ethical code (ethical principles, ethical standards that a community strives for and against which they will be judged) and its Code of Conduct (set of rules, norms and responsibilities).

- Second, a common understanding was reached in terms of what is meant by a Code of Conduct, namely: (1) A document that specifies expected conduct (rules) that is aligned with institutional values and strategy (clarity); (2) a document that allows for institutional recourse (accountability); and (3) a document that allows a community of interests to cohere around institutional values and purpose (fairness).

After considering the way forward, the working group recommended that instead of creating separate codes of ethics and conduct, a single code ("Code 2040") should be developed, which is clearly anchored within the University's values. In this way, one code is created to direct the SU community and that clearly indicates the interaction and interdependency between the different components. Unfortunately, this recommendation was not accepted by the Social and Business Ethics Committee, resulting in a further delay. The team is now focused on creating a draft document and entering conversations with the respective University communities by the end of 2021, and the refinement of the document for presentation to the SU Council by the middle of 2022. Since engagement with the campus community is critical to success, the timeline may be adversely impacted by the course of the pandemic and how this influences the campus community and institutional priorities.
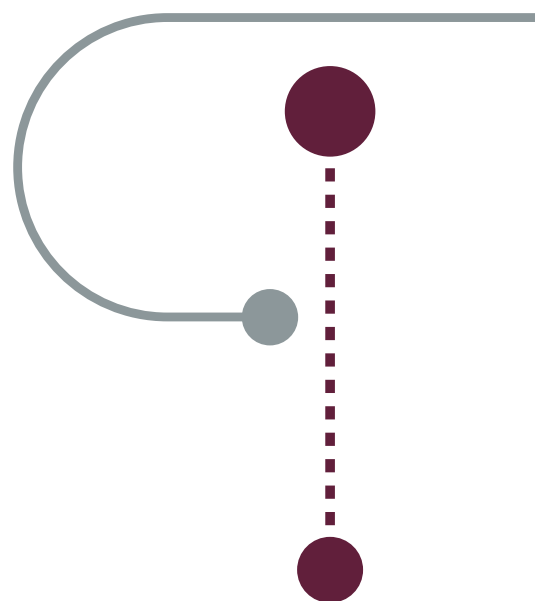
1.7. STRATEGIC FUND

The SU Strategic Fund focuses on initiatives that are directly aligned with the vision, mission and core strategic themes of the University, as contained in *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*. Funds are allocated in respect of the six core strategic themes of the University and the associated institutional goals. During 2019, 2020 and 2021, a total amount of R392 million was allocated to new Strategic Fund projects. Table 1 below indicate the available funding per category, as well as the number of projects (for 2019 and 2020), and Table 2 the number of applications received and either allocated or successful for consideration in round 2 (for 2021).

With this huge investment it is now one of the primary functions of the Strategic Fund Process Manager to monitor the progress of active Strategic Fund projects and to keep the Strategic Fund Committee (SFC) informed in this regard. The first annual report was submitted to the SFC on 29 September 2020. Although the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting national lockdown has been felt by all, 23 Category A (strategic initiatives) and one Category B (strategic high rises) projects were able to proceed with implementation, even though timelines were impacted. All Category C projects (strategic applications) are either completed or in process. This indicates the commitment of all the project managers to deliver on the goals set out in their project plans.

During 2020, we initiated the review of the Strategic Fund Regulation (approved in 2018) by the University's internal auditors. The final report was submitted in May 2021 and contained the following conclusion: "The current size of the SU Strategic Fund is valued at more than R400 million. The new SU Strategic Fund Regulation is in line with leading practice from a content and key topics perspective and supports the SI Division in their mandate to support new initiatives that gives expression to the University's institutional strategy and the achievement of the vision, mission and core strategic themes as contained in *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*."

STRATEGIC FUND CATEGORY	ALLOCATED FOR 2019 AND 2020	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
Category A (Strategic initiatives)	R264 million	31
Category B (Strategic high rises)	R30 million	1
Category C.1 (Staff related)	R48 million	20

Table 2: *Available funding and number of projects per category that received funding in 2019 and 2020*

STRATEGIC FUND CATEGORY	AVAILABLE FOR 2021	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	APPROVED OR THROUGH TO ROUND 2
Category A (Strategic initiatives)	R25 million	16	9 (Round 2)
Category B (Strategic high rises)	R20 million	1	1 (Round 2)
Category C.1 (Staff related)	R13 million	5	2
Category C.1.2 (Staff related)	R2 million	0	0

Table 3: *Available funding and number of applications received for 2021*
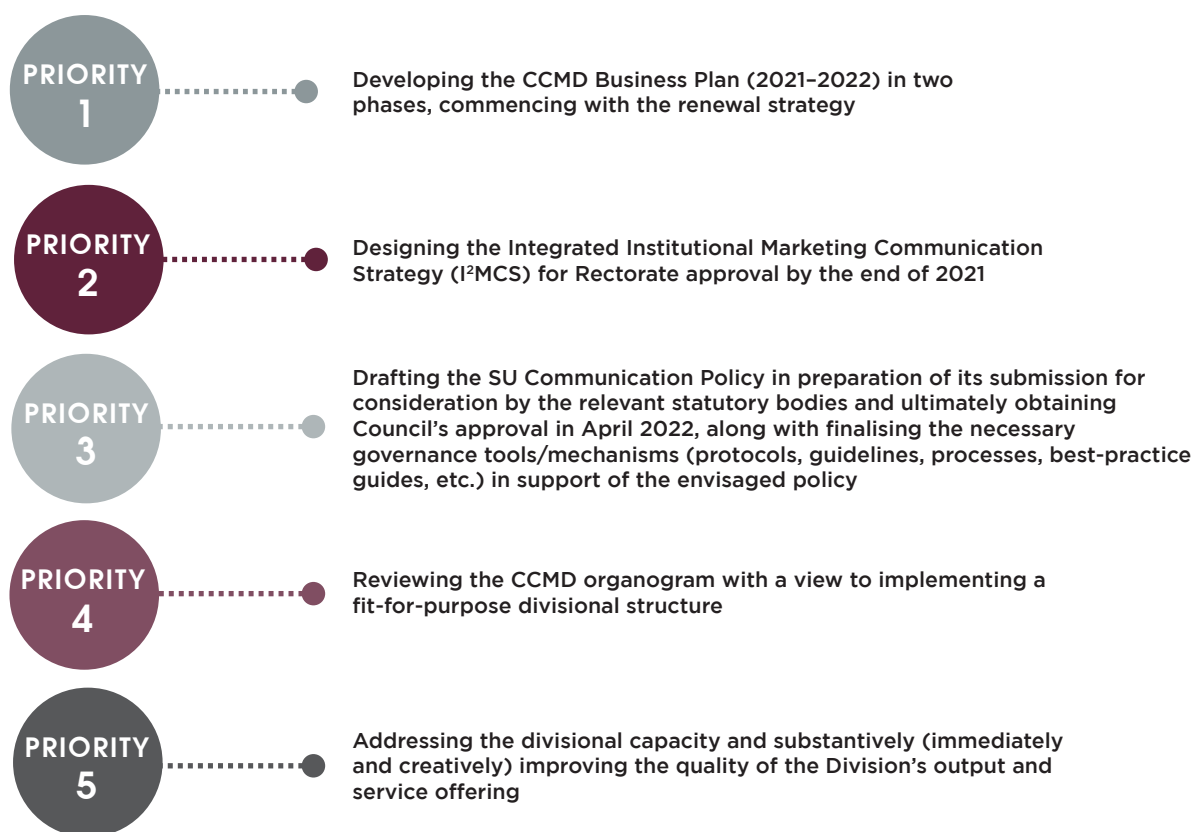
1.8. RENEWAL STRATEGY FOR THE CCMD

In August 2020, there was a change in leadership for the CCMD, along with an extended mandate for the Division, which included an amalgamation of the institutional marketing and communication portfolios. This has given rise to the need for the development of a focused business plan for the newly expanded division – a project that has been included in the prioritised performance goals of the CCMD for the 2021/2022 cycle.

The process of devising the divisional business plan has, however, been directly impacted by several developments that exacerbated the urgency of developing a turn-around strategy that would immediately optimise the current functioning of the Division. The initial concept of such a turnaround strategy has been transformed into the development of a renewal plan, focused on the short term, with the purpose of implementing a medium-/longer-term business plan for the Division. The draft renewal strategy has been developed through a facilitated participatory process that actively involved the extended management team of the Division, along with input by key stakeholders from within the RC. Five dedicated input sessions were held with the CCMD team from May to July 2021.

Every effort has been made to only include realistic, attainable goals and outcomes in this phase of the business plan, given the vast array of expectations, and against resource limitations and the current capacity of the Division. Executive management support is considered vital to maximising the intended success of this project.

The priority elements that jointly comprise the renewal strategy are:

PRIORITY 1 ········· Developing the CCMD Business Plan (2021–2022) in two phases, commencing with the renewal strategy

PRIORITY 2 ········· Designing the Integrated Institutional Marketing Communication Strategy (I²MCS) for Rectorate approval by the end of 2021

PRIORITY 3 ········· Drafting the SU Communication Policy in preparation of its submission for consideration by the relevant statutory bodies and ultimately obtaining Council's approval in April 2022, along with finalising the necessary governance tools/mechanisms (protocols, guidelines, processes, best-practice guides, etc.) in support of the envisaged policy

PRIORITY 4 ········· Reviewing the CCMD organogram with a view to implementing a fit-for-purpose divisional structure

PRIORITY 5 ········· Addressing the divisional capacity and substantively (immediately and creatively) improving the quality of the Division's output and service offering

1.9. RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Communication and marketing professionals at SU were rewarded for outstanding work in the annual Marketing, Advancement and Communication in Education (MACE) Excellence Awards for 2021, and were rated as the most successful higher education institution in this Southern African competition. The awards recognise the achievements of specialists and practitioners in marketing, advancement and communication in the higher education sector in Southern Africa. MACE fulfils a leadership role in the higher education, technical vocational education and training and private education sectors within Southern Africa, aiming to add value to practitioners in marketing, advancement and communication in higher education by offering high-quality development programmes, facilitating networking partnerships and transformation, and promoting best practice.

Besides the work done by the CCMD, communication projects by the Division for Development and Alumni Relations, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Division for Research Development and Postgraduate Office also received recognition.

SU received 26 awards, among them two Gold Awards (awarded to the highest scoring entry in each category) and a Platinum Award (awarded to the highest scoring entry in each of three divisions). SU also received the Chairperson's Award of Excellence (awarded to a single entry that embodies true excellence in marketing, advancement or communication), as well as the Severus Cerff Award for Consistent Excellence (for the highest success ratio of all entering institutions).

These awards give appropriate recognition to the continued high-quality work delivered by SU's corporate communication, marketing and fundraising teams – a remarkable achievement during the Covid-19 pandemic amidst many challenges.

- Read more about SU's 26 MACE Awards in this publication.

Photograph 2: SU videographer Stefan Els won a bronze MACE Award for his video call *SU Campus Tour*, which communicated vital information to newcomer students about the campus and campus life. Picture above is German trials cyclist Nils Riecker, who guides the viewer through the video. Click to watch the video.

1.10. WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Over the past year, progress was made in achieving the major milestones set for the redevelopment of the SU website, www.sun.ac.za. The project, which encompasses seven phases and will continue over the next three years, aims to create a mobile-friendly, user-centred website with a clean, modern design that lives the SU brand and strategic objectives, and provides users with clear, succinct information in an inspiring and relatable tone of voice.

In September 2020, the Rectorate approved the draft Web Strategy and gave their support to continue with the next steps in finalising the strategy. During November, the strategy was presented to Faculty and RC management teams for input, which has led to a refined strategy that was approved by the Rectorate in April 2021. The Web Strategy forms the roadmap for the development and future management of the SU website, and includes the role of the website, design criteria, the envisaged hybrid management model, and resource allocation considerations.

During October and November 2020, the CCMD worked closely with the Division for Information Technology to draft a comprehensive Request for Proposals (RFP) for the appointment of a service provider to undertake the redevelopment project. The RFP was published in a range of print and online tender bulletins in February 2021, and during March and April two rounds of tender deliberations took place. Rogerwilco was ultimately selected by the tender panel as the preferred service provider. This Durbanville-based company was founded in 2008, is a Level 2 B-BBEE contributor, and has won more than 50 awards, including the Small Agency of the Year Award at the 2020 *Financial Mail* AdFocus Awards. They are a Drupal Content Management System development house, and some of their work includes websites for the University of Cape Town, DBSA, Africa Check, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, and Doctors without Borders.

A kick-off meeting and workshop unpacking the technical requirements has been held. Currently, a content audit is under way with teams from SU and Rogerwilco evaluating the existing website's content. The next phases include the establishment of the various project management bodies and the first steps of the design process.

1.11. CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Ombud awareness campaign: In November 2020, the CCMD launched an integrated communication campaign to create awareness of the important role the Ombud, Advocate Rina Meyer, plays in good governance at the University. The campaign included the following items:

- Redesign and updating of the Ombud website to align with the SU brand
- An article in the format of a Q&A featured on the SU main webpage and social media platforms
- A banner linking visitors to the SU website was placed on the SU homepage
- A podcast interview was distributed to all staff via *info@ StellenboschUni*
- Information snippets about the Ombud's role were placed weekly in the *info@StellenboschUni* newsletter and on the SU social media platforms

Reveal of the new SU logo: A multi-faceted communication campaign was employed to reveal the new SU logo, which was approved by Council on 13 April 2021. This included:

- Development of a website
- Mailers to staff, students and alumni
- Social media posts, which spread quickly on social media, achieving a reach of more than 30 000 on Facebook, 28 000 on Twitter, and 28 000 on LinkedIn within 48 hours

Corporate publications: The digital publication Review 2019 was released in November 2020. The publication features highlights of the University over the 2019 reporting period and contains financial data on SU's operations over the financial year under review. Also, the 2020 Annual Integrated Report was compiled and delivered to the DHET on 30 June 2021. The report covers the full scope of University operations over the reporting period and contains financial data about SU's operations over the financial year under review.

Podcasts: *Talks@StellenboschUni*, SU's podcasting channel, recently broadcast its 100th podcast. The podcasts have been played more than 12 000 times by listeners in 80 countries. Podcasts are available on the SU website via the following services: Anchor, iTunes, Google, Pocket Casts, Breaker and Spotify. Recent episodes include a series called 'What to study?', aimed at prospective students, Privacy in the era of POPIA to coincide with the POPI Act coming into effect on 1 July 2021, as well as a series of episodes for Youth Month.

1.12. COVID-19-RELATED INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Website: The strategy behind the Covid-19 website was to create a single source for reliable information for various SU stakeholders. The website went live on 14 March 2020, functions well, and has been well received – it is the third most visited SU website. As communication needs change, the website is adapted to meet requirements. During this reporting period, the English website received 81 853 visitors; of those, 29 822 are regular visitors to the website. The Afrikaans website received 6 307 visitors; of those, 2 232 are regular visitors to the website.

Mailers: Due the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, regular communication is required to ensure that SU stakeholders are kept up to date on all-important information, decisions, and developments with regard to the business continuity of the institution. A specific banner was designed for all Covid-19-related mailers.

Student Awareness Campaign: To reinforce the importance of wearing a mask on campus, practising social distancing and washing hands, a poster campaign was rolled out during the last semester of 2020 as part of the ongoing Covid-19 awareness campaign. Posters were placed on lamp posts along main walkways

on campus, including Victoria and Ryneveld streets. The campaign was repeated at the start of the 2021 academic year.

Social media: Social media continues to play a critical role in reinforcing SU's Covid-19 messaging, and to direct stakeholders to more comprehensive information on the dedicated webpage. To prevent message fatigue, the campaign is adjusted every few months to keep the images and messaging fresh. Below are some of the images used on social media.

Figure 7: *A poster used on various media as part of the SU's Covid-19 communication campaign*

1.13. MFM 92.6

The SI Division is currently undertaking a project relating to the University's community radio station, MFM 92.6. In 2020, the station reached its 25th year of existence as a licensed broadcaster. MFM's main target audience has consistently been the 16- to 25-year age group, encompassing mostly students, scholars and other categories of youth, and broadcasting in English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa. Its broadcast mix consists of educational, informational, news and entertainment elements.

SU is the holder of the licence, broadcasting as MFM 92.6. Its direct reporting line, via its Station Manager, is to the Senior Director: CCMD. It has traditionally generated its own funds, mostly via the sale of various forms of airtime. Over the years, this has covered its operational expenses.

However, over the last five years, expenses have consistently overridden income, which led to the slow degradation of its funds and reserves. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated an already precarious situation and further affected MFM's ability to generate income. Apart from the largest part of its listeners, SU students, being out of reach due to the lockdown, the station's regular advertisers were unable to continue advertising due to their own financial pressures. This was congruent with what happened in broadcasting on a regional and national level. In addition, since many of MFM's presenters are students, it meant that the core presenters were unable to fulfil their duties, because most students moved out of Stellenbosch.

At the end of 2020, within the above-mentioned context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic uncertainties that are expected to continue for the

foreseeable future, the SI Division, with the support of the CCMD, was tasked to investigate a way forward. This mandate included an analysis of the status quo of MFM, a stabilisation of operations and an exploration of future opportunities. Part of this was the continued cutting of expenses, where possible.

In the first half of 2021, the station returned to a hybrid of live broadcasting and automated programming, whilst major work has been done on the stabilisation of its operations and finances. Going forward, SI will be exploring opportunities to create a multi-dimensional multimedia platform, within the context of and dovetailing with the University's larger process of revisiting its full communications offering. This investigation gives expression to the University's commitment, in its *Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024*, to good communication being an enabler in achieving its vision and mission, and that communication platforms and channels should continuously be improved.
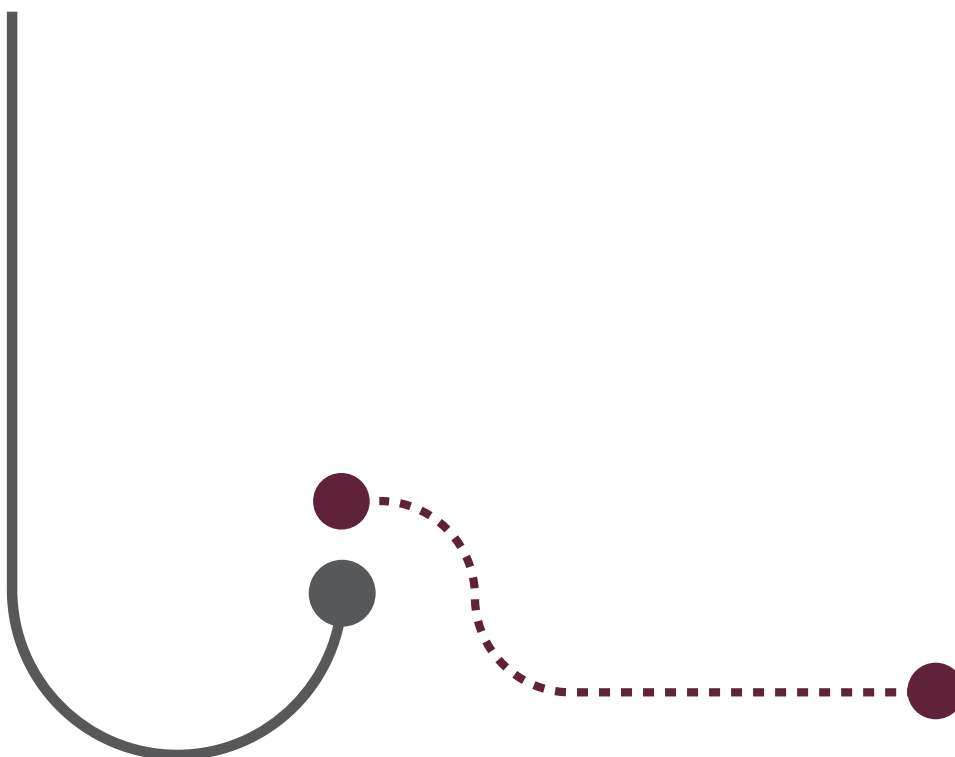
1.14. REFINEMENT OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

The "Stellenbosch University Score Card" is a Power BI™ application that tracks progress on goals achieved as defined by the Strategic Management Framework 2019–2024. The application shows historical values and targets, as seen in the figures below, as well as SU's progress towards the 2024 targets. The SU Score Card is based on a composite index approach, with the purpose to measure progress for each theme, objective and SMI, as well as for the Strategic Framework as a whole.

The SU Score Card starts with line chart visualisations for available historical values and targets. Performance indicators are visualised in the model with radial gauge charts showing the progress of the indicators towards the target. Effectiveness is the calculation of the extent to which the target is reached.

The Strategic Management Indicators (SMI) team of the IG Division has co-ordinated several detailed consultations with the respective data owners and/or Deans to provide historical analysis as supplementary context to align, redefine and improve the current set of SMI definitions and indicators. This included thorough analyses of potential data sources to inform the respective SMIs in terms of data definitions, data quality, completeness, applicability and availability. The team further developed SMI and operational KPI templates with drill-down capabilities to ensure data is available at a faculty and/or departmental level.

Below are examples (Figures 8 to 12) of selected SMIs and SU's progress in achieving them as an overview of how data and the Score Card aims to serve SU's strategy and supports the *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*.

In terms of Core Strategic Theme 1 (a thriving SU), the strategic management indicator "% Maintenance and acquisition of facilities/buildings to total income" under the institutional objective "Maintain and enhance world-class facilities" is an indication of the maintenance costs and capital expenditure on the upgrading, expansion and renovation of SU's facilities. The below figure from the Score Card shows the increase in expenditure from 2016 of 7.6% to 15.5% in 2020, indicated with a grey line on the figure. The maroon line on the visualisation represents the SU targets. The increase in expenditure as a % of SU's consolidated income indicates the importance of raising the standard of SU's facilities and infrastructure as set out in the institutional goals.

% MAINTENANCE AND ACQUISITION OF FACILITIES/BUILDINGS TO TOTAL INCOME
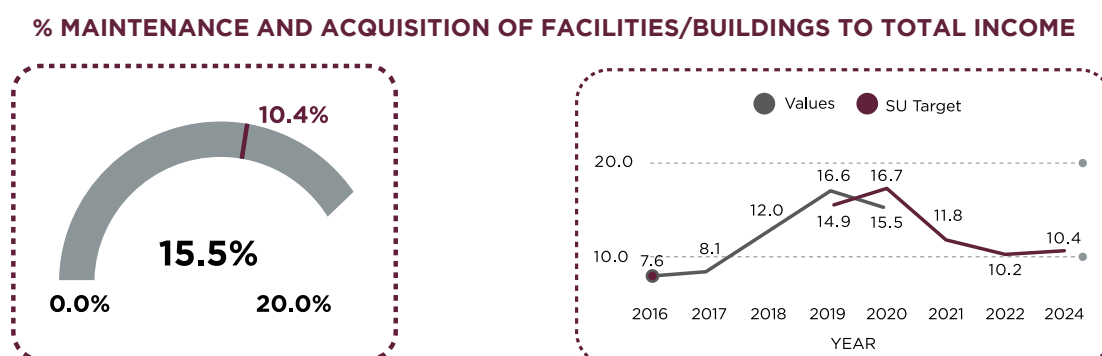
Figure 8: *Score Card relating to Core Strategic Theme 1*

In terms of Core Strategic Theme 2 (a transformative student experience), there has been a steady increase in the "Composition of total student body (% BCIA)", where SU started with 38.7% in 2016, and improved to 43.3% in 2020. SU was 86.6% successful in reaching the 2024 goal of 50.0% in 2020 (indicated with maroon on the visualisation), by achieving 43.3% (indicated in grey) for this SMI, as seen below.

COMPOSITION OF TOTAL STUDENT BODY (% BCIA)
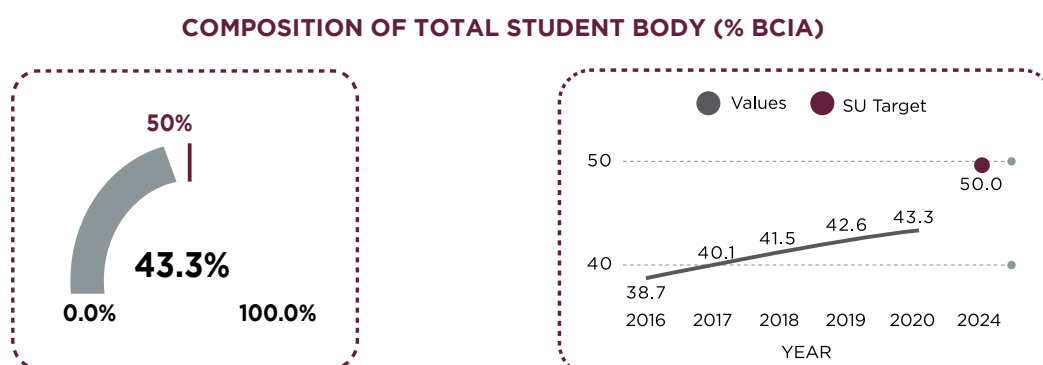
Figure 9: *Score Card relating to Core Strategic Theme 2*

In terms of Core Strategic Theme 3 (purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks), SU was 62.5% successful (we reached 10.0% in 2020) in reaching the 2024 goal of 16.0% for the SMI "International students of total enrolled students" under the institutional objective "Strengthen and expand Africa partnerships as aligned with SU vision and mission". Goals are visualised in maroon on the figures and values are represented in grey on the radial gauge charts, as seen below, and as maroon lines on the line charts.

% INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OF TOTAL ENROLLED STUDENTS
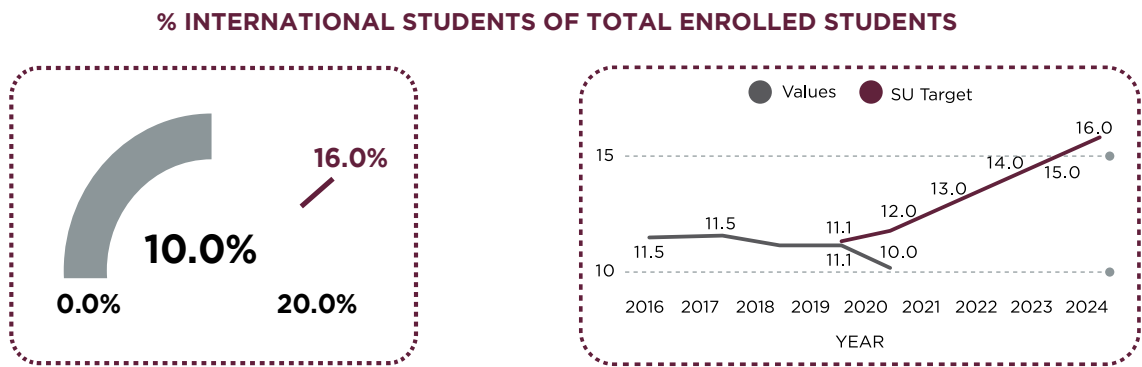
Figure 10: *Score Card relating to Core Strategic Theme 3*

In terms of Core Strategic Theme 5 (research for impact), SU was 93.2% successful, in 2020 with 69.9%, in reaching the 2024 goal of 75.0% for the SMI "% of academic staff members with a doctorate to all academic staff members". The visualisation below shows the target in maroon and the performance of the indicator in grey.

% OF ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS WITH A DOCTORATE TO ALL ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS
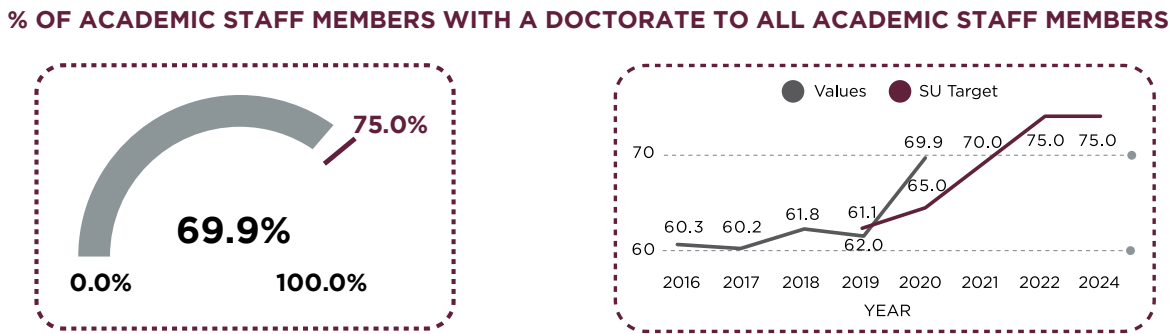
Figure 11: *Score Card relating to Core Strategic Theme 5*

In terms of Core Strategic Theme 6 (employer of choice), the SMI "% BCIA of all staff [all job levels]" under the institutional objective "Equity, transformation and promotion of personnel" shows a steady increase from 2016 with 46.2% to 2020 with 50.2%. This means that SU was 90.5% successful in reaching the 2024 target of 55.5%.

% BCIA OF ALL STAFF (ALL JOB LEVELS)
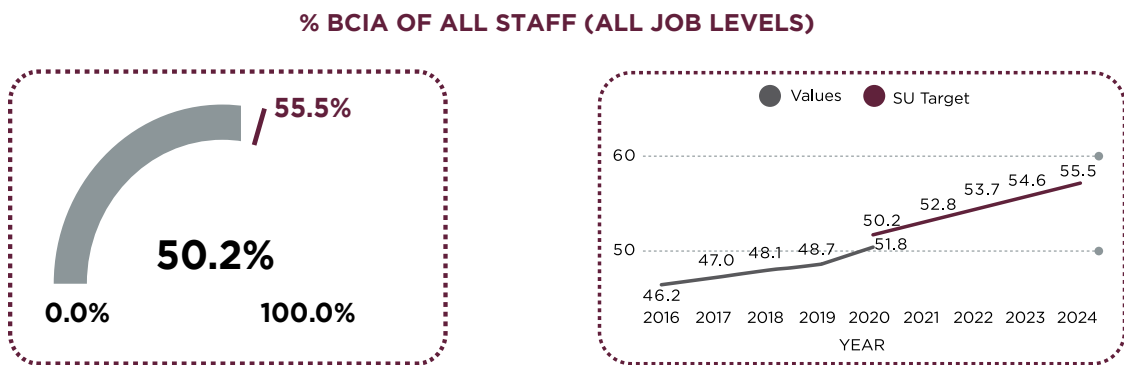
Figure 12: *Score Card relating to Core Strategic Theme 6*

For more, visit the "Stellenbosch University Score Card including Faculties" on Information Governance's website. Click here, also on IG's website, on how to access your power BI™ applications, and how to get a Power BI™ licence.

- The IG Division developed their new interactive webpage to profile its expertise and services. It contains links to all its services and statistical profiles, as well as tools for Privacy Impact Assessments. Access to classified data might be restricted, but all other statistical data are available to staff and the public as normally published. A PDF summary of the portfolio with links to webpages and contact details is available for download.

1.15. VISUALISING DATA

In striving to be a data-driven university it is important to expand on the visualisation of data to ensure easy access for users across the university. To this effect, the IG Division developed interactive Power BI™ visualisations of data related to rankings, strategic management indicators, faculty research data, HR KPIs, and SU's statistical profile.

Rankings: This model contains a list of rankings that SU participates in, visualises the placement of South African universities on the different rankings, explains the methodologies of the different rankings, lists the data fields used by the different rankings, and provides data field definitions and data that SU submits to the rankings. The model also compares the data submitted by South African universities to the DHET as HEMIS data (staff and student data) to the data that are submitted by South African universities to the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings and the QS World University Ranking.

THE WUR RANK BY YEAR AND UNIVERSITY

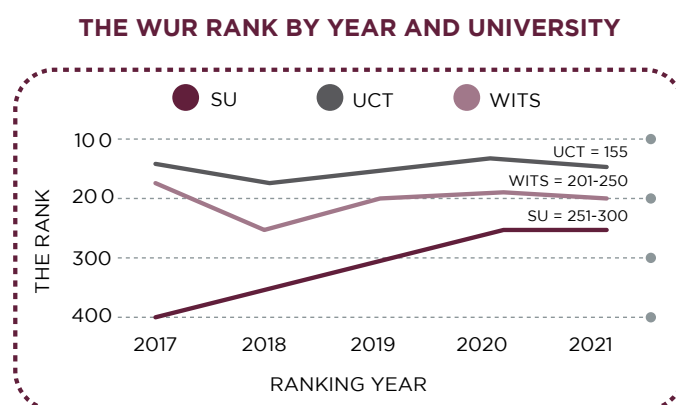*Figure 13: THE World University Ranking for SU, UCT and Wits (2017–2021)*

Strategic Management Indicators: The visualisation for SMIs shows and compares the effectiveness calculated for SU's Core Strategic Themes.
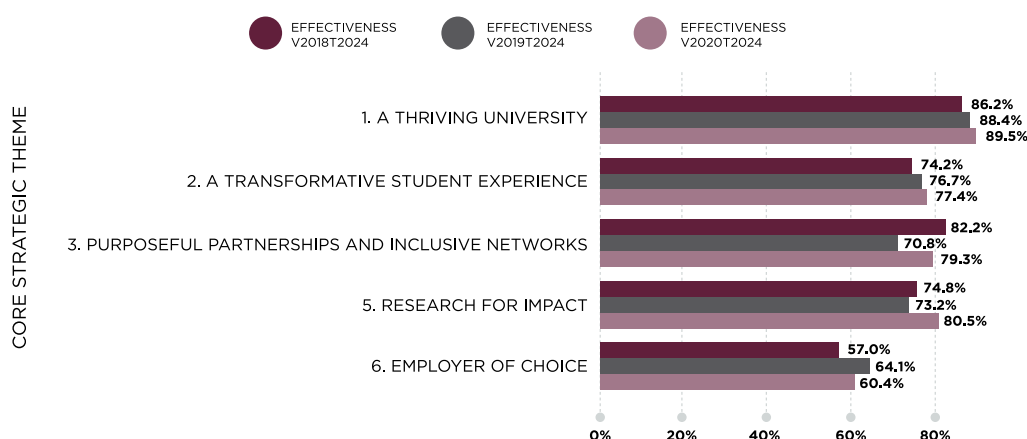
Figure 14: Effectiveness calculated for SU's Core Strategic Themes, values for 2018 against 2024 targets in maroon; values for 2019 against 2024 targets in grey; and values for 2020 against 2024 targets in pink

Statistical Profile: SU's statistical profile originated several years ago and is intended to share certain core information regarding the University's students and staff to the public in a concise and visually pleasing way. Traditionally, it took substantial time and effort to update and publish this profile on an annual basis. An initiative was launched by IG to create a new dashboard that will link to the institutional data warehouse to enable automatic updates of the relevant data. Care was taken to push only summarised data to prohibit access to more fine-grained or sensitive data groupings. The dashboard was made available in Power BI's public environment, having the benefit that users can access such data without having a Power BI licence. The new statistical profile was completed and made available during the last quarter of 2020 and can be found here. As an additional advantage, the use of this dashboard by internal users has escalated tremendously during 2021, providing them with core information at their fingertips.
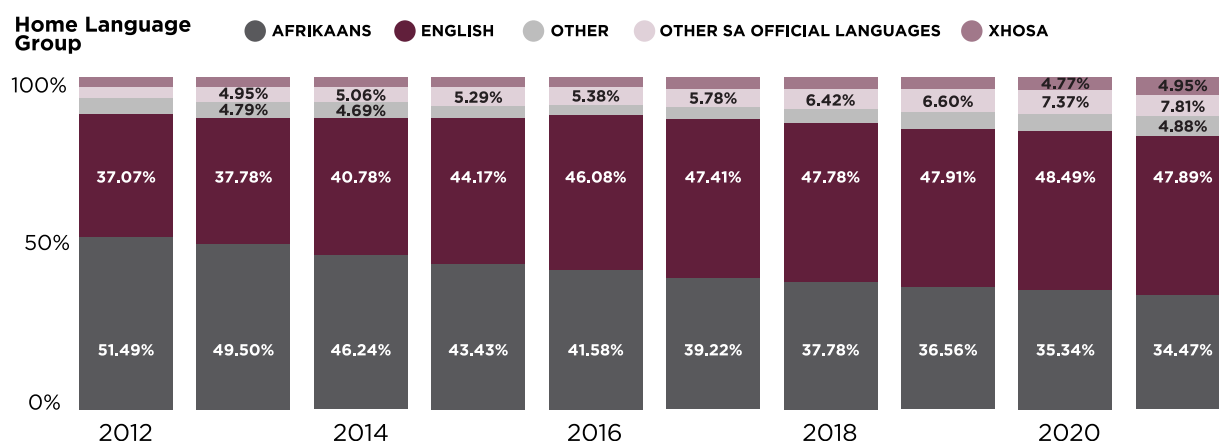
Figure 15: *Student headcount distribution by home language (2012–2020)*

Staff Distribution: The SUN-i staff distribution dashboard presents an overview of the up-to-date and June staff headcount statistics over time and is now available as an interactive Power BI report. The information used in the model is based on data captured in the SUN e-HR system, which is further extended and enriched with relevant data dimensions within SUN-i. The aim of this Power BI dashboard is to gain quick insights concerning SU's staff in terms of headcounts, nature of appointments, and associated trends.
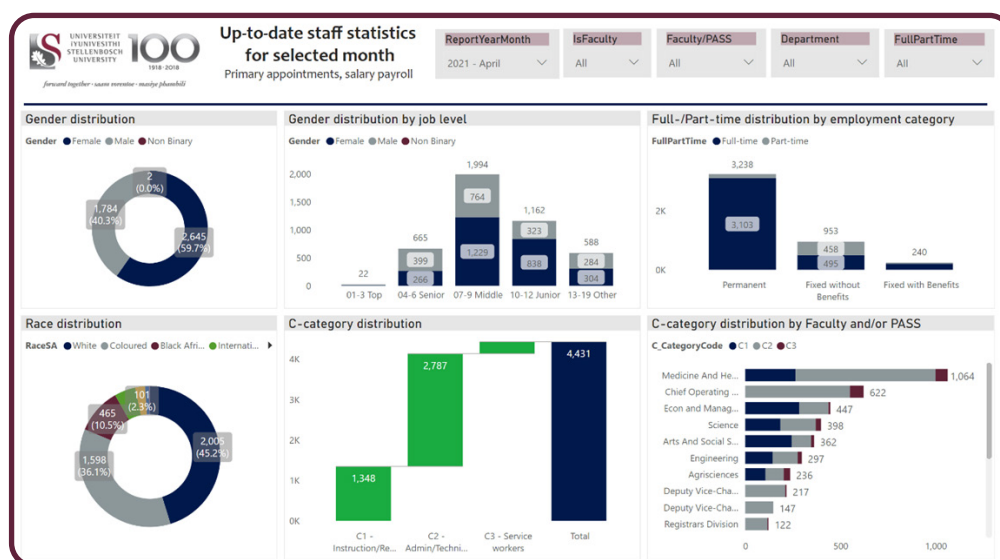
Figure 16: *A screenshot of the SUN-i Staff Distribution Dashboard*

Staff FTE: The SUN-i Staff Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) dashboard gives an overview of the FTE number of staff based on the data captured within the SUN e-HR system. The data are further enriched to indicate the FTE senior lecturer equivalent (FTE-SLE) per category. The SLE factor (that is used to convert FTE staff numbers to FTE-SLE numbers) is calculated as the basic remuneration of a staff member's job level relative to the basic remuneration of a senior lecturer. The weights are calculated for both academic and PASS staff, based on their respective basic remuneration scales, i.e.,

a senior lecturer at job level 7 has an SLE-factor of 1. The FTE-SLE measure is useful to compare environments with one another, or the evolution of a given environment over time since the measure caters for differences in post levels of staff in a consistent way. The aim of this Power BI dashboard is to gain an understanding of SU's FTE staff and associated trends.
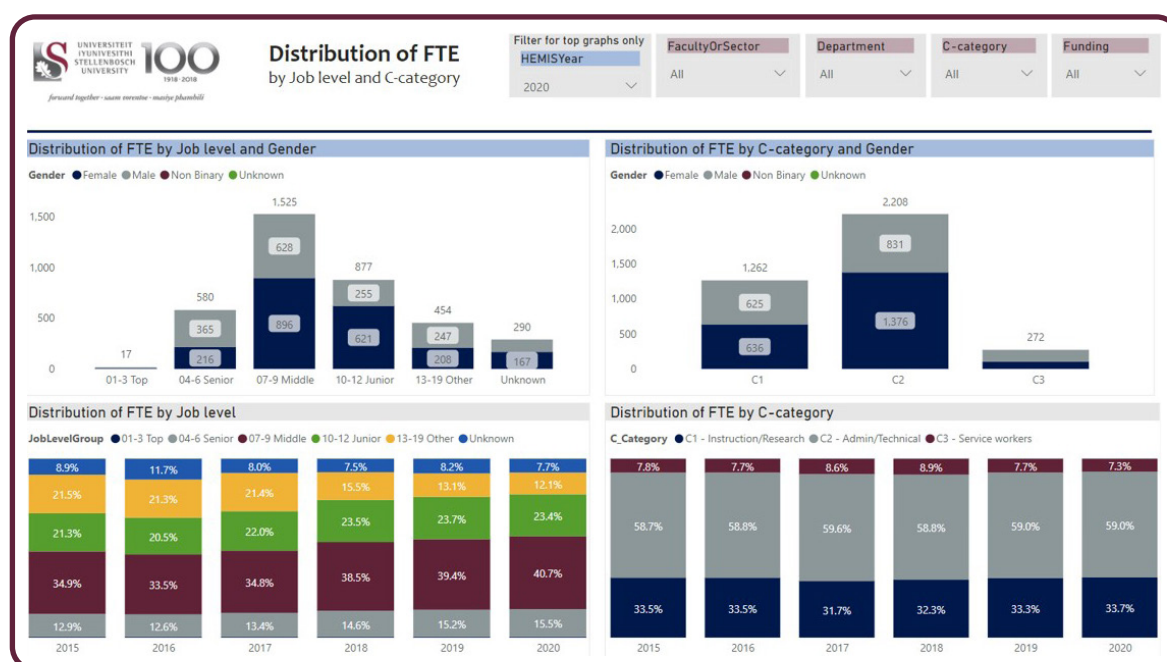
Figure 17: SUN-i Staff FTE Dashboard

1.16. ANNUAL EXTERNAL AUDIT OF STAFF AND STUDENT DATA

The external audit process of SU's 2020 student and staff data commenced at the beginning of June 2021 and was completed middle July 2021. Data elements that need to be audited for accuracy are prescribed by the DHET. Some of these data elements are: SU's Programme Qualification Matrix, students' academic activity status, student enrolment numbers, student full-time equivalents (FTEs), qualifications' approval statuses, qualifications' NQF levels, enrolled FTE calculations, completed FTE calculations, module levels, module CESMs, foundation module indicators, research module credit calculations, gender/race/nationality/ NSFAS data, staff FTE calculations, staff CESM data. For the second year, Ernst & Young is the external auditor and it is anticipated that, as in the past, an audit report with no factual findings that conflict with DHET audit directives will be issued at the end of the audit process.

1.17. PROMOTION OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

On 1 July 2021, national responsibility for the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) shifts from the South African Human Rights Commission to the Information Regulator. At the time of writing, the IG Division is in the process of refreshing SU's PAIA-related documentation to ensure compliance with changes to the PAIA landscape. This refresh allows IG to also consider recent months (March to June 2021) during which a significant spike was seen in the number of requests made under the Act and in the complexity and/or scope of individual requests. These requests had a significant impact on the operations of the University, requiring individuals from multiple areas to dedicate time and resources to handle these requests. IG, and SU as a whole, has learned many lessons from the handling of these requests. As part of the document refresh process, IG intends to capture those lessons, highlight opportunities for improvement, and present those to the Rectorate for further discussion and guidance.

1.18. USAF PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT FORUM

Universities South Africa (USAf) has made considerable efforts to strengthen the public university sector's overall response to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) over recent years. These efforts include guidelines for POPIA, guidelines for the European Union's General Data Protection Regulations, individual guidance notes for a selection of subtopics, and customisable awareness materials. In May 2021, USAf created a POPIA Forum to facilitate inter-institutional conversation and support between information officers, deputy information officers, and compliance officers, amongst others, across the sector. Mr Jerall Toi from the IG Division was elected as the inaugural chair of this national forum.

1.19. PRIVACY IMPACT SELF-ASSESSMENT

The IG Division developed and launched an online privacy impact self-assessment tool accessible to all SU staff and students. Privacy impact assessments (also known as data protection impact assessments and personal information impact assessments) address both privacy legislative requirements and good information and data management practices. The self-assessment allows researchers and institutional process owners to quickly assess the value of the personal information collected, used, or created in their research or process. Understanding this value of information enables researchers and process owners to design more appropriate controls, to have more informed discussions with support environments about storage and (cyber) security needs, or to reach out to IG for more advice and guidance for higher value information processing.

1.20. HEMIS-SUN-I-SUNSTUDENT

The SUNStudent system renewal project that SU embarked on challenged the IG Division, in collaboration with the Division for Information Technology, to rethink and redesign old NATURAL ADABAS procedures, processes and functionalities concerning HEMIS reporting and other statutory and non-statutory reporting. Almost all these processes and procedures have already been converted to Structured Query Language (SQL) and migrated to the SUN-i data platform, which will, to a great extent, replace the current Student Information System (SIS) procedures and processes for HEMIS and other statutory reporting. The next phase will be to convert all processes and procedures to align to the new SUNStudent context and to match current HEMIS curriculum data elements with those in SUNStudent, as well as the configuration and customisation of the data architecture necessary to ensure that HEMIS and other statutory reporting will not be compromised under SUNStudent.

1.21. SURVEYS

The IG Division administers and analyses several annual surveys in collaboration and in service of other divisions, mostly centred within Student Affairs. During the reporting period these included:

- The Graduate Destination Survey 2020
- The SUBSIFY (Stellenbosch University Baseline Survey for Incoming First Years) Survey 2021
- The Newcomers Welcoming Survey 2021

The need also arose, due to the extraordinary circumstances of 2020, to get an understanding of the lived experience of students in 2020, documenting their experiences of learning online and mostly from home. The SU Campus in the Cloud 2020 survey was therefore compiled, launched, and analysed in collaboration with colleagues from Student Affairs.

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 2

A Transformative Student Experience

The institutional goals for a transformative student experience are:

- Provide a unique, personalised student experience that serves as a catalyst for transformational change amidst opportunities for engagement and development through a first-class academic offering, which prepares graduates to lead and excel in a diverse world.

- Develop our students' graduate attributes so that they can be 21st-century citizens and achieve their full potential.

- Strengthen strategic enrolment management to enhance access and inclusivity.

- Enhance our student success rate through educational innovation.

- Deliver comprehensive, premium-quality support services to our student community.

- Enhance and expand engagement opportunities for our substantial alumni community.

- Create relevant opportunities for work-integrated learning towards a successful career and positive societal impact.

During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.

2.1. GLOBAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

SU International facilitated the participation of students in various global education opportunities. These ensure that SU students develop global and intercultural skills aimed at ensuring they can function in a global environment after graduating. A summary of these global education opportunities follows:

Umoja Inaugural African Student Leaders Network Summit 2021: On 10 and 11 June 2021, the inaugural African Student Leaders Network Summit, Umoja, was hosted by Student Governance and SUI. The mission of the network is to unite African student leaders to champion ethical leadership and good governance. The two-day virtual summit covered various themes, which were discussed by participants from eight higher education institutions in South Africa and the rest of Africa. A total of 253 delegates from across the world attended the summit.

International Conference of Undergraduate Research: The International Conference of Undergraduate Research is an annual conference that was established by the University of Warwick and Monash University. Currently thirteen universities, including SU, participates in the conference. Sixteen undergraduate SU students from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences presented their research during the virtual conference, held on 29 and 30 September 2020.

Global Week: SU International hosted its first online Global Week from 12 to 16 October 2020 (www.sun. ac.za/globalweek). The purpose was to encourage students to take up available online and physical mobility opportunities in 2021. Each day focused on a specific theme, with the responsible SUI coordinator giving a presentation and facilitating a panel discussion with students via MS Teams. All sessions were recorded and placed on the Global Week website to allow asynchronous engagement.

Tübingen Exchange Programme: The Tübingen South Africa programme, established in 2000, is coordinated by the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen in Germany and by SU in South Africa. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the programme entailed travelling to Tübingen for the month of January and students taking part in various seminars and excursions. Due to travel restrictions, the programme was transformed into a two-week virtual exchange programme. Ten Southern Africa students participated, of which five were SU students. This was one of SU's first online short virtual exchanges co-presented with another international university.

Global Citizenship Short Course Phase I: The Global Citizenship short course is a joint venture between SUI and the Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert Institute (FVZS). Previously, the course was closely aligned with the development of intercultural competencies, but has now been aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. Students participated by, among others, deconstructing what it means to be a global citizen and were introduced to the SDGs and other global issues. A total of 39 students enrolled for the course.

Global Citizenship Phase II: SUI is involved with a programme called "In conversation with Globalisation" in collaboration with the University of Stuttgart (Germany), St. Xavier's College (India) and the University of Bergamo (Italy). Nineteen participants from the four institutions were actively engaging and having fruitful interactions through a combination of online seminars and work. The programme culminated in a virtual project week at the beginning of March 2021 with a focus on the theme of "Post-Covid: Looking ahead".

Study Abroad for Global Learning Short Course: The Global Education Centre (GEC) at SUI developed the Study Abroad for Global Learning short course during 2020 and presented the first version thereof in 2020. Students who are taking part in a semester exchange is required to follow the course. The course consists of ten sessions taught by GEC staff members. The short course aims to support students' global learning, encourages them to be global ambassadors for SU and South Africa, and helps them to navigate the complexities of living and learning in a foreign country. The course is experiential in nature and covers the entire study-abroad life cycle from pre-departure to reintegration back in Stellenbosch. It is currently presented online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous teaching. It is envisaged that the course will follow a hybrid teaching approach in future, with some sessions taught face-to-face and others online. This is in line with SU's approach to combine hybrid learning with physical and virtual student mobility, the outcome of which is hybrid mobility. As such, the Study Abroad for Global Learning course is also an example of the type of hybrid support for student mobility envisioned by the Hybrid Mobility Hub.

International Week on Sustainability: In March 2021, ten BCom (International Business) students participated in the University of Antwerp's Faculty of Business and Economics "International Week on Sustainability" (or I-Week) online. The aim of the I-Week was to expose the students to international views and perspectives on corporate sustainability, social and environmental reporting, and business strategy for sustainability. It was a great opportunity for students to acquire a global perspective and intercultural skills in a course-specific context. Students participated in interactive lectures delivered by international visiting professors or business managers with global experience. The plenary sessions, workshops and group activities were followed by working on a paper and presentation in small groups, and a test. The ten students passed well and enjoyed the experience to engage with their international peers online.

2.2. INCOMING AND OUTGOING STUDENTS FOR 2020

Comparing the physical student mobility numbers of incoming and outgoing students of 2020 with 2019, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on the physical mobility of students. A significant reduction in terms of incoming international student numbers is visible – from 862 incoming students in 2019 to 377 incoming students in 2020. This was due to international travel bans, but also students preferring face-to-face teaching rather than online classes. There was, however, a strong recovery of student numbers in the first semester of 2021, with a total of 400 students participating.

In terms of outgoing student mobility, students were initially restricted from travelling abroad by the South African travel ban, but later also due to international travel bans on travellers from South Africa due to the virus variant found in South Africa. All outgoing student mobility was cancelled for the second semester of 2020. While there were 320 outgoing students in 2019, there were only 93 outgoing students in 2020. At the beginning of 2021, SUI was able to send a small number of students abroad before stricter international travel bans on South Africa were put in place.

Although physical mobility was hampered, various virtual exchange programmes were presented to SU students. Some students who could not travel, still decided to participate in the semester exchange by following online classes of the partner university in South Africa.

MOBILITY OPTIONS	NUMBER OF OUTGOING STUDENTS
Semester Exchanges, first & second semester	49
Partner Summer & Winter Schools	29 (13 online)
International Conference for Undergraduate Research	16 (online)
Independent Summer & Winter Schools	0
TOTAL	**93**

MOBILITY OPTIONS	NUMBER OF INCOMING STUDENTS
Exchange, first semester	122
Exchange, second semester	9 (only online students)
Free movers, first semester	79
Free movers, second semester	7 (only online students)
SKEMA, first semester	29
Affiliate research students	57
Short programmes	74
Summer School	0
TOTAL	**377**

Table 4: Number of outgoing and incoming students for 2020

2.3. SKEMA PARTNERSHIP

SU entered a strategic partnership with SKEMA Business School in 2020 to offer their students from across their four global campuses a study-abroad experience at SU, as well as offering a tailored academic programme. The first cohort arrived in 2020 and had to return to their home countries in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic but completed their courses online. The cohort for the first semester of 2021 was a considerably larger group of 343 students. It is important to note that not all students are on campus – of the 343 students, 81 students attend online from France. The academic programme consists of three streams: two Master's degree streams and one Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) stream. Each stream has been tailored to the needs of the specific group following courses. Courses also needed to be presented in augmented mode, accommodating both students in class and those online.

The course offering consists of:

- Courses specifically designed for groups and which forms part of SU's Global Education Programme offering: Doing Business in Southern Africa, Introduction to Data Science, and Overview of South African History. These courses are designed in collaboration with academic departments on campus.

- Language Courses: Students could choose between taking Chinese or English for Academic Purposes.

- Most courses followed by the students are in the field of economic and management sciences. The latter courses are presented by academic staff from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, but also staff from the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB).

It has been a cross-faculty and campus-wide effort in presenting the academic programme to the SKEMA Business School students; a smaller group of 140 students is expected to attend in the second semester of 2021. In addition to the above three streams offered in the first semester, a fourth academic stream has been added for the second semester. The name of the academic stream is ESDHEM, and it is a three-year undergraduate programme with the aim to prepare students for the French Business School Entrance Examinations.

2.4. STUDENT COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Student Recruitment: The Centre for Student Recruitment and Career Advice (CSR) launched a #chooseSU social media campaign (Facebook and Instagram) in January 2021 that continued until 31 July 2021. The aim of this campaign was to showcase what makes the University unique and why provisionally accepted students should choose to study at SU. It focused on Grade 12 learners and why they should apply to study at SU.

December Graduation 2020: A December Graduation 2020 communication campaign was conceptualised and implemented, with the goal of providing graduates and guests with user-friendly access to detailed and accurate information on all the processes related to graduation. The December graduation period also saw SU featuring in a significant amount of user-generated content on social media (#SUgrad) as graduates celebrated obtaining their degrees. The output of the campaign was as follows:

- A streamlined graduation website: The English website received 85 606 visitors during the period 1 November 2020 to 1 February 2021. Of those, 27 170 are regular visitors to the website. The Afrikaans website received 4 013 visitors during the period 1 November 2020 to 1 February 2021. Of those, 1 182 are regular visitors to the website

- A pre-graduation information newsletter distributed to graduands

- Distribution of a graduation edition of *news@ StellenboschUni*

- Placement of a series of graduation news articles on the SU website, social media channels and in the local and national media
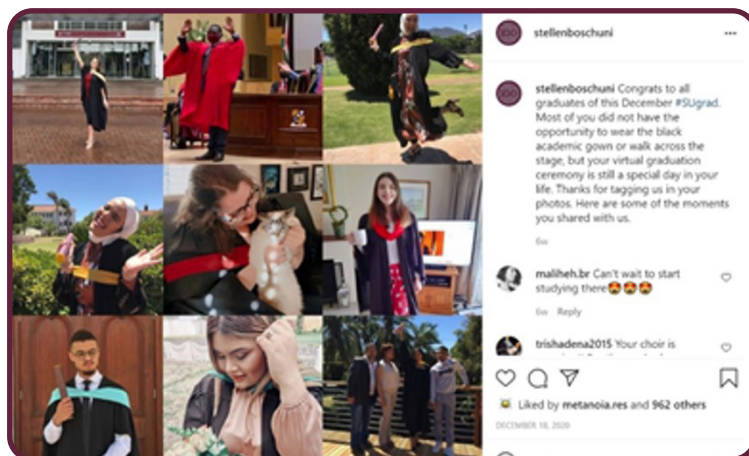
Figure 18: *A screenshot of social media posts about the December 2020 graduation*

March Graduation 2021: A March Graduation 2021 multi-channel communication campaign was conceptualised and implemented, with the goal of providing graduates and guests with user-friendly access to detailed and accurate information on all the processes related to graduation. The output of the campaign was as follows:

- Virtual, faculty-specific graduation videos: To date the videos have received 25 878 views

- Livestreamed PhD ceremonies: These ceremonies received just over 2 404 views, with most of the views occurring after the ceremony

- A streamlined graduation website: In total, the English and Afrikaans website received 11 821 visitors during March 2021

- A pre-graduation information newsletter

- Distribution of a graduation edition of *news@StellenboschUni*

- Placement of a series of graduation news articles on the SU website, social media channels and in the local and national media

Registration and Fees 2021: A new registration and fees website was conceptualised and designed. The aim of the project was to provide newcomers and returning students with easy and user-friendly access to detailed and accurate information on the registration process, fees, and funding. Links to the new website were widely distributed on the SU social media platforms. The website went live in December 2020, functions well and has been well received. The English website received 85 258 visitors during the period 1 November 2020 to 1 February 2021. Of those, 28 814 are regular visitors to the website. The Afrikaans website received 5 106 visitors during the same period, and of those, 1 821 are regular visitors to the website.

#SUyouthday: During Youth Month, the CCMD put the spotlight on eight members of the SU Choir – one from each voice group. Each member and the conductor, André van der Merwe, shared a special Youth Day video message with the SU community. These messages were distributed via SU's social media channels. A short Q&A-style article of each member was also published on SU's student page during the course of June. The aim of the campaign was to showcase how the diversity of the SU Choir has not only enriched the sound and repertoire of the choir, but has also taught the members valuable life lessons and offered them a place to be unashamedly themselves. The campaign was a great success, achieving an average reach of 12 000 on Facebook, much higher than the average post reach on our Facebook account. View the video on YouTube and see the campaign on Facebook.
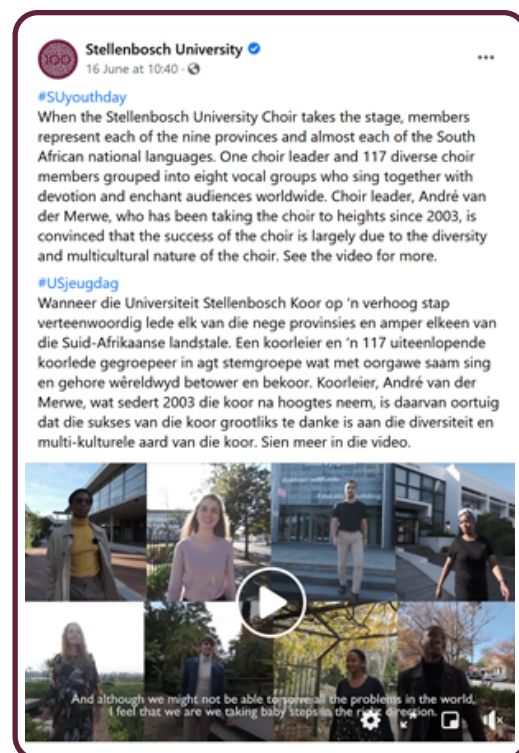
Figure 19: Screenshot of the #SUyouthday campaign

2.5. SU OPEN DAY 2021

SU's Open Day is most students' first experience of the University and plays a key role in prospective students' experience of student life and studying at SU. In line with the University's commitment to comply with Covid-19 safety protocols, SU hosted its first online Open Day, which attracted more than 23 238 prospective students, parents and teachers on Saturday, 17 April 2021. This number of cyber visitors is more than double the number of visitors who attended previous face-to-face Open Day events. The virtual event reached audiences across the globe, with visitors from as far as the United States, Namibia, the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, United Kingdom, Germany, Botswana, Nigeria and France.

The Centre for Student Recruitment and Career Advice (CSR) partnered with schools and projects, for example Kutlwanong (a non-profit organisation committed to accelerating the quality and quantity of Mathematics and Physical Science performance amongst township youth) and TRAC (a national, non-profit Mathematics and Physical Science intervention programme of SU)

to make sure that all learners have access to the day. Nationally, schools in previously disadvantaged areas opened their doors to learners and parents to make sure they receive important information that can help learners and parents in their decision-making process.

The top five visited online faculty stalls were Medicine and Health Sciences (7 170 visitors), Economic and Management Science (6 189 visitors), Science (5 888 visitors), Arts and Social Science (5 589 visitors), and Engineering (4 452 visitors). On the day, Contact and Client Services also assisted with 548 live chats to guide learners and parents through the site and answer enquiries on SU's application process, available funding options, career advice and student support. The Open Day webpage remained active until 31 July 2021 for visitors to obtain information, watch information sessions, and download brochures and documents. The site had 37 733 visits overall, with 14 364 unique visitors.

The website www.maties.com for prospective learners and parents remains a valuable resource for recruitment information. Since applications opened on 6 April 2021, there has been an increase in visitors, with the site receiving 305 660 visits (120 119 visits in the month of June alone).

2.6. ENGAGING WITH PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

The CSR provides various services as part of the student experience pipeline to prospective students to support them in making a career choice and making SU their university of choice.

Webinars: On 15 June 2021, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) hosted 458 learners, parents and Life Orientation teachers for a webinar. SU presented its academic offering and application process in partnership with seven other South African universities. The webinar aimed at providing universities a platform to engage with learners and teachers as an alternative to in-person school visits. In addition, after the success of the 2020 Grade 9–11 webinar series, the CSR presented a Grade 12 webinar on how to apply, the admission criteria, financial assistance available and other useful information available to prospective students. This webinar was presented on 23 June 2021 and offered both an Afrikaans and English stream simultaneously. Learners and teachers from across South Africa, as well as from Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the UK attended the webinar. The number of registrants for the Afrikaans webinar was 509, and for the English webinar 1 124.

Advisory Sessions: Prospective students are offered the option to book individual sessions with one of four student advisors to discuss the SU application process and academic offering. In total, 209 scheduled advisory sessions were presented until June 2021. Since it has been presented as an online service, there has been an increase in the national uptake thereof.

Career Advice (psychometric assessments): A paid-for service is offered by our career advice psychologist to assess prospective students and assist them with career and/or subject choices. A total of 201 scheduled assessments took place from January until June 2021. A part of this service is a focused project, Careers@Maties, in which the top BCIA achievers are tested (free of charge) in 27 Western Cape schools. For 2021, 46 learners have already been tested.

2.7. DATA SUPPORT FOR DELL YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAMME

SU applied to become a partner of the Dell Foundation Young Leaders Programme in 2019. This programme is a scholarship initiative aimed at undergraduate students from disadvantaged backgrounds with the goal to provide financial assistance, as well as academic and psychosocial support to students up to graduation, and thereafter, getting them into employment. After several selection rounds, SU was selected as a partner during the first half of 2020. The Dell Foundation has now initiated the process to select the first cohort of students to participate in the programme. In their application, SU 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. The Centre for Business Intelligence within IG provided the data needed for the initial application, as well as for subsequent selection rounds. The data was mainly obtained from the SUN-i Business Intelligence system. A list of potential candidates from which the first cohort of students would be selected was further provided in September 2020. In future, academic progress reports of students selected into the programme will also be provided on an ongoing basis as required by the Dell Foundation.

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 3

Purposeful Partnerships and
Inclusive Networks

The institutional goals for purposeful partnerships and inclusive networks are:

- Develop a framework of principles to ensure local relevance, regional impact, and a global reach to enable transactional partnerships and promote transformative partnerships.

- Promote a deep connectedness and interaction with business, industry and government to leverage our strengths, which will include work-integrated learning, continuing professional development, collaborative research, consulting, licensing, spin-out companies and commercial ventures.

- Embrace the communities we serve to bring about social, cultural, environmental, and economic development and change.

- Enhance and expand engagement opportunities for, and foster our relationship with, our substantial alumni community.

- Build effective collaborations through partnerships, alliances and networks with other universities, institutions and organisations, where such collaboration contributes to excellence in teaching and learning, outstanding research, and social engagement and impact.

- Foster distributed, networked and reciprocal partnerships that are nurtured by both institutional structuring and personal relations.

- Establish appropriate partnerships with institutions in all societal sectors, including the spheres of civil society, public discourse, public opinion-formation and public policymaking.

During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.
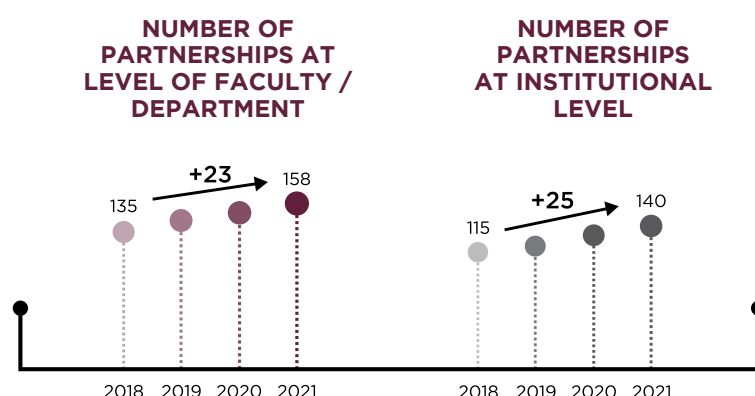
3.1. GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Although SU's international partnerships generally grow organically through research collaboration or the mobility of staff and students, over the last few years partnership development has been strategically driven by the SU Internationalisation Strategy and the subsequent Partnership Framework as developed by SUI.

The regional growth (see the below graphs) can be attributed to the focus on internationalisation at institutions worldwide over the same period. The eagerness to interact and collaborate globally certainly made it easier and more commonplace for institutions to formalise interactions. The sharp difference between the number of partnerships with Europe and the other regions can be attributed to SU's historic linkages with Europe. SU is also a coveted partner due to its

geographical location in Africa; Africa is a big attraction globally with regard to novelty in research and impact that is made by the research.

SU's Partnership Framework also makes provision for the distinction between institutional and faculty/departmental (FD) level partnerships. The latter also strives to achieve many of the features of an institutional partnership but affords more custodianship to the relevant academic environment. SUI is currently developing and mapping the Comprehensive Partnerships Portfolio. The FD level partnerships generally support specific research collaborations for an academic environment.

- See Addendum A for a list of the new and renewed partnership agreements concluded during the reporting period.

NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS AT LEVEL OF FACULTY / DEPARTMENT

NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Graph 2: Growth in international partnerships

NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS BY REGION
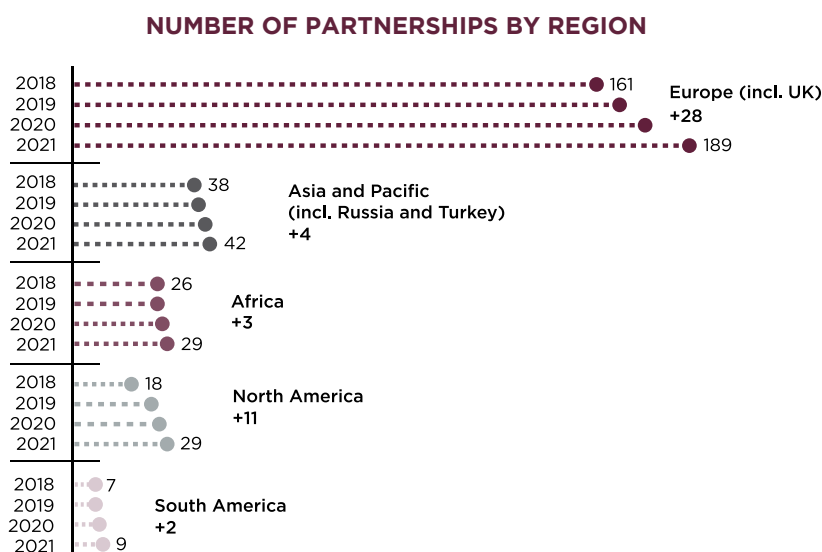
Graph 3: Number of international partnerships by region

3.2. PARTNER INSTITUTION ENGAGEMENT

External relations and partner engagements, managed by SUI, have continued through online "check-in" meetings, bilateral research-focused meetings and "virtual" delegation visits. A summary of some of the partner meetings follows:

Leiden University, the Netherlands (17 August 2020): SU and Leiden University have been partners since 1992, with strong links in the Faculty of Law. A meeting was held between the Global Education Centre and the Centre for Partnerships and Internationalisation Support at SU and their counterparts. The purpose was to discuss and understand challenges during Covid-19, discuss some of the technical and administrative aspects of the student exchange, and to expand to possible other opportunities for comprehensive internationalisation, such as more support for Joint PhDs and staff mobility.

Hamburg Network Post Meeting Debrief, Germany (10 September 2020): SU colleagues, along with some of the strategic partners of the University of Hamburg were invited to participate in a series of webinars as part of the Hamburg Network meetings that went online in 2020. Four sessions have already been held, with this meeting between SU, Northwestern University and the University of Hamburg held as a debrief to reflect on what worked well and the way forward in terms of online engagements. Discussions centred around the financial impact of Covid-19, models for sustainability and innovation, as well as exploring synergies between Northwestern University and SU's focus on PASS capacity building and mobility programmes.

TU Dresden, Germany (15 September 2020): A meeting was held between water researchers at TU Dresden and the Water Institute at SU. This was described as a "sandpit event" where ideas were discussed and initial links explored to find synergies and possible joint research activities. The TUD water researchers explored ways to extend multi/cross-disciplinary collaboration into social sciences and economics, ways to extend international collaboration to Africa, as well as to learn more about dealing with extreme water scarcity. Moving forward, a further mapping of research interest areas and "widening the net" of researchers were suggested.

Leipzig University, Germany (28 September 2020): Leipzig University is also a longstanding partner of SU International, since 1998. There are a number of ongoing activities currently under way and this was a "check-in" to keep the connection between our institutions strong. The meeting focused on three key topics, namely: virtual and hybrid mobility, opportunities for collaborative online international learning (COIL), and joint funding. Several synergies in the hybrid mobility concept emerged, and further discussions and exchange of ideas will be led by SUI.

University of Lausanne, Switzerland (8 October 2020): SU's partnership with the University of Lausanne spans almost a decade, with the first formal MOU concluded in 2012. During this partner "check-in", the partners discussed how Covid-19 has affected our operations, reporting on ongoing collaboration in terms of student mobility, and key follow-up actions resulting from a visit by the SU Rector van Vice-Chancellor, Prof Wim de Villiers, to the University of Lausanne in January 2020. As a way forward, the partners plan to explore options for a research-related discussion, especially in interdisciplinary fields with various overlaps, such as Microbiology, Humanities, Sport Science, and Economics.

University of Bath, United Kingdom (29 October 2020): The partnership with the University of Bath has grown exponentially over the past decade, with various activities and pockets of engagement taking place. This partner meeting focused on various topics, including an overview of each partner's higher education environment, internationalisation strategies, and key priorities relevant to the partnership, such as the Town and Gown Network and Civic Engagement, doctoral training, joint PhD summer schools in Africa, developing networks of research excellence, exploring research, practice and governance for equality, diversity and inclusion, widening participation, and sustainability. The meeting also included discussions around postgraduate research, new developments in teaching and learning, such as COIL initiatives, and a review of SU's student mobility actions.

Humboldt University Berlin, Germany (30 October 2020): SU's relationship with Humboldt University Berlin spans decades, and this partner meeting revolved around existing activities within the partnership. There has always been good student mobility in terms of semester exchanges, winter/summer schools and short programmes. Research/academic contact is highly dependent on the interest of faculties, and currently the only consistent activity is within the field of theology and religious studies. The discussion highlighted the realistic ways of expanding this collaboration, including staff mobility when it becomes possible again.

University of Hohenheim, Germany (17 March 2021): The University of Hohenheim is eager to continue SU's cooperation through Erasmus+ that provides funding for staff and student mobility, but travel is currently restricted due to the pandemic. SU students are also unable to travel to the summer school at the University of Hohenheim, but they offer some virtual alternatives. Both institutions are awaiting the outcome of a joint DAAD application for the bid for a global Climate and Environment Centre.

NC State University, USA (30 April 2021): This partnership has grown over the past few years from the initial link through AC21 and collaboration in Engineering (including student mobility). There has been much synergy between the institutions, with NC State also hosting a SKEMA campus and a Japanese Centre.

The agreement between SU and NC State University is up for renewal and SU is eager to continue the partnership. Follow-up discussions in this regard will be held soon.

University of Strasbourg, France (8 June 2021): SU held a productive meeting with Dr Claude Chailan, who is the Co-Director of the Executive MBA at EM Strasbourg Business School. Although SU's relationship with Strasbourg was initially through the University of Stellenbosch Business School, it has since grown into an institutional linkage with good student mobility, both for semester exchange and summer school mobility. The partners will continue exploring ways of collaboration and a follow-up meeting is expected soon.

3.3. GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

Network engagement has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, as many of SU's trusted partners are seeking ways to enhance internationalisation efforts by working with partners who belong to mutual networks. A summary of some of these activities follows:

ANIME Network: Strasbourg University in France approached SU to become a founding member of the Academic Network for Inclusiveness, Multilingualism and Excellence (ANIME). This network brings together universities that share similar values and highlight inclusive excellence, multilingualism, and an openness to civil society. The focus is on the development of strong interdisciplinary, inclusive research and training on an international level. SU has been tasked with coordinating working group 3, focusing on "inclusive excellence".

International Network of Universities: Another new network is the International Network of Universities (INU), which SU joined in December 2020. SU is the only African partner in this network and is represented on the INU Academic Council by Prof Hester Klopper, DVC: Strategy and Internationalisation, and Ms Sarah van der Westhuizen, Manager: Global Education Centre. The objective of the INU is to establish a global platform where members work collaboratively to provide transformative experiences that continuously advance the global engagement of students, faculty and staff.

Social Sciences Universities Network: In November and December 2020, the Social Sciences Universities Network (SSUN), which is coordinated by LUISS (Rome) and Renmin University (China) with SU as one of its members, hosted four webinars on themes relating to artificial intelligence. From SU, Prof Bruce Watson (Information Science) and Prof Gert-Jan van Rooyen (Engineering) participated.

South Africa Sweden University Forum: An established network to which SU belongs, the South Africa Sweden University Forum (SASUF), drew to the end of its first phase. SU has been an active member since 2018, participating in its annual conference. In the first phase, 13 SU researchers were successful in obtaining funding with their counterparts from Sweden. Each project received R160 000 to enable joint research development. The final conference was due to be held in Sweden but was delivered as a virtual conference called "SASUF Goes Digital 2020". A Leadership Summit was attended by Rector and VC Prof Wim de Villiers and DVC Prof Hester Klopper. This conference was also used as a last steppingstone to draft an agreement for continued collaboration into the next three phases of the project, aiming to spread out collaboration over the next ten years to further embrace the challenge of servicing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals until 2030.

Town and Gown Network: SU, as host of the Town and Gown (T&G) Secretariat, established a T&G forum in January 2021 to enable more effective cross-divisional collaboration and to align common goals of enhancing and supporting SU's civic engagement and engagement with business, society and industry. The forum aims to "feed into" the International Town and Gown Community of Practice by enabling greater substantive content inputs and knowledge, and practice sharing. The current members of the forum are Dr Leslie van Rooi (Social Impact), Mr Robert Kotzé (SUI) and Ms Lidia du Plessis (SUI). The plan for 2021 is to support the development of a T&G community of practice between the current 13 member institutions.

AC21 Consortium: SU has been re-elected to the Steering Committee of the AC21 Consortium with Nagoya University (Japan), University of Strasbourg (France), North Carolina State University (USA), Nanjing University (China), and the University of Freiburg (Germany). In 2020, SU successfully participated in three AC21 projects funded by the AC21 Special Project Fund. Furthermore, from 7 to 9 December 2020, several SU staff members participated virtually in the AC21 Online International Forum 2020, themed "New Pathways in Higher Education to meet Challenges of Global Change" and hosted by Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand.

Global Research Alliance SMARTY programme: SU was approached to partner with Sao Paulo State University (UNESP) as part of their Global Research Alliance on climate-smart agriculture and forestry, "Sustainable Smart Farming: Tropical Agriculture and Forest Production Systems" (SMARTY). UNESP was approved a grant proposal "Project of Internationalisation" (PrInt) to enhance graduate programmes and expand international research collaboration through the Brazilian Federal Universities funding. The PrInt project was built upon the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the global alliances are the primary institutional tools used to build strategic partnerships. SU has signed a letter of agreement to be a partner and, if successful, this Global Research Alliance SMARTY project will be coordinated at SU through the Faculty of AgriSciences with support from SUI. The project will enable research mobility and the development of joint research activities over a period of three to five years.

Global Alliance of Universities on Climate (GAUC): SU became part of the GAUC in 2019 and is currently the only African university in the alliance. Prof Hester Klopper was elected to serve on the board of directors, while Prof Guy Midgley serves on the Academic Council. In the lead-up to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, or COP26, SU students will participate in the GAUC student summit.

Venice International University (VIU): SU, KU Leuven and Waseda University submitted a proposal for a Graduate Seminar (similar to the former SU-KU Leuven Think Tank – online interaction followed by in-person seminar) in 2022, titled "Digital Citizenship: Exploring the opportunities and challenges of a digitalised society" with Prof Kanshu Rajaratram of SU's School for Data Science and Computational Thinking as SU academic lead. SU awaits the outcome of the proposal.

3.4. INTERNATIONAL@FACULTY WORKING GROUPS

The implementation phase of SU's Internationalisation Strategy involves several action steps to support faculties to align their research, teaching and learning, and other international partnership activities with this strategy. One key deliverable of this action plan has been a comprehensive Partnership Framework, which focuses on bilateral partnerships (formal relationships based on signed agreements) with higher education institutions and related international education organisations. One specific distinction made in the Partnership Framework pertains to the level of the agreement: institutional, and faculty or departmental (FD) level. Requests for FD level agreements are reviewed by International@Faculty working groups and then referred to the SUI Working Group for Agreement Development for consideration and processing to comply with institutional guidelines. The next phases in developing and implementing the partnership are managed by faculties according to their specific priorities with the support of the International@Faculty forum and the SU International liaison. Members of the SUI management team have been engaging with faculties to support the development of faculty-level working or interest groups to help with coordination and information flows. The first meetings of the working groups were held during the reporting period, ahead of the May meeting of the Institutional Advisory Committee for Internationalisation (IACI) to assess the status of partnership agreements held at a faculty-level, to align agreement development processes, and to explore ways of responding in more agile ways to opportunities available through our bilateral partnerships and the multilateral consortia and networks to which SU belongs.
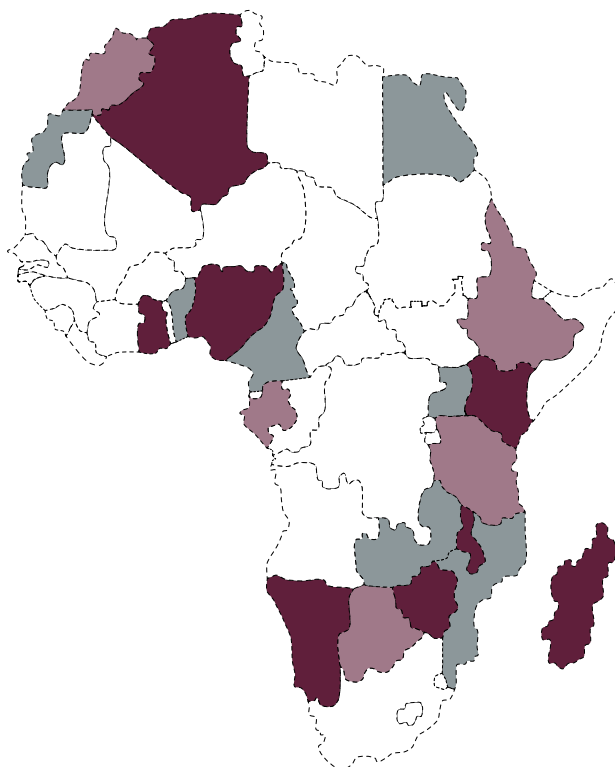
3.5. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS IN AFRICA

Figure 19: *Bilateral institutional and faculty agreements in Africa*

In line with SU's vision to be Africa's leading research-intensive university, SUI's Centre for Collaboration in Africa (CCA) focused on four major partnerships. A summary thereof follows:

PERIPERI-U: SUI hosts the PERIPERI-U Secretariat, which collaborated with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to launch an online short course named "Covid-19 Recovery Needs Assessment and Recovery Planning". The training contributes towards building capacity across the region to tackle challenges related to Covid-19 and helping to establish the foundation of a regional pool of experts that could be called upon to address Covid-19 issues and challenges. The first of these training sessions was held from 17 to 20 November 2020 and focused on providing training to 37 stakeholders involved in academia in the region, while the participants of the second course, held from 1 to 4 December 2020, were primarily from government offices and departments from the specific project countries, along with representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC) and ECOWAS. During both courses, representatives from the African Youth Advisory Board were invited to participate and receive training.

In addition, the PERIPERI-U Secretariat led a project in partnership with the World Bank focused on "Strengthening the research collaboration on disaster risk reduction in Southern Africa". This included a regional research project investigating the applied research and capacity-building network on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) across the SADC region, as well as providing a series of recommendations to improve capacity building and how to develop an effective and meaningful research network for DRR in Southern Africa. A validation workshop was held on 2 June 2021 to obtain constructive criticism and inputs on the findings, analysis and recommendations from stakeholders across the region. Initially the project was meant to support academic exchanges across the region, however due to travel restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the PERIPERI-U Secretariat hosted an online training short course for 45 participants across the region on fundamentals of DRR in Southern Africa and the continent. The short course ran for four weeks, officially concluding on 30 June 2021.

Round Table: On 13 November 2020, SU Rector and VC Prof Wim de Villiers hosted a virtual round table discussion with a few selected leaders and academics from partner institutions in conjunction with the Africa Centre for Scholarship (ACS) and the CCA. The aim of the round table discussion was to share some of the approaches that universities have undertaken and considered in developing capacity in research and enhancing scholarship on the continent, as well as to reflect on how scholarship on the continent can be enhanced through sustainable partnerships. The outcomes of the round table discussion will guide the implementation and development of activities of the Emerging Scholars Initiative of the ACS.

AUDA-NEPAD Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation: As one of five African Union Development Agency (ADUA-NEPAD) regionally located Centres of Excellence (CoE) on the African continent, the AUDA-NEPAD CoE in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is primed to be a major instrument in generating and/or leveraging knowledge and science-backed innovations to directly support policy and investment decisions in the implementation of Agenda 2063. Set up in Stellenbosch within the AUDA-NEPAD and CSIR Bilateral Cooperation Framework, the direct involvement of SU (led by Prof Eugene Cloete, DVC: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies) has evolved into a trilateral partnership presenting and leveraging significant access to the world-class Stellenbosch-based science and innovation ecosystem. Following a virtual workshop with 144 researchers and programme officers from SU, the CSIR and AUDA-NEPAD in December 2020, the CCA played a leading role in collaborating with the CSIR and AUDA-NEPAD to operationalise the AUDA-NEPAD CoE in STI and to develop a business plan, which is based on an initial 44 innovations identified during the December 2020 workshop. Subsequently, a formal business plan was developed and one-on-one discussions with project leaders led to the unpacking of the innovations to identify potential synergies and opportunities in projects for the upscaling of the innovations in the rest of Africa. Further activities will include the identification of priority project proposals, resource mobilisation and the detailed resource requirements from SU to contribute towards the operationalisation of the AUDA-NEPAD CoE in STI, which was launched on 22 June 2021.

AUDA-NEPAD Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence:

- 21st WaterNet/WARFSA/GWPSA Symposium: The AUDA-NEPAD Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence (SANWATCE) convened a virtual special session during the 21st WaterNet/WARFSA/GWPSA Symposium from 28 to 30 October 2020, entitled "Implementing the SADC Water Research Agenda: the WARFSA Aligned Research Grant", which showcased six student research projects supported under the DSI funded WARFSA Aligned Research grants.

- ACEWATER e-readiness assessment: The Covid-19 pandemic and consequent restricted movement of people has made it difficult for Centres of Excellence (CoEs) to pilot courses using conventional modalities of face-to-face, classroom lectures, lab sessions and field work, thereby affecting the piloting of courses under the ACEWATER II project. An e-readiness assessment was therefore undertaken to explore alternative modes of learning and to provide support to CoEs for alternative course delivery such as digitalisation of course materials, distance, and online learning.

- ACEWATER e-implementation: Following on to the e-readiness assessment, five CoEs delivered courses: (1) Online: University of the Western Cape delivered three courses with one course in collaboration with the CSIR; (2) Face-to-face: As Covid-19 restrictions have lifted in most of the region, five courses were presented by the universities of Malawi (2), Eduardo Mondlane (2), and Zambia (1) in October 2020.

- NRF Africa Rapid Grant Call: The SANWATCE Secretariat facilitated the development of a successful proposal to the NRF Africa Covid-19 Rapid Grant Call, with the University of Malawi and UWC. The study aims to explore the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the socio-economic livelihoods for vulnerable communities in semi-arid areas of Malawi.

3.6. CELEBRATING SU'S AFRICAN FOOTPRINT

In line with its vision to be a leading research-intensive university on the African continent, SU celebrated both African University Day and Africa Day. On 12 November 2020, SU held the second African University Day seminar as a virtual seminar with the theme "Nurturing sustainable African Partnerships". Prof Hester Klopper, DVC: Strategy and Internationalisation, welcomed the more than 80 virtual participants, followed by a contribution from Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice-Chancellor of Makarere University, Uganda. Several SU academics joined colleagues from across the continent to present their collaborative projects. The value of contextualisation, institutional support and the reciprocal nature of partnerships was highlighted during the seminar as key success factors in nurturing sustainable partnerships. On 25 May 2021, SU celebrated Africa Day through various online events and the publication of opinion pieces, allowing reflection on SU's partnerships across the continent. The focus was on the partnership between the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and SU in establishing the AUDA-NEPAD Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation. Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Wim de Villiers, hosted the Annual Africa Day Lecture on 27 May 2021.

3.7. SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT FOR STUDENT RECRUITMENT

As part of its mandate to build partnerships with feeder schools and new-market schools, the CSR engages with schools across South Africa. While the first semester of 2021 has mainly been focused on application-generation activities, the CSR also facilitated school engagements as part of its student recruitment activities. These engagements were held both online and in-person, and ranged from the traditional school visit presentations and exhibitions to pre-recorded videos, followed by an online Q&A session. The CSR was also part of online exhibitions and parent evenings that were offered by schools.

From March until June 2021, there were interactions with 260 schools in seven provinces. These school engagements included a roadshow by Prof Wim de Villiers. In May 2021, he hosted school principals and two of their SRC members in Bloemfontein, Kimberley, Oudtshoorn and George. The invited schools were strategically identified feeder schools and new-market schools. This event created an opportunity to position SU, address perceptions in the school market, and to acknowledge the important role these schools play in delivering exceptional academic talent for admission into undergraduate programmes at SU.

PROVINCE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REACHED	NUMBER OF LEARNERS REACHED
Eastern Cape	26	2 363
Free State	13	809
Gauteng	31	2 996
KZN	21	2 137
North West	2	330
Northern Cape	18	1 166
Western Cape	149	19 298
TOTAL	**260**	**29 099**

Table 5: Number of schools and learners reached by province

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REACHED
Expo (face-to-face)	39
Expo (online)	23
Information drop	28
Parent evening (face-to-face)	2
Parent evening (online)	3
Pre-recorded video share (presentation watched on demand)	118
Rector's function	27
School visit presentation (face-to-face)	33
School visit presentation (online)	23
WhatsApp groups	63
TOTAL NUMBER OF ENGAGEMENTS	**359**

*Table 6:* Types of engagement and the number of schools reached

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 4

Networked and Collaborative
Teaching and Learning

The institutional goals for networked and collaborative teaching and learning are:

- Focus on a learning-centred approach to teaching, whilst promoting a holistic understanding of teaching and learning.

- Foster interdisciplinary and interprofessional teaching and learning by empowering students to participate in a learning community where staff and students work together to learn, solve problems, research, and innovate.

- Create an institution of continuous learning that is skilled at co-creating and sharing knowledge and insights.

- Promote the professionalisation of academics in their teaching role, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

- Develop a digital strategy to provide the basis for digital fluency and the meaningful integration of learning technologies towards a networked University that engages and inspires students, staff and alumni.

- Expand on SU's knowledge offering to serve new student markets.

- Promote the continuous renewal of the University's academic programmes by means of a systemic process with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities for the various role-players.
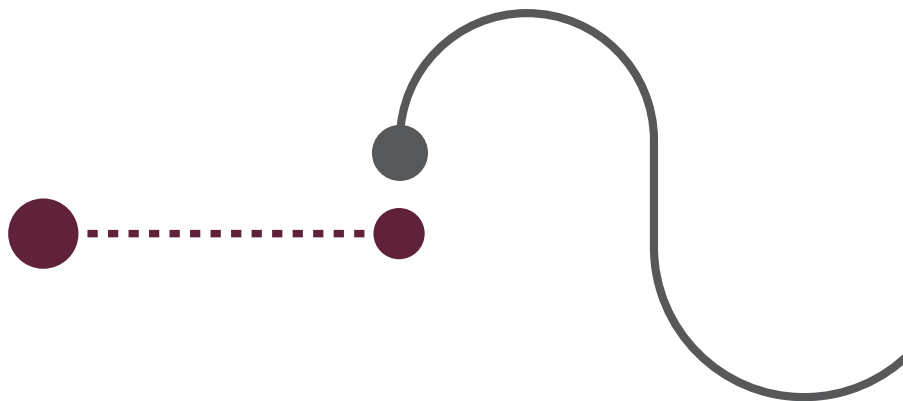
During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.

4.1. HYBRID MOBILITY HUB

The Hybrid Mobility Hub serves as a holding structure for Globally Networked Learning at SU. Over the reporting period, the focus has been on building capacity and developing Globally Networked Learning courses. In terms of capacity-building, the TU Dresden Collaborative Online International, Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Learning (TUD-COIIIL) project plays an important role and is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The TUD-COIIIL midterm conference took place from 23 to 25 March 2021. This online conference was hosted by TU Dresden; participants were staff and students from the respective project partners, i.e., TU Dresden, Shiraz University and SU. There were also two external evaluators in attendance to follow and document the progress of the project. The conference had a strong focus on community building within the larger International Virtual Academic Collaboration (IVAC) project and

the finalisation of plans in terms of the delivery of outcomes at the end of the project. (This phase of the project ends in September 2021.) A proposal has been made to host the final conference of the IVAC project at SU, depending on Covid-19 risk levels and travel restrictions. Currently, an online intercultural competence course is being developed between TU Dresden and SU.

During the first semester of 2021, two Globally Networked Learning courses were presented. The first course was presented with Ohio University and focused on Global Leadership Development, with a specific co-curriculum focus. The second course, Social Activation and Engagement, was presented with UNC Charlotte. These courses will be written up as case studies and offered as examples of best practices for SU lecturers for the development of future courses.

4.2. AFRICAN DOCTORAL ACADEMY

SU's African Doctoral Academy (ADA) serves to coordinate and strengthen excellence in doctoral education across the African continent. A summary of the ADA's activities over the reporting period follows:

ADA Online Spring School: The ADA Online Spring School drew 96 delegates in four courses (Teaching in a digital World, Supervising a PhD by Publication, Academic Writing, Introduction to Mixed Methods) facilitated by presenters from SU, KU Leuven and (for the first time) Cambridge University. A world-leading researcher in education, Prof Tony Onwuegbuzie (an A-rated scientist and professor at Cambridge), presented the largest course, with 31 delegates, on mixed methods research designs and methods. This School had a diverse

group of delegates with 13 countries (12 from Africa) represented, including larger groups of delegates from Rwanda (six as part of the Emerging Scholar's Initiative) and Namibia (seven). Two-thirds of the delegates at the ADA Spring School were from eight South African universities and 63% were female. Seventy-two percent of the delegates were older than 35 years and more than 40% already had a doctorate, indicating an older and more mature group of scholars in this School. Almost 80% were employed full time. Interestingly, there were four delegates who were undertaking their doctorates at international universities outside Africa (Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne, Linkoping University, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of Massachusetts).

ADA Spring Bootcamp 2020: A small Spring "Writing Boot Camp" took place from 26 to 30 October 2020. Twenty delegates attended two courses, namely either a week-long workshop with Prof Ruth Albertyn (SU, USB) on Writing an Article during the final phases of the PhD, or a two-day workshop on Grant Writing with Ms Riana Coetsee (SU, DRD).

ADA Summer School: The ADA Online Summer School took place over three and a half weeks between 13 January and 5 February 2021. This is the biggest and longest online School to date with 138 delegates, and the 14 short courses extended a week longer than previous Schools. The majority of the delegates originated from South Africa, followed by those from Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda. Delegates from these countries were sponsored through the Africa Centre for Scholarship (ACS) Emerging Scholars Initiative (ESI) programme. Overall, delegates came from 20 countries of which 18 were in Africa. The courses covered several topics

around Research Design and Methodology, Scientific Communication, Preparing for the PhD, The Productive PhD, Ethics, Scenario Planning, Implementation Science, the Systematic Review, and Academic Writing. The presenters were from SU, KU Leuven (Belgium), Trinity College Dublin (Ireland), the universities of Cambridge (England), Michigan, Nebraska (USA) and St Gallen (Switzerland). Of the 138 delegates, only six were not enrolled or had already obtained their doctorates across the 39 universities represented. International, non-African universities included the universities of Bath, Ghent, Oslo, Linkoping, Liege (EU), Liverpool (UK), as well as Southwest University and the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences in China. The majority (81%) of the delegates were between 25 and 45 years old, and 62% were enrolled for a doctorate with 79% on the doctoral track: ranging from preparing for a PhD through to the final phases of study. The majority of the delegates were female (57%), slightly below previous years' schools.

NATIONALITIES OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL 2021 DELEGATES
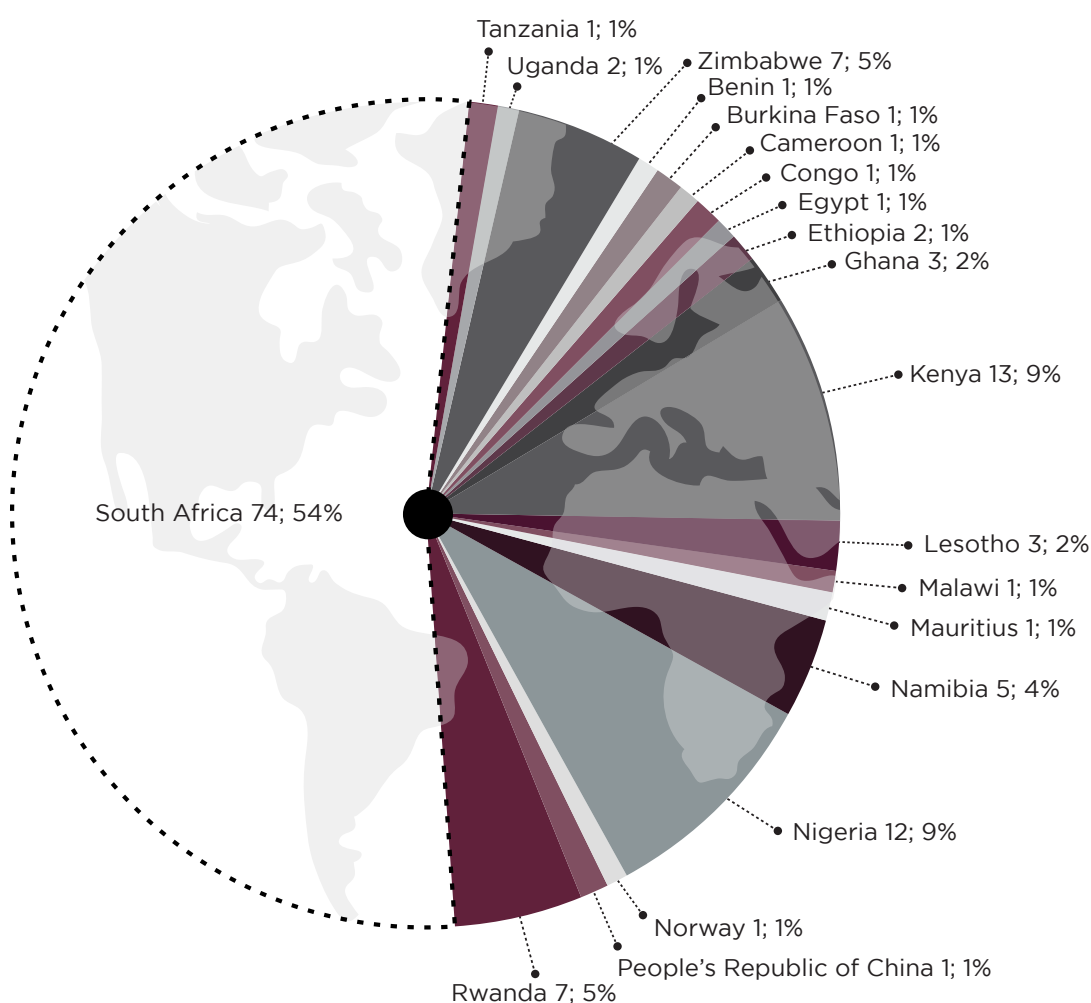
Graph 4: *Country of origin of ADA Summer School 2021 delegates*

ADA Autumn School: The ADA hosted its first Autumn School and fifth online School from 3 to 10 May 2021, hosting 71 delegates over three workshops. The ADA had scheduled an inaugural Autumn School for March 2020, but it had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown. The School included a two-day workshop by Prof An Carbonez (KU Leuven) on Graphics with R and an Introduction to ATLAS.ti v9 (Dr Lauren Wildschut, SU) over three days. These were the first two workshops on computer-assisted data analysis taught online at the ADA. The popular course on academic writing skills for doctoral candidates (Ms Selene Delport, SU) previously offered in Spring School 2020, was repeated. The majority of the delegates came from South Africa (70%), with the largest international groups coming from Nigeria and Kenya. Of the South African delegates, SU represented the largest group (44% of the total), followed by the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The majority of delegates were female (68%).

Proportionately, more delegates already held a PhD than other Schools, but this is due to the postdoctoral fellow cohort.

ADA Webinar Wednesdays: This latest initiative by the ADA, Webinar Wednesdays, is held monthly on the first or second Wednesday of the month and started in February 2021 at the ADA Summer School. This was an opportunity to showcase SU, SU staff and ADA presenters, and to maintain the ADA profile throughout the year, not just in the lead-up to the Schools. The webinars, six to date, are also another way to offer the ADA experience for free to alumni and potential delegates. To date, the ADA has hosted between 100 and 170 participants per webinar. The webinars have presented topics such as Creating an Academic Vision, Data Science and its relevance for us in Africa, and Scenario Planning. The webinars are recorded and hosted on the ADA YouTube channel, with recordings reaching up to 386 views.

4.3. SU UNIT FOR INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIALING

In 2019, the Rectorate approved the establishment of the SU Unit for International Credentialing (SU-UIC), as part of the SU International's Africa Centre for Scholarship, headed by Prof Sarah Howie. Its purpose is to perform an external and internal quality assurance role concerning international and foreign qualifications from school level (including the International Secondary Certificate) to postgraduate level. In March 2021, SU entered into a working agreement with the Independent Examination Board-International (IEB-International), which will see the University quality assure an Africa-centred international school-leaving qualification that will be offered internationally. Referred to as the IEB-International's International Secondary Certificate (ISC), the qualification will be available in 2022, with the first examinations scheduled to take place at the end of 2022.

The agreement with IEB-International, the South African IEB's international arm, outlines that the IEB will be wholly responsible for the content and implementation of the qualification and communication thereof. SU will be responsible for the quality assurance of the qualification and the certification thereof. In particular, the SU-UIC will perform the oversight role of external quality assurance of the ISC qualification. This role includes developing and maintaining all related

policies and processes and establishing structures. These structures include all relevant committees, such as the Quality Assurance Governance Committee, the Curriculum and Assessment Sub-Committee, and the Standardisation Sub-Committee.

The IEB-International ISC qualification is the equivalent of the IEB National Senior Certificate (NSC) currently being offered in South Africa and neighbouring countries. The qualification has been evaluated by Universities South Africa and international candidates who obtain the IEB-International ISC with merit or at an advanced level (and are offered a place at a South African university), will have met the minimum requirements for admission to study degree programmes in South African public and private higher education institutions.

The Quality Assurance Governance Committee, chaired by Prof Hester Klopper (DVC: Strategy and Internationalisation), met for the first time on 3 June 2021. This committee will oversee the quality assurance of key processes in IEB-International's ISC qualification. It will also oversee the work of the SU-UIC on this qualification and that of the two working committees the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and the Standardisation Committee.

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 5

Research for Impact

The institutional goals for research for impact are:

- Develop a research agenda derived from SU's values, societal needs, and the sustainability imperative.

- Conduct research of significance based on selected, focused strategic research areas.

- Inform the future research agenda and strategically involve our stakeholders.

- Conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary research that addresses the grand challenges of society.

- Create an embedded culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in our research.

During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.

## 5.1. EMERGING SCHOLARS' INITIATIVE

SU's Emerging Scholars Initiative (ESI) is a collaborative project that focuses on two streams (one for doctoral students and the second for early career staff members, who are all identified as emerging scholars by their institutions). It offers courses related to research methodology, supervision, academic writing and publishing skills. The courses are co-designed by SU facilitators and facilitators from the partner/host institution.

Strathmore University: The inaugural ESI Research Joint School by the ACS at SUI was launched and co-hosted at Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya in the form of an online school comprising three courses and 80 delegates from 12 to 23 April 2021. The School started in the first week with Grounding for Doctoral Fellows, in which doctoral candidates from Strathmore University worked with three SU facilitators (Prof Sarah Howie, Dr Ruth Albertyn and Prof Brigitte Smit) and four facilitators from Strathmore, who co-designed and co-taught the course. The team was further strengthened by the addition of the ACS's Senior Blended Learning Coordinator and Designer, Lorene Mayoma.

In the second week, another seven facilitators from both universities co-facilitated (from SU, Drs Palesa Mothapo and Riana Coetzee, Profs Liezel Frick, Susan van Schalkwyk and Sarah Howie, along with colleagues from Strathmore's schools of Humanities and Social Sciences and Computing and Engineering Sciences, Institute of Mathematical Sciences, and Strathmore Business School). Courses in Early Career Scholarship

and Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision were offered to another 40 staff members from Strathmore. Half of the delegates were enrolled in the Grounding for Doctoral Studies, followed by Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision and Early Career Scholarship being the smallest groups. Due to the nature of the School, there was a mix of delegates deemed emerging scholars as well as those who were working with emerging scholars. In terms of their phase of study, more than one-third already has a doctoral degree, whilst about a quarter were enrolled for a doctorate. Most were employed by Strathmore University and the remainder were students at the university. The School was multi- and inter-disciplinary. The largest disciplinary field represented by the participants was management and administration, followed by Software and Application, and Finance, Banking and Insurance.

An extensive evaluation of the School was conducted, including evaluation questionnaires and debriefing with the facilitators and Strathmore staff hosting the School. The feedback was very positive and is encapsulated in one of the questions in the questionnaire asking participants the extent to which they would recommend the course they attend. Overall, more than 90% of the delegates "very highly" or "highly" recommended their course, and for all courses the recommendation of "very highly" was above 80%. The School was significant in its partnerships between academic staff and the learning opportunities for staff from both institutions through the intense discussions and interactions around scholarship.
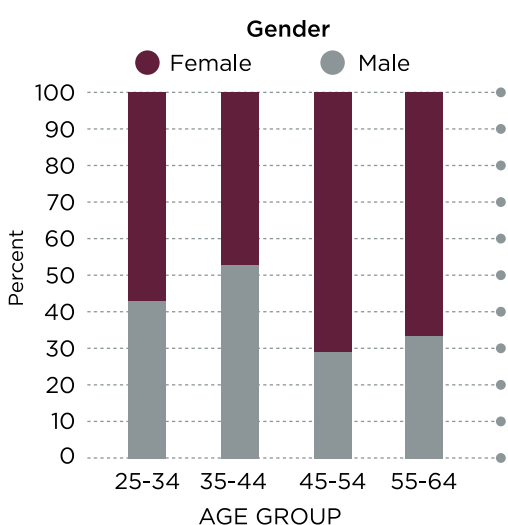
Graph 4: Profile of participants ages at SU-Strathmore Joint School 2021
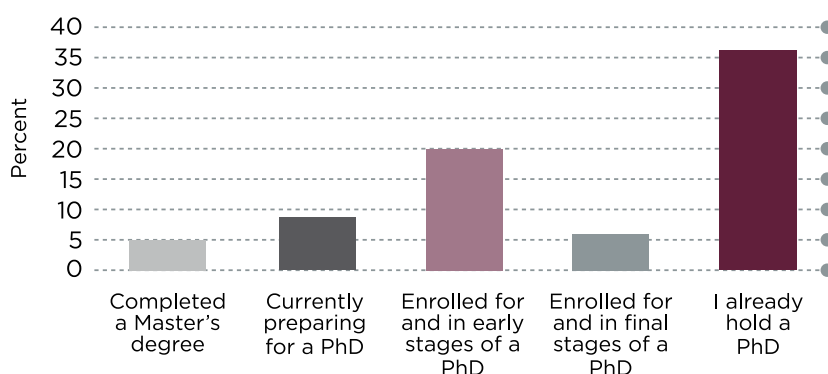
Graph 5: Status of phase of study of participants at SU-Strathmore Joint School 2021

Lagos-Stellenbosch Joint Online School: The second ESI Research Joint School by the ACS was co-hosted with the University of Lagos, Nigeria. This online School offered a course on Grounding for Doctoral Studies and 69 delegates attended from 31 May to 4 June 2021. In this School, doctoral candidates from the University of Lagos worked with three SU facilitators and four facilitators from the University of Lagos, who co-designed and co-taught the course. It targeted doctoral candidates using synchronous and asynchronous online learning, although a quarter of the delegates had a doctoral degree and just over half were enrolled for doctoral studies. Of those having or enrolled for a doctoral degree, more than half were from the University of Lagos, whilst the next most represented university was the University of Maiduguri with most of the others being in Nigeria. The exceptions found were universities in Benin, Canada, China, England and the USA. More than two-thirds of the delegates were full-time students, which would highlight the challenge faced by these students as 73% of the delegates were also employed full-time with half being lecturers at different universities represented (more than a third were employed by the University of Lagos). Whilst the School was multi-disciplinary, the disciplines most represented were Biology, Chemistry, Economics and Journalism. The University of Lagos invited a number of other universities in Nigeria to participate, resulting in staff and students included from eight other universities. The School was significant in creating opportunities for SU staff for interaction with multiple Nigerian universities' academic staff and students. The ESI is now planning two more Schools for 2021 with the third School taking place in August/September with the University of Rwanda and the fourth in the final quarter of 2021.

5.2. POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION MODEL

The Postgraduate Supervision Model, completed in the last quarter of 2020, has been implemented and received well by users. The model gives an interactive overview of the weighted supervision load per department and/or academic staff member over time, as well as other useful information from various angles. The relevant data is extracted from the postgraduate administration support system, transformed, enriched and then packaged in a user-friendly format as a model on the SUN-i business intelligence platform and can be accessed (with the required permissions) from Excel and Power BI dashboards. The aim of the model is to empower departmental chairs, faculty managers, vice-deans, deans and other research-related roles by joining and enriching existing information and presenting it in such a way that new insights can quickly be uncovered. The model was received well by key users and is already used by several faculties to simplify their tasks in this regard. The next phase is to provide an introduction and training to key users in the relevant PASS environments.

5.3. FATHUM PROJECT

The Forecasts for Anticipatory Humanitarian Action (FATHUM) research project is a three-country, three-year study (2017–2020) led by Reading University in the UK to strengthen forecasting and early warning systems in the Langeberg Municipality in the Western Cape, Teso Region in Uganda, and Gaza Province in Mozambique. This multi-institutional, interdisciplinary project aims to improve forecast predictability, investigate complex disaster risk drivers, and implement forecast-based financing/action mechanisms that enable effective, appropriate and impactful action before a disaster. The project contributes to comparative studies in the wider development context using three disaster risk contexts. Locally, the project will impact the community of the Langeberg Municipality to seek ways of how early warning could be strengthened.

CORE STRATEGIC THEME 6

Employer of Choice

The institutional goals for employer of choice are:

- Develop a comprehensive people strategy for SU that embraces diversity and equity, leverages unique talents and strengths, promotes life-long learning and celebrates achievements.

- Enhance the wellbeing of our people by creating and promoting an enabling, inclusive, equitable, healthy and safe working and learning environment that encourages our diverse staff to maximise their productivity, and where they feel valued and contribute to SU's excellence.

- Improve human resource processes through the application of technology and digitalisation.

- Develop and execute a game-changing talent acquisition and talent management plan, which includes equitable remuneration, the management and rewarding of performance, the identification of competencies and the development of talent and leadership throughout the career cycle of each SU employee.

- Support the development of SU as a learning organisation that is responsive to both individual and organisational needs.

During the reporting period, the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation has supported the achievement of these institutional goals through the activities discussed below.

6.1. COLLABORATIVE VIRTUAL PASS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In November 2020, SUI and Lund University (LU) in Sweden successfully presented the first virtual PASS (Professional Administrative Support Services) Development Programme. Envisaged to be thought-provoking, it exceeded expectations with nearly 50 staff members from SU and LU support staff environments in attendance. Comprehensive institutional internationalisation requires all support staff to consider themselves as internationalisation practitioners on a secondary level. To take on this secondary role, support staff must understand what the internationalisation of higher education means and know the broad strokes of their institution's internationalisation strategy. The virtual programme provided a brief overview of this and aimed to motivate support staff to embrace their transformational contribution in this regard. Three parallel sessions were presented, as well as a follow-up session about the SU-LU visit, a discussion of the role of internationalisation practitioners, and an interactive intercultural competence session providing staff members with an introduction to intercultural competence and the constituent elements of intercultural communication.

6.2. STAFF MOBILITY GRANTS

During September and November 2020, the Centre for Collaboration in Africa (CCA) invited applications for mobility-related activities to the Africa Collaboration Grant (ACG). Proposed activities could take place during the first semester of 2021. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, only five applications were received from staff in the faculties of Medicine and Health Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Social Sciences, and Economic and Management Sciences. After an evaluation process, a total amount of R157 000 was awarded. A certain degree of flexibility was required, and awardees were offered the opportunity to postpone activities to the second semester of 2021. In addition, a further call for applications to the ACG for mobility activities planned for the second semester 2021 was published. There was an increase in applications, with 11 applications from the abovementioned faculties, of which 10 awards were made. Awards amounted to total funding of R375 000. Again, due to Covid-19 restrictions, a degree of flexibility was required, and awardees were offered to postpone activities to the first semester of 2022 if need be.

Beyond Africa, other bilateral mobility grants were awarded through SU International, an additional R283 000 for mobilities that would have taken place in 2020. It was decided to extend the staff mobility grants allocated in 2020 until June 2021. However, in the current situation, SUI is considering extending the grants until December 2021. The allocated grants will be honoured once the host institutions confirm that they are still able to host SU academics on the new proposed dates. Although SU has officially lifted the travel ban for staff, there are national and country-specific travel restrictions in place for potential destinations. The annual call in 2021, that usually opens during February and March for mobilities in the second semester, has been postponed and SUI will likely only open another round of applications in September 2021 for staff mobility in 2022.

6.3. HUMAN RESOURCES KPIS

The IG Division is currently in process to develop operational KPIs for the Human Resources (HR) Division that are in line with SU's strategic framework. In collaboration with the HR management, IG identified seven critical areas for investigation and two of these are currently being treated with high importance. Currently, the existing recruitment and appointment process is being examined and documented, from where suggestions of KPIs will be formulated and implemented. To pay employees correctly and on time is another priority requirement that is currently being observed and recorded. Other KPIs for the payroll department will include monitors for efficiency and effectiveness. Along with relevant stakeholders, improvements on current procedures will be suggested as and where necessary. The remaining five areas will be investigated as soon as available resources allow.

6.4. HR DATA IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

The Workgroup for Unlocking HR Data for Integrated Decision Support was devised in December 2019 to create a more intimate and collegial partnership between relevant HR, IG and IT stakeholders concerning exploiting, refining and extending the scope of HR-related data for institutional purposes. The mutual need for such a workgroup was confirmed during the process of gathering data and clarifying data definitions for new HR-related SMIs in 2019. During this process, it was discovered that there are numerous definitions and terminologies that are not yet sufficiently clarified, standardised or institutionalised. In addition, discrepancies were discovered between certain HR data items in the institutional data warehouse (SUN-i) and the SUN-e-HR operational system.

The workgroup was launched in February 2020 and consists of two delegates from HR, three delegates from IG, and two delegates from IT, and have since been meeting monthly. One of the most important outcomes of this collaboration was that the highest qualification of staff is now a true reflection of reality and an increase of about 10% in the number of academic staff members with a doctoral qualification resulted in 2021. New system processes were also tested and put in place to ensure that staff qualifications are updated after each graduation ceremony.

The HR delegates further provided training in using the Oracle Business Intelligence Suite to explore HR data in a fine-grained manner and identifying new data items or groupings for incorporation into the institutional data warehouse, which led to several enhancements in this regard. To date, this collaboration was extremely beneficial and rewarding and all challenges were taken on as an integrated team.

PERMANENT AND FIXED TERM ACADEMIC STAFF WITH DOCTORATES
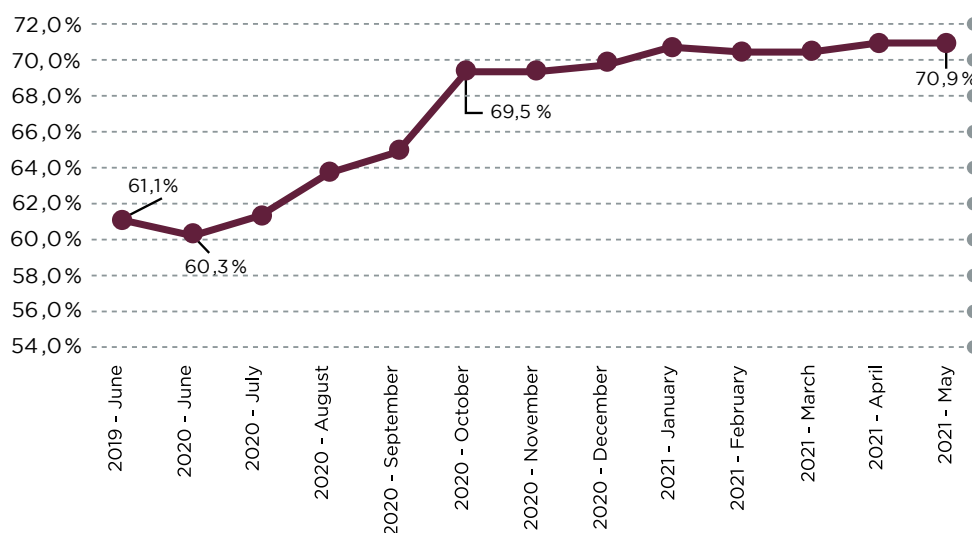
Graph 6: *Permanent and fixed-term academic staff with doctorates*

6.5. STAFF COMMUNICATION

Newsletters: During the reporting period, the CCMD distributed 249 mailers, which included the weekly staff e-newsletters *info@StellenboschUni* and *news@StellenboschUni*, Covid-19-related mailers, as well as general mailers related to various important institutional matters, such as the SU rebranding, results of the SU Wellbeing, Culture and Climate Survey, and Communication from Council. Several bereavement mailers were also distributed to the SU community. The Covid-19-related mailers, as well as general communiques have been well received – the opening rates range between 62.4% and 75%, which are well above the industry standard.

Communication campaign: In May, to commemorate Workers' Month, a multi-channel campaign, #Adayinthelife, which focused on highlighting the work of staff members and their daily duties was conceptualised and implemented. The campaign involved the placement of a series of articles on the SU website and social media channels. The reach and engagement of the campaign on the SU social media platforms were well above SU's average reach and engagement. A post of PSO coordinator Jethro Georgiades had a reach of 20 500 and 1 200 post engagements, which is exceptionally high for campaigns.
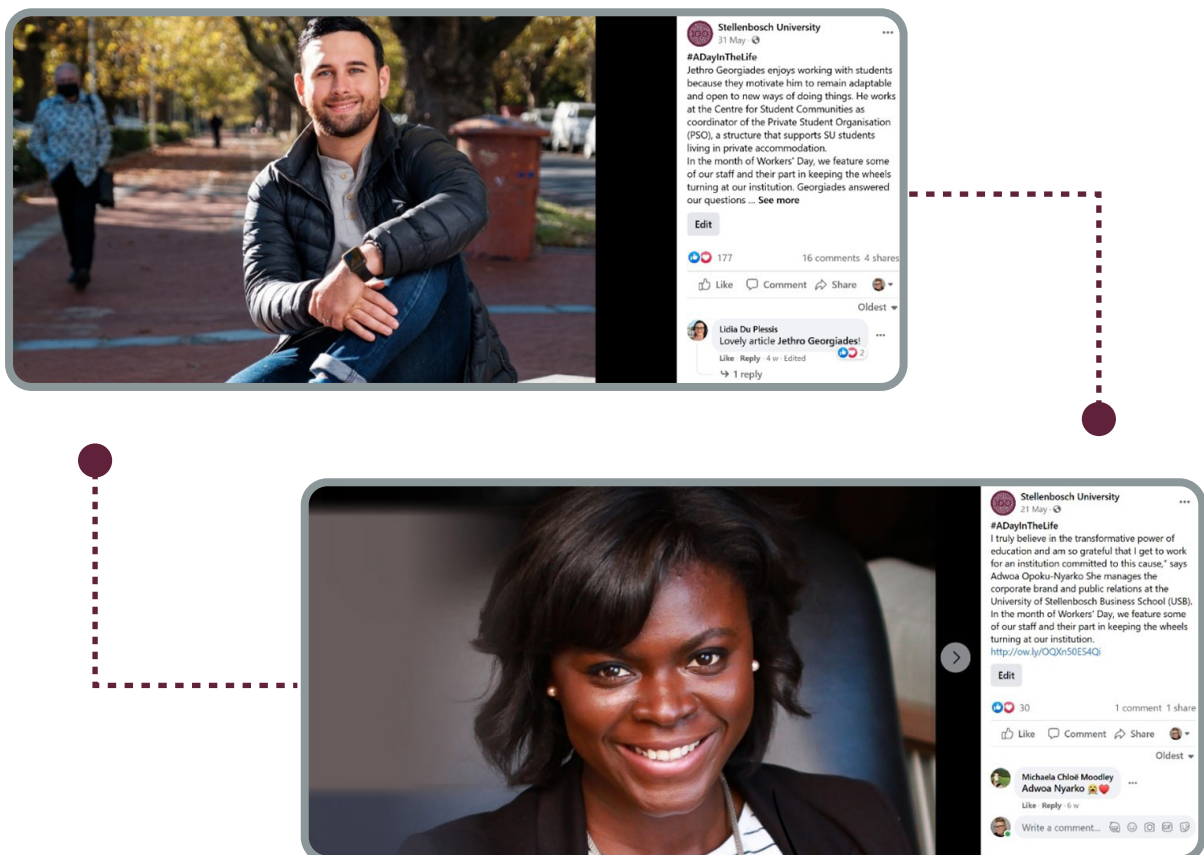

Figure 21: Screenshots of two posts that were part of the #ADayInTheLife communication campaign.

CONCLUSION

This report, covering the period September 2020 to August 2021, has endeavoured to demonstrate the impact made and contribution of the RC: Strategy and Internationalisation in achieving the goals and objectives of SU's *Vision 2040* and *Strategic Framework 2019–2024*. Over the past year, our integrated approach has ensured that we continuously build on the foundation that was laid with the establishment of this RC in 2016. Our work in the fields of strategy development, integrated marketing and communication, information governance, and internationalisation has added value to the achievement of the goals and objectives SU has set for itself on its path towards the future.

In the next year, the RC's strategic priorities will focus on the repositioning of the CCMD's expanded mandate, the implementation and monitoring of the SU Internationalisation Strategy, the uptake of structures, data integration, analytics and business intelligence across the institution, and the implementation of actions for institutional change enablement and a value-driven SU.

The accomplishments and progress made during 2020/2021 has taught us many lessons that will serve the RC and the SU well in our continued efforts to advance a university that is systemically sustainable, agile, responsive and relevant well into the next 100 years.

Forward Together | Sonke Siya Phambili | Saam Vorentoe
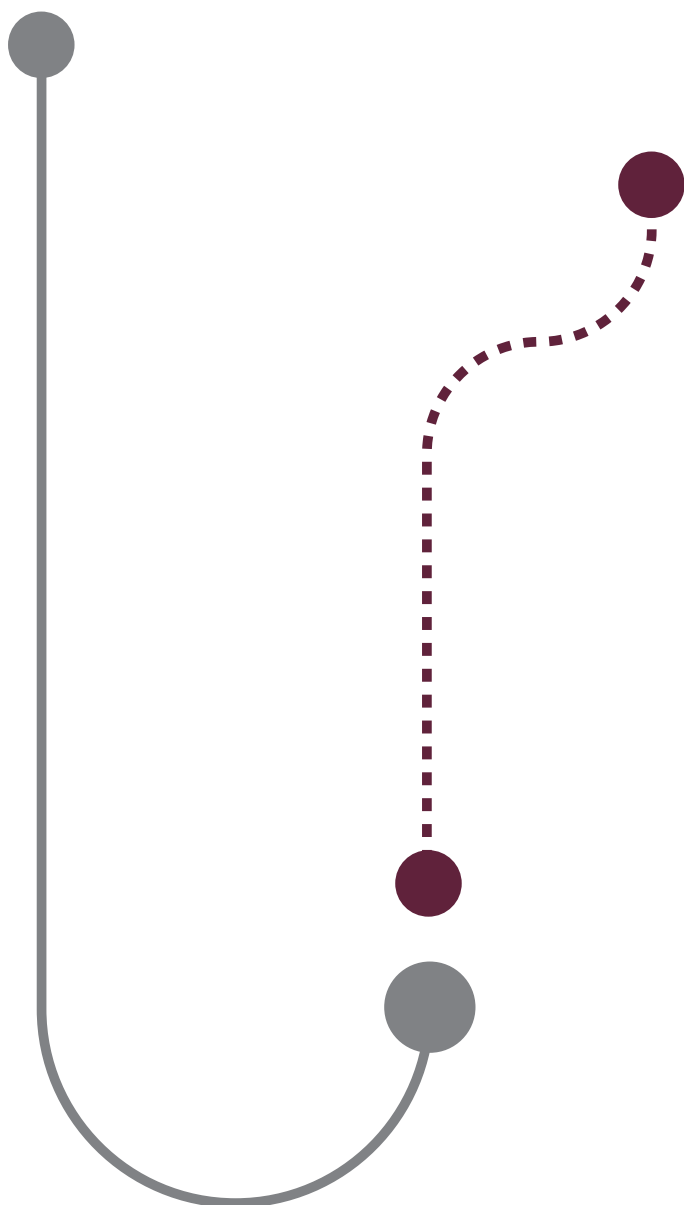
ADDENDUM

ADDENDUM A: NEW AND RENEWED AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED FROM AUGUST 2020 TO APRIL 2021

INSTITUTION	COUNTRY	NEW/ RENEWAL	TYPE OF AGREEMENT	LEVEL OF AGREEMENT	AGREEMENT STARTS
University of Bern	Switzerland	New Agreement	Summer School Agreement	Institutional	26/08/2020
University of Passau	Germany	New Agreement	Student Mobility Agreement	Faculty	28/08/2020
University of Helsinki	Finland	Renewal	MOU, including staff and student exchanges	Institutional	26/06/2020
West Virginia University	United States of America	Renewal	MOU, including student exchanges	Institutional	24/09/2020
George Mason University	United States of America	New Agreement	Student Exchange Agreement	Institutional	01/08/2020
Tampere University	Finland	New Agreement	Memorandum of Understanding and Student Exchange Agreement	Institutional	21/09/2020
Hohenheim University	Germany	Renewal	Memorandum of Understanding	Institutional	16/02/2021
University of Minho	Portugal	New Agreement	Letter of intent	Faculty: Engineering	26/02/2021
University of Groningen	The Netherlands	Renewal	Memorandum of Understanding	Institutional	03/01/2021
Czech Technical University Prague	Czech Republic	Renewal	Memorandum of Understanding and Student Exchange Agreement	Institutional	08/03/2021
African School of Economics	Benin	New Agreement	Memorandum of Understanding	Faculty: Economic and Management Sciences	12/03/2021
Manchester Metropolitan University	United Kingdom	New Agreement	Memorandum of Understanding	Department: Sociology and Social Anthropology	19/03/2021
Sapienza University Rome	Italy	New Agreement	Student Exchange Agreement	Institutional	23/01/2021
University of Trento	Italy	New Agreement	Memorandum of Understanding and Student Exchange Agreement	Institutional	26/03/2021
Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology	Ethiopia	New Agreement	Memorandum of Understanding	Faculty: Theology	31/03/2021
City University of Hong Kong	HKSAR, People's Republic of China	New Agreement	Student Exchange Agreement	Faculty: Economic and Management Sciences	12/04/2021
Gerrit Rietveld Academie	The Netherlands	Renewal	Student Exchange Agreement	Department: Visual Arts	15/04/2021