

EXOTIC LEATHER RESEARCH CENTRE

CONTENT FOR WEBSITE

CONSTITUTION OF THE “EXOTIC LEATHER RESEARCH CENTRE”

1. Name

The entity will be called the “Exotic Leather Research Centre” (hereafter referred to as “The Centre”)

2. Function and Mission

The function of the Centre is to act as the Technical Partner in the National Exotic Leather Cluster (NELC) recently approved by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which has as its mission to increase the global competitiveness of the South African exotic leather and leather-goods industry, and to establish sustainable growth. The specific mission of the Centre will be:

- 2.1 To provide scientific support in the local beneficiation of exotic leather industry throughout the value chain and thereby increasing the industry’s contribution towards skills development, job creation and increased export earnings
- 2.2 To establish a national research capacity in crocodile health, welfare and production
- 2.3 To provide high quality internationally accepted research throughout the value chain of exotic leather production and in the manufacture and trade in exotic leather-goods with an initial focus on crocodiles
- 2.4 To provide human resource development both upstream and downstream in the exotic leather industry
- 2.5 To develop norms and standards that meet international standards of production, manufacture and trade in exotic leather and leather-goods

3. Objectives

The overall objective of the Centre is in support of NELC is to:

- Improve efficiency and quality throughout the value chain

- Ensure sustainability of the industry by developing production models based on a resource-efficient “life cycle” production approach across the production value chain;
- Build supply chain capacity through on-going research, by improving skills, by upgrading of equipment and by incubation of small, medium and micro enterprises
- Uplift communities which are in close proximity to natural resources (crocodiles) through education, skills training and job creation
- Improve on the regulated environment for crocodile production and trading in crocodile products
- Develop and implement international standards and best-practices

The primary objective of the Centre will be to execute the interventions assigned to the University of Pretoria in the NELC proposal (see annexure 1) through its associated Research Chairs and also to:

- Build national and international recognition of the Centre
- Contribute to the national scientific community
- Develop national and international collaborative linkages
- Establish sources of renewable funding

4. Finance

- 4.1 All funds received by the Centre, on behalf of, or as result of its activities shall be deposited in University of Pretoria (hereafter known and “the University”) cost centres designated for the Centre and Chairs and used exclusively for the execution of the interventions as identified according source of national funding within the NELC proposal e.g. NRF, TIA and THRIP.
- 4.2 The University procedures for the processing of financial disclosure, auditing and accountability will be followed in accordance with the Regulations for the Establishment and Operation of Units, Centres, Institutes and Bureaus (S 3563/05) and its stipulations on financial control
- 4.3 The Director manages the financial administration of the Centre through the support of the University

5. Funding

- 5.1 The Centre and Chairs will primarily be funded from the Critical Infrastructure programme (CIP) of the DTI which is managed by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), for a period of 5 years (Attachment 4)
- 5.2 The Director of the Centre with the support of DTI will be responsible for seeking additional funding from other national funding agencies (NRF, TIA and THRIP) required for the implementation of non-CIP funded NELC interventions, including the development of a crocodile research facility and all such sources will be disclosed to the NELC Board and Steering Committee
- 5.3 Planning and justification of purchases and budget will be presented in writing to the Advisory Board as outlined in Regulations S 3563/05

6. Status

The Centre will be a University institution as part of the Faculty of Veterinary Science in collaboration with the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

7. Staff

The Director is the executive officer of the Centre and will be supported by three Research Chairs. Two support staff positions have been provided in the grant application, including a Grant Manager and a Personal Assistant and will be either appointed full-time or part-time as required.

Additional staff within the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Natural and Agricultural Science with an interest in crocodiles or crocodile leather trade will be associated with the Centre.

8. Management

- 8.1 NELC has been registered as a Section 20 Non-profit company and will be governed by a Board, consisting of 4 or 5 Directors represented by the University of Pretoria, DTI and all sectors of the crocodile and crocodile leather industry; and a Steering Committee represented by participants of various sectors of the Industry and the Deans of Faculties of Veterinary Science and Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the Director of the Centre. The Exotic Leather Centre will have a Service Level Agreement with NELC and the Board that will be evaluated on an annual basis

- 8.2 Day-to day management of the Centre will be performed by the Director (as Chief Executive), supported by its administrative and technical staff
- 8.3 Research and training activities of the Centre will be led by the three research chairs dedicated to the Centre viz. a Chair in Crocodile Health and Welfare, a Chair in Crocodile Production and a Chair in Trade.as indicated under staff
- 8.4 The Centre will be overseen by an Advisory Committee as stipulated in the Regulations governing Units, Centres, Institutes and Bureaus (S 3563/05).
- 8.5 The role of the Advisory Committee will be to provide guidance, advice and direction to the Centre.
- 8.6 The Advisory Committee will be composed as follows:
 - 8.6.1 The Deans or Deputy Deans of Research of the Faculties of Veterinary Science and Natural and Agricultural Sciences
 - 8.6.2 The Vice-Principal (Research) of the University (*ex officio*)
 - 8.6.3 The Director of Finance or his/her representative
 - 8.6.4 The Heads of relevant departments
 - 8.6.5 A member of each sector of the value chain of the crocodile industry nominated by the Advisory Committee
 - 8.6.6 Director of Centre
 - 8.6.7 The 3 Exotic Leather Research Chairs

The Advisory Committee has the option to co-op, at the most two additional members with special expertise as required

- 8.7 The Deans of the two participating faculties will serve as Chair of the Advisory Committee on an alternating year-to-year basis
- 8.8 Non University members serve for a period of three years and may be appointed for a further 3 years
- 8.9 Authority for approval of policy and acceptance of reports will be vested in the Advisory Committee
- 8.10 All members of the Advisory Committee shall have voting rights. The Chairman will have a deciding vote in the event of a tie.
- 8.11 The Advisory Committee will meet at least twice per year, provided that members of the Advisory Committee will be deemed to be present and able to vote if they are present via electronic/telephonic means and able to make a real time responses and input into the meeting
- 8.12 A quorum at meetings of the Advisory Committee will be constituted by 50 % plus 1 of its members

9. Appointments

- 9.1 Non-academic staffing appointments will be made by selection and approval of the Centre Management team and ratified where necessary, by the appropriate Faculty Recruitment and Selection Committee
- 9.2 Academic staffing appointments will be approved by the appropriate Faculty Recruitment and Selection Committee and approved where necessary by the Senior Appointments Committee, and will be members of appropriate academic departments

10. Postgraduate students

All postgraduate students in the Centre will be registered through an appropriate Department in either the Faculty of Veterinary Science or Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, and will be subject to the formal processes of registration, progress reporting, examining and submission as dictated by the department and respective Faculty.

11. Responsibilities of Director

- 11.1 The Director will be responsible for achieving the objectives as listed in this constitution and to meet the Service Level Agreement requirements with NELC
- 11.2 Staff appointed to the Centre will report to the Director
- 11.3 The Director will be responsible to monitor the progress of the three research chairs
- 11.4 The Director will report on the operation of the Centre to the Advisory Committee, NELC Board and Steering committee
- 11.5 The Director of the Centre will be responsible for seeking additional funding for the Centre as indicated under point 5.2

12. Amendment

This constitution may only be changed, amended or repealed by resolution passed at any meeting of the Advisory Committee, provided no such resolution shall be deemed to have been passed or have any force and effect unless it has been carried by more than 66 % of the members of the Board present and voting at the meeting.

13. Termination

The Centre will be terminated when so decided by the respective Faculties or when the Advisory Committee recommends this to the Faculty with a two-thirds majority and the respective Faculties and/or the University approve such a recommendation.