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**An investigation into the practices of Rhodes University researchers to enhance and promote their research visibility**



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**University of Pretoria & Carnegie Capstone Conference (25-29 March 2019)**

**Kievits Kroon Country Estate and Conference Centre  
Pretoria, SOUTH AFRICA**

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Librarian: Scholarly Communication, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, SOUTH AFRICA



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## OUTLINE


**M.IT Mini-dissertation research process**


- **Background**
- **Research design**
- **Research Process & Lessons learned**

**The Value of the M.IT programme**

- **Awareness campaigns**
- **Rhodes Digital Commons**
- **Continuing Professional Development**







2

## M.IT Mini-dissertation research process

### Background: Conceptualisation of the research project

The idea for this investigation originated from the Rhodes University Vision and Mission Statement



This disparity motivated the interest to explore what the researchers are doing “to promote excellence in research and other creative endeavours” Rhodes University, 2015)

The Vision Statement states the university is a research intensive institution (Rhodes University, 2015)

**Observation:** the Mission undertakings focus heavily on undergraduate support rather than on research (Rhodes University, 2015)

**Observation:** 14 National Research Foundation funded SARCHI Chairs are located at Rhodes University is indicative of the institution’s research excellence



3

## Conceptualisation of the research title

There are many reasons for this status quo

- However, the scope of the mini-dissertation limited this investigation to one of the reasons



**“An investigation into the practices of Rhodes University researchers to enhance and promote their research visibility”**

A related purpose was to also determine the role of the Rhodes University Library within the research endeavor. The academic library is the heart of the institution which plays “critically-important roles in supporting research” to their research community (Brown & Swan, 2007: 5)



4

## Research problem

“To what extent do researchers at Rhodes University engage with non-traditional tools to enhance and promote their research output and visibility”

- Explore current research practices
- Explore traditional vs technology-driven practices
- Determine the role of the Rhodes University Library within the research programme (current and futures advocacy, support and lead)

## Research Design: Research Approach

### Qualitative Research Approach

- Case Study (Rhodes University)

### Literature Review

- Traditional research scholarship
- Re-imagined research scholarship
- The impact of technology on research scholarship
- The role of the Library in a digitally-driven research landscape

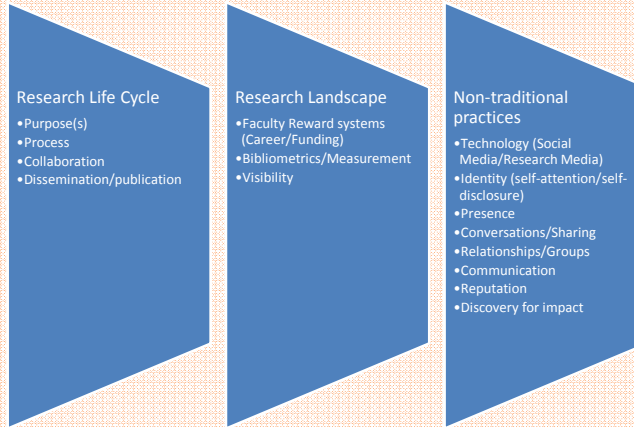
### Methodology: Data collection

- Target population (Audience)
- Ethical clearance
- Online survey

### Data Analysis

- Excel (for both open and closed questions)

## Research Design: Focus Areas



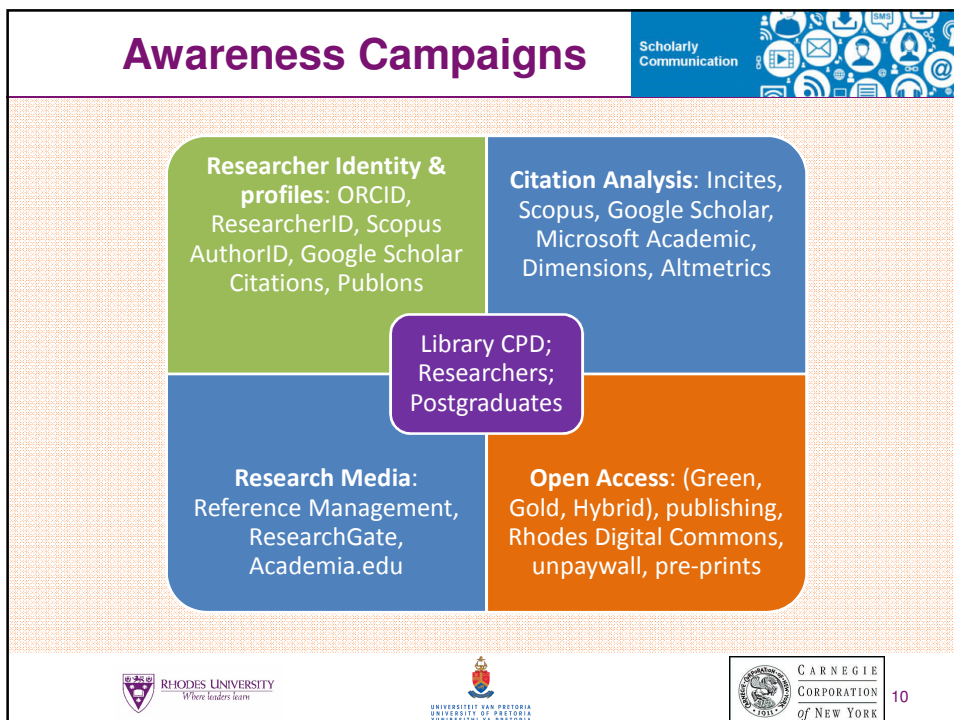
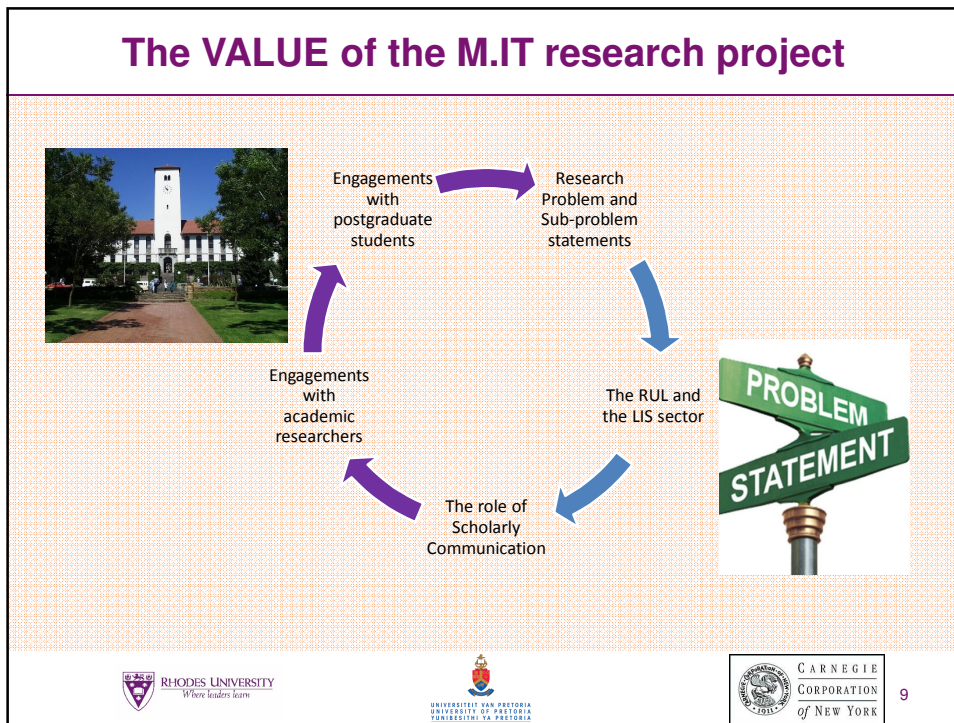
7

## Research Process & Lessons learned

- Thesis Writing
- Division of chapters
- Writing Structure
- Organised notes and references



8



## Rhodes Digital Commons

Scholarly Communication

E-Strategy  
Librarian: Repository & Metadata  
Faculty Librarian  
Research Office  
Researcher

Rhodes University Open Access Policy (2017)

National Research Foundation (2015/2017)

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## Continuing Professional Development

Scholarly Communication

### Personal

- Reading
- Alerts: blogs, newsletters, Facebook
- Webinars (eg Library Connect)
- Workshops/Seminars (eg ORCID SA Workshop, OA Seminars)
- Task Teams (eg e-Strategy & Web Design)

### Knowledge Sharing

- Library CPD
- Workshops/Seminars:
  - New staff and PG students orientation
  - Departmental visits
  - Research seminars
  - Intra-university collaborations (eg Incites)
  - Inter-university workshops (eg SEALS, UFH, NMU)

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## Thank You

- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Professor Theo Bothma
- M.IT Co-ordinators: Dr Marlene Holmner & Ms Rachel Fischer
- The M.IT Lecturers
- Rhodes University: Director Library Services: Ms Ujala Satgoor. Line Managers: Mrs Linda Cartwright & Mr Larshan Naicker. Colleagues
- Supervisor: Cecilia Penzhorn  
Co-Supervisor: Dr Marlene Holmner
- M.IT Intake 5
- My family: Arlene Meager & Rory Martindale



13

## References

- Brown, S. & Swan, A., 2007. *Researchers' use of academic libraries and their services: a report commissioned by the Research Information Network and the Consortium of Research Libraries*. University of Southampton, UK. [online]. [PDF]. Available at: <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/id/eprint/263868>. [Accessed 5 March 2016].
- Rhodes University, 2015. *Rhodes University Vision & Mission Statement* (approved by Council on 29 June 2000). [online] Available at: <https://www.ru.ac.za/introducingrhodes/visionandmission/> [Accessed 15 August 2015].



14

## Thank You



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15