



2020 - 2021  
**REPORT**

---

**Engagement &  
Transformation Portfolio**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

### **Patterned motifs**

*Rachel Larkin - inspired by the pattern work of Xolela Madlanga*

### **African symbols**

*Xolela Madlanga; Pola Maneli*

### **Report layout & design**

*Neil Honeycomb*

### **Photos & images**

*Provided; Facebook; Mandela University Website; MEMO*

### **Text**

*Provided by ETP entities, units & chairs*

### **Editing support**

*Mandela University Dept. of Communication and Marketing; ETP Office Staff; CriSHET Office Staff*

## Vision

To be a dynamic African university, recognised for its leadership in generating cutting-edge knowledge for a sustainable future.

## Our Mission

To offer a diverse range of life-changing educational experiences for a better world.

## Our Values

Diversity

Excellence

Ubuntu

Social Justice  
and Equality

Integrity

Environmental  
Stewardship

# CONTENTS

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS .....	iv
<b>FOREWORD: FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>OVERVIEW OF THE PORTFOLIO .....</b>	<b>4</b>
HOW TO READ THE REPORT .....	4
PROGRAMMES, ENTITIES & RESEARCH CHAIRS .....	5
WHAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS .....	6
RESPONSE TO COVID-19 .....	7
<b>ENGAGEMENT OFFICE .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TRANSFORMATION OFFICE .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HUBS OF CONVERGENCE .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>MANDELA UNIVERSITY FOOD SYSTEMS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>CENTRE FOR WOMEN &amp; GENDER STUDIES .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION &amp; TRAINING .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF NON-RACIALISM AND DEMOCRACY .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>CHAIR: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYABILITY &amp; EMPOWERMENT .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>HIV &amp; AIDS RESEARCH UNIT .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>TRANSDISCIPLINARY INSTITUTE FOR MANDELA STUDIES .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>CHAIR: CRITICAL STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION .....</b>	<b>44</b>

# ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CANRAD</b>	Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy
<b>CAWE</b>	Community Adult and Worker Education
<b>CERT</b>	Centre for Education Rights and Transformation
<b>CCC</b>	COVID-19 Coordinating Committee
<b>CCW</b>	Community Convergence Workstream
<b>CHE</b>	Council on Higher Education
<b>CIPSET</b>	Centre for Integrated Post-School Education & Training
<b><i>Cri</i>SHET</b>	Chair: Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation
<b>CUS</b>	Critical University Studies
<b>CWGS</b>	Centre for Women & Gender Studies
<b>CYUEE</b>	Chair: Youth Unemployment, Employability & Empowerment
<b>DHET</b>	Department of Higher Education & Training
<b>DVC</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
<b>EAF</b>	Engagement Advancement Fund
<b>ETP</b>	Engagement & Transformation Portfolio
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence
<b>HAU</b>	HIV & AIDS Research Unit
<b>HET</b>	Higher Education Transformation
<b>HoC</b>	Hubs of Convergence
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>NIHSS</b>	National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>NMBM</b>	Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan
<b>NRF</b>	National Research Foundation
<b>NSFAS</b>	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
<b>ORHET</b>	Online Resource for Higher Education Transformation
<b>SLP</b>	Short Learning Programme
<b>TIMS</b>	Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education & Training
<b>VC</b>	Vice-Chancellor

# FOREWORD

## FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Nelson Mandela University has committed to positioning itself as an institution in service of society. Partnering with, and supporting, the community in which we are situated, we are realising a conception of the University at the engagement-transformation interface: a transformative, responsive university. The Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) is the vehicle driving this pursuit, coordinating our community engagement efforts, and curating commitment to stakeholders. This report thus reflects on the work of academics, staff, students, faculties, entities, and communities across the University and beyond.

The Portfolio has seen many positive and encouraging advances since its establishment in 2019. The appointment of Prof André Keet as the DVC for Engagement and Transformation in October 2020 has provided the much-needed dynamic leadership that will bring to fruition the University's goals for this Portfolio. In his first few years as DVC, he has demonstrated steady and formidable resolve in pushing the University to accomplish its vision of becoming a transformative and responsive institution.

Nelson Mandela University, like the rest of South Africa, is in transition. We are faced with complex national, continental, and global challenges which were, in 2020, exacerbated by the advent of a global pandemic. Flexibility and swift adaptation were demanded of all of us, and the education sector was no exception. As an institution, we rose to the challenge. The ETP's response to the pandemic was coordinated through the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW), which reports to the COVID-19 Coordinating Committee (CCC), chaired by the DVC: ETP. Aside from being essential to addressing the challenges of the pandemic, this work has also provided productive insights into the potential of transdisciplinary collaboration within the University.

In 2021, the various projects coordinated by the CCW were integrated into the Hubs of Convergence (HoC), which is a signature project of the University that seeks to re-imagine engagement through co-creating innovative solutions to persistent societal challenges. The internal

and external convergences that have been nurtured around thematic hubs such as GBV, food sovereignty, economic initiatives, and individual and collective wellness over the past few years have been remarkable.

The University's promotion and re-imagination of engagement over the past few years is also evident in the Engagement Office and its support of engagement projects. The Office has been key in rewarding great engagement work through its Engagement Excellence Awards, which saw a record 16 applications in 2021. Another facet of the Engagement Office's work is facilitating graduate placement and work-integrated learning opportunities, for which they had to overcome novel challenges in the face of COVID-19 to support students.

Nelson Mandela University has the great responsibility of being the only higher education institution in the world that carries the name of South Africa's iconic former president. The University thus seeks to become the premier site of the intellectual expression of Mandela through the



**Professor Sibongile Muthwa**

development of scholarship, and exploration of the implications of the name for all disciplines, faculties and functions. The Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) in collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) is at the forefront of this work.

As the University, we endeavour to continue Nelson Mandela's work in creating a non-racial, equal and democratic society, in which all citizens are treated with dignity. The Centre for Non-racialism and Democracy (CANRAD) celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2021 with a conference that showcased its impact in this area since its establishment and engendered powerful conversations about the possibilities of democracy.

In striving to live up the ideals and values of Mandela, the ETP has also been involved in the review and development of various important policies. Notable here are the newly approved Integrated Policy for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of and Protection against Unfair Discrimination, the revision of the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Offences Policy, and the development of the Racism and Racial Discrimination Policy and the Gender Equality Policy. The processes for developing these policies were overseen by the Transformation Office. The Transformation Office has also continued to improve the capacity for responding to equality and discrimination-based complaints and to drive advocacy related to LGBTQIA+ rights and anti-Gender-Based Violence, along with the HIV & AIDS Research Unit (HAU).

The Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) is also mandated to advance gender equality and gender equity. Since its launch in 2019, the Centre has established a wide network of gender scholars through its programmatic work and development a strong scholarly basis for its research into

African women's biographical and intellectual histories. In June of 2020, the Centre welcomed Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola, one of the pre-eminent gender scholars in Africa, as the DSI-NRF SARCHI Chair in African Feminist Imaginations.

In terms of thinking through the transformation of Nelson Mandela University and the higher education sector, the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (*CrSHET*) has been key. Over the past few years, the Chair has grown a strong scholarly base for imagining the University in Africa differently, through its networks, programmatic and intellectual work. The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) and the Chair for Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment (CYUEE) have developed another important area of scholarship in relation the transformation of the higher education landscape, working with TVET colleges in closely collaborative ways that reflect the ideal converged engagement that the University is oriented towards.

The idea of engagement as 'convergence' is the conscious effort of drawing together internal and external stakeholders to unlock the knowledge and praxis that enable us to better engage on issues affecting our society. As an engaged University, we aim to join with our community to create new knowledge, drawing on the experience and practical understanding of our stakeholders and communities. Engagement, social responsiveness and social embeddedness, therefore, link our academic scholarship with the work we are doing to address the major societal challenges of our time and place. This is essential if we are to make social justice an integral part of our learning, teaching, research and innovation. The ETP, in the few years since its establishment, has already shown us many of the possibilities, and challenges, of what it might mean to be a university in service of society.



Professor Sibongile Muthwa

# FOREWORD

## FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

The 'new' Engagement & Transformation Portfolio confirms Mandela University's commitment to reimagine, reposition, and reframe its character as a transformative, responsive university<sup>1</sup>. Based on the University's strategic redirections, an executive portfolio was established to driving engagement and transformation would serve this commitment well. Thus, the engagement mandate was separated from the Research and Engagement portfolio and, based on an understanding of engagement as co-constitutive of University transformation, the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio was established.

The ETP, like the other portfolios within the University, is steered by the strategic proposition of the institution. Six strategic priorities underpin the University's strategic plan, and high-level goals have been articulated for each of these priorities to ensure that the University achieves its strategic aspirations. These priorities are located in a matrix of strategic statements: the Vision, the Mission and Values, the Desired Graduate [and Staff] Attributes, and the Curriculum Statements. All of these are rooted in the University's

recent history, with key moments being the name change to Mandela University, Vice-Chancellor Sibongile Muthwa's inaugural address, the listening campaign, and the strategic recalibration and organisational redesign processes.

The ETP is also guided by a set of conceptual parameters. The development of these has been a journey of co-travelling and co-construction through countless engagements with MANCO and EMANCO members, the scholars and communities in the Portfolio itself, and others within the University. Central to these parameters is the need to rethink<sup>2</sup> what engagement and transformation mean and what their relationship to one another might be. There is thus a critical heart to this project, with the aim to imagine alternatives to the neoliberal, managerial university that is embedded in colonial modes of knowing and being.

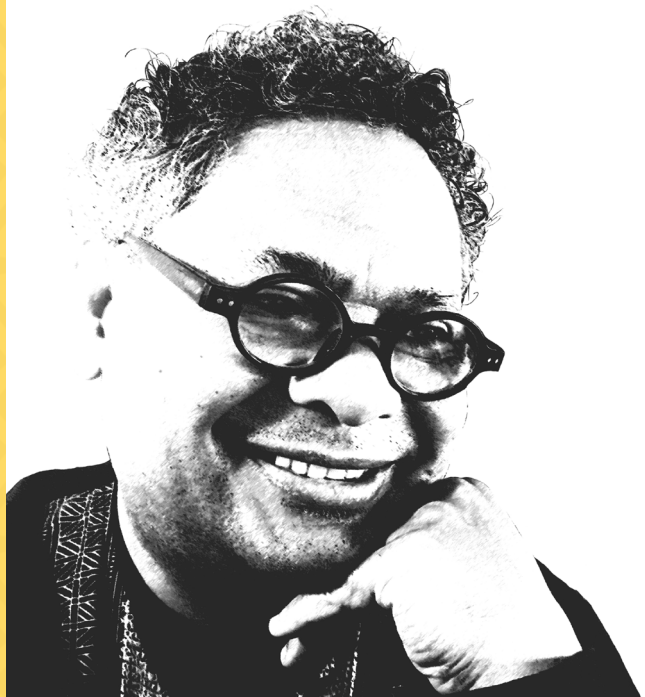
The Portfolio works in an iterative, self-interrogating and self-critical manner, on the understanding that it is part of a developing conversation, rather than being able to offer conclusive solutions to the intractable challenges the University and its communities face. This approach is rooted in the ideals of knowledge democracy and epistemic justice with an interest in maintaining flexibility and adaptability to be able to constantly re-assess and test our assumptions, concepts, and praxes. The concept of critical hope thus orients the ETP towards generative ways of making sense of the University and broader society.

With this rethinking, and the putting forward of the conceptual and programmatic innovation of convergence, the University is responding to a key dilemma facing the higher education sector, nationally and globally. That is, if not immersed in society, universities will find it almost impossible to engage authentically – and thus productively – with the current socio-economic, environmental, and political challenges of our time, our place.

<sup>1</sup> Though far from exhaustive, for a literature analysis on the meanings of engagement and transformation, see Keet, A. and Muthwa, S. *The Transformative, Responsive University*, in Brink, C. (Ed) (2021), *The Responsive University and the Crisis in South Africa*. Brill Sense publishers.

<sup>2</sup> This rethinking is a collective process across and beyond the University. Keet and Muthwa try to capture it in *The Transformative, Responsive University*. The chapter provides one possible starting point for conceptual framings and programmatic guidance.

Professor André Keet



# OVERVIEW OF THE PORTFOLIO

## HOW TO READ THE REPORT

This is the Report (2020-2021) of the Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) which is located in the broader framework of Vision 2030. Please read it against the wide backdrop of the history, present and future of the University.

The report is an invitation for continuous critical reflection and unburdened conversations to make collective sense of what a dynamic African university in service of society might look like, and how it can be advanced through the work of this portfolio. Our work is open and incomplete and we welcome ideas, collaborations and initiatives from across the university, the sector and society.

This report also presents a sketch of the portfolio collectively drawn by countless engagements across the University and its publics, with first-rate support and guidance from Council, colleagues, partners, collaborators, communities and our associates, critics and friends.

*What should the defining spirit of our University be?*

This key question has been animating discussions across and beyond the university since the Mandela name change in 2017 and the inaugural address of the Vice-Chancellor in 2018 and guided the organisational redesign processes and development of Vision 2030 (2021-2030).

The response to this question is not static, and is rooted in the self-reflexive struggles of the University since the merger in 2005, is not static. It has evolved through various generative phases over the past 17 years and is at present framed as a transformative-responsive university with a social embeddedness.

The portfolio, and its work, is a key 'architectural' or 'design' expression of Vision 2030; and the 'new' direction of the University. Our work is based on three tenets:

I.

We believe that, in order to provide a diverse range of lifechanging experiences for a better world, the University needs to be both socially responsive and socially embedded; to be achieved through institutional transformation.

II.

We believe that a critical, engaged scholarship and the transformation of our knowledge project is essential if the University is to pursue impactful research, innovation and internationalisation to promote sustainable futures.

III.

We believe that internal and external convergence within and beyond the University will facilitate engagement with all publics in equalising partnerships that advance agency and promote the co-creation of African-purposed solutions.



HoC Community Project

## PROGRAMMES, ENTITIES, AND RESEARCH CHAIRS



## WHAT WE ARE *WORKING TOWARDS*

Advancing the scholarship and praxes of an engaged, transformative university – locally responsive, nationally active, regionally alive, and globally aware – to advance the social value of research and learning and teaching.



Aligning engagement and transformation with the vision and strategic priorities of the University; including oversight of the institutional transformation plan and the engagement strategy and philosophy.



Embedding engagement and transformation across the University's portfolios for socio-economic impact and in the interest of the public good.



Leading creative and innovative engagement and transformation projects; positioning Nelson Mandela University strategically within the national and global higher education sector.

# RESPONSE TO COVID-19

*HoC Community Project*



The 2020 year brought with it the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ETP moved to re-orientate its engagement work in order to respond to the pandemic, with the Hubs of Convergence (HoC) and the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education & Training (CIPSET) co-ordinating the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW). This workstream reports to the COVID-19 Co-ordinating Committee (CCC), which is responsible for coordinating the University's external stakeholder engagements related to the pandemic and is chaired by Prof André Keet.

The CCW constituted a number of projects driven by the various entities: 1) tele-counselling, 2) community-based food systems, 3) food and material relief (tied into the distribution of donations to the Convergence Fund), 4) capacity-building in GBV for first-responders, 5) archiving website and citizen journalism, 6) supporting masks campaigns, 7) public webinars, and 8) ETP engagement and research projects related to COVID-19.

There are plans to upscale this work going forward - even post-COVID-19 - and the lessons learnt are crucial to the conceptualisation of the HoC and the re-imagination of engagement. The ETP entities also successfully adapted their work to the online space. Webinars became an important platform on which to continue sharing and developing the work of the entities and allowing them to reach a broader audience than they might have otherwise.

*South Campus, Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha*



# ENGAGEMENT OFFICE

The Engagement Office is comprised of three functional areas, namely: Engagement Information and Development, the Unit for Continuing Education, and the Career Services Department. Within the context of the pandemic and its challenges, the Engagement Office made progress in achieving the objectives that it set for 2020-2021. It achieved this by providing online capacity development interventions and academic and student support services. The mandate of the Engagement Office and its Departments is to advance and position the University as an engaged and transformed institution that is locally responsive, regionally alive, nationally active, globally aware, and that serves the public good and is in service of society. The Office serves as an institutional resource and support service internally and externally, aimed at contributing towards the development of partnerships and impactful, engaged scholarship that is in the interest of the public good. It also provides support, strategic direction, and oversight of the following institutional functions: Graduate and Student Placement; Work-integrated and Service-learning; Continuing Education and the offering of non-formal programmes (short learning programmes).

## Engagement Project Funding

Through the Engagement Advancement Fund (EAF), a total of 26 engagement projects were funded; 17 in 2020, and 9 in 2021. Due to the pandemic, a number of these projects could not be initiated, which resulted in the funds being

*Engagement Excellence Awards are presented on an annual basis and give recognition to staff members who have excelled in integrating engagement activities into their learning and teaching and research activities.*

rolled over to the following year. The EAF was effectively used to support entities as institutional mechanisms to promote trans-disciplinarity and the scholarship of engagement. As the EAF is generated via levies raised on the offering of Short Learning Programmes (SLPs), the amount of funding available has been placed under strain due to a significant decrease in the offering of SLPs in 2020 and 2021.

## Engagement Excellence Awards

Engagement Excellence Awards are presented on an annual basis and give recognition to staff members who have excelled in integrating engagement activities into their learning and teaching and research activities. A total of 8 awards were made in 2020. Two Humanities awards were

Engagement Excellence Awards, 'Creche X3 Project'



## An Engagement Mapping Process was initiated to provide a comprehensive overview of engagement activities taking place across the ETP.

presented, owing to the very high quality of applications. The recipients of the top three awards were:

- Prof Tim Gibbon received the *Engagement Excellence Award – STEM* for his Optical Fibre Communication Projects.
- Prof Andrea Hurst received an *Engagement Excellence Award – Humanities* for the Tributaries Project.
- Mr John Andrews received an *Engagement Excellence Award – Humanities* for the Creche X3 Project.

A record number of 16 award applications were received in 2021, of which 9 were successful. The winner of the *Engagement Excellence Award – STEM* was Prof Darelle van Greunen – Harnessing ICT Innovation and Engagement to Support the Fight against COVID-19. The *Engagement Excellence Award – Humanities* winner was Prof Hennie Van As for his UNODC E4J Programme – Advancing of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

In 2021, the award criteria for the EAF were amended to align with the institutional Engagement Repositioning process, with its emphasis on convergence and the co-creation of knowledge. The alignment of the other engagement-related policies to the repositioning process will commence in 2022.

### Publications

The Engagement Office submitted a total of 6 research outputs for subsidy claims in 2020 and 2021, which were produced by Dr Belinda du Plooy, who was granted a six-month research sabbatical in 2020. During the same period, 7 publications by academic staff emanated from Engagement Writing Retreats hosted by the Office. The Office also successfully supervised 3 master's and 2 PhD students during this period. A [presentation](#) at the 2021 USAf/CHE

Community Engagement Conference, prepared by the Office, generated great public interest. The presentation was based on the documentation of the Institutionalisation of Engagement at Nelson Mandela University over the past 18 years (2003-2021) by the Office Director, who retires at the end of 2021 (document: *Nelson Mandela University Engagement Institutionalisation Timeline & Milestones 2003-2021*). The document is also aimed at assisting with the transition and orientation of the incoming Director.

### Programmatic Work

The Office was also instrumental in developing and drafting two important MoUs that were signed in 2021. The main objective of the MoU signed between the NMBM and the three higher education institutions in the Metro (Nelson Mandela University, TVET Colleges) is to further the socio-economic development of the NMBM through sharing of expertise. The MoU signed with the AmaJingqi Traditional Council in the Amatole District Municipality of the Eastern Cape has the long-term objective of developing a replicable Rural Development Model framed around rural development within the broader strategic plan for the Eastern Cape.

An Engagement Project Mapping process was initiated to provide a comprehensive overview of engagement activities taking place across the ETP. It provides details of aspects such as the nature of the portfolio's engagement activities; its engagement characteristics; its alignment to development agendas (SDGs); institutional engagement priorities; and the key stakeholders involved in the portfolio's engagement work. The findings will also be used for identifying potential areas of collaboration among ETP entities and across the University. In terms of the Univer-

Engagement Excellence Awards, 'Tributaries Project'



sity's sustainability and stewardship focus, the study found that the ETP entities have a strong social justice component, with a major focus on SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality), SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDGs 1, 3, and 5 (No Poverty, Good Health, and Gender Equality). Training and mentorship as an intervention using an introductory Community Development SLP as a launchpad was rolled out to unemployed youth in the rural and semi-rural communities of the Eden Municipal district. In partnership with the NGO LEAP Entrepreneurial Development, the same training was provided to unemployed youth residing in a marginalised community of Helenvale. An online version was also offered to the South African Regional Directors of Alzheimer's SA NPC.

#### Unit for Continuing Education

The Unit for Continuing Education oversees the offering of all Short Learning Programmes (SLPs) within the University. It provides guidance and administrative support to all departments and faculties offering SLPs to ensure compliance with the Short Learning Programme policy and CHE guidelines. In 2020 there was a sharp decline in the offering of SLPs due to COVID-19 but, since then, departments have implemented changes to their mode of delivery from contact to online via Moodle, MS Teams and Zoom, with 1431 students certified in 2020 and 1630 certified from 30 September 2021. SLP certificate issue verifications – mainly for employment purposes – numbered 68 in 2020 and 50 for 2021. Consultations with lecturers developing new SLPs were ongoing, with 35 new SLPs registered in 2020 and 22 in

2021. The website advertising SLP offerings, which is maintained by the Unit, recorded 77 647 hits in 2020 and 44 847 in 2021, with the increased interest shown from other countries in Africa and internationally. The Unit planned ongoing administrative activities, but errors/changes to the system/s required it to respond rapidly with fixes to ensure clients have a memorable experience, so that they return for further training. The Unit has completed the implementation of the audit recommendations as required by the External Audit Report of 2020 and has introduced several new initiatives to improve work processes, SLP learner experiences and marketing of SLPs.

#### Career Services Department

The amalgamation of the Graduate Placement Office with the Cooperative Education and Service Learning Unit to establish the Career Services Department was completed at the beginning of 2021. This new department now serves as one contact point for students and employers. It has also allowed for the expansion of its services and increased efficiencies. The expansion of services includes the offering of work preparedness programmes that were previously offered by the Student Counselling Department. The services offered in 2020 and 2021 had to be shifted online and to various social media platforms. The number of employer requests for students decreased because of the pandemic, resulting in fewer students being placed when compared to pre-pandemic figures. The decrease in placement opportunities applied to both graduates and students requiring work-integrated learning opportunities to complete their qualifications.



Engagement Excellence Awards,  
'Optical Fibre Communication Project'

*... the study found  
that the ETP entities  
have a strong social  
justice component ...*

## Going forward, [the Office] aims to introduce hybrid methods of service delivery.

A total of 560 employer requests were received, 3253 CVs were sent to employers during 2020, and 654 requests were received and 2599 CVs were sent to employers by the end of October 2021. Flowing from the long-term partnerships with SETAs, the department was successful in securing a Discretionary Grant award for R9.5-million from CHIETA in support of an application to fund final year students from the "missing middle" group with historical debt. At the request of USAf, an institutional survey was conducted to determine which modalities universities were using to accommodate students for work-integrated, experiential learning, in-service training, and project-based learning resulting from the student placement restrictions introduced during the lockdown requirements resulting from the pandemic.

As no campus-based contact Career Fairs could be staged, the department participated in the SA Graduate Employers Association Virtual GradExpos in 2020 and 2021. The department hopes to recommence its campus-based annual graduate recruitment and placement programmes

and services. These programmes include the Employer Graduate Recruitment Presentations and Showcase Programme, the Computer Sciences & Information Technology Careers Fair in March, the Law Recruitment Programme in April, the General Careers Fair in July, and the Accounting and Law Fair in August. The department received national recognition for its services when it was ranked in the top ten best university Careers Services Departments in 2020 and as a top 3 finalist in 2021 by the SA Graduate Employers Association. The department also facilitated the University's participation in the GradStar programme and awards ceremony, which is designed to recognise the most employable students across the country and introduce them to future employers. Attracting over 10 000 entries this year, 33 of our students did well to reach the Top 500.

### Conclusion

Due to the contact nature and requirements of the Office for effectively delivering its functions and services, the pandemic has had a direct effect on the performance of its activities. This is reflected in rolled-over project funding, decreased SLP offerings resulting in reduced levies and income to the EAF, and reduced placement opportunities for students. It required an adaptation and changes to its methods of delivery to online platforms and the use of social media for communicating with students. Going forward, it aims to introduce hybrid methods of service delivery, as face-to-face contact with academics, students and employers remain essential for the effective performance of its functions.

### VirtualGradExp

The world of work is  
extremely online!

So is the world of **graduate recruitment**.

Join industry experts and graduate employers at our VirtualGradExpo on **21 July 2020** and find out where your talent could take you.

[Register now](#)



### GRADnext



NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

Due to the global pandemic, the Career Services department had to adapt to the new normal.

Other than offering work preparedness assistance online, we partnered with Ruda Landman to avail GRADnext to our students and alumni.

This ebook has been made available free of charge on the student portal thereby enabling access to all students and alumni without using data.

Thank you to Thomas Hilmer and Tiffany Rayners of our Communication and Marketing department. GRADnext is now available online.

There is also an audio version on the same page, downloadable in free-standing episodes.

Change the World

### NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

Career Services



#### SERVICES OFFERED

- Graduate Recruitment Programme
- Careers Fair
- Accounting and Law Day
- Law Recruitment Programme
- Company Showcases
- Part time and Full time placements and advertisements
- CV preparation
- Interview skills
- Company Presentations
- Work Integrated Learning Placement
- Experiential Learning / In-service Training Placement
- Service Learning Placement

## Repositioning of the Transformation Office

The start of 2020 saw the repositioning of the Transformation Monitoring and Evaluation Office, previously associated with the Institutional Planning Office, to report to the newly established DVC Engagement & Transformation Portfolio, as part of the organisational redesign process. The mandate of the Transformation Office, therefore, was also reviewed to reflect the following – to promote institutional transformation and foster an affirming transformative institutional culture that promotes diversity and social inclusion through programmatic interventions focusing on the Constitutional principles of human dignity, equality, fairness, non-racism, non-sexism, and redress.

## Review of Equality-related Policies

In 2018, MANCO appointed an external consultant to review the Institutional complaints processes associated with equality-related complaints. After an extensive consultative process, a report and recommendations were provided to MANCO. In 2020, the Transformation Office incorporated these recommendations into a new Integrated Policy for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of and Protection Against Unfair Discrimination, which was approved by the Council in December of that year. The Policy for Sexual Harassment and Sexual Offences, an equality related policy, was also reviewed in 2020 to align with the over-arching Integrated Equality Policy process.



## First Responders Training

### Fully Free Online Course:

- Self-guided
- Asynchronous
- Downloadable resources
- isiXhosa and Afrikaans versions available

### Enrollment Key

Mandela2021



## An approach to supporting trauma survivors in Higher Education

In 2021, two further equality-related policies were developed, namely: the Racism and Racial Discrimination Policy and the Gender Equality Policy. These policies form part of a list of several policies which are linked to the Integrated Equality Policy, since they focus in greater detail on specifically listed grounds outlined in the Constitution, as well as other relevant pieces of legislation. Expansion of the equality-related policies will continue to ensure that all listed grounds are included in the Institutional Regulatory Code.

## Operational Implications of Equality-Related Policies

### Online Reporting Page

In 2019, the University procured the Cyber Incidents and Investigations Management System (CiiMS) software to monitor and report on equality-related complaints, including gender-based violence (GBV). This software package required further development to enable it to be used for these specific types of complaints.

In 2020, the development of the software was completed and all employees from the respective operational offices (Employee Relations, Legal Services) underwent training in the use of the software. The online reporting page was communicated to all students and employees via the University's official communication channels.



The Transformation Office presents:

# A GENDER BASED VIOLENCE TALK

24 March 2021 | 12:00-13:00

Ms Teams

**AmandaMEMEZA**

The Diary of AmandaMEMEZA is a fictional story used as an educational tool to raise awareness on GBV

In 2021, the availability of the reporting page as the online complaints mechanism for GBV, harassment and discrimination-related reporting continues to be communicated via MEMO, as well as to all first-year students (as part of their first-year success programme), all student leaders (Student Representative Council, House Committee members, Mentors), newly appointed employees (as part of their induction programme co-ordinated by Human Resources Division), the Middle Management Forum, the Dean's Forum and all residence managers (both on and off-campus). Most cases are reported via referrals, which are then logged on the system by the complainant.

## Support and Protection Measures

In 2020, the Transformation Office appointed a registered Counsellor on a fixed-term contract (while the organisational redesign process is being concluded) for the provision of appropriate support to complainants traumatised by equality-related violations, including GBV. Besides psycho-social support, the case coordinator facilitated the provision of academic concessions, as well as requests for alternative accommodation when students feel unsafe. Further protective mechanisms such as no-contact orders may be issued by the University against an alleged perpetrator until the matter has been resolved via the relevant policy provisions and processes. Relevant support interventions are available to employees via Occupational Health, while other types of support are facilitated by the Transformation Office via the Human Resources Division. In 2021, the provision of a GBV support group for females was extended to include

support groups for male and LGBTIQ+ GBV survivors/victims. The different support groups convene online, which has enabled students who used to be geographically separated across all campuses, including George, to collectively participate in these online sessions. It is envisaged that both mask-to-mask and the online session will be implemented in 2022, depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Education and Advocacy

Prior to 2020, the Transformation Office conducted various face-to-face advocacy and awareness interventions throughout each academic year. These interventions were mainly focused on GBV due to the increase in GBV-related complaints across all our campuses. However, in 2020, advocacy and awareness interventions were predominantly implemented in the first three months of the academic year, prior to level 5 COVID-19 lockdown regulations being imposed.

GBV was included in the first-year orientation programme, with survivor kits being handed to all first-year students. These survivor kits contained, amongst others, a yellow whistle and a small business card providing information related to the use of the whistle in emergency situations, as well as the University's emergency number. In the second semester of 2020, as the lockdown levels were eased, students started returning to the University residences, which aided us in implementing our advocacy interventions via student-accessible online platforms. For GBV-related content, online seminars were hosted, with invited guests

presenting contemporary content. These initiatives form part of the Annual Integrated Institutional GBV Plan which provides an overview of all institutional interventions being implemented across different entities, including faculties. In 2021, the approval of the Integrated Equality Policy in December 2020, necessitated the development of appropriate Equality Promotion and Social Inclusion advocacy and awareness resources. To this end, various posters, pamphlets, and video clips were developed for distribution via our official communication channels and can also be accessed on the revamped Transformation Office website.

The development of resources continues, as equality-related policies are developed, and their substance converted into easily accessible and comprehensible content. Programmatic interventions require significant resources to ensure that the content design is well researched and appropriate to achieve the outcomes identified in our Statement of Commitment for an Inclusive Institutional Culture. The development of such interventions also requires the integration of efforts across entities to ensure impactful outcomes. The Equality Working Group is working towards the compilation of an Annual Integrated Institutional Equality Promotion and Social Inclusion Plan which will enable the sharing of resources and implementation of joint projects. Discussions were initiated in 2021 with other stakeholders, for collaboration on the development of such interventions during 2022.

#### **Amanda\_MEMEZA anti-GBV campaign**

The creation of a fictional first-year student character has enabled us to create a Facebook blog about the experiences of this individual as she transitions from matric to life as a first-year student at Nelson Mandela University. The content of her story is developed by students and related to the wide range of challenges faced by students, including GBV. This modality is used to share pertinent information about the complaints process, the manifestations related to GBV trauma, the relevant support available as well as what the formal disciplinary process entails. The blogs also deal with the complicated dynamics between students, involving peer pressure, silencing of voices, labelling, and snubbing of individuals who courageously report GBV incidents.

#### **Singamadoda, Redefining Positive Masculinity**

This project was initially introduced via DOXA, an NGO which focuses on engaging males about GBV, fatherhood and being positive role models. This particular programme



#### **Relationships in the 21st century VS Healthy relationships?**

Date: 23 June 2021  
Time: 12:00 to 13:00  
Where: Microsoft Teams

#### **Speaker: Bongani Malahle**

Counselling Psychologist at Emthonjeni Student Wellness Centre and Co-ordinator of Singamadoda positive masculinity Program and Mental Health Awareness Program.

#### **Economic Inequality: Opportunities available for the youth within the Nelson Mandela University.**

Date: 30 June 2021  
Time: 12:00 to 13:00  
Where: Microsoft Teams

#### **Speaker: Karen Snyman**

Student Entrepreneurship Specialist: Opportunities available for the youth within the Nelson Mandela University.



involves open dialogues among male students, facilitated by trained student facilitators, to discuss specific elements associated with: Identity; Beliefs and Social Conditioning; Gender stereotypes; Equality and Commitment Statement. Implementation of face-to-face sessions could not proceed in 2020 due to level 5 lockdown regulations. In 2021 the facilitators manual was reviewed to enable online discussions. However, students responded better to mask-to-mask sessions than to online sessions. Efforts are therefore underway to again create awareness about the programme at residence level (on and off-campus) and to implement the programme within residences via mask-to-mask sessions in the 2022 academic year.

#### **GBV Forum and Tele-Counselling**

During the hard lockdown period, with the increase in mental health challenges as well as GBV complaints, our office coordinated the provision of tele-counselling to healthcare workers who were unable to access such support. The University also identified NGOs who have been working in the GBV space in the Metro to collaboratively provide support to individuals who were affected by GBV, both internal and external to the University. A GBV Forum was established and continues to operate, with joint GBV-related projects being funded by the University with a focus on Women's Month and 16 Days of Activism Against GBV,

among others. Ultimately, this GBV Forum will form the basis of formalised partnerships between the University and these NGOs to facilitate the co-creation and implementation of projects that will positively impact the communities we serve.

### **Policy-Related Capacity Development**

#### ***Mediator Training***

A group of candidate attorneys appointed on a yearly basis by the Law Clinic was annually exposed to a 40-hour social justice mediation training programme to provide internal capacity to facilitate mediation between parties linked to GBV complaints. In 2020, prior to COVID-19 level 5 lockdown, we were able to conduct face-to-face training. However, in 2021, the training was conducted via an online platform under COVID-19 level 3 regulations. A Mediation Forum was also established in 2021 to enable continued capacity development of the cohort of mediators.

#### ***Inquiry Panel Training***

The Integrated Equality Policy and all equality-related policies required that an inquiry panel be established to evaluate the evidence associated with equality-related complaints. The inquiry panel members, therefore, required appropriate training, provided by an external consultant, to enable them to correctly evaluate the evidence before them. In addition, the investigator was trained to conduct the investigations and accurately capture the findings in an investigation report, which served before the Inquiry Panel. Ongoing capacity development sessions are provided to all inquiry panel members to ensure that they remain abreast of case studies. Academics associated with the Faculty of Law have generously served as experts on GBV and unfair dis-

crimination inquiry panels, respectively. In addition, other academics within the Faculty of Law have provided investigative capacity associated with very complex discrimination cases.

### ***Trauma-Related First-Responder Online Training***

The need for continued development of frontline workers, who interface with students, was addressed through the provision of face-to-face First-Responder training to traumatised people, resulting, among others, from exposure to GBV cases. In 2020, this training changed to online sessions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The online course was piloted in the second semester of 2020 and rolled out in 2021 to all students and employees. By the end of October, about 320 staff and students had enrolled in the course. The expansion of this Trauma-related course into a comprehensive short learning programme will provide a source via which third-stream income can be generated, while also providing training to NGOs, educators, the Post-School Education and Training Sector, Security Sector and Corporates. This expansion is planned for 2022.

### **Conclusion**

Structure determines function – despite being resource-constrained in terms of suitably qualified permanent personnel, and having to navigate the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Transformation Office has managed to deliver on its mandate over the past two years, using creative and innovative means to continue to advocate against GBV, and for a socially just and inclusive institutional culture. More can and will be done once the organisational redesign process is finalised.

The Transformation Office presents

## **A Conversation On: The Hate Crime Bill**

Date: 20 July 2021

Time: 14:00 to 15:00

Where: Zoom online platform

### **Speaker: Thandile Notununu**

**Thandile Notununu** is currently pursuing her LLM degree. Her research interests include human rights and the protection of the vulnerable through the law. Her LLM study is focused on the regulation of hate crimes in a South African context. She holds an LLB degree from the Nelson Mandela University and works as a candidate legal practitioner



## **A Conversation On: What it means to be a young queer person in University**

Date: 22 June 2021

Time: 12:00 to 13:00

Where: Zoom online platform

### **Speaker : Busisiwe Nxumalo**

**Busisiwe Nxumalo** is a former SASCO UCT Branch Executive Committee member and SRC deployee. Busisiwe is an ANCYL Regional Task Team member in the Dullah Omar region (Metro), heading the gender portfolio.

Busisiwe currently serves in the Young Woman's Desk (YWD) Western Cape and national sub-committee. Busisiwe is the current Deputy Chairperson of the ANC Gaby Shapiro Branch.



### **Respondent : Nikita Ntuma**

**Nikita Ntuma** is a former Nelson Mandela University Student.



# HUBS OF CONVERGENCE

The Hubs of Convergence (HoC) emerged from our Vice-Chancellor's, Prof Sibongile Muthwa's, commitment to cultivating a space where the University and community come together "to find solutions to practical problems that affect our immediate communities." The vision for Mandela University – as expressed in [Vision 2030](#) – highlights the importance of engagement in the work of the University. Indeed, it stands right alongside teaching and learning, and research, as a key focus area for developing "inclusive student access for success":



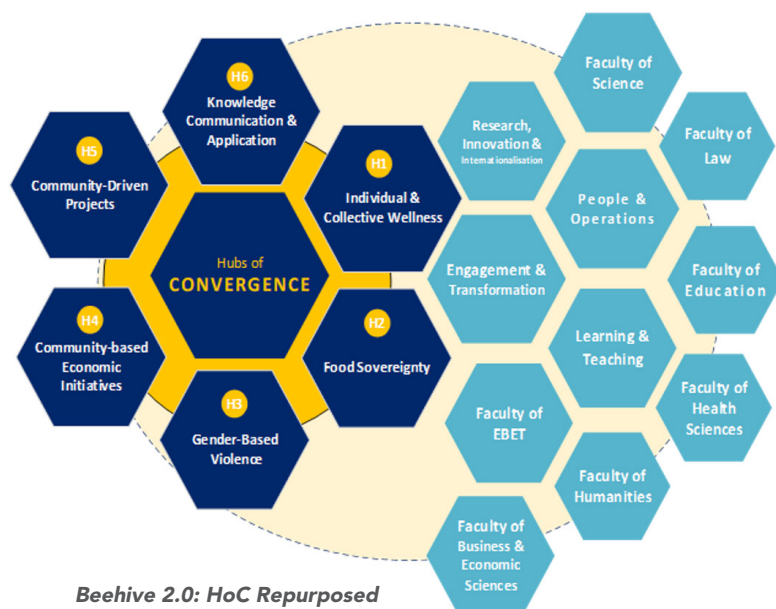
The establishment of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio further solidifies this prioritising of engagement. What 'engagement' means also finds expression in multiple forms through the various units within the Portfolio committed to realising Transformative Engagement as a key goal.

It is within this Portfolio that the Hubs of Convergence is nestled; in its (relative) newness, it stands as a 'project' rather than a unit, exploratory in nature but occupying a specific role – to co-create both the platforms and the programmes through which 'communities' and the University can come together to solve immediate problems. The key word in that sentence – "co-create" – is what one might see as defining the work of this project. It expresses the idea that it is only through meeting as equals, each bringing forth the wisdom and expertise polished through experience and contemplation, that 'university' and 'community' can collectively begin to find solutions to the multiple crises facing our society.

## Reshaped by the COVID Moment

Between 2019 and 2020, the HoC's exploration took the form of many moments of engagement between stakeholders from the University and those from 'communities,' developing a pathway towards a signature project based on recommendations stemming from careful research. That was before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived at our doors, however. And in the rapid rethink it brought about, the HoC's plans received a daunting but invaluable boost. The anticipated research plan managed to survive the rethink, but instead of shaping the HoC's course of action, the research project continued alongside a concerted effort to respond with urgency to the grave societal issues exacerbated by the pandemic. The two objectives, research and 'application', would in effect interact with and shape one another. The HoC's revised objectives included:

- Playing a coordinating role in the newly established Community Convergence Workstream;
- Playing a supporting and connecting role in other projects located within and outside the university;
- Taking forward the envisioned research project, aligned to the programmatic work being undertaken in the CCW.



*Beehive 2.0: HoC Repurposed*

## Universities and their Communities: Engagement scholarship and practice

The Hubs of Convergence research team completed the desktop research component in 2020. The research focuses on both the activities of the University and the CCW as it has responded (and continues to respond) to the idea of community engagement arising from the pandemic - and on wider sources of information about the pandemic and the approaches taken by universities more generally in concert with their communities.

In 2021, the Research Project welcomed more members, becoming a multi-disciplinary space of collective learning about how Engagement has been understood and practised in the University sphere, of the challenges and limitations this work faces, and of new possibilities for meaningful, co-constructed engagement praxis.

The Research Project also received Ethics approval in 2021 and has undertaken a number of focus group interviews, which are set to continue into 2022.

### Programmatic Work and Multiple Outputs

The pandemic certainly shifted the Hubs of Convergence into high gear, making it impossible to carefully plot out and

walk towards an informed course of action. These circumstances are as much as a gift, however, in that they have proven that it is possible, albeit at times untidy, to put into practice sooner than expected the theorisation that had been taking shape; to undertake a swifter iteration of the cycle of co-construction, practice, and reflection. The sense-making space of the Research CoP, and the ongoing dialogue with the Research Project itself, have proven vital to this process.

The Community Convergence Workstream has evolved significantly since its emergence soon after the arrival of the pandemic. Conceptually, we have re-organised the various transdisciplinary projects into Thematic Hubs. You could understand these Hubs as spaces in which the HoC, along with other ETP Units, such as CIPSET, Transformation, HIV-AIDS, and CANRAD, co-construct programmes in collaboration with 'communities,' inviting in centres and faculties across the University, as well as stakeholders across civil society at large.

The HoC's principles of *Convergence* and *Reciprocity* underpin its proposition around *Multiple Outputs* - mindful that socially engaged scholarship is best derived from an authentic process of learning with others in practice; that it embraces the uncertainty embedded in 'not knowing' and is supportive of multiple forms of knowledge output to drive social inclusion and cohesion. In this context, typical

**Area Assemblies: knowledge-sharing and problem solving. Kariega (left), Wells Estate (top right), Booysens Park & Dwesi Ext (bottom right)**



conceptions of scholarly outputs must be balanced with outputs that are meaningful to the community partners and other stakeholders, and as is patent below, are shaped by the unique landscape of each collaborative space.

**Hub 1** – Individual and Collective Wellness, is where we situated the *Tele-Counselling Project* operational in 2020. The network of volunteer counsellors offering debriefing to Community Healthcare Workers on the frontlines of the COVID crisis flourished under the coordination of the Transformation Unit alongside staff from the Psychology Department and Emthonjeni Student Wellness. As the academic programme resumed and the demand for debriefing tapered off, the project ended. The need for collaborative thinking towards psycho-social support has not declined, however, and the Hub thus awaits revitalisation from a transdisciplinary University and community collaborators.

**Hub 2** – Food Sovereignty has been a hive of activity. Within this hub, the *Community-Based Food Systems* project, held by Siyabulela Mama and the CIPSET team, has offered multiple forms of support for urban food farmers across Gqeberha and Kariega. This has consisted of various material inputs such as seedlings and tools, alongside workshops, training sessions, area assemblies, educational materials, a comprehensive webinar series, booklets, videos



Malibongwe and Mcebisi of Yizani Sakhe in Wells Estate planting seedlings - photo by Nonkululeko Masuku



Members of Moeggesukkel Community Kitchen in front of their garden, holding FireKilla units - photo by Dion Nonyane



**GBV Forum members: self-protection training**

and an SLP in progress. These have provided numerous opportunities for multi-directional learning around issues key to building food sovereignty, from understanding how the dominant food system operates to tapping into local traditional knowledge around seed saving and food growing, and making sense of the water crisis our region is facing.

A collaboration between one of the urban food farming groups, Sibanye, and Northern Lights School has since emerged. They have invited the HoC to collaborate with community farmers and teachers to shape an educational programme that offers opportunities to differently abled learners to develop post-school vocational pathways and builds connections between learners and communities while developing possibilities for alternative food systems.

Also located in Hub 2, the *Sustainable Food Relief* project has entered its second iteration, building on the foundation of the material support offered to soup kitchens in 2020 and the beginnings of the development of the concept of the Community Kitchen. Ikhala Trust, a local NGO, leads as Implementing Partner and a key link between communities and the University. This year, the project received further funding from the Mandela University Convergence Fund (MUCF), to expand material support and capacity-building

with six community groupings. This project has enabled collaborating members to explore what a Community Kitchen could look like and whether it may be a useful vehicle for building more solidaristic and sustainable solutions to the problems our most marginalised communities face.

Linked to this is the *FireKilla Pilot Project: Masixhobe Siwulwe Umlilo*. In 2020, eNtsa tested an alternative fire extinguisher - Firekilla - which is developed by a local enterprise. It is cheaper, easier to use, and non-toxic. Funding from Mandela Convergence Fund thereafter made it possible to provide 8 units and 8 refills each to 6 Community Kitchens with which we were working, alongside Ikhala Trust. In mid-November 2021, a workshop aimed at gathering feedback on the use of the units thus far, and providing fire training was conducted - the latter facilitated by the University's Emergency Medical Services Department.

In **Hub 3**, the HIV-AIDS Unit and a handful of local organisations have expanded their network, and been joined by the Transformation Unit, forming a *GBV Forum* whose members span Gqeberha, Kariega and beyond. Funding from the MUCF has supported the activities of four member organisations, strengthening their contributions towards ending the scourge of Gender-Based Violence. The Forum fosters collaboration between fellow member organisations, an understanding of one another's work, and a supportive environment for organisational development. The Forum is currently preparing a collective proposal for the UN Democracy Fund.

In **Hub 4**, Community-based Economic Initiatives, the *Sewing Project*, has evolved out of the erstwhile Masks Project which endeavoured through 2020 to source and distribute masks, with the long-term goal of developing economic initiatives within local, marginalised communities. In 2021, possibilities have emerged for the CCS-CANRAD-HoC team to build small sewing enterprises or cooperatives along with stakeholder communities, through collaboration with Manyano Schools and the Association for People with Physical Disabilities, alongside conceptual support from the University's Business School. Extended stakeholder engagement has led to the development of a foundation-building proposal, sponsored by funding from CANRAD, with which to cultivate a supportive network or ecosystem that will provide the best chance for the cooperatives to thrive. This foundation will also prepare the grounds for a larger funding proposal covering sewing training and establishing of cooperatives in 2022.

In **Hub 5**, two community-driven projects are continuing their work. The *Civil Society Engagement Platform* was initiated in response to requests from local organisations within the C19 People's Coalition for a space that would enable these organisations and movements to collaborate and support others in strengthening their work. Taking up the request, Mandela University's Centre for Community Technologies found a supportive partner in GIZ and developed the offering through various stages of focus group interviews and feedback sessions. The platform has been launched and is now available to be populated.

Ubuso Bethu developed organically out of the groundwork done by Wara Fana in the development of the Takasele [web-site](#). It was spurred into action by initial seed funding from the Community Convergence Workstream, allowing for a number of community journalists to be paid for work they prepared under the mentorship of the Ubuso Bethu team, which was then published on the website. The project also undertook workshops to assist aspiring community journalists and held a well-attended webinar with a number of speakers on the topic of media ethics. Tragically, Wara lost his life to COVID-19 in June 2021. In the wake of his passing, a number of [tributes](#) appeared, and recognition for Wara's contribution to platforming and prioritising African languages was received by the likes of the great Ngugi wa Thiong'o. In order to carry forward the powerful vision and legacy of Wara Fana, Heather Fana will step into the role played by her husband and she and Louise Vale have committed to continuing with the work of Ubuso Bethu. Further funding has been received from the HoC and CrSHET to continue and expand this work.

In **Hub 6**, Knowledge Communication and Application, we have located the Research Project discussed above, as well as the CCW Webinar Series held at the end of 2020. In 2021, this has included the development of a Communication Strategy, an HoC Instagram account, and the development of a Organisational Profile template alongside a community partner organisation. Our collaboration with the School of Visual and Performing Arts connects Photography and Graphic Design curricula to the Community Kitchens we are working with in the *Sustainable Food Relief* project. The latter collaboration provides a pilot exploration of possibilities for connecting the work of teaching and learning to that of engagement, with multiple outputs including high-quality images, logos and visual designs for the Community Kitchens



**Wara Fana (1976-2021): Activist-journalist and Mandela University Alumnus**

to use in any proposals or media moving forward.

#### **Towards V2030**

The strategic focus areas of Vision 2030 resonate deeply with the HoC, forming an ever-present lens through which we may understand and measure our work. In supporting projects within and outside of the University space, our contribution is often to translate this vision into pathways and activities appropriate to a particular collaborative context. At times this may mean making space for participants to connect deeply on a human level, understanding that this is key to cultivating the kinds of moments that awaken one's consciousness and bring about transformative learning. Or it could mean subtle adjustments made to 'balance' voices so that co-creation of socially just solutions is not thwarted by the unequal power dynamics that define our society. It often means listening to critiques from stakeholders, or the research team, whose difficult questions force us to re-examine assumptions, and in turn, drive innovative and impactful problem-solving within our research and programmatic work. And increasingly, it means looking for opportunities to invite students in to think and to participate with us, shaping and being shaped by our praxis – and not as individual volunteers, but as part of their curriculum. This makes possible multiple outputs that simultaneously supply life-changing learning experiences for all participants, while completing a component of a curriculum, producing something meaningful to our community stakeholders, and informing the research underpinning this work to help us understand what it might mean to be a University in service of society.

# MANDELA UNIVERSITY FOOD SYSTEMS

Upscaling and coordinating our interventions in 'food' as a key priority for Nelson Mandela University's engagement work emerged through various discussions over 2020. The production, distribution, availability and politics of food is a key marker of systemically anchored inequalities, and it thus came as no surprise that 'food' re-emerged as a major theme through COVID-19; it is central to people's daily struggle for dignified and sustainable livelihoods.

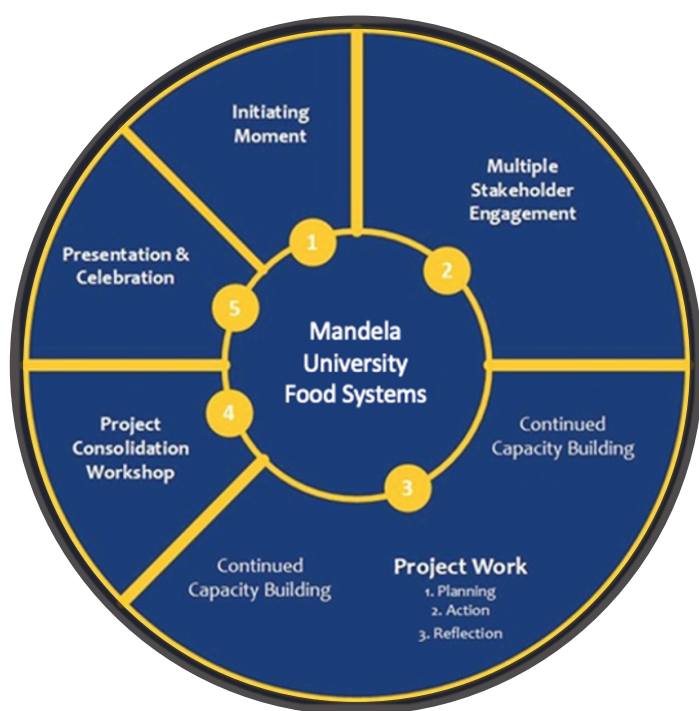
The pandemic has since transformed social thinking and forced us to adopt a sustainable, long-term approach in questioning food systems. In 2021, the Mandela University Food Systems initiative was activated, aiming to clarify, connect, and hold space for existing food and food systems projects within Mandela University and surrounding communities.

## January – June 2021

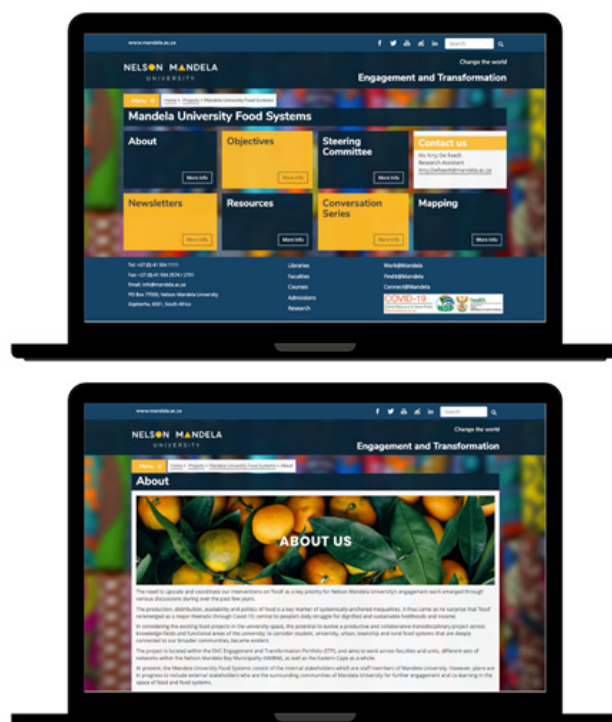
The first six months of the programme were marked by intensive consultations with food and food systems representatives, from within the University, who are active in this space in varying degrees. From this, we formed a Food Systems Working Group, Steering Committee and Secretariat.

The conceptualisation of the work required consistent and continuous reflexivity and ratification processes related to how University staff and students understand and acknowledge food and food systems within their spaces. During this process, the focus was on clarifying and coordinating the existing work being done within the University space, and that the missing voices – namely, external-stakeholder communities – will be included in the following phase.

In essence, the first six months of the programme simultaneously encompassed the "initiating moment" and "multiple stakeholder engagement" phases (see Phase Breakdown in Annexure A). The programme needed to spend sufficient time in the consultation processes as it provided a space of advocacy and ownership for Working Group members. This then solidified and gave a rooted mandate for the Secretariat to embark on phase three of the project, which is "project work" (see Phase Breakdown) and also saw the conceptualisation, ratification and adoption of the [Working Document](#), which serves as a blueprint for the programme moving into the second half of the year and beyond.



Phase breakdown



Website

## July – December 2021

For the remaining six months of 2021, the Mandela University Food Systems Programme has been and is focusing on the practical implementation of the programme of action as set out in the Working Document. To date, the programme has launched the [website](#), which will be continually updated; the [mapping](#), which is an ongoing, interactive mapping of the existing projects and programmes related to food and food systems across the University space; the [newsletter](#), which was first launched in September, with the second issue set to be released in November; and the [conversation series](#), which has seen two conversations take place, with two more scheduled for the rest of the year.

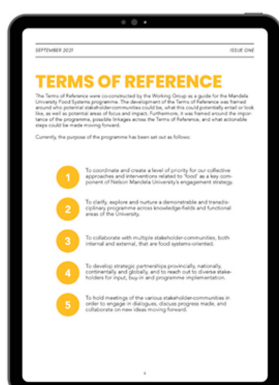
The programme is also in the process of repackaging the conversation recordings and related resources to develop a type of resource hub, set to launch by the end of 2021. These deliverables were highlighted as entry points into initiating engagement, learning, co-learning and collaboration with internal stakeholders, as well as external-stakeholder communities in the future. At present, the Working Group is in the process of ratifying the way forward with regards to a) developing a signature project (internal and/or external) and b) involving external-stakeholder communities.



## Mapping

## Conclusion

The first six months of the Mandela University Food Systems Programme was an initiating moment that saw internal stakeholder engagement, the establishment, clarification, and ratification of ToRs, as well as planning and capacity building for the programme, while the last six months have been focused on the implementation of the deliverables identified in the programme of action. Mandela University Food Systems aims to align with Mandela University's Vision 2030 and to operate through its lens to encompass transdisciplinary solidarity in the food and food systems space, and be in service of society.



## Newsletter

REPORT — 2020-2021

### MANDELA UNIVERSITY FOOD SYSTEMS CONVERSATION SERIES

The Mandela University Food Systems programme invites you to join the first conversation under the theme 'food and food systems'.

**DATE: THURSDAY, 09 SEPTEMBER 2021**  
**TIME: 12:00 - 13:00 (SAST)**

**SPEAKERS**

- FOOD SYSTEMS SECRETARIAT**  
Dr Bruce Damons, Ms Oyama Maza and Ms Amy De Raedt will be discussing the proposed architecture, strategic objectives, and emerging learning of the programme to date.
- GEORGE CAMPUS OPERATIONS DIRECTOR**  
Mr Martin Leubner will be highlighting the work of George Campus around food sustainability and production.

**REGISTER HERE**

### MANDELA UNIVERSITY FOOD SYSTEMS CONVERSATION SERIES

The Mandela University Food Systems programme invites you to join the second conversation under the theme 'food sovereignty and security'.

**DATE: THURSDAY, 07 OCTOBER 2021**  
**TIME: 12:00 - 13:00 (SAST)**

**SPEAKERS**

- IRINA SENEKAL AND SIYABULELA MAMA**  
Ms Irina Senekal and Mr Siyabulela Mama from CIPSET will present on their learning with community farmers about community-based food production practices.
- SYDEN MISHI**  
Prof Syden Mishi from the Department of Economics will present on the work he is currently involved with related to food sovereignty and security.

**REGISTER HERE**

## Conversation Series Adverts



# CENTRE FOR WOMEN & GENDER STUDIES

Since its inception in October 2019, the Centre for Women & Gender Studies (CWGS) was mandated to advance gender equality and gender equity within Nelson Mandela University and the broader community in the region and beyond. CWGS has discussed this mandate in various collaborative projects with faculties and entities in the University and with other university departments across the country, as well as local communities.

The Centre operated for less than six months before COVID-19 restrictions challenged the existence of everything in the global academy. Operating under heavy lockdown restrictions, the Centre launched: a year-long seminar series in 2020 (titled *Author Fridays*); international gender engagement Women's annual colloquiums; graduate gender writing workshops; a gender film festival; a DSI-NRF SARCHI Chair in African Feminist Imaginations; and published books, book chapters, and accredited journal articles within. By the end of 2020, the CWGS had hosted

*Launch*

**Nelson Mandela University-DSI-NRF SARCHI Chair in African Feminist Imagination**

**05 June 2021 | 15:00-17:30**

**Zoom Webinar**



Prof Pumla Dineo Gqola

more than 24 international speakers, 34 postgraduate students across the faculties and between the different universities and attracted more than a million views on the University YouTube channel (combined viewings).

Through the digital platform – Online Reading with Author Fridays – the CWGS created a digital engagement space for scholars, students, and community members to facilitate gender curricula and learning through our online Zoom space. This platform sought to build a community of gender scholars to allow students, community members, academics, and practitioners to engage about and discuss current societal issues. This digital platform sought to close the geographical limitations imposed by physical, geographical infrastructures of learning. We engaged different published authors while promoting the gender intellectual corridor of the Eastern Cape among the gender scholars of the region. This platform opened a space to exchange ideas, building collaborations globally with like-minded scholars to mainstream gender beyond the academy and the region.

With the 'Author Friday' Seminars, the Centre generated a lot of interest from many institutions seeking to partner with it via the online platforms. The past two years have



been dynamic, with a research chair linked to the CWGS programme, a newspaper supplement, almost R1-million in NIHSS Funding, regular seminars, research publications, contributions to the national Policies on GBV, and a book project. It is fair to say that the CWGS's intellectual programme has been excellent and continues to build a new cohort of feminists throughout the country.

### Engagements in 2021

In 2021, the CWGS continued this engagement with different audiences, including global speakers, in collaboration with regional partner universities. We opened 2021 by collaborating with Rhodes University's Department of Political and International Studies and the University of Pretoria's English Department to host an inter-generational dialogue on the legacies of the *25 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* on 22 March. The Zoom Webinar [dialogue](#) included Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (Executive Director of UN Women, Former Deputy President of South Africa); Ambassador Thenjiwe Mtintso (South African Ambassador to Spain, Former Chairperson of the Commission on Gender Equality); Dr Bev Palesa Ditsie (Award-Winning Filmmaker and first African lesbian activist to address the UN) and Prof Yolande Bouka (Political Studies, Queen's University).

In May 2021, the CWGS and the Chair in African Feminist Imagination launched an annual student competition on residences named after icons. Partnering with the Dean of Students Office (through Charlotte Maxeke Residence), we hosted a series on 150 years of Charlotte Maxeke, in which Dr Thozama April, Prof Simphiwe Sesanti and Zubeida Jaffer gave a seminar and two Master Classes on the topic. On 5 June, CWGS launched the first Nelson Mandela University-DSI-NRF SARCHI Chair in African Feminist Imagination chaired by Prof Pumla Dineo Gqola. This Chair has added to the engagement and research profile of the Centre, clearly defining the academic programme from 2021 onwards.

On 15 June, we invited Dr Sindiwe Magona, recipient of an honorary doctorate from Nelson Mandela University, and Prof Puleng Segalo, the new Chief Albert Luthuli Research Chair at UNISA, to a well-attended [conversation](#) about unearthing intergeneration knowledge transfer mechanisms through values, *amabali* (stories), *iintsomi* (folktales) and endogenous principles that are an investment for education today.

In August 2021, the Centre co-hosted an annual Women's Month [colloquium](#) with Rhodes University and the University of Cape Town titled "*Sizobashaya ngamatshe: Women and 60 years of the armed struggle in South Africa*".

In September 2021, the CWGS co-hosted a symposium during the international conference themed '*The state we're in: Democracy's fractures, fixes and futures*', hosted by CANRAD. The symposium, titled '*African feminisms in the Postcolony*', was moderated by Dr Babalwa Magoqwana, with Prof Nomalanga Mkhize, Dr Mathe Ntsheke and Siphokazi Tau.

The Chair in African Feminist Imagination and the CWGS, together with the University of Fort Hare (Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies) and Rhodes University (Political and International Studies), hosted a feminist and gender writing workshop for emerging gender scholars from 18-20 October 2021. Attended by almost 40 postgraduates from Mandela University, Rhodes and Fort Hare, this workshop was a continuation of the Centre's gender and feminist writing retreat from 2019, which included presentations from an award-winning writer, poet and anti-Apartheid activist Prof Makhosazana Xaba (University of Johannesburg), who presented and facilitated the

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY



The Centre for Women and Gender Studies launches  
Online Reading with the Author Fridays

### Gender and Health April 2020 Reading Series

The following speakers will be reading their articles with us via Microsoft Teams:

- 09 April 2020: **Prof Pumla Gqola** (University of Fort Hare): *COVID-19, Movement and Class in Post-Apartheid South Africa*
- 17 April 2020: **Dr Ntabiseng Motsemme** (National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences): *Loving in the time of hopelessness: On Township Women's Subjectivities in a time of HIV/AIDS*
- 24 April 2020: **Prof Sakhumzi Mfecane** (University of the Western Cape): *Health and Masculinities*
- 30 April 2020: **Ms Mthunzikazi Mbungwana** (Rhodes University): *Reading 3 Poems on Sex and Health Today*

Time: 13H00- 14H15 | Day: Fridays | Platform: Microsoft Teams

RSVP: [Nomtha.Menye@mandela.ac.za](mailto:Nomtha.Menye@mandela.ac.za) (an email will be sent back to you with a link inviting you to the Teams reading group)



workshop on 'Feminists (re)writing the struggles', followed by Dr Ruby-Ann Levendal (Transformation Office), speaking on Sexual Violence in higher education. Prof Pumla Dineo Gqola facilitated the workshop on gendered narratives as written in slavery and colonial histories, while Danielle Bowler (New Frame editor) provided practical exercises on writing for the public. Dr Athambile Masola (UCT) encouraged the postgraduate students present to consider writing about feminism in African languages. Prof Zethu Matebeni (UFH) spoke on the bibliography of African queer histories in Africa and their link to global queer politics today. In closing, Dr Babalwa Magoqwana provided a broad overview of the higher education landscape and the challenges of African feminist research.

From 21 to 22 October 2021, the CWGS and the Chair in African Feminist Imagination held the launch of the *African Feminist Book Wor(l)ds* series, designed to celebrate selected African feminist books published between 2020 and 2021. The books included *Surfacing: Being Black and Feminist in South Africa* (by Desiree Lewis and Gabeba Baderoon); *Mothers of the Nation: Manyano Women in South Africa* (by Lihle Ngcobozi); *Women, Visibility and Morality in Kenyan Popular Media* (Dina Ligaga); *Female Fear Factory* (by Pumla Dineo Gqola); *Illifa* (by Athambile Masola) and *UNam Wena* (by Mthunziki A. Mbungwana). These book discussions looked at the variations of gender politics, black women's organising and institutional building work, spirituality, heritage, and iterations of love, desire, womanhood, and language in the public sphere.

## To My Children's Children

A conversation between Dr Sindiwe Magona and Prof Puleng Segalo

This conversation takes place during Youth Month in the South African calendar, where we try and unearth intergenerational knowledge transfer mechanisms through values, amabali (stories), iintsomi (folktales) and endogenous principles that are an investment for education today.

Tuesday, 15th June 2021

17:00- 18:15 PM

Zoom Webinar

[CLICK HERE \(To Register\)](#)

For further details, please contact: [Jackie.Smith@mandela.ac.za](mailto:Jackie.Smith@mandela.ac.za)



DR SINDIWE MAGONA  
Recipient of Honorary Doctorate  
at Nelson Mandela University



PROF PULENG SEGALO  
Chief Albert Luthuli Research Chair  
(UNISA)



In continuing with gender mainstreaming across the sector, the Centre for Women and Gender Studies, Chair in African Feminist Imaginations and the Chief Albert Luthuli Research Chair (UNISA) hosted a national *Gender Transformation in Higher Education Dialogue* with Prof Amina Mama (University of Ghana); Prof Edith Phaswana (UNISA); Dr Thandi Lewin (DHET); Lihle Ngcobozi (Wits) and moderated by Prof Pamela Dube (UWC). This national dialogue aimed to centre the gender transformation project in higher education and the continued contestations including GBV/SH and the related gender power dynamics shaping the higher education landscape.

## Research and Engagement of the CWGS & Chair in African Feminist Imaginations

The CWGS aims to achieve its agenda through the SRAC-funded project titled "Towards an Intellectual Gender Corridor of the Eastern Cape". In resuscitating African women's biographical and intellectual histories, the CWGS

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

11-23 SEPTEMBER 2020

## ARTS, HERITAGE & GENDER

13:00 - 14:15

Centre for Women and Gender Studies (Nelson Mandela University), in collaboration with the Department of Political and International Studies (Rhodes University), invites you to our online Author Fridays, the September edition

These speakers will share their papers with us via Zoom:

**11 September 2020 - Prof Janine Jones**  
(University of North Carolina)  
Moonlight Rite: Examining Rites between  
Presentations of Black, Gay, Male humanity and  
Representations of Black, Gay, Male Non-Humanity in  
Moonlight

**18 September 2020 - Dr Thozama April**  
(University of Fort Hare)  
Pioneers of black feminist thought in South Africa

**23 September 2020 - An interview with Celeste Ntuli**  
(Comedian, Actress)  
RSVP: [nomtha.meny@mandela.ac.za](mailto:nomtha.meny@mandela.ac.za)  
(An email will be sent to you with the Zoom password)



NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY



An interview with  
**Thandiswa Mazwai**  
on heritage, women and popular culture

CENTRE FOR WOMEN AND GENDER STUDIES (CWGS), NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY: 1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

FRIDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2020 | 17:00 - 18:30

This program will take place on Zoom:

Thandiswa Mazwai (born 31 March 1976) is a South African musician. She grew up almost entirely in Soweto, Johannesburg, amidst the heavy apartheid township violence of the 1980s. Both her parents were journalists and anti-apartheid political activists, and she reflects that her home was filled with books, articles and thick with political discussions. It was this environment that nurtured her perspective as an artist. She went on to attend Wits University where she studied English Literature and International Relations. Her work has always been inspired by her mother (who died early in Thandiswa's life) and the writings of people like Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon, Chinua Achebe and Kwame Ninsin.

Thandiswa's first attempt to get noticed occurred at the Shell Road to Fame talent show but Thandiswa did not even make it to the semi-finals round. She did, however, catch the eye of musician and producer Don Laka, who arranged to include her in a project he was working on. And so she began her career in 1996 with Bongo Maffin, one of the pioneering bands of Kwaito. She became widely recognised as the voice of South Africa's conscious youth, their compositions consistently combining dance floor favourites with thought-provoking lyrics. They were invited to perform all over the world, and shared the stage with musical icons Steve Wonder, the Marley clan, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Chaka Khan, Sean Paul, Steel Pulse and Shaka Azimwe, among others. Their contribution to the South African musical canon earned Bongo Maffin numerous awards, among them South African Music Awards, the Kora All Africa Music Awards, and the Metro FM Music Awards.

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY



AN INTERVIEW WITH  
**CELESTE NTULI**  
COMEDIAN, ACTRESS

Centre for Women and Gender Studies (Nelson Mandela University), in collaboration with the Department of Political and International Studies (Rhodes University), invites you to our online Author Fridays, the September edition

23 SEPTEMBER 2020

## ARTS, HERITAGE & GENDER

13:00 - 14:15

This program will take place on Zoom Webinar and YouTube live stream

Celeste Ntuli is full-time stand-up comedian and an actress. She has come a long way since she was first discovered performing in a marquee in Durban more than nine years ago. She first captured our attention as a top ten contestant on SABC's "So You Think You're Funny" where she came third, this exposure allowing her to take stand-up comedy as a full-time career and she has not looked back since.

She is a brilliant comedian, MC and actress who's featured in films such as *The Jakes* are Missing and *Hard to Get*, and can be seen daily as one of the main characters in one of South Africa's favorite soaps *Isibaya* on Mzansi Magic, with a viewership of over 1 million, where she plays the role of Sipheakazi Zungu (S). The vibrant of the Mpyakale wines, Celeste has also been nominated in the South African Film & Television Awards (SAFTA) as Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress. And more recently, awarded The Simon Sabela Award for Best Supporting Actress.



collaborates with universities and other entities across the region. Both in the public and through scholarly engagements, the Centre and Chair have recorded a productive two years. A CWGS book project, *'Inyathi Ibuzwa kwaba Phambili: African Women's Intellectual Histories'* has been accepted by Sun Media publishers and scheduled for publication in the first term of 2022. This forms part of a four-book series under the *'Inyathi'* Series, planned around the Centre's collaboration with Rhodes University, the University of Pretoria and the University of South Africa. It is based on the contributors' inputs at the August 2020 [Colloquium](#) programme.

In June 2021, the CWGS launched Professor Pumla Gqola's book titled *Miriam Tlali: Writing Freedom* (HSRC Press) and her second book, *Female Fear Factory* (Melinda Ferguson Publishers), launched in October 2021. Several book chapters have been submitted to Wits Press and Jacana Media.

The Director of the CWGS co-edited a special issue with Dr Siphokazi Magadla and Prof Nthabiseng Motsemme titled *30 years of Ifi Amadiume: Male Daughters and Female Husbands* in the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 39(4). This issue follows another special issue published by the *South African Sociological Review* (2020), 50(3-4), co-edited by the Dr Babalwa Magoqwana and Dr Lionel Thaver (UWC), and titled *Higher Education: Power, Practices and Discourses*.

In 2020, the CWGS contributed to the formation of the new Research Chair in African Feminist Imagination, occupied by Prof Pumla Gqola. This Chair was a crowning achievement for the Centre, positioning it as a relevant academic leader in African feminism scholarship.

## Youth and Gender: Continuities, Rupture and Opportunities in Post-Apartheid South Africa

In June, academics, student activists, former student leaders will share perspectives and engage under the theme of **Youth and Gender: Continuities, Ruptures and Opportunities in Post Apartheid South Africa**.

- 05 June 2020 **Dr Gcobani Qambela (UJ)**, *There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle": Xenophobia in the time of decolonisation, eRhini, 2015*
- 12 June 2020 **Xolisa Guzula (UCT)**, *Moving beyond artificial linguistic binaries in the education of African Language speaking children: A case for simultaneous biliteracy development*
- 19 June 2020 **Gogo Londiwe Nompilo Mntambo (RU)**, *Umemulo and Zulu Girlhood – From preservation to variations of ukhlonipha nokufihla*
- 26 June 2020 **Dr Mosa Phadi (SU)**, *Ghanaian Bureau of African Affairs (BAA) and the South African liberation: Additional Data from the BAA Files*

## YANAYA GENDER FILM AND DIALOGUE FESTIVAL

The Centre for Women and Gender Studies (CWGS) in collaboration with Yanaya, the Department of Media and Communications and the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF) invite you to a Film Festival on Zoom Webinar

**DATES: 26–28 NOVEMBER 2020**

**Synopsis:** The three-day film festival has a full programme of film screenings, masterclass, film panel discussions and a workshop. As part of this year's pilot programme, film students from Nelson Mandela University will screen their own films alongside those by more experienced film makers. The work of the CWGS, continues to highlight the necessity of people seeing themselves reflected in all spaces including the academy, arts, and heritage.

Staying true to the mandate of the CWGS – to grow and train our own students to be future leading feminist scholars - Siphokazi Tau (student assistant) published her first and single-authored paper, which is symbolic of the growth and trajectory of the Centre's investment in postgraduate development.

In September 2021, we also celebrated Vuyokazi Gwam, a student assistant at the CWGS, who was selected to be part of a cohort of young politicians from Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe for the Programme for Young Politicians in Africa (PYPA). PYPA has been operating for 11 years in East Africa and nine years in West and Southern Africa. Funded by the Swedish government's SIDA, it aims to develop the capacity of young politicians in Africa. This pleasing development speaks to the sustainability of the gender agenda across the continent.

*In resuscitating African women's biographical and intellectual histories, the CWGS collaborates with universities and other entities across the region.*

# CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION & TRAINING

The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) was established in 2012 at Nelson Mandela University as an engagement centre involved in post-school education and training (PSET). After years of consistent work, CIPSET has grown into a research and engagement centre. It has worked collaboratively with socially marginalised communities surrounding the University and with departments and faculties within the institution to develop progressive approaches and practices in the field of community, adult, and worker education as part of its role in supporting the transformative engagement goals of the University. CIPSET's work develops the capacity and power of young researchers, and community and worker educators, to conduct socially engaged transdisciplinary research and to mobilise, organise and build a radically transformative educational praxis and an enduring platform for the genuine and sustainable transformation of the post-schooling system in South Africa.

## **Post-school Education: Community Adult and Worker Education (CAWE)**

CIPSET and the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT), and the University of Johannesburg, are the joint hosts of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Chair: CAWE. The Chair locates its work within a broader investigation of the role of community and vocational education in addressing the triple challenge of inequality, unemployment and poverty with a particular focus on marginalised communities through the provision



*Harvest day at KwaDwesi Ext by Amandla Collective*

of education and skills development opportunities. Its research interests include curricula and pedagogies for community and vocational education, skills for sustainable livelihoods and adult, vocational and worker education.

The work undertaken by the Chair is distinctive because it speaks to the broader purposes of education and training, not reduced to narrow economic ends or contingent on the labour market requirements of business or solely on its 'entrepreneurial' role. The objectives of the Chair assume that the value and purpose of education and training are much more expansive – linked to a rich tradition of praxis based on social justice, transformation, and democratic

*Young Black Engineers Co-operative members ready for work placement*



citizenship, through capturing human imaginations and unleashing their creativity for a more humane and compassionate society. These objectives allow for addressing the entire nexus of issues in which education is one strand in the tapestry of economic, political, social, and ecological policies and practices in the context of social forces that constitute classed, racialised, and gendered lives.

The economic system has failed to meet the demand for trained labour, despite the many policies, plans, strategies, and summits devoted to the problem of unemployment. These supply-side interventions around education and training are inadequate for addressing the structural constraints of formal labour markets. As the data on employment levels has shown over the last 20 years, these have given rise to a persistent and seemingly incurable situation regarding the prospect for jobs in the formal economy. There are no prospects that these structural constraints on the employment market are likely to change significantly. The structural limits of formal employment are implicated in a global environment where countries like South Africa will be at a disadvantage regarding the availability of investment capital for greater employment. CAWE's research concentrates on an alternative approach to the relationship between the socio-economic and political system and the

**The Centre for Integrated Post-school Education and Training (CIPSET) and the Initiative for Participatory Development (IPD) invite you**

**Join the Webinar  
14 December 2020  
10:30 – 12:00**

**Meeting ID: 922 6407 5586  
Passcode: 057400**

**RSVP: [siyabulelam@mandela.ac.za](mailto:siyabulelam@mandela.ac.za)**



**The solidarity economy and cooperatives**  
with Enver Motala



education and training requirements of such an alternative system. This alternative approach represents a critical point of departure for social transformation in an era of unprecedented economic, social, and ecological crisis.

### Programmatic Work

CIPSET's work focuses on the development of research, engagement, and capacity-building in PSET. Our capacity-building programme includes three components: (a) the development of an Honours programme in CAWE with funding support from DHET; (b) the development of Short Learning Programmes (SLPs); and (c) webinars and workshops with policy-makers, community groups, social movements, and networks.

### CAWE Honours Programme

Nationally, there are currently no Honours programmes based on this Chair's area of interest in any university. The White Paper on PSET refers to the negative impact of the closure of university-based adult education units and the dearth of dedicated research capacity in universities related to areas pertinent to the Chair. It is poorly supported and there is currently no institution in the country where interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary work in this area exists. Hence, there is a great need for programmes that develop the capability necessary to build the knowledge and skills base in this field. Therefore, the work of the Chair has been identified as a significant focus area in government policy and can be aligned to many policies and regulations.

The Honours programme is a new offering with a trans-disciplinary focus, because of the impact of socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors on the remit of workers and community lives. Despite some differences in these domains,

**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY**

**The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) in collaboration with the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW) of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio invites you to participate in its webinar series on Food Systems**



<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>The Struggle of Farmers In India: lessons for South Africa</b>
<b>Speaker</b>	<i>Radha D'Souza is a critical scholar, social justice activist, barrister and writer, from India. She is Professor of Law, Development and Conflict Studies at the University of Westminster in the UK.</i>

**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY**

**The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) in collaboration with the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW) of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio invites you to participate in its webinar series on Food Systems**



<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>Ecofeminism and Food Systems with Susan Nakacwa</b>
<b>Speaker</b>	<i>Susan joined GRAIN in 2017, after working with several regional civil society organisations in Africa. A journalist by training, her passion lies in researching, documenting and making the case for smallholder farming in Africa, which she believes is the best way forward. Based in Kampala, Susan works with GRAIN partners across the continent, especially on issues like seeds, land grabs and trade policy.</i>

there are significant areas of intersection and interface that are critical for creating seamless transitions and developing learning pathways across a wide range of social and human issues. The Honours programme intends to attract students from across the academic disciplines. It will also target educational activists involved in the provision of education in trade unions, community organisations and social movements.

The growing PSET sector requires the development of academic and support programmes for the professional development of policy decision-makers in several government departments, non-governmental organisations, the staff within the community, adult and worker organisations, and lecturers and scholars more generally. Students will be drawn from graduates of the university and college system, and from beyond the borders of South Africa. The Honours programme, together with SLPs, is intended to provide scholars and researchers with academic programmes that advance knowledge and skills in an underdeveloped field of study. These programmes will build on the pre-existing network of collaborations already developed by CIPSET nationally, globally and in the province, and draw on the strengths of many partners here and abroad. CIPSET is currently adding four new SLPs as part of its capacity-building work in CAWE.

### Solidarity Economy Education

With rampant unemployment especially acute in 2021, the need for rethinking and challenging the barriers that affect young people's access to work has become even more urgent. In 2021, CIPSET registered an SLP, '*Advancing the solidarity economy and cooperative livelihoods*' and offered it to a pilot group of unemployed TVET graduates



Sibulelam, a Wells Estate farmer, showcasing produce

The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education & Training (CIPSET)  
in collaboration with the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW) of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio  
present

### Food sovereignty and land - (re)constituting democratic land and food systems



A conversation with Dr Fani Ncapayi, Honorary Research Associate of the Centre for African Studies (CAS) at UCT and the Director of the Cala University Students Association (CALUSA), a rural development NGO based in Cala - Sakhisizwe Local Municipality, Eastern Cape.

- **Saturday 17 October 2020 | 11h00 to 12h30**
- **Meeting ID: 958 5649 7629 Password: 773062**
- **Contact: [siybulelam@mandela.ac.za](mailto:siybulelam@mandela.ac.za) to register for the event**

with electrical and civil engineering backgrounds using the Moodle online platform. The course introduces students to principles and practices associated with the solidarity economy and supports the development of cooperatives. To accompany the SLP, a curriculum framework and facilitators' guide were developed and peer-reviewed. The current SLP participants are also in work placements with Nelson Mandela University and companies involved in social housing construction. The process to register a cooperative of unemployed TVET graduates is underway.

The proto-cooperative's planning process connects the cooperative's mission to providing building and maintenance services through eco-conscious technologies and to share their skills and work with unemployed TVET college graduates and youth, with CIPSET's community-based food systems work. A feasibility study to build an eco-conscious greenhouse using repurposed industrial and agricultural waste material is being undertaken with a proposed pilot site on the Missionvale Campus. It is envisaged that the project can help in exploring pathways to support the collaborative production of food through localised food production hubs connected to greenhouses in communities. Such hubs can stimulate peer learning amongst community food producers and the organisation of other elements of a food system, develop collaboration across different functions of the University, and involve engineering and agricultural students.

### Community Food Systems

CIPSET's solidarity support for community-based food producers developed in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant lockdowns. It formed the core of CIPSET's response to the COVID-19 crisis alongside a range of community-led actions. Working with the Community Convergence Workstream of the Hubs of Convergence, a

conversation started with community-based food producers about the support they needed to develop their productive work, including the continued distribution of seedlings, seed, and gardening tools to 21 food-producing groups across Nelson Mandela Bay. The WhatsApp network connecting these groups generated useful knowledge and peer-to-peer learning about growing food under local conditions. In the process, a growing database of knowledge around community-based food production from an agro-ecological perspective started.

Through this work, a knowledge-action-network is developing through the Food Systems Working Group with other Mandela University researchers interested in community-based food production. In addition, a new collaboration with the Urban Agricultural sub-division of NMBM will facilitate coordinating support to food producers and engage in shared learning.

CIPSET also facilitated a series of eight webinar conversations focusing on alternatives to the dominant food system with colleagues in South Africa, India, Pakistan, and Uganda. A Short Learning Programme on food systems is being developed.

## Publications

CIPSET has produced several articles and reports related to its work on socially engaged scholarship and the solidarity economy. CIPSET's publications include research reports, learning materials, and articles. The aim is to build a body of knowledge about the theory and practice of engagement, the solidarity economy and community food systems. Our publications on the solidarity economy emerged out of a three-year research project, *'Building a student-driven association'*, that brings into existence the Young Black Engineering Cooperative made up of unemployed engineering TVET graduates. This research activity has the potential to contribute to the transformation of curricula in TVET

colleges as sites that prepare students to develop knowledge and practice towards building solidarity economies. CIPSET's document, *'Creating hope: Advancing alternative livelihoods. A curriculum framework for non-formal solidarity economy education'* is a unique contribution towards preparing students, workers and communities for building solidarity economies. Over the next few years, CIPSET hopes that this course and its resource material can support community food systems' work, and that other community cooperative projects can facilitate the establishment of a network of transformative community development initiatives.

CIPSET continues to add to the production of popular education materials. To date, CIPSET has published a total of 18 booklets aimed at educators, workers, community activists and students in the PSET sector. CIPSET staff contributed to a co-authored book chapter that was published as part of the commemoration of the legacy of Paulo Freire. CIPSET also collaborated on a book proposal examining the influence of Paulo Freire's work in South Africa. In addition to this, CIPSET is completing two additional book proposals – one on solidarity economy education and another on community and vocational education. We believe that these publications will contribute significantly to scholarship in the field.

## Conclusion

With limited resources, CIPSET has laboured to produce the work it has done under the prevailing conditions of austerity. If financial resources and staffing were augmented, even more could be achieved towards the critically important goal of producing knowledge that meets the vision of the University to be in service of society. For the next decade, CIPSET plans to contribute to scholarship and knowledge production related to the solidarity economy and PSET. This, we believe, could be supported through the establishment of research chairs and community participatory education programmes.



**The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) in collaboration with the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW) of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio**  
**Invites you to participate in its webinar series on Food Systems**



TOPIC	<b>Agroecology in the time of Drought and Water Scarcity with Prof Raymond Auerbach</b>
Speaker	Raymond Auerbach is Project Leader for the African Organic Farming Systems Research Project, and Principal Investigator (Food Production) for the Centre of Excellence for Food Security (both funded by the SA National Research Foundation), based at Nelson Mandela University (George Campus).



**The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) in collaboration with the Community Convergence Workstream (CCW) of the Engagement & Transformation Portfolio**  
**Invites you to participate in its webinar series on Food Systems**



TOPIC	<b>Solidarity Economy and Food Sovereignty a Case for The Climate Justice Charter</b>
Speaker	Vishwas Salgar is an Associate Professor of International Relations at Wits University, principal investigator for Emancipatory Futures Studies in the Anthropocene and co-founder of the Climate Justice Charter process.

# CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF NON-RACIALISM AND DEMOCRACY

The Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy (CANRAD) provides an intellectual and social space for debate and research on the complexities of post-apartheid South Africa, as we seek to establish a new non-racial and democratic social and economic order. CANRAD has been functioning for 11 years at Nelson Mandela University (launched 23 March 2010), led by Mr Allan Zinn. Our strong Engagement profile both within and beyond the University is twinned with a newly established Research Programme that has achieved a national profile and international linkages since the appointment of Prof Christi van der Westhuizen as Senior Researcher in 2019. CANRAD continues to build strong networks and partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally, to give effect to an important Nelson Mandela University and national mandate in SA today. This report focuses on the Research Programme, which has burgeoned over the reporting period of 2020-2021.

## Research Programme

As per the University's Research Strategy, the CANRAD Research Programme is embedded in an ethos of critical inquiry towards advancing non-racialism and democracy, guided by the institution's Vision 2030 core purpose of being 'in the service of society' towards the co-creation of a socially just world. Framed by the Institutional Research Themes (IRTs) of 'Social Justice and Democracy' and 'Origins, Culture, Heritage and Memory', the Research Programme critically interrogates the state of South Africa's democracy for almost three decades since the first democratic election. South Africa's history is one in which difference was weaponised and wielded to dehumanise people in the pursuit of racialised, gendered and classed extraction and distribution of material resources. Therefore, the Research Programme provides analysis to deepen understanding of current social problems, drawing on the latest scholarship on democracy, difference, and identity.

In particular, the programme hones in on interrogating new developments that re-entrench ethno-racial colonialities, to explore the possibilities for new imaginaries of humanising, with an emphasis on South Africa and Africa. This is in pursuit of Nelson Mandela University's Vision 2030, which defines the African university as committed to combating racism, among other forms of prejudice and discrimination. The pathologisation of 'all that is Africa and African' that permeates our dominant discourses is underlined in Vision 2030 as a central challenge that the Research Programme is confronting in its work.

In advancing inter-institutional collaborations and global and local impact, the following Honorary and Adjunct Professors were appointed in May 2020, receiving media publicity in *The Herald*, *Dispatch* and on Algoa FM:

- Honorary: Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (Stellenbosch University, SA), Mumbi Mwangi (St Cloud University, USA), Josephine Ahikire (Makerere University, Uganda)
- Adjunct: Karen Zoid (award-winning musician, producer, and television host)

Publications include all CANRAD staff research outputs encompassing three primary areas: publications, colloquia, and postgraduate students. During 2020 and 2021, CANRAD researchers published in several accredited publications. Three articles were published in the journals *a/b Autobiography Studies*, *Gender and Behaviour* and *African Journal of Information and Communication*, addressing Afrikaner whiteness at the intersections of sexuality and gender; gender, sexuality and religion; and Nigerian youth, social media and COVID-19 misinformation. Four accredited book chapters tackle questions of apartheid legacies in the Afrikaans media, sexuality and the epistemic violence of whiteness, and the history of anti-apartheid resistance in the figure of George Botha. A full-length book by G Mayende,



titled *The Land and Agrarian Question: The First Frontier of Decolonisation in South Africa* (Skotaville Publishers), was published in 2021 under CANRAD's auspices. CANRAD Head of Research Prof Christi van der Westhuizen was also confirmed as co-editor of the *Routledge International Handbook on Critical Studies in Whiteness*.

### Programmatic Work

Colloquia are hosted to create platforms for thinking that deepens a culture of scholarship as an intellectual resource base and contributes to the transformation of institutional culture and curriculum reform, while providing opportunities for students to develop their academic skills. The primary research output was an international interdisciplinary conference to mark CANRAD's 10th anniversary, titled '*The state we're in: Democracy's Fractures, Fixes and Futures*', held from 7 to 10 September 2021.

In the face of anti-democratic forces rising globally, and mindful of South Africa as a country only recently transitioned to democracy after centuries of anti-colonial struggles, the conference created a space for thinking through democracy towards its promise of equality, freedom, accountability and human dignity. A call for papers drew 60 speakers who presented during 18 sessions over four days, co-hosted with

the Office of the DVC: Engagement & Transformation and the Faculty of Humanities, with the Head of Research as programme director. The online aspect of the conference, due to COVID-19, maximised reach: 328 delegates were in attendance from 19 countries and 45 universities or organisations.

Democracy's possible futures were discussed in relation to constitutionalism, nationalism, and neoliberalism; democratic institutions, laws, and accountability; party politics and political representation; the developmental state; decolonisation of democracy; indigeneity and traditionalism; African feminism; queer activism; land and rural struggles; racial identities and education and social justice. The sessions are available for watching on the CANRAD website, YouTube channel and Facebook page. An edited volume with selected papers is due to appear in 2022. The conference made a significant contribution to the ETPs key performance area of cultivating a culture of scholarship. It also contributed to the Vision 2030 focus on internationalisation. Local and global linkages were built through collaborations with internal departments and entities, and other universities and external organisations.

While the conference addressed the CANRAD focus area of democracy, a high-level event was hosted to address its other focus area of race and racism. On 25 August 2021, a webinar was hosted with the top leadership of the University to mark '*The 20th Anniversary of the UN World Conference Against Racism: Challenges and Advances in the Global Fight Against Racism*'. The speakers were Ambassador Nozipho January-Bardill, Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Prof Sibongile Muthwa and Prof André Keet in conversation with Dr Barney Pityana and Prof Shirley Anne Tate, conceptualised and moderated by Prof Christi van der Westhuizen.

The Research Programme's academic seminar series was taken online in May 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a total of 15 academic webinars and one face-to-face seminar presented in 2020 and 2021. Topics include the socio-political implications of COVID-19; '1820 Unsettled' to critically interrogate two centuries since the arrival of British settlers; the gendering of precarity, migrant labour and other processes; apartheid continuities and racial identification; lockdown regulations and authoritarianism; and constitutionalism. Speakers hosted include Dr Mandisi Majavu, Prof Barney Pityana, Dr Leon Wessels,

## AFRICA WEEK SERIES 2021

Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy Webinar:

### "AFRIKA'S STOLEN ARTEFACTS AND THE RESTORATION OF OUR HERITAGE"

As part of the over one thousand years of Arab and European invasion of Afrika, together with the bodies of Afrikans, hundreds of thousands of Afrika's artefacts were looted and taken to various parts of the Arab and European world. The looting of these artefacts must be seen as part of the grand project of colonial pillaging of Afrika, and the enrichment of both the Arab world and Europe, at the expense of Afrika. To correct this historical wrong and give impetus to Afrika's rebirth, it is important that the return of Afrika's stolen artefacts forms part of the discourse of Afrika's decolonisation in 21st century.



<b>Facilitator:</b>	<b>Speaker:</b>	<b>Speaker:</b>
<b>Sethu Nguna</b>	<b>Napo Masheane</b>	<b>Vuyisile Mshudulu</b>
Centre for Sustainable and Integrated Rural Development at the University of Zululand	Writer and Theatre Specialist	Writer and Black Power Activist

Prof Howard Phillips, Dr Lulamile Hanabe, Prof Enaleen Draai, Prof Andries Bezuidenhout and Dr Sandla Nomvete. Co-hosts include Rhodes University's Department of Political Studies and the following entities at Mandela University: the Faculty of Law; the departments of Sociology and Anthropology, and Public Management and Leadership; SARChI Chair in Identities and Social Cohesion in Africa; and the HoC and COVID-19 CCW. Regarding academic conferencing, the research programme presented papers at four international conferences in 2020 and 2021 in India, Netherlands, Britain, Kenya, and South Africa.

### Postgraduate output

The Research Programme recruited two postdoctoral research fellows, Dr Olutobi Akingbade and Dr Marc Röntsch, with the latter co-hosted by the Music Department. To contribute to the University's graduate output and transformation goals, the Head of Research currently supervises seven doctoral and master's students. These postgraduate studies are all transdisciplinary, and all have a focus on one or more of the following transformation-related topics: gender, racial, economic and/or social justice. The Doctoral cohort includes a co-supervision arrangement with Bath University in Britain, with Prof Enaleen Draai from the Department of Public Management and Leadership undertaking her DBA studies there. Two Master's students were recruited to the Research Programme to conduct research on the socio-political implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Developmental opportunities have been made available to master's interns in various forms, including Simphiwe Zondani co-authoring a chapter with Prof Christi van der Westhuizen on the University focus area of 'revitalising the humanities', which was also co-presented as a paper at an international conference. Postdoctoral fellow Dr Olutobi Akingbade leads the monthly reading group for students attached to the programme, intending to provide a peer-to-peer supportive space, and to engage with difficult texts and challenges of the postgraduate experience.

### Media, public engagement and academic citizenship

In advancing and projecting CANRAD's vision, mission and aims to national and global publics, the Head of Research has written analytical articles and columns for Al-Jazeera, The Conversation, News24, and Netwerk24. Her 2014 book, *Working Democracy: Perspectives on South Africa's Parliament at 20 Years* was referenced during the evidence given by President Cyril Ramaphosa before the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture in May 2021, leading



**Facilitator**  
Siphokazi Tau  
Centre for Women and Gender Studies, Nelson Mandela University

**Speaker**  
Dr Sizwe Mpofo-Walsh  
South African author, scholar, media innovator and musician.

**Respondent**  
Pedro Mzileni  
International Office, Nelson Mandela University

**THE NEW APARTHEID**  
SIZWE MPOFU-WALSH  
"Apartheid did not die; it was privatised"

to a request for an article by *BusinessLive/Business Day*. Prof Christi van der Westhuizen has also been interviewed by local and international outlets, including radio and TV stations (Newzroom Afrika, Morning Live, eNCA News, Kyknet, SAfm Morning show, RSG, Radio Islam, Radio Pulpit, SmileFM, 702), online media (NPO-Dutch national broadcaster) and for US podcasts (Religion of Sport; Right Rising) and South African podcasts (Fearless and Unfiltered; Dink & Doen). She hosts her own podcast (Nuusknaars) on Litnet, an academic and literary portal. She was invited to contribute to public discussions and analyses, including at the Thabo Mbeki African School of Public and International Affairs (Unisa), Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (law firm) public debate, Netwerk24 webinars, South African Book Fair, Woordfees at Stellenbosch University (as moderator and debater), and Aardklop festival at North-West University. Prof Christi van der Westhuizen serves as editor on international journals and the NRF's adjudication panel for funding for the Humanities and Social Sciences for the period 2019/2020 to 2022/2023, and as external examiner for several universities.

### Engagement Programme

The Engagement Programme, under the leadership of Mr Sonwabo Stuurman, strategically facilitates the integration of scholarship and transformative action relating to the advancement of non-racialism and democracy. Its focus is on student and youth development as an opportunity for constructive dialogue and for sharing information and best practices, generating institutional horizontal and triangular cooperation, and contributing to new programmes by the University and broader society. CANRAD, in partnership

with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and local NGO, UNAKO, conducted workshops among township youth on:

- Youth unemployment and livelihoods
- Substance abuse, HIV prevalence and unwanted pregnancies
- Gender-based and sexual violence

Youth Dialogues were funded by KAS on the following topics:

- 'Impact of COVID-19 on Youth: Opportunities and Challenges';
- 'Youth Activism and Youth Agency in a Time of Crisis: Insights from South Africa Higher Education'; and
- 'How Free are We: Exploring Democracy in South Africa'

The CANRAD Living History Series with Prof Raymond Suttner galvanised a new interest in History Studies at Nelson Mandela University. Our collaboration with Prof Nomalanga Mkhize, Head of the Department of History and Politics, assists in enlivening the humanities space as we enable an understanding of praxis by promoting inter-generational debate and discussion. We continue to utilise various Faculty members in our programming, especially from the Faculties of Arts, Law, Education, and the Department of Development Studies.

The Engagement Programme is also tasked with organising the University's themed institutional periods, including Africa Week and Diversity Month. CANRAD Honorary Professor Josephine Ahikire delivered the annual Africa Week lecture in 2020 titled 'On Staying Home and the Woman subject in the COVID-19 Pandemic'. During Africa Week, another seminar with Ms Zandi Radebe and Mr Veli Mbele, titled '*Africa and the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic: what are the implications for the Pan Africanist Project?*' garnered critical acclaim. In 2020, our VC, Prof Sibongile Muthwa, welcomed Prof Ibbo Mandaza of the University of Zimbabwe to deliver the 10th Steve Bantu Biko Memorial Lecture. This is a joint venture between Nelson Mandela University and partner AZAPO. Prof Mandaza delivered a virtual address titled 'Breaking the barriers of neo-colonialism to restore true humanity and dignity'. Prof Simphiwe Sesanti from UWC proved a spirited respondent. In 2021, Africa Week featured a webinar on the African way of knowing and the quest for cognitive sovereignty, co-hosted with the Centre for Philosophy in Africa, and another webinar facilitated by Sethu Nguna from the University of Zululand. Diversity Month included the launch of Dr Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh's book, *The New Apartheid in South Africa*.

In partnership with UNAKO, Lovelife and the VW SA Community Trust, the following workshop was hosted with schools in impoverished communities, in order to foster leadership: '*Opportunities and Innovation*'. The Common Purpose Programme supports young leaders by:

- Re-energising youth leadership by joining a diverse, cross-sector peer group;
- Finding the inspiration young people have been looking for;
- Learning how to adapt to new responsibilities and rapid change; and
- Discovering how to lead people through tough times and create a wider impact

### Conclusion

CANRAD's development of its research capacity since 2019 has provided a renewed basis for its vision to lead the advancement of non-racialism and democracy within the University and broader society. The centre has extended its scholarship to reach national and global audiences through multiple publications, including an international handbook, an international conference, and numerous webinars, academic conference presentations, postgraduate supervision, postdoctoral research, and national and international media engagement. These endeavours, along with the continued Engagement Programme work, have positioned the Centre to become a leading voice in advancing democracy and resisting racism, both locally and globally.



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

THE HERALD AND NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY WILL HOST A COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON THE RENAMING OF PORT ELIZABETH, ITS AIRPORT AND UITENHAGE.

WHEN:

31 MARCH 2021

TIME:

11:00

FACILITATOR:

PROF CHRISTI VAN DER WESTHUIZEN

SPEAKERS:

NOKUZOLA MNDENDE, KHENSANI MALULEKE, MKHUSELI JACK, CHRISTIAN MARTIN



Prof Christi van der Westhuizen  
CANRAD,  
Nelson Mandela  
University



Nokuzola Mndende  
Adjunct Prof, Dept  
of Sociology &  
Anthropology, Nelson  
Mandela University



Khensani Maluleke  
Chairperson of South  
African Geographical  
Names Council



Mkhuseli Jack  
Activist,  
Businessman  
& Politician



Christian Martin  
Khoi & San  
Activist

Register and join this free webinar at: [www.quicklink.co.za/dialogue-7](http://www.quicklink.co.za/dialogue-7)



# CHAIR: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYABILITY & EMPOWERMENT

The Chair: Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment (CYUEE) seeks to develop a scholarly community engaged in better understanding the education and training needs of youth who make their livelihoods (or parts thereof) working in the informal sector. The aim is to expand scholarship in the area through undertaking third-stream funded research projects in skills (including TVET) and livelihoods, postgraduate supervision, and publication, expanding and converging scholarship and building strategic partnerships with communities and South African and international scholars. The task is to hold together scholarship that is both critique and reconstruction by exposing the limitations of instrumental and technicist approaches to skills development, while simultaneously advancing the possibilities for alternate and more equitable realities.

## Research on skills (including TVET) and livelihoods

The dominant consensus of the education-to-work paradigm is underpinned by a 'pathways' metaphor that stubbornly, and despite all evidence to the contrary, insists on understanding work as youth transition into the formal labour market. It does this despite employment gains post-Apartheid (outside of the public sector) having been in either the informal sector or in micro-enterprises, notwithstanding one in five South Africans making their livelihoods in the informal sector and despite more than half of South Africa's youth unemployed and unlikely to gain access to the formal sector. The result is that other than small bodies of work located in various disciplinary patches, scholarship on the education and training needs of the informal and social economies has largely been ignored.

Skills within the CYUEE are not understood in terms of human capital, nor instrumental framings. Instead, skills are understood as valuable not only for accessing and participating in work, but also advancing the agency that communities need to "rethink their reality in and out of work, modify it, and make it more suitable to their desired development scenario" (Szekely, 2019, p. 413). Carswell & De Neve (2018) note that labour agency has been understood in terms of organised worker resistance in the formal sector but has been unresearched when it comes to the informal



## Re-imagining TVET:

## The Implications of Covid-19

### Proceedings of the Webinar Series

economy and the social economy. This exposes the critical role that education and training play, not only in expanding access to meaningful skills, but also in expanding the agency to shape and create opportunities for meaningful work. The work of the CYUEE builds on this powerful call by opening dialogue, engagements, and scholarly thinking on the skills (including TVET) needs of the informal sector.

In 2020, the CYUEE held the *TVET Webinar Series: Re-imagining TVET*. The series was undertaken in partnership with the Faculty of Education and eight other partner organisations, including the DHET, IPSS (from UWC), REAL (from Wits), the HSRC (Education and Economy Division), the Eastern Cape TVET Colleges Research Roundtable and Nottingham University. The series coalesced the TVET

colleges community and included discussion on the possibilities for TVET to better respond to the skills needs of the formal economy, the informal economy, and the social economy. Building a deeper understanding of the capacities and demand for TVET is the DHET TVET Colleges Research Programme (TVET-RP), which is funded by the National Skills Fund and led by Professor Joy Papier from IPSS at UWC. The CYUEE is one of eight partners working on the TVET-RP and is responsible for three components of this large scale TVET research programme. The components are: (i) Component 3.1: Factors affecting the academic performance of TVET college students, (ii) Component 4.1: Student Demand for TVET Colleges and (iii) Component 3.2: The under-utilisation of NSFAS in the TVET sector and the implications of NSFAS for poor students.

Across all three components is a focus on the experience of marginalised youth in South African TVET colleges, which draws on Powell and McGrath's (2019) work on skills and human development, and which highlights the importance of the student voice and experience. The TVET-RP is ongoing (2019-2023) and has, inter alia, found that student demand for TVET colleges far exceeds the capped enrolment totals allowed by DHET. It also found that NSFAS, despite expanding enrolment access, is the single greatest institutional and systemic factor that increases the multidimensional poverties that affect TVET students.

The TVET-RP and the *TVET Webinar Series: Reimagining TVET* provided a deeper understanding of the supply-side of the skills-to-work equation. Building a deeper understanding

of the demand side was supported through the *merSETA Lived Livelihoods Research Study* (hereafter called the '*Lived Livelihoods Study*'). The '*Lived Livelihoods Study*' sought to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of young people who make their livelihood (or part thereof) in engineering-related areas in the informal economy. It focused on the way(s) in which education and training expanded or restrained livelihood possibilities. As a panel study, it drew on interviews undertaken longitudinally with 40 young people over a two-year period. The findings opened new insights into the ways in which skills are put to work in the informal sector. The reports also served to challenge, in important and powerful ways, some of the key assumptions that underpin South African skills development policies.

The merSETA COVID-19 Youth Voices project, an extension of the merSETA Lived Livelihoods Project, sought, through a series of interviews with urban township youth, to understand the ways in which COVID-19 was affecting working, living, and learning (Grainger & Spours, 2018). The dialogues provided incredible depth to our understanding of: (i) how skills can better support urban township youth, (ii) the ways in which the pandemic affected young people and (iii) the ways in which policy can intervene and better support youth living in urban townships.

### **Expanding scholarship on skills (including TVET) and livelihoods**

Scholarship on skills and livelihoods has, since the 1980s, dwindled, with scholars claiming that the theoretical, methodological, and epistemological complexities make dealing with the subject outside of cross-disciplinary



*The 'Lived Livelihoods Study' sought to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of young people who make their livelihood in engineering-related areas in the informal economy.*

frameworks challenging, if not impossible. Since then, the national debate on education-to-work transitions has mostly been dominated by economists and, worryingly, focused solely on the pathway from education to the formal economy. Notwithstanding these challenges, the work of the CYUEE has put squarely on the table the importance of education and training responding to the needs of youth who make their livelihoods in the informal economy. In opposition to the apathy, silence, and scholarly neglect of this area of work, the scholarship of the CYUEE has highlighted the social justice imperative of responding to the skills needs of over two billion people globally who work in the informal economy.

This has led to a recent NIHSS award for the project, titled, 'Putting Skills to Work: Skills, Livelihoods and the Informal Sector'. The project aims to expand scholarship by bringing together scholars working in this area to discern and develop theoretical lenses that can better inform scholarship on skills and livelihoods earned in the informal economy.

#### Programmatic work

The CYUEE, in partnership with the Faculty of Education (FoE) and the Centre for Integrated Post School Education and Training (CIPSET), led the first Nelson Mandela University TVET Convergence Workshop in February 2021. The workshop was attended by over 60 people drawn from multiple schools and faculties and included fifteen presentations from colleagues, who offered critically important, innovative, and value-adding work in TVET-related areas. The Nelson Mandela University TVET Convergence Steering Committee was established at the workshop. Led by the CYUEE, the Steering Committee initially consisted of the FoE and CIPSET but has recently

been extended to include the Faculty of Engineering. A report capturing the range of work presented at the workshop highlights Nelson Mandela University's competitive edge in TVET.

As part of the Nelson Mandela University TVET Convergence Workshop, postgraduate students working in a TVET-related area at the University were identified. The study topics of 15 postgraduate students working in TVET-related areas were presented. It was encouraging to note that seven of the 15 students, and three of the four doctoral students enrolled at Nelson Mandela University, were supervised by the CYUEE. These emerging scholars are supported within a programme that includes regular PG TVET/Livelihoods Student Roundtable Workshops and annual conference attendance.

To support the supervision of postgraduate students working in TVET-related areas and to address Papier and McGrath's (2020) concerns with the low quality of theses being produced in TVET, the DHET awarded a bursary fund to the CYUEE. The bursary fund is to cover the registration and tuition fees of postgraduate students supervised by the Chair and allows the Chair to fund full-time and part-time students, including TVET lecturers.

The CYUEE has been hosting (together with the

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY



## LIVED LIVELIHOODS: EDUCATION ADVANCING ENTREPRENEURIAL LIVELIHOODS STUDY

### HEADLINE REPORT



**Research Chair: Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment**

20 September 2020

FoE) Dr Francis Muronda as the postdoctoral scholar working in educational economics. His scholarship seeks to better understand the relationship between wellbeing, livelihoods, and educational attainment.

Two books were produced during this period: one co-authored and the second an edited section of the multi-volume Springer Handbook of Vocational Education and Training. In addition, two refereed co-authored journal articles were produced. To advance the scholarly community working in the area, over twenty reviews of academic articles for journals have been undertaken, one NRF rating has been completed, three theses examined (two master's and one PhD), two keynote addresses delivered and 8 conference and webinar presentations delivered. In addition, many research reports (over 15) linked to the research projects discussed above were produced.

A Visiting Professor, Professor Simon McGrath from Nottingham University, has been appointed and two research associates, Dr Adam Cooper from the HSRC and Dr Trent Brown (underway) from the University of Melbourne.

The Chair is a member of Nottingham University's UNEVOC centre and has been appointed as an Honorary Visiting Professor to the School of Education at Nottingham University. The Chair is also part of the editorial committee for the *Journal of Vocational Adult and Community Education and Training* (JOVACET).

## Engagements

Engagement and Transformation are embedded in the

work approach of the CYUEE. The Engagement & Transformation Portfolio (ETP) has elected to work within a broad notion of 'community'. In terms of the work of the CYUEE, broadly speaking, there are three communities with whom we work. On one hand, there are skills development and TVET policy-makers and implementers, and on the other are those served by the system (students and youth). Cutting across these two groups are the communities of scholars both within and external to the University (nationally, internationally and on the African continent) who work in related areas. During 2020, the engagement work of the CYUEE involved all three communities.

## Conclusion

The programmatic work of the CYUEE has focused on building scholarship in the space of skills (including TVET) and livelihoods. This has involved undertaking the third-stream funded research projects discussed above. It has also involved growing scholarship in the field through supervising postgraduate students, producing and supporting academic publications, reviewing and examining journal articles and theses and sharing the work produced at conferences and seminars. Engaged scholarship is key to the approach, which has seen the CYUEE bringing together dialogues between scholars working in skills and livelihoods, as well as the TVET colleges. The production of two key volumes (one edited), the engagements and the research undertaken have assisted in positioning Nelson Mandela University as a leader in the area of skills and development.

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY

## TVET CONVERGENCE WORKSHOP

### THE DVC ENGAGEMENT & TRANSFORMATION

invites

you to attend the first Nelson Mandela University TVET convergence workshop

The workshop is led by the Research Chair: Youth Unemployment, Employability and Empowerment in partnership with the Faculty of Education & the Centre for Integrated Post School Education and Training. It aims to develop a TVET Working Group at Nelson Mandela University that is constituted of colleagues working in TVET related areas across our Faculties, Schools, management and research and engagement entities. The workshop will provide an opportunity for colleagues to meet and to share the work that they are doing in the TVET space.

Date: 04 February 2021

Time: 10:00 AM to 13:00 PM

RSVP by 15 DECEMBER 2020 by clicking the link and providing the information requested:

<https://bit.ly/3pPHATZ>

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY

### INVITATION WEBINAR SERIES

#### Re-Imagining TVET: The Implications of COVID-19

A partnership between universities, TVET colleges, the Departments of Higher Education and Training and Science and Technology and research enterprises.

11 Sept	EC TVET - RRT	Positioning TVET colleges during the pandemic
02 Oct	DHET	Remote Teaching and Learning at TVET colleges: A COVID-19 challenge
23 Oct	IPSS	Teaching and Learning in a time of Social Distancing – what do TVET colleges need to ensure learner success?
13 Nov	NMU	The future of work and the implications for South African TVET colleges
27 Nov	REAL	Building back a responsive, flexible and agile TVET sector – Why occupation as a frame of analysis for VET?
04 Dec	HSRC	"Markets on the margins": TVET, COVID and the informal economy in South Africa
10 Dec	University of Nottingham	TVET and COVID-19: international perspectives

# HIV & AIDS RESEARCH UNIT

The Unit's mandate is to be a leading HIV & AIDS Research Unit that is community- and research-driven in order to harness the enthusiasm and commitment of the community through trustworthy educational resources, publications, and advocacy. This will lead to positive social behavioural change regarding the perceptions, discrimination, and stigma related to HIV & AIDS, and related challenges in South Africa.

The HAU piloted a Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices (KABP) activity during the COVID-19 lockdown with the South African Police Service (SAPS). The Unit has been navigating new models of engaging Civil Society Organisations in line with the Institutional Engagement and Transformation agenda.

The Unit wrote and submitted a proposal to the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) for funding. This is a collaboration project for three countries, namely South Africa, Ghana, and Botswana. The title of the proposal was *'Gendered Challenges for Equal Access to Healthcare Services in Resource-limited Settings: A case of Amathole District Municipality, Eastern Cape'*. The



project aim to catalyse and open up new avenues of Humanities and Social Science (HSS) and assist in the establishment of a network of researchers across universities in South Africa and the Global South as well as support academics and researchers with the production of research outputs. These projects ought to produce benefits for research in the higher education system and, indeed, for society as a whole. These projects are also intended to meet the institution's strategic objectives of promoting the integrity, reputation, and recognition of the HSS within the higher education community, the science and technology community, and society. The NIHSS funding is awarded for the following academic activities:

- Publication of books, journals, and creative outputs
- Opportunities for international collaborations within Africa and the BRICS
- Hosting of conferences, annual general meetings, workshops, seminars, dialogues, colloquia, and similar academic events

## Programmatic Work

The Unit has sessions with Civil Society Organisations every two weeks, which have enabled the Unit to co-construct Education and Advocacy in GBV and HIV & AIDS in line with the Engagement and Transformation agenda. This resulted in the creation of posters and media messaging for community outreach appropriate for the Eastern Cape, with the possibility of a national campaign. The Unit also hosted a webinar with panellists including the Civil Society



OUT: Health and Engagement Organisation receiving masks and pamphlets

Organisations, CEOs who work with HIV & AIDS daily, and related challenges such as drug abuse, alcohol abuse, abused women and children, abused men, LGBTIQ+, and Gender-Based Violence.

### Learning and Teaching

Aside from supervision of masters and PhD students, the Unit has also created space for learning and teaching for Civil Society Organisations, specifically for GBV capacity-building during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Unit has

written papers on the challenges faced by adolescents born HIV+, and the people (adults) living with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adding to this, the Unit has contributed a paper on SAPS KAPB GBV during COVID-19 from the data collected during the lockdown. Lastly, the HIV & AIDS Research Unit was successfully granted a post-doctoral fellow through the Nelson Mandela University Council.

### Engagement Highlights:

Development of a website with 66 templates to support ECD practitioners and NGOs to initiate and implement community-based HIV prevention programmes ([www.sakhaesethu.com](http://www.sakhaesethu.com)).

As part of a PWC financial and systems audit and the UNICEF Nelson Mandela University collaboration, the HIV Research Unit received a positive audit.

Completed iMAP study: Improve malnutrition, morbidity, and mortality in pre-school children in the Eastern and Northern Cape.

Inter-collaborative research project with Eastern Cape Liquor Board including Policy formulation; an MoU has been submitted to the Nelson Mandela University Legal Services.

Successfully granted a postdoctoral fellow through the Nelson Mandela University Council.

The Unit submitted a proposal to the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) for funding. The title of the proposal was Gendered Challenges for Equal Access to Healthcare Services in Resource-limited Settings: A case of Amathole District Municipality, Eastern Cape.

Collaboration with other institutions : (1) the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal with regard to external examinations of Masters, PhDs, and Independent Research Projects; (2) Stellenbosch University, collaborated in HIV and nutrition, HIV and Care projects, and HIV and Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Granted Ethical Clearance through the Ethics Committee for a National study for SAPS KAPB GBV: South African Police Services Research Department and Nelson Mandela University Research and Capacity Development.

Ethical Clearance from SAPS to do research and Capacity-Building at the national level.

Produced papers on SAPS KAPB GBV during COVID-19 from the data collected during the lockdown and submitted for publication to various South African Higher Education Accredited Journals.

With the generous assistance of the ETP, the HIV & AIDS Research Unit distributed masks and pamphlets that were written in three languages – English, Afrikaans and IsiXhosa – to Civil Society Organisations such as Yethu, DOXA, Phila Ndoda, and OUT-Health Engagement.

MoU signed with Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA).

## Engagement

The HIV & AIDS Research Unit engaged the following:

Level of Engagement	Organisations / Departments / Councils
Civil Society Organisations	• Yethu (NGO for abused women and children, alcohol, and drug abuse)
	• OUT-Engagement Health
	• Paphamani Crisis Centre
	• DOXA
	• Phila Ndoda
	• Yokhuselo
Government Departments	• Eastern Cape Liquor Board (ECLB) – MoU and funding proposal
	• Eastern Cape AIDS Council (ECAC) – support for EC HIV & AIDS projects
	• South African Police Services (SAPS) GBV research and capacity-building
	• Yokhuselo construction of SLPs on GBV
	• Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (SASSETA) – MoU
Private Organisations	• Automotive Industry Development Co-operation (AIDC) – HIV & AIDS stigma and GBV amongst workers discussions
	• Skills Factory – co-construction of GBV programmes

## Sustainability and the future

With regard to sustainability, the Unit's engagement speaks to long-term collaborations. Its initial thinking was to collaborate with at least one Civil Society Organisation. However, the Unit engaged with organisations and government departments in order to be connected with a number of civil society organisations and government departments that deal with GBV victims, crisis centres, LGBTI+, and organisations of men. Thus, the Unit held inclusive and comprehensive discussions every fortnight. The knowledge gained will be included in enhancing the formulation of SLPs on GBV that will be used for Capacity Building with the Front-Liners and Civil Society Organisations. This model of engagement of 'don't talk about us without us' has made the initiative more engaging and leads to transformation. The Unit's circle of influence has widened with the negative impacts of HIV & AIDS as well as the

dual pandemic of COVID-19 and GBV. The Unit will engage with at least one more funding organisation to secure sufficient research and capacity-building funds to achieve social behavioural change regarding the perceptions, discrimination and stigma related to HIV & AIDS, and the negative impact of GBV and COVID-19 in South Africa. As such, the Unit wrote a collaborative proposal for funding and submitted it to the Eastern Cape Liquor Board. The faculties involved are Faculty of Health, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences and Anthropology, as well as the Department of Psychology and Industrial Psychology. The Unit's thinking is that the challenges related to alcohol abuse require an integrated approach to successfully change social behaviour.

# TRANSDISCIPLINARY INSTITUTE FOR MANDELA STUDIES

The Transdisciplinary Institute for Mandela Studies (TIMS) is steadily taking shape, with several legal documents in place to foster the institutional partnership between Nelson Mandela University and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. This partnership, among others, is located within the overarching Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Foundation and the University. The purpose of this MoU is to define the basis for collaboration between the University and the Foundation in the areas of social justice advocacy, scholarship, and research, as well as human rights-related projects.

Nelson Mandela University Vice-Chancellor Professor Sibongile Muthwa and Nelson Mandela Foundation Chief Executive Mr Sello Hatang finalised the MoU between these two eponymous institutions at a signing ceremony held on 3 February 2020. This significant event took place on South Campus, at the Nelson Mandela Bench, and was attended by staff and students from the University, by delegates from the Foundation and the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, and by members of the press.

## The Politics and Cultures of Naming Seminar Report and Recording now available

The seminar held in August earlier this year aimed to explore the academic expression of Mandela, and the broader question of how naming cultures work. The seminar was facilitated by Professor Verne Harris, with a formal introduction by Professor Sibongile Muthwa, and featured a provocative panel discussion by Professor Crain Soudien, Ms Judy Sikuza (CEO, Mandela Rhodes Foundation) and Mr Sello Hatang (CEO, Nelson Mandela Foundation).

### ***"Is there an essence to Mandela? Which Mandela?"***

This discussion builds on the workshop presented in April which sought to engage with current Mandela-related Scholarship, exploring fresh lines of inquiry, and distilling critical questions which would be helpful for the processes related to configuring Critical Mandela Studies and informing Nelson Mandela University's identity and posture.

***"If the institution is to be reflective of Mandela, and critical, what would such critique look like?"***

- **Report link:** <https://tinyurl.com/TIMS-August-Seminar-Report>
- **Recording link:** <https://tinyurl.com/TIMS-August-Seminar-Recording>

***These national and international collaborators will continue to provide collective involvement that will achieve growth towards TIMS's goals.***

## Programmatic work

On 9 July 2020, CrSHET, in collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, hosted the webinar "(Re)Assessing Mandela". The purpose of the webinar was to engage with current Mandela-related scholarship, identify and explore fresh lines of enquiry, and distil critical questions that would be helpful in the process of creating appropriate content for TIMS. Specifically, the webinar was organised around the special issue of the *Journal of Southern African Studies (JSAS)*, published late in 2019, with the theme "Reassessing Mandela". This issue included ten articles by prominent scholars on Nelson Mandela historiography. The webinar speakers, Professors Shireen Hassim and Xolela Mangcu, spoke about their own contributions to the special issue and offered provocations to initiate the webinar deliberations. Over 120 people from across the globe registered for the webinar, including the editors of this issue, Professors Colin Bundy and William Beinart, as well as their colleague from Oxford University, Professor Elleke Boehmer, who also contributed to this journal edition. The video recording of the webinar is available on the [TIMS website](#) and on [CrSHET's YouTube channel](#).

As a follow-up to the "(Re)Assessing Mandela" webinar held in 2020, a workshop was held on 13 April 2021. This workshop built on the lines of enquiry that emerged from the webinar and revisited the proposed research focus areas for TIMS. Conversations on shaping the expressions of the meanings of Mandela within the University were

initiated. Key scholars based at Nelson Mandela University were among the 27 participants discussing the posture and identity of the University. A report of the workshop is available [here](#).

The [second webinar](#) of 2021, held on 27 August 2021, facilitated discussions on the politics and cultures of naming institutions. External and internal participants included key scholars based at Nelson Mandela University and other institutions. A [recording](#) of the webinar, as well as a full [report](#) on the webinar, is available.

A panel discussion has been planned for February 2022, the objective of which will be to open a discussion about how a signifying theme or an idea – like a name – is given academic expression. Plans to launch strong media campaigns are also underway, in order to ignite conversations on this topic ahead of time.

All news and programmatic information relating to TIMS can be found on the [website](#), which is updated regularly. On the homepage, one can easily browse the news section, access the blog, and find email contact details for the Institute.

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY



The Engagement and Transformation Portfolio (ETP) invites you to join the discussion on the name **Mandela**, as part of its Critical Mandela Scholarship project.

ETP brings the conversation to you

This joint activity between the Nelson Mandela University and the Nelson Mandela Foundation seeks to dig deeper into the Mandela name that both of these institutions carry. Here we aim to be critical of naming cultures and how they work. From this, we seek to engage with the naming of the Mandela University at a scholarly level, to contribute to the academic and social identity of the University.

Tell us what the name Mandela means for you

Over the next few months, we will be asking **5 key questions** that aim to engage with this theme. Your participation gives you the opportunity to build your library: you could bring home one of several book publications on Higher Education.

Follow us on our social media platforms to find out more about how to engage with these crucial questions and share your voice on the name **Mandela**.



**TIMS has demonstrated its potential in driving Mandela scholarship within and outside the University.**

### Publications

In 2020, Professor Harris, together with his colleague and Chief Executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, Mr Sello Hatang, released their book entitled *I Know this to be True about Nelson Mandela* (2020). Furthermore, the "Reassessing Mandela" special issue of the *Journal of Southern African Studies (JSAS)*, published late in 2019, is now available as a book. *Reassessing Mandela*, edited by Colin Bundy and William Beinart, was published in 2020 by Jacana Media. Another publication from 2020 was authored by Professor Verne Harris of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. His book, [Ghosts of Archive: Deconstructive Intersectionality and Praxis](#), was published on 22 December 2020 by Routledge.

An upcoming publication by Professor Xolela Mangcu from George Washington University is expected. Like Professor Harris, Prof Mangcu is an affiliated Nelson Mandela University researcher, and his biography on Nelson Mandela scheduled to launch in 2021.

### Conclusion

While still in its infancy, TIMS has demonstrated its potential in driving Mandela scholarship within and outside the University. Internal scholars led by Professor André Keet, and external scholars such as Professor Harris from the Nelson Mandela Foundation, Professor Xolela Mangcu from George Washington University (currently also a Visiting Professor at CrSHET) and Professor Soudien Crain are providing critical contributions to the advancement of TIMS. These national and international collaborators will continue to provide collective involvement that will achieve growth towards TIMS's goals.

# CHAIR: CRITICAL STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

The Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CrSHET) was introduced as a strategic post to drive the Transformation of the University by grounding it in critical studies and framing it within the concept of an African-purposed curriculum in view of the current debates about the decolonisation of the University. It was launched in 2018 and, since then, has worked to fulfil its mandate through research, programmatic work, serving as a strategic resource to various key stakeholders internally and externally, and supporting the leadership team. The Chair seeks to be a premier national, regional and international site for critical studies and praxes in higher education transformation with local and global impact and, as is apparent in the report that follows, has made great strides towards achieving this goal within a few short years. The challenges of 2020 and 2021 necessitated a pivot towards online platforms, allowing the Chair to continue its work.

## Critical University Studies

In order to ground its work in critical studies of higher education, CrSHET has, since its *Emancipatory Imaginations: Advancing Critical University Studies* Winter School in 2019, been deeply involved in the development of the Advancing Critical University Studies in Africa (ACUSAfrica) network. In 2020, the network was able to launch their website ([www.ACUSAFRICA.com](http://www.ACUSAFRICA.com)) and, in 2021, held an online colloquium on "Critical University Studies and the Battle Against Global Racism". This colloquium featured provocations by Professor Paul Zeleza, addressing questions around COVID-19 and higher education, and Prof Shirley Anne Tate, probing racist hate speech within higher education. CrSHET was also involved in the launch of the ACUSAfrica seminar series in 2021, co-organising two webinars: one on the experience of timescapes by Bangladeshi academics and one on sustainability, transdisciplinarity and the public epistemic role of higher education.

Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation, Center for Philosophy in Africa, and the Faculty of Humanities of Nelson Mandela University



Advancing Critical University Studies:  
**Critical University Studies and the Battle Against Global Racism**  
15, 16, 18 February 2021 Online

The ACUSAfrica network, launched in 2019 with the *Emancipatory Imaginations: Advancing Critical University Studies* Winter School, will be hosting an online colloquium in February 2021. The colloquium aims to build the ACUSAfrica network to advance critical and radical approaches for studying higher education by grappling with the questions of global racism. The programme will include provocations by Paul Zeleza and Shirley Anne Tate.

To RSVP please click [here](#) and indicate which sessions you would like to attend before 10 February 2021. The Zoom link for the colloquium will be shared closer to the time.

An initiative of Nelson Mandela University, Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ghana.



The Chair also holds a CSUR-NRF-funded three-year [research project](#) (2020-2022) attempting to locate Critical University Studies as an emancipatory frame for studying the university in South Africa and Africa. The primary objective of 2020's research was to 'map' the field of Critical University Studies in relation to other existing approaches to studying the university. This work had three strands: 1) mapping the field of Higher Education Studies, 2) mapping the field of Higher Education Transformation Studies, and 3) mapping the field of Critical University Studies. In 2021, the focus was on higher education policy analysis and the conversion of the research into publications. Ms Qhama Noveve was awarded the bursary from this project for her doctoral study: a qualitative ethnographic study that investigates the transformation agenda in relation to race and gender. Dr Du Preez also holds an NRF postdoctoral grant for a study on Critical University Studies and Literary Studies in English, which aims to explore what the latter discipline might offer the former.



**THEME**  
"Mhudi" (Sol Plaatje) and "The Cry of Winnie Mandela" (Njabulo Ndebele) and possible new ways of reading

**SPEAKER**  
Professor Antjie Krog

**ABSTRACT:** In a recent article on Sol T. Plaatje's "Mhudi", Bhokizwe Peterson (2020) writes of the necessity of developing a different way of reading particular texts in South Africa as they are inaugurating an underappreciated method or genre of creative meditation: that is, creatively thinking through (rather than 'philosophising' or 'theorising' in conventional ways) a range of difficult historical, political and social questions and challenges. (125) According to him, their texts challenge the orthodoxy of the novel in the twentieth century, and are structured to allow a multiplicity of perspectives and arguments to emerge, making actual the thoughts of a philosopher, a social scientist and an historian within the newly configured concept of what a novel should be. "I am advocating that their novels... constitute modes of creative thinking and practice that had been undervalued even by scholars who are proponents of 'decolonisation'" (126).

**Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021**  
**Time: 15:00-16:30 SAST**

**RSVP Link:** <https://forms.gle/3375ES1p8SuebX28>  
**or email:** [Anela.Mngadi@Mandela.ac.za](mailto:Anela.Mngadi@Mandela.ac.za)





**Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021**  
**15:00hrs – 17:00hrs SAST**

RSVP Link: <https://forms.gle/NKwv15JAJ5BY13C7>  
or email: [Anela.Mngadi@Mandela.ac.za](mailto:Anela.Mngadi@Mandela.ac.za)

**THEME**

Of tired narratives and the making of a disposable people: unearthing the epistemic tools embedded in the African past





**SPEAKER**  
Ebrima Sall  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TRUSTAFRICA

Ebrima Sall is the Executive Director of TrustAfrica, a pan-African foundation based in Dakar. From 2009 to 2017 he was the Executive Secretary of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Sall is also a member of the Expert Group supporting the work of UNESCO's Global Commission on the Futures of Education, and of the Scientific Advisory Committee of UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) program. He holds a 'Maitrise' (MA) degree in Economic and Social Administration from the University of Grenoble II in France, and a PhD in sociology from University of Paris I-Panthéon-Sorbonne.



## Higher Education Transformation

Higher Education Transformation (HET) has been on the agenda for the South African sector since 1994. Despite this, the pace of transformation has been slow. Although resources have been developed across the sector, there remains a gap in terms of the collation of HET resources and scholarship and provision of training and qualifications for transformation officers. CrSHET thus initiated a project to fill this gap.

The Online Resource for Higher Education Transformation (ORHET) is a Nelson Mandela University-led project in collaboration with Stellenbosch University, the University of Cape Town, Rhodes University, and the Vaal University of Technology. It is envisaged as an extensive interactive archive and collaborative platform for the location, tracking, sourcing, classification and categorisation of transformation-related teaching and learning resources, training modes and platforms, research, good practices, etc. within the sector. It will provide the basis for e-learning, blended development programmes and workshop series; and the growth of libraries, databases, links, discussion forums, communities



PRESENTED BY: Dr. Desire Chiwandire (NMU)

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND TRANSFORMATION  
PRESENTS:

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ACTIVISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr Desire Chiwandire is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CrSHET) at Nelson Mandela University (NMU). He holds a PhD in Political and International Studies from Rhodes University where he also taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Critical Disability Studies and Political Studies. His doctoral thesis focused on the social inclusion of students with disabilities at South African universities and has also published his academic work in refereed journals. His research interests broadly focus on Disability Politics specifically the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and disability in South African educational and workplace environments. He is also currently working with NMU's Transformation Office, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit as well as the Universal Accessibility and Disability Services (UADS) on issues related to campus disability inclusion research, advocacy and awareness raising initiatives.

**DATE:** 17 JUNE 2021 | **TIME:** 11H00 – 13H00

**Zoom Link:** [https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/WN\\_i55umCrGRGOru8n3nkU48Q](https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/WN_i55umCrGRGOru8n3nkU48Q)

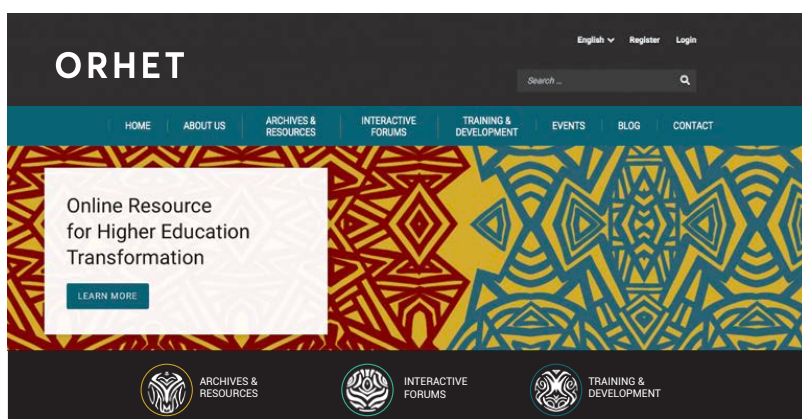
**Zoom PASSCODE: 886268**



**Vaal University of Technology**  
*Your world to a better future*



SOCIAL JUSTICE & TRANSFORMATION UNIT



of practice, blogs, chatrooms, email listservs and research networks linked to the themes of HET. This project has made great progress since the appointment of Dr Patrick Ajibade in October 2020 as a postdoctoral fellow driving the project, in collaboration with an ICT team from Nelson Mandela University, led by Dr Sam Bosire. In 2021, a visual artist and designer were also brought onto the project, resulting in a website with a dynamic 'look-and-feel' based on abstract pattern designs.

## Programmatic Work

In 2018, CrSHET initiated its flagship seminar series titled '*[Re] Directions/Ukutshintshwa Kwendlela: Knowledge, Praxes and the African-purposed Curriculum*' as part of its work to revitalise the intellectual culture of the University, especially within the Humanities. By 2020, this work had successfully catalysed a growing programme of seminars, webinars, colloquia, conferences, public lectures and book launches within the ETP and beyond. CrSHET has continued with a scaled-back programme for the seminar series, with Xolela Mangcu and Shireen Hassim engaging on '*(Re) Assessing Mandela*' in 2020; and Claudio Costa Pinheiro on decoloniality and the '*Global South*' in 2021.

The scaling back of this seminar series allowed CrSHET to focus on the ACUSAfrica seminar series and events, as well as collaborating on the Africa & Knowledge Seminar Series. For this series, CrSHET collaborated with the Centre for Philosophy in Africa, the Faculty of Humanities of Nelson Mandela University, and the Emengini Institute for Comparative Global Studies. The series was launched in 2020, and hosted four seminars in 2021, with Ebrima Sall, Chielozona Eze, Antjie Krog and Martin Ajei as presenters exploring a range of topics: epistemic tools in Africa's past, typologies of African encounter in the world, possible new ways of reading South African literature, and the question of Africa and development. These seminars were guided by the

# THE PERSPECTIVE ONLINE

Radical perspectives on transformation, decolonisation, and Africanisation in higher education

2020 Vol. 2, No. 1-2

## SPECIAL EDITION

### COVID-19 IN HIGHER EDUCATION

NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

## The Perspective Online Journal Launch: COVID-19 in Higher Education SPECIAL EDITION

The Perspective Online journal is published bi-annually at Nelson Mandela University by the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CrSHET), the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Department of Student Governance and Development.

### SPEAKERS:

Anne Munene | Yaseen Ally  
Vuyolwethu Ngcofe | Zvikomborero Hweju

Date: Friday, 09 April 2021  
Time: 14:00 - 15:30 (SAST)

RSVP Link: <https://forms.gle/P215ZtpT5dHkzFX6>  
or email [anele.mngadi@mandela.ac.za](mailto:anele.mngadi@mandela.ac.za)

question “What is an African today?” This question is not a demand for a description of the sort of thing we can say is African, that is, an account of qualities we can claim are predominantly shared by people inhabiting the geographical space called Africa. This question is an invitation to consider the sort of Africa we think is worth striving after. Who should we strive to become as Africans today – in the here and now? That is, the series posits, the challenge.

Dr Desire Chiwandire, appointed in 2021 as a postdoctoral fellow hosted by CrSHET, has been active in driving the imperative of universal access as part of the broader transformation project. Apart from his research and involvement with policy development and the Universal Access Working Group, Dr Chiwandire frequently presents on questions of disability rights and universal access. With the CrSHET team, and in collaboration with the Transformation Office and the Universal Access and Disability Services (UADS) at Nelson Mandela University, Dr Chiwandire is spearheading a disability rights symposium on student activism, politics, and engagement in higher education for 2022.

### Book Series & Journals

The last two years have seen CrSHET establish two book series that serve as important vehicles for research on higher education transformation, especially from Africa. In 2020, CrSHET, in partnership with the Director of the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education at the University of Johannesburg, the now late Prof Michael Cross, relaunched the book series *On Higher Education Transformation* with African SUN Media. A formal agreement was also reached on a book series entitled *African Higher Education: Developments and Perspectives* with Brill Publishers in partnership with Prof Cross and Dr Woldegiorgis of the University of Johannes-

burg. Since Prof Cross's untimely passing, Prof Keet and Dr Woldegiorgis have been serving as series editors for the two series. A number of volumes have already come out in both series, covering a range of pertinent higher education issues – including scholarly engagement, decolonisation, university mergers, North-South partnerships, social justice, and leadership – from theoretical, structural and political perspectives. Various book projects for publication in these series are also underway, exploring institutional culture(s), Critical University Studies, and Critical Social Work.

The quarterly student journal, *The Perspective Online*, initiated in 2018 by CrSHET in partnership with the Office of the Dean of Students and Student Governance and Development, continues to provide a space for articles, columns, and creative work by students and academics on the deepening of transformation, decolonisation, and Africanisation of higher education. In 2020, the journal published a special edition on COVID-19 in Higher Education (Vol 2. No. 1-2).

### Publications

CrSHET submitted a total of 60 research outputs produced in 2020 for subsidy claims: 31 peer-reviewed articles in DHET-accredited journals, 24 peer-reviewed book chapters, and five books. Publication numbers for 2021 are also looking promising, with a current tally of 30 articles, 16 book chapters, and two books. Apart from these accredited outputs, CrSHET and its associates have also produced various other pieces, including writing for newspapers,

## BOOK LAUNCH

WEDNESDAY, 11  
NOVEMBER 2020  
15:00 - 17:00 SAST

Join us online to celebrate the launch of  
Professor Ihron Rensburg's new book.



# Africa and Knowledge

## Seminar Series

Friday, 06 November 2020 | 13:00 – 14:30

RSVP Link: <https://forms.gle/NKwvvtSjAJSBYf3C7>  
or email: [Anele.Mngadi@mandela.ac.za](mailto:Anele.Mngadi@mandela.ac.za)

such as the *Daily Maverick* and *The Herald*, and the online platform for academic popular writing, *The Conversation*. Through these written outputs, *CriSHET* and its associates have contributed to thinking and conversations, both in South Africa, Africa and beyond, around university transformation and the pursuit of social justice.

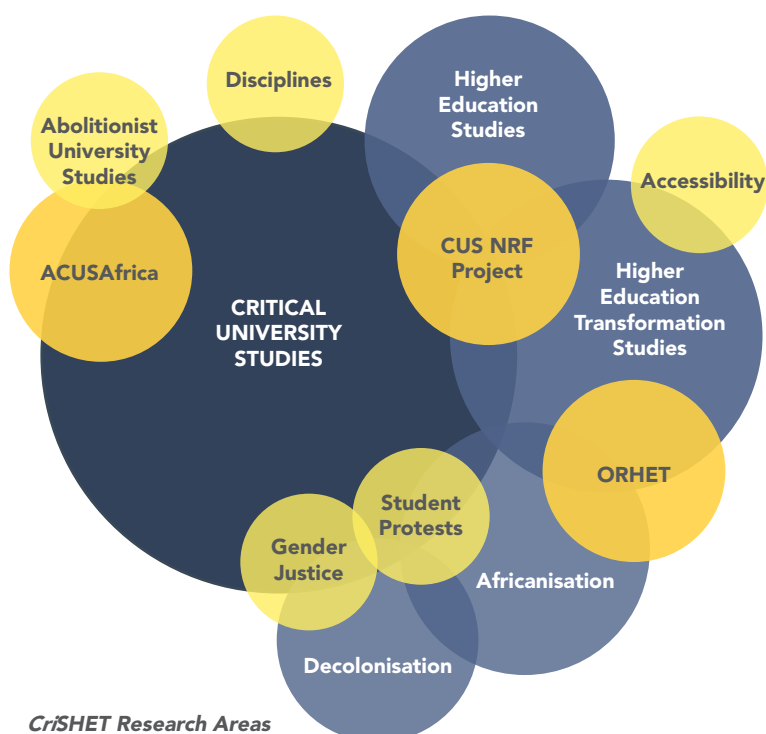
This body of scholarly work explores higher education transformation from various angles. Both decolonisation and Africanisation are key areas of research in the work produced, as are issues of race, gender, and language. The question of alternative pedagogies also appears frequently, with scholars exploring pedagogies of discomfort and compassion, as well as anti-complicity pedagogies and critical pedagogies. The application of theories of affect emerges as a significant trend in thinking through more socially just modes of education. Critical studies that focus on curricula initiated in pursuit of social justice are also propounded, with authors reviewing typologies of global citizenship education and human rights education. These explorations feed into a larger question that underlies *CriSHET*'s work: how do we re-imagine the University in more socially just ways? This is a deeply philosophical question that leads to questions of ethics and ontologies, as well as a systemic question. The publications of 2020 tackle this systemic aspect in numerous ways, from interrogating higher education internationalisation, global ranking systems and the challenges of displaced academics, to examining structural issues facing the University, such as mergers and studentification, and exploring theories of change for higher education. A final significant trend in the research outputs of the Chair is a focus on the creative arts and literature

*CriSHET was introduced as a strategic post to drive the Transformation of the University by grounding it in critical studies...*

as a modality for socially just education and for exploring complex issues related to injustice.

### Conclusion

*CriSHET*'s programmatic and scholarly work has, over the last two years, been strongly focused on developing an intellectual base for the Africanisation of the curriculum and the higher education sector, as well as on mapping the discursive fields that shape universities and the ways in which they are studied. These core focus areas are constantly informed by and expanded through the work of *CriSHET*'s associates, postdoctoral fellows, and collaborators, who are creating a body of scholarship that approaches the imperatives of higher education transformation from discursive, political, affective, philosophical, literary, structural and other perspectives. *CriSHET* aims to continue to develop the richness of this work.



*CriSHET Research Areas*

**Change the World**

**PO Box 77000,  
Nelson Mandela University  
Gqeberha, 6031**

---

**info@mandela.ac.za**



mandela.ac.za

**NELSON MANDELA**  
UNIVERSITY