

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS' AWARDS

November 2024



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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CONGRATULATIONS

to all our
ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS
who push the
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
to greater heights.

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WELCOME

Professor Francis Peterson | *Vice-Chancellor and Principal*



I am truly honoured to join the University of Pretoria (UP) during this transformative era of innovation and growth. As a leading research-intensive university in Africa, UP's commitment to academic excellence, research innovation, and societal impact is both noble and essential, driving us forward into new frontiers.

In recognition of UP's outstanding achievements, we were awarded the Most Improved – Sub-Saharan Africa Award at the QS EduData Summit 2024. This accolade highlights our remarkable progress in the QS World University Rankings, showcasing UP as a beacon of academic excellence on the global stage. Our collaborative spirit is further exemplified by our partnership with the University of Leeds, which has earned us a shortlist spot for the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) Award for International Collaboration of the Year. This nomination underscores the strength and impact of our international partnerships and our commitment to addressing global challenges.

In the Webometrics mid-year update for 2024, UP solidified its standing as a global leader in tertiary education. We proudly climbed to 3rd place in both Africa and South Africa (jointly with Stellenbosch University), improving our global position from 447th in February 2024 to 431st out of more than 12,000 ranked universities. Despite tying for 3rd place, UP's improvement was more significant, highlighting our relentless pursuit of excellence and our growing influence on the global academic stage.

This year, we hosted two major international events that further cemented our role as a leader in global academia. In April, the Future Africa Institute was proud to host the prestigious and first-ever Times Higher Education (THE) Pan-African Universities Summit. This event brought together thought leaders and innovators to discuss the future of higher education on our continent. In May, UP hosted the World Universities Network (WUN) Annual General Meeting, welcoming leading universities from around the world to collaborate on addressing some of the most pressing global challenges.

In addition, our partnership with the Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation led to a groundbreaking achievement: the launch of the Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI) facility. This world-first in South Africa is set to advance drug development, clinical research, and provide cutting-edge diagnostics and treatment for cancer, tuberculosis, and other major diseases. Such initiatives position UP at the forefront of medical research and innovation.

It is on this foundation of excellence that the Academic Achievers Awards take place. The academics featured in this publication are doing us proud as they continue to elevate the University's research and international profile, strengthening our social responsiveness and impact on society. As a top-tier traditional university with the most NRF-rated researchers—and with three of our scholars ranked in the top 1% by ESI worldwide—UP's research and collaborative efforts with partners transform lives and society by providing African solutions to global concerns.

Congratulations to all our researchers being honoured on this auspicious occasion. Your dedication and groundbreaking work ensure that UP is widely recognised for the solutions you provide through your research outputs. As a result, we are often the first or only South African institution invited to collaborate on or spearhead international projects. Your efforts and achievements will ensure our continued success as we leverage our reputation as a research-intensive university to build bridges into Africa and across continents in search of solutions to complex local and global challenges.

Thank you.

Professor Francis Petersen
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

It is my great pleasure, as Chair of the University of Pretoria (UP) Council, to celebrate the achievements of our distinguished academics in this year's Academic Achievers book. This publication highlights the remarkable contributions of our recently rated scholars, whose dedication to research and teaching excellence elevates our institution.

The University of Pretoria has once again performed strongly in the 2024 QS World University Rankings by Subject, with 16 of its subject offerings ranked in the top 450 globally and 18 in the top three among South African universities. These rankings evaluate academic reputation, employer reputation, citations, *h*-Index, and the International Research Network (IRN).

New research by UP scientists has shown that pulse oximeters, initially designed for humans, can effectively monitor blood oxygen levels in rhinoceroses during anaesthesia by attaching them to the rhinoceroses' third eyelid.

Additionally, the Study Abroad Aide has placed UP in seventh position in South Africa and the top 8% globally for providing international students with high-quality education within their budget. The Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT) announced the launch of its new Immersive Technology Lab at the Department of Information Science. This cutting-edge facility marks a significant milestone in the University's journey towards integrating advanced immersive technologies into its curriculum and research initiatives.

Furthermore, the Department of Physiology in the Faculty of Health Sciences and ASS Investment 98 (Pty) Ltd, operating as MTC Dome, have formalised a collaboration to bolster neuroscience research efforts. This partnership offers postgraduate physiology students from UP the opportunity to work within the Neuroscience Lab at MTC Dome, enhancing their practical skills and contributing valuable data for ongoing research.

We have celebrated major international events hosted at Future Africa, such as the Times Higher Education Pan-Africa Academic Summit and the Worldwide Universities Network annual meeting. Additionally, the launch of the Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI) facility and the Industrial Sewing Laboratory has enhanced our research and educational capabilities.

As we celebrate our academic achievers, I am reminded of our scholars' vital role in shaping the future. Their passion for discovery inspires us all and reinforces the University's reputation for excellence on a global scale.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with our University's community. Together, we will overcome challenges and achieve even greater heights.

With warm regards,

Mr Ben Kruger
Chairperson of Council

MESSAGE

Mr Ben Kruger | *Chairperson of Council*





EXCEPTIONAL

ACADEMIC ACHIEVERS AWARD

RECIPIENTS:

Professor Jacek Banasiak
Professor Armanda Bastos
Professor Namrita Lall
Professor Nelishia Pillay
Professor Frans Viljoen

This is awarded annually to senior academics who have already achieved the status of Professor, are regarded highly by their peers, and have consistently excelled in the areas of under- and postgraduate teaching and learning, research, community service and administration over a period of time.

PROFESSOR JACEK BANASIAK



Professor Jacek Banasiak holds the DSI/NRF SARCHI Chair in Mathematical Models and Methods in Biosciences and Bioengineering at the University of Pretoria; he is a visiting professor at the Strathclyde University in Glasgow, Scotland and holds a research position at the Łódź University of Technology in Poland. He received MSc (Engineering) from the Technical University of Łódź, PhD from the Strathclyde University in Glasgow in 1981, Habilitation (DSc) from the University of Warsaw in 1999, and in 2007, the president of the Republic of Poland conferred on him the state title of professor.

He was the Head of the School of Mathematical Sciences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Academic Leader: Research in 2015. Outside South Africa, he was a visiting professor at the University of Franche-Comte in 2004 and a co-head of the International Research Laboratory for Applied Research in Semigroups, South Ural State University, Russia, from 2019 to 2021.

His research interests are nonlocal, integro-differential models in kinetic theory, mathematical biology and fragmentation-coagulation theory, asymptotic analysis of multiple scale problems and epidemiological modelling.

He authored or co-authored seven research monographs, the recent of which is *Analytic Methods for Coagulation-Fragmentation Models*, Vol. 1 and 2, CRC Press, 2020, written with W Lamb and P Laurencot, and over 145 refereed research papers.

He has taught many postgraduate courses at the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences, CIMPA schools, and universities in South Africa, India, Poland, Scotland, Cameroun, Kenya and the Russian Federation. He supervised 16 doctoral and over 30 master's students and mentored seven postdoctoral fellows.

Prof Banasiak has been a B1-rated scientist since 2008. He is a recipient of the South African Mathematical Society Award for Research Distinction (2012), Cross of Merit (Silver) of the Republic of Poland (2013), first prize for the best paper in applied mathematics from the Centre for Applications of Mathematics (Gdańsk) in 2014 and the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Poland Award for Scientific Achievements in 2022.

He is a fellow of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2013), the African Academy of Sciences (2017) and the Royal Society of South Africa (2023), and a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (2006).

He is the editor-in-chief of *Afrika Matematika* (Springer) and a member of the editorial boards of several other journals.

Prof Banasiak served the scientific community of South Africa as a vice president of the South African Mathematical Society from 2001 to 2005, the chairman of the South African Committee for the International Mathematical Union from 2005 to 2008 and a member, convener and chairman of NRF Rating Panels, member of several NRF grant panels and convenor and member of DSI/NRF review panels.



PROFESSOR ARMANDA BASTOS

Professor Armanda Bastos is a professor of One Health in the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases. She manages the One Health platform at the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station (HHWRS) in the Kruger National Park and coordinates the MSc in Global One Health, a joint offering of the University of Pretoria (UP) and the Institute for Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium.

Prof Bastos' research focuses on transboundary animal diseases, and zoonotic and vector-borne diseases at the wildlife-domestic interface.

Data emanating from studies on the molecular epidemiology, taxonomy and evolution of a broad range of viral, bacterial, zoonotic and vector-borne disease agents, are used for custom-development of affordable and sensitive molecular diagnostic assays in support of early disease detection and surveillance. Having initially focussed on the molecular epidemiology and diagnosis of SAT-type foot-and-mouth disease viruses and African swine fever viruses whilst employed as a senior veterinary researcher (1994–2000) at the flagship ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (ARC-OVI) BSL3 / Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD) laboratory, her research interests expanded to include rodent and vector-borne diseases on joining the Department of Zoology and Entomology at UP in July, 2000. She was promoted to senior lecturer in 2002, associate professor in 2007, and full professor in 2013 and she served as the Mammal Research Institute's deputy director and acting director from 2016-2017 and as Head of the Department of Zoology and Entomology from 2018–2022.

Prof Bastos has published 126 scientific papers and seven book chapters. She has supervised and co-supervised the postgraduate research projects of 22 doctoral, 35 master's (29 research and six coursework) and 21 BSc honours-level students to completion. She serves on the editorial board of CABI One Health, as president of the Global African swine fever research alliance and holds an NRF B2 rating. She was inducted as a fellow of the Royal Society of South Africa (FRSSAf) in 2019 and a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (MASSAf) in 2023.

PROFESSOR NAMRITA LALL



She has been placed in the Essential Science Indicators List of the top 1% of publication outputs (citations) in pharmacology and toxicology. She was recently listed as part of Stanford University's list of the World's Top 2% of Scientists.

Professor Namrita Lall is a research chair at the University of Pretoria.

Six start-up companies named Bio Indigenous Solution (BIS, a Mamelodi community-based company in Pretoria), Valoren, Blyde Botanics, Scholareview and Looksci (formed by young postgraduates) resulted from Prof Lall's research programme.

Prof Lall's research focuses on developing natural antituberculosis product leads from medicinal plants, investigating the cytotoxicity of plant extracts and compounds, the anticancer activity of medicinal plants, and isolating and purifying bioactive principles from plants. Several master's and doctoral graduates have graduated under Prof Lall's supervision. Most candidates were South African, but there were also students from Germany, Cameroon, Mozambique, India, Mauritius, Iran and Egypt who completed degrees under her supervision (34 master's and 27 doctorates).

She has gained international recognition for her research into the potential of medicinal plants

for pharmaceutical and cosmeceutical purposes. Three pharmaceutical products for skin hyperpigmentation, periodontal problems and liver protection have been commercialised internationally, and another 12 are close to commercialisation. Under Prof Lall's supervision, several license agreements have also been signed for various research activities.

She has registered 13 patents and published over 195 research articles and 75 book chapters. Her *h*-index is 53, and her RG score is over 52 (top 5%). Taylor and Francis and Elsevier have published four books on medicinal plants edited by Prof Lall.

Among several awards received in recognition for her work, a few are the Exceptional Supervisor's Award by the University of Pretoria (October 2021), the Top Intellectual Property Creator Award (2019), Biotech Fundi Lifetime Contribution Award by the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD) and the Innovation Hub (2017). She is the president of the International Society of Ethnopharmacology (ISE) and the founder of the African Phytomedicine Scientific Society.

PROFESSOR NELISHIA PILLAY



Professor Nelishia Pillay is a full professor in the Department of Computer Science. She holds the DST/NRF co-funded SARChI Chair in Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development and the MultiChoice Joint Chair in Machine Learning.



Prof Pillay is currently chair of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Computational Intelligence Society (CIS) Subcommittee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, the IEEE CIS Mentoring Subcommittee and the IEEE CIS Outstanding Dissertation Subcommittee. She serves as an elected member of IEEE CIS Adcom.

Her area of research involves improving current and developing new artificial intelligence algorithms to solve complex real-world problems related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on innovation in industry, health and well-being, renewable energy and lifelong learning. More specifically, the research focuses on hyper-heuristics, automated design of machine learning and search techniques, transfer learning, genetic programming, genetic algorithms, metaheuristics and neural networks. These are the focus areas of the NICO (Nature-Inspired Computing Optimization) research group, which she has established. She has co-authored two books, one on hyper-heuristics and the second on automated design.

Prof Pillay has been awarded a B2 rating by the NRF.

PROFESSOR FRANS VILJOEN

Professor Frans Viljoen stood down as director of the Centre for Human Rights in the Faculty of Law in 2023, having served for 15 years. In this capacity, he was responsible for the academic programmes, fundraising, and management of Centre projects. He is a professor at the Centre and acts as the NRF SARChI Chair in International Constitutional Law in the Faculty of Law.

He is the director of the LLM/MPhil (Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa), a programme instituted in 2000 in partnership with law schools across Africa. This programme is part of a global network of master's programmes on human rights and democratisation, the Global Campus of Human Rights. Prof Viljoen is a member of the Council of the Global Campus of Human Rights. He is also the programme coordinator of the LLM/MPhil in Multidisciplinary Human Rights. He teaches modules on these programmes and the LLM/MPhil in Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa.

Prof Viljoen has been invited to serve as a visiting professor at several institutions across the world, including Oxford University (United Kingdom), the Sorbonne (Paris), the African Institute of International Law (Arusha, Tanzania), University of Peace (Costa Rica), Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia), and Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique).

Prof Viljoen co-founded and leads the editorial teams of two leading African journals on human rights. He is editor-in-chief (since its founding in 2001) of the *African Human Rights Law Journal*. He is also the convening editor of the *African Human Rights Yearbook* (2017–present), a publication of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. Since its founding, he has been a member of the Pretoria University Law Press (PULP) editorial committee, an open-access publishing house based in the Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law.



He serves as the series editor of the *PULP Commentaries on African Union human rights law*.

He wrote one of the leading monographs on the African human rights system, *International human rights law in Africa* (Oxford University Press), with 722 citations (according to Google Scholar). Together with the late Prof Christof Heyns and later, Prof Rachel Murray (from Bristol University), he oversaw research for and edited a 20-country study about the domestic impact of the United Nations treaties, initially published in 2000. A follow-up study was conducted and published in 2024 as *The Impact of the United Nations Human Rights Treaties on the Domestic Level: Twenty Years On*, second revised edition.

He has published 54 peer-reviewed articles and 37 chapters in collections of essays published by leading publishers, and edited or co-edited 12 books.

A total of 41 doctoral students have graduated under his sole or co-supervision.

In 2021, he was elected to serve a three-year term as a member of the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council, which is the 'think-tank' of the Council. He is the chairperson of the Association of Human Rights Institutes, a network of over 80 institutes worldwide devoted to research and educational activities in human rights.

Prof Viljoen received a B2 rating from the NRF.

EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG RESEARCHERS AWARD

RECIPIENTS:

Dr Chimere Anabanti
Dr Abe Kasonga
Dr Samkelo Malgas
Professor Vukosi Marivate
Professor Adrino Mazenda
Professor Kgomotso Mokoala
Dr Chijioke Okorie

This award is given to exceptional young achievers in the field of research, as seen against the University's strategic goals of achieving academic excellence, international competitiveness and local relevance.

DR CHIMERE ANABANTI

Dr Chimere Anabanti is a senior lecturer at the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) of the University of Pretoria.

He earned his doctorate from Birkbeck, University of London. He has received several excellence awards, including the Gilchrist Education Trust PhD Student's Prize. His research is mainly in computational group theory, which involves using both computational techniques and theoretical knowledge of the subject to solve problems in group theory and its related areas.

Through his research, he has disproved famous conjectures and theorems, answered numerous open problems, and proved several results in mathematics. He has given invited talks at conferences and seminars around the globe, with most of the talks in Europe. He has served as a reviewer for Web of Science-rated journals, including *Communications in Algebra*, *Open Mathematics* and *Quaestiones Mathematicae*. Part of his work experience includes serving as a lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) and a postdoctoral research fellow (university assistant) at the Graz University of Technology (TU Graz), Austria. During his postdoctoral appointment at TU Graz, he designed and taught computational group theory modules for master's and doctoral students.

He is a member of some learned societies, such as the European and Austrian Mathematical Societies.

Dr Anabanti is an NRF Y1-rated researcher. In 2022, he received an Academic Achiever's Award from the University of Pretoria. He has led workshops using a computer algebra package called GAP, including at the Seventh Biennial International Group Theory Conference (7 BIGTC) at North-West University, South Africa, in 2023, and the University of Salerno, Italy, in 2024. Recently, he was awarded a grant to host a postdoctoral fellow for two years. He has also served as a laureate of the CIRM-CIMPA fellowship at CIRM, France. At UP, he prepares the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics bulletin called the Blue Bulletin and works on the Department's website.



DR ABE KASONGA

Dr Abe Kasonga is a senior lecturer in the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Health Sciences.

He received his doctorate in 2018 from the University of Pretoria. He is the coordinator for the BSc (Hons) degree in physiology and also lectures to undergraduate and postgraduate students. His research has focused on investigating novel therapeutics that target G-protein coupled receptors in treating bone degenerative disorders such as osteoporosis. He has been awarded the NRF support for Y-rated researchers grant from 2024–2026.

Dr Kasonga has co-authored 13 papers in peer-reviewed international journals, which have received over 200 citations. He presented his research at the International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids (ISSFAL) conference in 2016, where he was awarded a Top 3 New Investigator Award. He again presented at ISSFAL in 2018 and was awarded a Top 10 New Investigator Award. He has recently presented his research at the World Congress for Osteoporosis, Osteoarthritis and Musculoskeletal Diseases in London.

Dr Kasonga sits on the South African National Committee for the International Union of Physiological Sciences. He is also a member of the Physiological Society of Southern Africa and has held membership to the European Calcified Tissue Society.

Dr Kasonga received a Y2 rating in 2023.



DR SAMKELO MALGAS

Dr Samkelo Malgas is a senior lecturer in biochemistry at the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics, and Microbiology at UP.

He has a doctorate in biochemistry and a Higher Education Postgraduate Diploma from Rhodes University. Dr Malgas is responsible for teaching at the second- and third-year undergraduate and honours levels and coordinating the biochemistry honours programme. He actively participates in various teaching- and learning-related committees and represents the Natural and Agricultural Sciences Faculty in the Curriculum Transformation Task Team.

In addition to teaching, Dr Malgas is the principal investigator of the Biocatalysis and Bioprocessing Laboratory. The laboratory focuses on advancing bio-refinery for the bio-economy through biotechnology. Their work revolves around using enzymes and microorganisms in the food and feed sector and producing fine chemicals and nutraceuticals from agricultural-derived plant waste. Industrial scaling-up of the research conducted by the laboratory would ultimately contribute to the development of sustainable processes, job creation, and the production of value-added products while avoiding the untenable disposal of agro-industrial wastes.



Dr Malgas has published over 30 research papers in peer-reviewed journals and three book chapters and holds a patent. His scholarly work has amassed over 950 citations and an *h*-index of 16.

He is dedicated to mentoring and research, having supervised and co-supervised the completion of one doctoral, six master's, and ten honours students to date. He has presented his work at many national and international conferences.

In 2022, Dr Malgas was awarded a Y2 NRF Rating in recognition of the potential to establish himself as a researcher within five years after evaluation, based on his performance and productivity.



PROFESSOR VUKOSI MARIVATE

Professor Vukosi Marivate holds the ABSA UP Chair of Data Science and is an associate professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Pretoria.

He is a researcher in artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing (NLP), focusing on local and low-resource languages. Prof Marivate leads the Data Science for Social Impact (DSFSI) research group, which explores data science methodologies to address societal challenges, especially in Africa.

Prof Marivate holds a bachelor's and master's degree in electrical engineering from Wits University and completed his doctorate at Rutgers University (USA). In addition to his research, he co-coordinates the MIT in Big Data Science Program at the University of Pretoria, helping to train the next generation of data scientists in Africa.

He co-founded Lelapa AI, a socially grounded Africa-centric AI startup, and Masakhane NLP, an open and collaborative research initiative focused on improving NLP for African languages. Prof Marivate is also one of the founding members of the Deep Learning Indaba, an initiative dedicated to strengthening machine learning and AI research across Africa by fostering collaboration, education, and innovation on the continent.

Prof Marivate's research and leadership in AI have earned him several prestigious awards and grants, including the Google Research Scholar Award, JP Morgan Chase AI Award, IDRC-AI4D awards, Meta/Facebook awards, NRF awards, and funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among others. He has also been recognised as a two-time finalist for the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) awards in the Emerging Researcher and Data for Research categories.

Beyond his academic work, Prof Marivate is highly engaged in community-driven science initiatives. He serves on the Council on Higher Education board and holds advisory roles in various data science organisations. He is a member of the steering committee for the Lacuna Fund, which supports the development of open-access datasets to address critical challenges in underserved regions, particularly in agriculture, health, and language. Furthermore, he is a board member of the Partnership on AI, a global coalition that brings together academia, industry, and civil society to promote responsible and inclusive AI development.

Prof Marivate continues to be a driving force in AI research and application, with a vision of harnessing the power of AI and data science to create positive societal impact, especially in Africa.

PROFESSOR ANDRINO MAZENDA

Professor Andrino Mazenda is an associate professor at the School of Public Management and Administration in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of Pretoria.

He also serves as the Department's faculty ethics representative. He holds editorial roles as a section associate editor in the *Humanities and Social Sciences Communication*, Springer, and as a section editor in *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, Frontiers Media SA. His research focuses on food security, livelihoods, and development policies.

Prof Mazenda has received significant recognition in recent years for his research contributions.

He was honoured as an Exceptional Emerging Researcher at the University of Pretoria. Additionally, he received a Y2 rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF) for 2023–2026. In 2022, he was awarded the Faculty's Best Emerging Research Award, the Junior Newsmaker of the Year Award, and *The Conversation Africa* Award.





PROFESSOR KGOMOTSO MOKOALA

Professor Kgomo Mokoala is an associate professor and specialist nuclear medicine physician in the Department of Nuclear Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences. She is the Head of the Clinical Unit (HCU/HoU). She holds the following degrees: MBChB, FCNP(SA), MMed (Nuclear Medicine) and PhD (Nuclear Medicine).

Prof Mokoala is the current South African Society of Nuclear Medicine (SASNM) president and a Colleges of Nuclear Physicians Council member. She is a member of the Master of Medicine (MMed), postgraduate and Pharmaceutics and Therapy (PTC) committees.

Her research interests lie in the theragnostic applications of nuclear medicine in gynaecological, prostate, skin and endocrine malignancies. She is involved in translational research that offers solutions to complex medical dilemmas and improves patient care and management. Her research activities have produced over 40 articles published in ISI-indexed peer-reviewed journals, 21 abstracts presented at national and international conferences, and four book chapters in books published by reputable publishers'. She is a member of the editorial board and a reviewer of some prominent, highly-ranked nuclear medicine journals.

She has also been invited as an expert or speaker in numerous local and international meetings and trainings.

She supervises, teaches and mentors both undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Department of Nuclear Medicine.

She received the Chris Jansen Young Researcher Award (2023). She was nominated for the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF-32) Award-clinician scientist category.

DR CHIJOIKE OKORIE

Dr Chijioke Okorie is a lecturer in the Department of Private Law and the Faculty of Law.

She received a doctorate in intellectual property law and competition law from the University of Cape Town in 2018. After receiving her doctoral degree, she served as the inaugural postdoctoral research fellow under the South African Research Chair in Intellectual Property, Innovation and Development at the University of Cape Town from 2019 to 2020.

Dr Okorie practised law full-time from 2006, when she was admitted as an advocate and attorney of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, to 2015, when she embarked on her doctoral research journey.

Dr Okorie has conducted research in the fields of copyright and the digital environment within the context of Africa. Over the past few years, she has adopted an information justice approach to address issues of law relating to emerging technologies, especially artificial intelligence.

She leads a research group in this regard, the Data Science Law Lab, deploying research in law and producing evidence and policy advice to support the growth of all aspects of data science research and application across Africa.

Dr Okorie received a C2 rating from the NRF.



TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

RECIPIENTS:

Dr Calayde Davey
Dr Carel Oosthuizen

The Laureates are awarded to nominated projects that display teaching practices with clear purpose and intent, and which have a strong alignment between the different elements in the broader context, to address identified needs or gaps with the aim of innovating to optimise teaching and learning.

These nominations show significant evidence of impact on student learning, are sustainable and can be replicated in other contexts.

These projects contribute to best practice in teaching and display significant evidence of innovation that addresses the identified challenges.

DR CALAYDE DAVEY

Dr Calayde Davey is a senior lecturer in the Department of Architecture at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. She holds a master's in architecture from the University of Pretoria and a doctorate in environmental design and planning from Kansas State University, USA, where she was a Fulbright Scholar.

Dr Davey is dedicated to exploring the transformative potential of urbanism, transdisciplinary professional practice, and innovation within the African built environment.

At the University of Pretoria, she leads the Urban Strategy Studio and the Hatfield Digital Twin City (HDTC) Initiative, integrating academic learning with professional practice in transdisciplinary settings.

In 2023, she was the leader of the South African delegation to the Universities of Twente, TU/Eindhoven, the Urban Design Institute, TNO, and the City of Rotterdam, invited by the Economic Department of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Diplomatic Mission for knowledge exchange on digitalisation in African cities.

She is a board member of BIMCommunityAFRICA, where she established and runs the annual BIMHarambee industry-academia conference since 2022.

Dr Davey received the University of Pretoria Institutional Teaching and Learning Award in 2023 and the 2023 Quanser Global Sustainability



Award for Engineering Education. Her recent publications include Davey, CA and Cook, L, 2024. *The Role of Organisational Culture and Structure in Data-Driven Green Policy and Decision-Making*. In *Geographic Perspectives on Climate Change Mitigation in Urban and Rural Environments*; Davey, C, 2024. *Digital Twin Cities: An Instrument for Pedagogical Change*. In *Teaching Architecture(s) in the Post-Covid Era*, 1st ed. Routledge; Cárdenas, I, Koeva, M, Davey, CA, and Nourian, P, 2024. *Solid Waste in the Virtual World: A Digital Twinning Approach for Waste Collection Planning*. In *18th International 3DGeoInfo Conference 2023*, Munich.

Dr Davey's work seeks to impact the African built environment through her innovative approach to education and practical applications in architecture, design and urban strategy.



DR CAREL OOSTHUIZEN

Dr Carel Oosthuizen is a senior lecturer in the Department of Zoology and Entomology within the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

He completed the following degrees: BSc (Zoology), BSc Hons (Genetics), MSc (Genetics), and PhD (Genetics), and he currently has an NRF Y-rating.

Dr Oosthuizen, a molecular geneticist and zoologist, has contributed significantly to various fields of biology through diverse research endeavours. One prominent area of his work involves population genetics and ecological genomics. Here, Dr Oosthuizen focuses on phylogeographic patterns and genetic connectivity among freshwater, estuarine and marine populations of fish species, showcasing his expertise in using advanced genetic techniques such as various Next Generation Sequencing (NGS, e.g., RAD sequencing) technologies to understand evolutionary processes and population dynamics. As part of this research, he also focuses on biodiversity assessment.

Dr Oosthuizen has explored practical applications of molecular biology in food security, investigating innovative methods to enhance food preservation, thereby addressing critical issues related to food security in South Africa. Furthermore, Dr Oosthuizen has contributed to methodological advancements in molecular genetics, where he explores techniques to optimise DNA extraction methods, which is crucial for genetic research and biodiversity assessments.

Overall, Dr Oosthuizen's research portfolio underscores his versatile expertise in molecular

genetics, population biology, and ecological genomics. His contributions advance fundamental biodiversity and evolutionary biology knowledge, as well as address practical challenges in food security and conservation.

Through collaborative efforts across diverse fields, Dr Oosthuizen continues to make significant strides in understanding and conserving biological diversity in South Africa and beyond.

Dr Oosthuizen's research prowess is underscored by his numerous publications and active participation in student supervision, enriching the academic discourse within his field.

His dedication to advancing knowledge is complemented by a solid commitment to student advising and mentorship, evident in his role as academic advisor for BSc zoology students.

Dr Oosthuizen has cultivated a reputation for excellence in teaching, research, and student mentorship. With over 12 years of experience in academia, Dr Oosthuizen's journey began with a profound commitment to enhancing the learning experience for students, particularly in molecular and cellular biology and animal diversity. Dr Oosthuizen is characterised by his infectious passion for his subjects, fostering a dynamic classroom environment that inspires students to engage deeply with the material.

He possesses exceptional communication skills and is adept at distilling complex concepts into understandable terms, ensuring accessibility for

diverse learning styles. His adaptable teaching approach accommodates the unique needs of his students, promoting an inclusive atmosphere where all feel encouraged to seek guidance and support. As a subject matter expert in zoology and entomology, Dr Oosthuizen continuously integrates the latest research and pedagogical methodologies into his teaching. His extensive teaching portfolio spans various academic levels, from foundational first-year modules to advanced coursework.

He has contributed significantly to curriculum development, leveraging technology such as BlackBoard Collaborate and Turning Point Technology to enhance interactive learning experiences.

He received the Best First-Year Lecturer Award in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences in 2021 and 2023 (NATHouse Award). He was the best lecturer of the year 2021 for the Biological Cluster within the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (faculty award). His accolades underscore his impact and innovation in pedagogy, highlighting his role as a leader in STEM education and student engagement.

Dr Oosthuizen's dedication to teaching excellence has been recognised through institutional and faculty awards, including the University of Pretoria Teaching Excellence Laureate Award for 2023-2024.





The Conversation Africa

AWARDS FOR SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

RECIPIENTS:

AWARD 1

UP Author with the single most-read article:

Dr Colleta Gandidzanwa

AWARD 2

UP Authors who published the most articles:

Ms Gwen Ansell

Professor Daniel Bradlow

*The University of Pretoria confers awards under **The Conversation** Africa Science Communication Awards category.*

*The **Conversation** Africa gives all higher education institutions an opportunity to share their research outputs with fellow academics across the globe as well as with civil society. The platform therefore places academics in a better position to identify opportunities to collaborate and conduct research with their peers across disciplines.*

*Our partnership with **The Conversation** Africa has increased the visibility of the work of UP researchers and academics, helping them reach wider audiences beyond academic research communities.*



PROFESSOR AHMED BHAYAT AND TEAM

The Department of Community Dentistry consists of 13 staff members who are all deeply committed to Community Engagement (CE) activities.

The Department educates undergraduate and postgraduate dental and oral hygiene (OH) students in Community Dentistry, exposing them to CE activities in nearby communities. These activities provide dental services to rural and marginalised communities, enhancing students' clinical skills and preparing them for their year-long community service programme.

The Department operates two mobile dental units (MDUs): one at the Daspoort Polyclinic and another at a designated school. These MDUs are excellent platforms for students to deliver preventive and curative dental care. Additional CE projects involve students visiting special needs schools, nurseries, primary and secondary schools, the Steve Biko Paediatric Oncology Ward, and the Phelophepa Healthcare Train. Professors Nkambule and Madiba, specialists in community dentistry, oversee teaching, organisation, planning, and scheduling for final-year dental students. Prof Nkambule also manages student placements on the Phelophepa Healthcare Train.

Professor Van Wyk and Mr Masinga, both experienced oral hygienists, are in charge of outreach projects for OH students. They plan OH CE projects and supervise students at special schools, nurseries, primary schools, and community outreach locations. Drs Mfolo and Chiwaya, as registrars, supervise dental and OH students and handle daily planning and organisation of CE projects. Dr Mmethi, a dentist, oversees final-year dental and OH students and provides dental services at CE sites. He is also responsible for the first-year CE project for dental students, which involves taking students to schools to provide dental and general health education. Ms Schoeman, the department

secretary, manages the administrative aspects of CE activities, compiles CE statistics, and ensures smooth project operations. Part-time staff include Ms Joosub, Wescombe, Monyepau, and Lukoto, all experienced oral hygienists who supervise, assist, and guide students during various CE projects. Mr Thabang, the School of Dentistry's driver, transports students, staff, and dental supplies to the various CE sites.

The Department also participates in oral health campaigns and other ad hoc CE projects. In addition to CE activities, staff teach community dentistry theory, covering policy, health services, finance, and epidemiology. Students apply these concepts during CE activities.

Qualified oral health staff supervise all dental procedures, and clinical quotas are awarded for services provided, ensuring standardised and acceptable service delivery. All CE activities adhere to the highest ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent and assent before dental procedures.

The Department uses these platforms for translational research, which has been published and presented in local and international journals and conferences. The Department has won the International Association for Dental Research Community Prize based on one of these CE activities. The Department is honoured to have received the CE Institutional Award and acknowledges this as a community effort, recognising and honouring all staff members for their hard work.

Professor Bhayat is the Head of the Department at Community Dentistry.



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DR COLLETA GANDIDZANWA

Dr Colleta Gandidzanwa is a lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.



She previously worked as programme manager for the ARUA Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Food Systems (ARUA-SFS) at the Future Africa campus. She is an agricultural economist by training and has extensive experience managing collaborative projects in Africa, such as ARUA-SFS, CLAB-Africa, FSNet-Africa, and Centres of Collaboration on agricultural research and development economics.

Her research interests are in food systems resilience in the context of climate change. Dr Gandidzanwa has worked with government departments and

parastatals in an inter-institutional team of scientists analysing the land reform's Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy farms in South Africa.

In August 2023, Dr Gandidzanwa was awarded the Horizons Institute Pump-prime Fund for an interdisciplinary research project as part of the Horizons Institute's Global Academy Crucible Programme.

MS GWEN ANSELL



Photo credit: Daylin Paul

Ms Ansell is an editor, writer, writing coach and organisational communication and journalism consultant with over 40 years of experience and a music researcher specialising in South African cultural and creative industries and the country's jazz history.

She has published books, chapters and media articles related to all these areas. Ms Ansell heads the research team at IKS Cultural Consulting, providing policy and research services to diverse arts industry entities locally and internationally.

Her recent work there has included the Digital Futures II study of online music streaming for South African artists (2022); a study of the income and expenditure of South African musicians before, during and post-Covid (2024) for Pro Helvetia Johannesburg; and a study of the representation and working conditions of women in South African live music for the South African Music Rights Organisation (2024).

Gwen Ansell is an associate of the Gordon Institute of Business Science, where she teaches academic writing and has co-researched and co-published with faculty. She is a former executive director of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism and a former Louis Armstrong Visiting Professor at the Center for Jazz Studies, Columbia University, New York.

PROFESSOR DANIEL BRADLOW

Professor Daniel Bradlow is a professor and senior research fellow at the Centre for Advancement of Scholarship. He was previously the SARCHI Professor of International Development Law and African Economic Relations in the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria.



He obtained his doctorate in legal studies from the University of Pretoria in 2010. He is also a compliance officer in the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit of the United Nations Development Program; co-chair of the Academic Circle, advising the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development; emeritus professor of law at American University Washington College of Law; co-chair of the 2024 T20 Task Force 3.3 on sovereign debt.

Prof Bradlow has also worked as Head, International Economic Relations and Policy Department, South African Reserve Bank and as a consultant to numerous international organisations.

His research focuses on the legal aspects of global financial governance and sovereign debt.

His most recent publications include *The law of the international financial institutions* (Oxford University Press, 2023); *Perspectives: thirty years of community centered accountability in international development*, D Bradlow, D Hunter, N Paul and V Iyengar (eds), October 2023, available on-line at: <https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/accountability-perspectives/> and *Re-thinking the sustainability of sovereign debt* (with Rosa M Lastra and Stephen Kim Park), in the *Journal of International Economic Law*, Volume 27, issue 2 (2024).

RE.SEARCH

CONTRIBUTION AWARD

RECIPIENT:

Department of Consumer and Food Sciences
in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The RE.SEARCH magazine award is awarded to a department or faculty for consistently communicating their science and research by providing relevant submissions relating to the theme of each edition which are shortlisted and published in RE.SEARCH over the preceding academic year.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND FOOD SCIENCES



The Department of Consumer and Food Sciences started as two separate departments: the Department of Food Science and the Department of Consumer Science—two of the oldest departments in the University.

The then Department of Food Science originated in 1920 as the Department of Dairying. In 1980, the teaching was extended to cover the broader field of food science and technology, and the name was changed to the Department of Food Science. The Department of Consumer Science was started in 1927 as the Department of Home Economics and Agriculture and evolved into the Department of Consumer Science in 2000. On 1 November 2017, the Consumer Science and Food Science departments merged to form the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences.

The Department provides relevant, world-class education and training for future consumer science, food science, culinary science, and nutrition leaders. The Department's research focus spans a wide range of the agricultural value chain from processors to consumers and can be placed in three main categories: food chemistry, nutrition and health; product development, food safety and sensory science; and sustainability, textiles, clothing and food.

In terms of personnel, the Department has a very balanced profile with a good mix of young early to mid-career academics and more established and senior researchers. A well-skilled and robust corps of professional staff provides excellent support.

There is a strong drive towards creating impact by placing the consumer's well-being at the heart of the research conducted in the Department. This has been important in motivating the Department's research to be popularised in media, such as the University of Pretoria's *RE.SEARCH* magazine. The goal is to realise the Department's vision of becoming the leading research-intensive consumer and food sciences department in Africa, recognised globally for the quality of its teaching and research to improve the well-being of the people of Africa.

NRF-RATED RESEARCHERS

RECIPIENTS:

A-rated
B-rated
C-rated
Y-rated



A-RATED RESEARCHERS



Professor Alexander Myburgh

Professor Alexander Myburgh is a full professor in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology at the University of Pretoria, where he also served as the Director of the Forest Molecular Genetics (FMG) Programme at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI). His research focuses on the genetic control of woody biomass production in fast-growing forest trees and the development of genome-assisted breeding technologies for trees.

Prof Myburgh established the FMG Programme in 2003 with SA forestry partners, garnering support from national organisations, including THRIP, NRF, DST, and TIA. His team has pioneered population genomics and systems genetics approaches to understand growth and wood formation in forest trees. He was the lead investigator of the United States Department of Energy - Joint Genome Institute funded Eucalyptus Genome Project, which produced the reference genome sequence for the genus in 2014. He is currently leading a DOE-JGI project for large-scale pangenome and population sequencing of over 3700 eucalypt trees.

For over 23 years, he has supervised 70 MSc and PhD students and authored 118 ISI peer-reviewed papers. He has received numerous awards, including the NSTF-BHP Billiton-W Kambule Award in 2015 and the UP Chancellor's Award in 2019.

Prof Myburgh received an A1 rating from the NRF.

B-RATED RESEARCHERS

Professor Olalekan Ayo-Yusuf is a professor and chairperson of the School of Health Systems and Public Health. He also served in various senior executive roles and is currently the founding director of the internationally-recognised Africa Centre for Tobacco Industry Monitoring and Policy Research. He is a dentist, and after receiving a doctorate in health promotion and health education from Maastricht University (The Netherlands) in 2008, he completed a postdoctoral fellowship training in public health practice at the Harvard School of Public Health.

His primary research focuses on tobacco use epidemiology and policy translation to prevent non-communicable diseases (NCD). He has been an investigator or co-investigator on national and international research, including clinical trials and capacity-building projects related to tobacco use prevention, treatment and cessation, and policy advocacy. In recognition of his outstanding research, he recently received the inaugural Mira Aghi Award from the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco. Prof Ayo-Yusuf has over 130 peer-reviewed publications and co-authored several World Health Organization (WHO) technical report series. He serves as a member of the editorial board of several journals, as the chair of the standing committee on Health of the Academy of Science of South Africa and is a member of the WHO Tobacco Regulation Scientific Group.

Prof Ayo-Yusuf received a B1 rating from the NRF.

Professor Juan Bornman is a distinguished academic and research fellow at the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) within the Faculty of Humanities. Over a career exceeding three decades at the University of Pretoria, coinciding with the Centre for AAC establishment in 1991, she has held various roles, including the directorship from 2009 to 2019. She served as president of the International Society for AAC from 2021 to 2022, following her tenure as president-elect from 2019 to 2020. Currently, her primary affiliation is with Stellenbosch University.

Prof Bornman's research focuses on two core areas: increasing awareness of the challenges associated with significant communication disabilities and advocating for communication as a fundamental human right and necessity, especially for individuals with complex communication needs. Her work addresses the utilisation of AAC to facilitate access within domestic, educational, and healthcare environments. Recently, her research has concentrated on supporting victims of abuse and violence with communication disabilities in navigating the criminal justice system.

In recognition of her contributions, Prof Bornman received the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's George Foster Research Award (2021) and the Stals Prize for multidisciplinary team research from the South African Academy of Science and Arts (2021). She is a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSaF) and has received fellowships from ISAAC (2019) and the South African Association for Speech-Language and Hearing Therapy (2023).

Prof Bornman received a B2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Olalekan Ayo-Yusuf



Professor Juan Bornman



Professor Daniel Bradlow

Professor Daniel Bradlow is a professor/ Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Advancement of Scholarship. He was previously the SARCHI Professor of International Development Law and African Economic Relations in the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria. He obtained his LLD from the University of Pretoria in 2010. He is also a Compliance Officer in the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit of the United Nations Development Program; Co-Chair of the Academic Circle, advising the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development; Emeritus Professor of Law at American University Washington College of Law; co-chair of the 2024 T20 Task Force 3.3 on sovereign debt, and a member of the Finance Technical Advisory Committee, 2024 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), annual flagship report, FAO.

His research focuses on the legal aspects of global financial governance and sovereign debt. His most recent publications include *The law of the international financial institutions* (Oxford University Press, 2023); *Perspectives: thirty years of community centered accountability in international development*, D Bradlow, D Hunter, N Paul and V Iyengar (eds), October 2023, available on-line at: <https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/accountability-perspectives/> and *Re-thinking the sustainability of sovereign debt* (with Rosa M Lastra and Stephen Kim Park), in the *Journal of International Economic Law*, Volume 27, Issue 2 (2024).

Prof Bradlow received a B1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Ding-Geng Chen

Professor Ding-Geng Chen is the first DST-NRF-SAMRC SARCHI research chair in biostatistics and an extraordinary professor in biostatistics at the Department of Statistics.

In 1995, he received his doctorate in statistics from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Guelph, Canada. Prof Chen is now an elected fellow of the American Statistical Association and an elected member of the International Statistical Institute in recognition of his research and contributions to the statistical profession. His contributions to statistical research and public health applications have been in-depth and very broad across several key areas of biostatistics to incorporate statistical theory with advanced computations to solve real-life problems. Prof Chen has published over 250 scientific papers and 40 books in biostatistics research and development on clinical trial methodology, biostatistical survival data analysis, big-data analytics and meta-analysis, data science, causal inference and structural equation modelling, and public health research.

Prof Chen received a B1 Rating from the NRF.



Professor Serena Coetzee

Professor Serena Coetzee is an extraordinary professor in the Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

Before she joined the United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES) as Head of Resource Nexus Programme in 2024, she was professor and Head of the Department of Geography, Geoinformatics, and Meteorology at the University of Pretoria from 2018. She joined UP in 2006.

Prof Coetzee's research focuses on the ever-increasing volumes of geospatial data and the management and governance challenges required to make the data available accessible and usable. The interdisciplinary research combines GISc, cartography, information systems and technologies. It contributes to understanding and solving these challenges in the emerging geospatial information ecosystem, often based on open principles and standards. At UNU-FLORES, she focuses on geospatial data for the integrated management of environmental resources. In 2022, she received the Society of South African Geographers Gold Medal, an honorary award for meritorious contribution to geography in South Africa. In 2023, she was elected as one of the vice presidents of the International Cartographic Association (ICA).

Prof Coetzee received a B2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Teresa Coutinho is a staff member of the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology, deputy director of the Centre of Microbial Ecology and Genomics and member of the management committee of the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute. She lectures plant pathology in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. Her research interest is primarily in phytobacteriology, but she has researched fungal tree pathogens as part of the Tree Protection Co-operative Programme.

Prof Coutinho has been involved in the training of 27 doctoral and 45 master's students (to completion of their degrees). She has 175 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals and has contributed chapters to several books, including *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology*. Prof Coutinho has edited and contributed to two books on plant pathology in South Africa. She has a *h*-index of 47 (Scopus). She is an editor of reviews, an associate editor for *Phytoparasitica*, an associate editor of the *South African Journal of Science*, and a senior editor for the *Journal of Plant Pathology* and the *Canadian Journal of Plant Pathology*. In 2020, she was the guest editor of a special issue of the *South African Journal of Science* that focused on this topic. She is the secretary-general of the International Society of Plant Pathology (2023–2028). She is also co-chair of the Specialist Committee of this society on plant pathogenic bacterial nomenclature (2018–).

Prof Coutinho received a B2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Chrisna du Plessis is a full professor at the University of Pretoria, where until June 2024, she was also Chair of the School for the Built Environment and Head of the Department of Architecture. Prof Du Plessis holds graduate and post-graduate degrees in architecture from the University of Pretoria, a doctorate in urban sustainability from the University of Salford, and an honorary doctorate from Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden.

Her research concentrates on developing new ways of thinking about the problems of sustainability to expand our understanding of concepts such as sustainability, resilience and regenerative development, how they are related, and how they influence the way we think about and the approaches we use, to create cities, neighbourhoods and buildings.

For almost two decades, Prof Du Plessis led the Priority Theme of Sustainable Construction of the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB). She served two terms on the CIB Board, one as Chair of the Programme Committee. She also served as a juror on international design competitions such as the European Solar Decathlon and the LafargeHolcim Foundation Sustainable Building Competition.

Prof Du Plessis received a B3 rating from the NRF.

Professor Tjaart Krüger is an associate professor in the Department of Physics, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. He completed his doctorate cum laude and a postdoctoral fellowship at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

He is passionate about multidisciplinary research and performs his research in molecular biophysics, a field at the confluence of physics, biology, chemistry, statistics, and even information technology and engineering. His primary interest is to resolve the molecular details of energy transfer and regulation in various photosynthetic organisms' light-harvesting complexes and apply the underlying design principles to solar cells. His research involves developing laser spectroscopy techniques complemented by theoretical and computational approaches. He has published over 60 journal articles, four book chapters, and an advanced textbook on optical spectroscopy. He has supervised over 20 postgraduate students to completion.

He is actively developing the field of biophysics on the African continent and is serving on various councils, including the International Union for Pure and Applied Biophysics. He is a South African Young Academy of Science member and senior editor of *The Journal of Physical Chemistry Letters*.

Prof Krüger received a B2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Teresa Coutinho



Professor Chrisna du Plessis



Professor Tjaart Krüger



Professor Innocent Pikirayi

Professor Innocent Pikirayi is a professor of archaeology and Deputy Dean responsible for research and postgraduate studies in the Faculty of Humanities.

He is an honorary research associate of the McDonald Institute and the Dunbarney Visiting Fellow at Magdalene College, University of Cambridge. His research focuses on the development of complex societies in southern Africa since 1000 AD. He is currently conducting geoarchaeological investigations at Great Zimbabwe to document the ancient city's water resources and to understand the role of water in the development of African civilisations. He uses historical ecology to engage with human-environmental relations in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, such as Mt Kilimanjaro, to understand the present human condition better. Since 2017, he has been an ambassador for *Antiquity: A Review of World Archaeology*, developing locally relevant strategies to mentor early career researchers in Africa. He is a member of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC), the Shanghai Archaeology Forum (SAF), and the Integrated History and Future of People on Earth (IHOPE). In 2020, he was admitted to the Royal Society of South Africa (RSSA) and the Academy of Science South Africa (ASSAf).

Prof Pikirayi received a B1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Jianwei Ren

Professor Jianwei Ren is a professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering within the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment, and Information Technology. Additionally, he will serve as the deputy director of the Institute of Materials Innovation and Sustainable Manufacturing under the Department.

His research interests include materials science and advanced manufacturing, automated data acquisition, process control, hydrogen and fuel cell technologies, atomic layer deposition (ALD) technologies, system integration, and environmental engineering focusing on sustainability. Beyond his scientific work, Prof Ren is passionate about sports, history, and travel.

Prof Ren received a B2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Marietjie Venter

Professor Marietjie Venter is an extraordinary professor at the Department of Medical Virology (2024-) and director of the Centre of Emerging Arbo and Respiratory Virus Research (CEARV) (2023-), University of Pretoria (UP). She is currently a distinguished professor and NRF SARCHI chair in emerging viral threats, One Health Surveillance and Vaccines (EViTOH), Infectious Disease and Oncology Research Institute (IDORI), University of the Witwatersrand (April 2024-).

Prof Venter launched the Zoonotic Arbo and Respiratory Virus Research Program, Department of Medical Virology, UP (2006-); became a full professor (2014-) and co-founded the Centre for Viral Zoonoses (2015) and CEARV (2023). She has over 180 publications in ISI journals, an *h*-index of 48 (Scopus) and over 10 600 citations.

She is a member of the Academy of Science, South Africa (ASSAf) (2021-), President (elect) of the World Society for Virology (2024-) and co-founded and chairs the Southern Africa Society for Virology (SASV) (2024-). She serves as World Health Organization (WHO) advisor on respiratory and arboviruses and chairs the Scientific Advisory Group for Origins of Novel Pathogens, including COVID-19 (SAGO) (2021-). She co-chaired the 8th World One Health Conference (WOHC) (Cape Town) and is a member of the Global One Health Community Scientific Advisory Board.

She received the NSTF Award (best output by an individual over 5-10 years) (2013), was co-recipient of the UP/Communications Africa Award for the most read paper in 2022 (How the new one was found: Discovery of SARS – COV2 Omicron variant, by the National Genomic Surveillance consortium-SA) and was a finalist for the NSTF Lifetime Achiever Award in 2022 and 2024.

Prof Venter received a B2 rating from the NRF.

C-RATED RESEARCHERS

Professor Celia Abolnik is a professor in the Department of Production Animal Studies in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. She holds the NRF-DSI SARCHI chair in Poultry Health and Production, the first and only SARCHI chair awarded to the Faculty of Veterinary Science, which is the only veterinary school in South Africa.

Her area of research is avian diseases, especially viral diseases that affect the poultry industry. Besides their impact on national food security and trade, some of these diseases, like high pathogenicity avian influenza, pose a significant human health threat too. Her research encompasses pathogen identification and genomics, the molecular epidemiological tracing of outbreak sources and spread, diagnostic test development, and the development and clinical testing of novel veterinary vaccines using a plant expression system.

She is a member of the international OFFLU network, has served on national avian influenza task teams and is a member of the South African Veterinary Association's Poultry Group (ex officio).

Prof Abolnik received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Celia Abolnik

Dr Ruth Aluko is a researcher within the Unit for Distance Education (UDE), Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. She manages the quality of the Faculty's Distance Education programmes.

Dr Aluko facilitates training and workshops in her field and is involved in evaluating distance education programmes and policy development locally and internationally.

Dr Aluko's latest edited books are *Does distance education in the developing context need more research?* and *Building theory into practice* Volumes 1 and 2. She is the chief editor of the open journal *Teacher Education through Flexible Learning in Africa*.

She has served as president of the National Association of Distance Education in Southern Africa (NADEOSA) for two terms. Dr Aluko is the treasurer of the Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA).

Dr Aluko also lectures in full-time programmes in the Faculty and supervises postgraduate students until completion. Her research focus areas include quality management of ODL programmes, mobile learning, access, social justice, programme evaluation, student support, and teacher professional development.

Dr Aluko received a C2 rating from NRF.



Dr Ruth Aluko



Professor John Annandale

Professor John Annandale is a professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. He received an MSc (Agric) degree from the University of Pretoria in 1988, specialising in crop water relations. His doctorate in soil physics from Washington State University (USA) was awarded in 1991, during which he developed a dynamic, mechanistic mathematical model to quantify water and solute fluxes in two dimensions in ridged potato crops.

Prof Annandale currently specialises in the irrigation of crops with poor-quality waters. He recently led a project to develop a risk-based, site-specific Irrigation Water Quality Decision Support System (IrrigWQ DSS) to assess the fitness-for-use of waters for irrigation. This DSS has proved invaluable in his research on the suitability of mine waters for irrigation, a technology with the potential to play an essential role in the Just Energy Transition programme for collieries post-closure.

Prof Annandale was selected as a finalist for the NSTF-Water Research Commission (WRC) Award. He also received the WRC Knowledge Tree Award for New Products and Services for Economic Development.

Prof Annandale received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor
Rashri Baboolal-Frank

Professor Rashri Baboolal-Frank is an associate professor in the Department of Procedural Law. She lectures alternative dispute resolution and civil procedure to the final year LLB students. She designed and created the LLM programme in alternative dispute resolution, for which she is the sole lecturer. She is involved in numerous short courses and projects at UP Enterprises. She designed and created the first postgraduate online diploma in labour dispute resolution, accredited by DHET and CHE and accordingly registered by SAQA. It will be offered in January 2025.

She is a practising advocate with unreported judgments as leading counsel. She has been involved in various civil litigation matters and has been successful for the client. She is an avid researcher and scholar in the Department of Procedural Law, with more than 30 research outputs. She has published a book, book chapters and articles in nationally and internationally accredited journals.

Prof Baboolal-Frank is a certified alternative dispute resolution practitioner. She possesses international accreditation and affiliation. She is an academic member of the London Court of International Arbitration. She is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators in the UK and the International Association for Procedural Lawyers. She is on the Rules Board for the High Court panel, which advises on amendments to court rules. She has applied for membership to both the Asian Institute for ADR and Singapore International Arbitration Centre.

Prof Rashri Baboolal-Frank received a C3 rating from the NRF.



Professor Megan Bester

Professor Megan Bester is a professor in the Department of Anatomy in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Her expertise in biochemistry and cell and tissue biology has provided an opportunity for interdisciplinary research, where laboratory-based findings are confirmed in cell, tissue, and animal models. This includes elucidating the effects of polyphenols, peptides and functional foods to prevent or treat non-communicable diseases.

Associated collaborations have been established between biochemistry, physiology, pharmacology, and food sciences, locally and internationally. At present, the focus of her research as a member of the Biotherapeutics group in the Department of Biochemistry and collaborators at Kings College United Kingdom is the discovery of antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) using peptide sequences from African species as templates for the design of novel AMPs for the treatment of antimicrobial resistant Gram-negative infections. She coordinates research evaluating antibacterial activity, cellular toxicity, and multifunctionality using *in vitro* and *ex vivo* models. Her research has led to the discovery of several novel bioactive molecules with therapeutic potential.

She has authored or co-authored 91 publications in ISI journals and supervised or co-supervised 64 master's and doctoral students.

Prof Bester received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Jaco Beyers is a professor in the Department of Religion Studies in the Faculty of Theology and Religion. He is the Head of Department and Deputy Dean for Teaching and Learning.

The Department of Religion Studies deals with all matters related to the study of religion and the relation between religions. Reflecting on what constitutes a religion and what the functions of religions are forms part of the area of research. Religion consists of different building blocks (phenomena). These are studied in comparison to understand the meaning of religion. Prof Beyers' areas of interest include the study of secularisation, inter-religious dialogue, and the relationship between religion and art.

Since 2016, he has acted as the section editor for the publication of the international workgroup, which focuses on Muslim-Christian relations. This initiative originated at the University of Birmingham, UK. He is responsible for all contributions from Eastern and Southern Africa. The research resulted in 21 volumes published with Brill Publishers.

In 2021, he was invited to join the International Advisory Board on Curriculum Innovation (Future Talent Council, Stockholm, Sweden).

Prof Beyers received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Melodi Botha is a professor in Entrepreneurship at the Department of Business Management in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) at the University of Pretoria (UP). She is also the research coordinator and programme lead of the PhD programme within her department. She holds a BCom and MPhil Degree (both cum laude) and received the Sasol Achievement Award for the most eminent postgraduate student, and the Elsabe Smith Achievement Award for the best achievement in the MPhil degree.

At the age of 27 she obtained her doctoral degree and received the Anton Rupert Prize for the best research thesis for a DCom degree in Business Management. She published three articles from her doctoral thesis and won a "best paper" award at an international conference.

Her research focus is to understand the entrepreneurial behaviours and actions of entrepreneurs. This led her to explore the entrepreneurial intention-action gap, and how entrepreneurial competencies (ECs) can reduce this gap. She received the Best Senior Researcher award in Management Sciences in the EMS Faculty at UP in 2022. She further also received the Best Researcher in the Department of Business Management in 2006, 2010 and 2017 respectively. She is a member of the Research Committee of the EMS Faculty since 2016 and was recently appointed as one of the directors of the TuksSport High School. She is also a member of the editorial team as Section Editor for both the *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences* (SAJEMS) as well as the *Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management* (SAJESBM).

Prof Botha received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Chris Broodryk is an associate professor in the School of the Arts. He is affiliated with the Drama Programme, where he was Chair of Drama from 2019–2022.

Prof Broodryk holds a doctorate in film and television studies from the University of Cape Town and lectures in Drama and Film Studies from first-year to honours students. Prof Broodryk's research focuses on the representation, expression, and negotiation of identity in and through various media, particularly feature films and social media.

Pursuing this research focus, he has published on South African cinemas and adjacent media in journals such as *Critical Arts*, *Persona Studies*, *Technoetic Arts* and *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*. He edited the volume *Public intellectuals in South Africa: critical voices from the past* (2021), published by Wits University Press.

He is currently involved in interdisciplinary projects such as The Theatre of Climate Action (in collaboration with the Centre for Asian Studies in Africa and the HSRC). Upon invitation in 2024 and 2018, he curated a selection of South African films for the African Film Weekend at the University of Richmond, Virginia (USA).

Prof Broodryk received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Jaco Beyers



Professor Melodi Botha



Professor Chris Broodryk



Professor Glynn Buchanan

Professor Glynn Buchanan is an adjunct professor, coordinator and Head of the Division of Endodontics, part of the Department of Odontology in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

He completed his dental training and doctorate at the University of Pretoria. In addition to his academic and teaching roles, he has been a practising dentist for the last 14 years. Whilst primarily engaged in the clinical training of dentistry students, his research focuses on the study of endodontic anatomy. Through local projects and multinational collaborations, his research has determined the prevailing root and canal morphology of the human dentition in populations living in the Southern African region.

His other research endeavours have also contributed to the clinical practice of endodontics and dentistry.

Outside the university, Prof Buchanan is a founding member and current president of the Nexus Dental South Africa group.

Prof Buchanan received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Elna Buys

Professor Elna Buys is a distinguished professor in the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences at the University of Pretoria. She began her research career at the Agricultural Research Council, focusing on fresh meat quality and safety, before joining the University in 2001 to establish a research area in dairy science. Her work centres on dairy microbiology, particularly the effects of processing on pathogenic and spoilage bacteria in dairy products. Her multidisciplinary research spans nutrition, toxicology, infectious diseases, microbiology, biochemistry, and genetics.

Prof Buys has made significant contributions to the field, holding three patents and serving on the editorial boards of several prestigious journals. She has been actively involved in international collaborations, including projects funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and various bilateral cooperation programs.

Her leadership roles include heading the Department of Food Science, merging it with the Department of Consumer Science, and serving as president of the South African Association for Food Science and Technology (2022–2023). Prof Buys has supervised numerous postgraduate students and developed an online Food Microbiology course. Her recognition includes appointments to the Dairy Standards Agency Board and various international committees.

Prof Buys received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Michael Chapwanya

Professor Michael Chapwanya is a professor in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics at the University of Pretoria. He holds a PhD from the University of Limerick (Ireland) and has received prestigious postdoctoral awards from both Simon Fraser University (Canada) and the University of Limerick. He has supervised several MSc and PhD students to completion. Currently, he is a Principal Investigator under the SARCHI Chair in the department where he was its interim leader in 2015. He is also the coordinator and graduate advisor for the PhD and MSc programs within the department.

Prof Chapwanya's research portfolio focuses on the mathematical modeling of real-life problems, particularly in the areas of plant vector-borne diseases, bacteria biofilms, and chemotaxis. He utilises mathematical modeling techniques, particularly based on Partial Differential Equations (PDEs), to study and analyze these phenomena. His research involves not only the development of mathematical models but also their rigorous mathematical analysis, including the derivation of approximate analytical solutions and the investigation of their qualitative properties.

Additionally, Prof Chapwanya is involved in the development and implementation of numerical schemes for solving these PDEs, as well as the simulation of these models to gain insights into the behaviour of the systems under study. His work spans both theoretical aspects of mathematical modeling and practical applications, with a focus on understanding and mitigating the spread of diseases and studying the dynamics of biological systems at both macro- and micro-scale.

Prof Chapwanya received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Evans Chirwa is a full professor and Rand Water Chair in Water Utilisation in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Pretoria, where he researches advanced water treatment for application in water reclamation and the creation of new water. He holds the following degrees: BSc (Civil Engineering) from the University of Malawi, MSc (Civil Engineering) and PhD (Civil Engineering) from the University of Kentucky (USA). During his tenure at the University of Pretoria, he has published 234 papers in peer-reviewed journals, over 144 papers in peer-reviewed conference proceedings, and 12 book chapters. In addition, he has produced 26 doctoral and 52 master's graduates in the past 16 years. He has served as an invited keynote speaker at the Associazione Italiana di Ingegneria Chimica (AIDIC), the International Water Association (IWA), Global Congress of Chemical Engineering (GCCE) and other international conferences. He is the editor of the acclaimed international water research journal *Water Science and Technology*, published by IWA Publishing in the United Kingdom.

Prof Chirwa won the 2022 National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) Award in the Water Research Commission Award Category. In 2021, he was elected a Senior Fellow of the Water Institute of Southern Africa (SFWISA) and he received the University of Pretoria Exceptional Academic Achiever Award for Research in 2023. The inter- and trans-disciplinary programme he established in the Water and Environmental Engineering Programme at the University of Pretoria has resulted in a fast-growing doctoral and master's programme.

Prof Chirwa received a C1 rating from the NRF.

Professor Theresa Coetsee is an associate professor in the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgical Engineering. She holds a doctorate in metallurgical engineering from UP and an MBA from Heriot-Watt University, UK. She joined UP in 2016, following 25 years of working in the mining and mineral resources industry, notably at ISCOR, Kumba Resources, and Exxaro Resources. She was the principal process development specialist for the AlloyStream project at Exxaro Resources, developing a novel process for high-carbon ferromanganese production at the demonstration plant level. She has published several research articles on the fundamentals of manganese ore smelting.

Her primary research is in extractive metallurgy (pyrometallurgy and hydrometallurgy), which focuses on process improvement and development through process mineralogy integrated with thermochemical modelling. Her research includes environmental remediation and valorisation of waste streams from industrial processes.

Prof Coetsee has published numerous research articles in internationally accredited journals. She served as South Africa's principal investigator on the BRICS multilateral joint science and technology collaboration project with researchers from China and India. This project focused on the development of flux for optimised inclusion engineering in submerged arc welding (SAW). Innovations include aluminium-assisted SAW to modify flux oxygen behaviour via gas phase reactions to improve weld alloying and increase deposition rates.

Prof Coetsee received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Stephen Coetzee, PhD (CA) SA, is a professor of accounting in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

Prof Coetzee obtained his doctorate in 2016 at the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland. He has taught financial accounting at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He supervises postgraduate research students and is dedicated to continued research in accounting education.

Within any discipline, a critical unifying characteristic of those undertaking research is found in their educator role; hence, Prof Coetzee's research seeks to explore critical unanswered questions in accounting education. In particular, Prof Coetzee's research interests include assessment and the use of technology in education. Prof Coetzee has published in leading journals in these areas, including *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* and the *British Journal of Education Technology*.

Prof Coetzee has also published in the top three accounting education journals: *Issues in Accounting Education*, *Accounting Education* and *Journal of Accounting Education*.

Prof Coetzee received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Evans Chirwa



Professor Theresa Coetsee



Professor Stephen Coetzee



Professor Sonali Das

Professor Sonali Das is a faculty member in the Department of Business Management at the University of Pretoria. She holds a bachelor's in statistics from Presidency College (Kolkata, India), a master's from the University of Calcutta (Kolkata, India), and a doctorate from the University of Connecticut (Storrs, USA). Her career includes being a visiting professor at the University of the Witwatersrand and a research associate at Nelson Mandela University. From 2007 to 2019, she advanced from senior researcher to principal researcher at the CSIR in Pretoria.

In 2019, Prof Das was elected to the International Statistical Institute, and in 2020, she received the Mujeres por Africa Foundation Award, facilitating collaboration with Spanish institutions. She serves on the councils of the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions and The International Society for Business and Industrial Statistics. Additionally, she is active in the South African Statistical Association, chairing its Bayes Special Interest Group.

Prof Das is an associate editor for several journals, including *Applied Stochastic Models in Business and Industry* and the *South African Statistical Journal*. She chaired the 2018 Women in Science Without Borders Conference in Johannesburg. Her extensive publications span statistical and interdisciplinary fields.

Prof Das received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Marné de Vries

Professor Marné de Vries is an associate professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology. In 2012, she received a doctorate from the University of Pretoria, focusing on governing the coherent evolution of enterprise designs. Her research, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, incorporates the Design and Engineering Methodology of Organisations (DEMO), using the DEMO aspect models to represent and re-design enterprise operations.

Identifying the need for better software support for DEMO's aspect models, she started a collaboration with the University of Vienna in 2018 on OmiLAB (Open Models Initiative Laboratory) to develop software tool support for DEMO aspect models. Currently, she guides postgraduate studies, using more participative modelling approaches during enterprise design, and therefore also experiments with different participative modelling tools.

She has been an editorial board member of the Enterprise Engineering Series from 2020 to 2024 and actively participated in activities of the Enterprise Engineering Working Conference.

Prof De Vries received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Marthie Ehlers

Professor Marthie Ehlers is a professor and principal medical scientist in the Department of Medical Microbiology in the Faculty of Health Sciences. In 1998, she received a doctorate in microbiology and commenced as a Post-Doctoral Fellow, one of the first fellows enrolled at UP, with a fellowship from the Claude Harris Leon Foundation, UK. Her research findings have been presented at 26 national and 37 international conferences. She has authored and co-authored 76 peer-reviewed research publications in accredited national and international journals and 14 scientific handbook chapters. Prof Ehlers has been an NRF-rated researcher since 2007.

Her research focuses on the genomic diversity and evolution of antibiotic-resistant bacterial pathogens such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, Coagulase-negative staphylococci, *Enterococcus* species, *Clostridioides difficile*, Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella* (typhoidal and non-typhoidal) and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Whole genome sequencing elucidates these pathogens' resistome, mobilome and virulome. Microbiome and metagenomics studies on respiratory diseases (cystic fibrosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchiectasis and TB in the context of HIV infection) aim to improve patient treatment and ensure a better understanding of these antibiotic-resistant polymicrobial infections.

Prof Ehlers received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Chukuakadibia Eresia-Eke holds an undergraduate degree in engineering and a postgraduate diploma in business management. He has an MBA and obtained his doctorate in business management from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Though he currently serves as a professor in the Department of Business Management at the University of Pretoria, he has taught at different tertiary institutions, nationally and internationally. Concerned about the dearth of critical skills on the African continent, Prof Eresia-Eke is deeply involved in human capacity development. He has trained thousands of people across sectors, empowering them to function better in the contemporary business world.

With a natural bent for academic work, Prof Eresia-Eke has successfully supervised many master's and doctoral students. He has also co-authored textbooks on monitoring and evaluation, project management, and supply chain management. His research is predominantly in entrepreneurship, mainly focusing on non-financial propellers of performance in entrepreneurial ventures. Over the past decade, he has consistently published a stream of articles in accredited journals and has also presented several papers, mainly at international conferences.

Prof Eresia-Eke received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor
Chukuakadibia Eresia-Eke

Dr Rebecca Fasselt is a senior lecturer in the Department of English. She earned her doctorate in Anglophone Literatures from the Free University Berlin in 2012.

Her research focuses on postcolonial and African literatures, with a particular interest in literatures of intra-African migration and diaspora. She is co-editor of *The Routledge Companion to Migration Literature* (2024) with Gigi Adair and Carly McLaughlin and *The Short Story in South Africa: Contemporary Trends and Perspectives* (Routledge, 2022) with Corinne Sandwith. Her work has also appeared in journals such as *Research in African Literatures*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Feminist Theory*, *Journal of Southern African Studies* and *Interventions*.

Dr Fasselt received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Rebecca Fasselt

Professor Yoseph Getachew is a faculty member in the Economics Department at the University of Pretoria. He is an associate editor of *Economic Modelling* and a member of the NRF Rating Specialist Committee. His research has been recognised with the Best Junior Researcher in Economic Sciences Award in the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences for three consecutive years (2015, 2016, and 2017).

Before joining the University of Pretoria, Prof Getachew was a research fellow at Durham University Business School (United Kingdom), a research consultant and a doctorate fellow at UNU-MERIT, Maastricht University (The Netherlands). His research focuses on macroeconomic development and political economy, particularly economic growth, public investment policy, inequality, and intergenerational mobility, analysed from theoretical and empirical perspectives. His work seeks to understand the impact of public policy on inequality dynamics and intergenerational mobility and their subsequent effects on economic growth and welfare—topics of significant relevance to the developing world, especially sub-Saharan Africa.

Prof Getachew has published extensively in highly rated international journals, including the *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, *World Development*, *Journal of Public Economic Theory*, *Journal of Macroeconomics*, *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, *Economic Modelling*, and *Economics Letters*.

Prof Getachew received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Yoseph Getachew



Professor Amelia Goddard

Professor Amelia Goddard is a veterinary clinical pathology professor and a registered clinical pathology specialist with the South African Veterinary Council. Prof Goddard was Head of the Department of Companion Animal Clinical Studies, Faculty of Veterinary Science, from September 2018 until April 2024. In 2016, she received a doctorate from the University of Pretoria titled 'Biomarkers of haemostatic and inflammatory changes in canine babesiosis'.

Prof Goddard's primary research focus is on the complex interaction and interdependence between the inflammatory and haemostatic systems in systemic inflammation, using various animal models such as canine babesiosis, canine parvovirus enteritis, canine spirocercosis, snake envenomation and African horse sickness. The main objective of her research is to expand on current knowledge of the host response in systemic inflammation, specifically its effect on haemostasis, as well as the role of the vascular endothelium in disease pathogenesis.

Prof Goddard received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Marien Graham

Professor Marien Graham's research journey spans numerous sole-authored publications and collaborative endeavours with esteemed international and national scholars. With a doctorate in mathematical statistics, her research sheds light on critical issues within South Africa's educational landscape. It utilises novel and sophisticated statistical techniques to generate a more comprehensive understanding of how learning and assessment opportunities for students at all levels of the formal education system (early learning, primary, secondary and tertiary) and their overall mental health and well-being can be improved.

As a full professor at the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Pretoria, Prof Graham has substantially contributed to various fields, including education, healthcare and social issues. She has published over 100 articles in peer-reviewed journals and authored one book and five chapters. She regularly presents her findings at national and international conferences and has supervised or co-supervised one postdoctoral, 15 doctoral and 22 master's students to completion.

Prof Graham is a researcher with the National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa, and serves on rating committees for the NRF. The Education Association of South Africa has awarded her the 2023 Research Medal.

Prof Graham received a C3 rating from the NRF.



Professor Stefan Gruner

Professor Stefan Gruner is an associate professor in the Department of Computer Science. In 1999, he received his doctoral degree (Dr.rer.nat.) cum laude from the RWTH Aachen (Germany) on the topic of software engineering. After a few post-doctoral positions in Germany, France, and England between 1999 and 2006, he joined the University of Pretoria in 2006. Here, he taught a wide range of courses in various sub-fields of computer science.

During the past ten years, with support from post-doctoral research fellows in his mentorship, Prof Gruner published some technical research results, mostly in model-checking applied to concurrent systems. He also wrote several less technical, trans-disciplinary and science-philosophical papers concerning the meta-scientific question of whether, or to what extent, his academic disciplines of computer science and software engineering are proper sciences. Publications of this more philosophical type were enabled by Prof Gruner's second academic degree, namely a Master of Philosophy (MA) awarded by the Fern-University at Hagen (Germany) in 2010.

Throughout the past two decades, Prof Gruner served the global academic community as a programme committee member or reviewer for numerous computer-scientific conferences and journals. He was also asked to provide professional advice to governmental agencies such as the SAQA Office or the NRF. In 2024, Prof Gruner was elected board member of the European Association for Programming Languages and Systems (EAPLS).

Prof Gruner received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Tharina Guse is a professor and Head of the Department of Psychology.

Her broad research area concerns positive psychology and well-being studies. In particular, she is interested in the mechanisms and effects of positive psychology interventions. Prof Guse further investigates hope as a psychological strength. She is one of the lead researchers of the International Hope Barometer Research Programme, which annually examines hope and other positive psychological characteristics among adults in 13 countries. She recently co-edited a Springer Volume, *Hope across cultures*, based on the programme's research findings. On several occasions, Prof Guse has been invited as a visiting professor to the University of Bologna (Italy), the University of Minho (Portugal) and Masaryk University (Czech Republic).

Prof Guse received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Tharina Guse

Professor Johan Hanekom is an electronic engineering professor and the Head of the bioengineering group in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT). He obtained his doctorate from the University of Pretoria in 2001.

He was chair of the EBIT Ethics Committee for nearly 20 years, is registered as a professional engineer with the Engineering Council of South Africa, is a senior member of professional institutes within his field, and is co-director of the Pretoria Cochlear Implant Unit.

His research focus area is the auditory system, deafness and electrical stimulation of the inner ear (or cochlea) via a cochlear implant system to elicit sound in people who are profoundly deaf. Despite cochlear implants being an established medical intervention, some users derive minimal benefit from their implants and speech processors.

Prof Hanekom's research aims to improve understanding of the relationship between the design parameters of the cochlear implant and the perceived sound. Specifically, he investigates processing in the central auditory nervous system and perception with cochlear implants, ie how the electrically elicited neural activation patterns are interpreted as sound and which cues used in normal hearing are available to cochlear implant users. This research involves computer modelling of processing in the central auditory nervous system and psychoacoustics research in which listeners with normal hearing and cochlear implant users participate.

Prof Hanekom received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Johan Hanekom

Dr Romina Henriques has been a senior lecturer in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences since 2021. She received a doctorate in biological sciences from the Royal Holloway University of London in 2012. She was a Claude Leon postdoctoral fellow at Stellenbosch University (2013–2015) and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie postdoctoral fellow at the Technical University of Denmark (2017–2021).

Dr Henriques' work uses genomic tools to understand how oceanographic features and ongoing climate change influence the evolutionary history of marine species. In particular, she is interested in understanding how commercially exploited fish species in southern Africa are structured in time and space, how exploitation and environmental change will impact their evolutionary pathways, and how this information can be harnessed for management and conservation actions.

In the past three years, Dr Henriques has been invited to be an associate editor at the *Fisheries Research* journal, and be part of the Scientific Committee for the Annual Symposium of the Fisheries Society of the British Isles (2024).

Dr Henriques received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Romina Henriques



Professor Benda Hofmeyr

Professor Benda Hofmeyr is a professor in the Department of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities, where she was awarded her ten-year-long service award in 2019. She lived and worked in the Netherlands while she completed her doctoral studies and postdoctoral research. She maintains strong collaborative ties with the Radboud University, Nijmegen, where she received her doctoral degree in philosophy on the work of Foucault and Levinas in 2005. After that, she worked for two years as a researcher at the Jan van Eyck Akademie in Maastricht, the Netherlands. Following the prestigious Innovational Research Incentives Scheme Veni-grant Award by the Dutch Research Council, she was a senior researcher at the Radboud University for four years. Since 2020, she has been a member of the Flemish Research Council's expert panel for philosophy and ethics. She is also a South African Academy for Science and Art member and serves on the editorial board of the *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie: Louvain Journal of Philosophy*.

Her research interests fall within the broad ambit of contemporary continental philosophy (especially thinkers following in Heidegger's footsteps, emphasising post-structuralism and phenomenology), and her work testifies to an enduring fascination with the inextricable entanglement of the ethical with the political. Her thinking is informed by the interfaces between European and non-Western (especially post-colonial African) philosophy and the possibility of dialogue across these apparently divergent yet fundamentally intertwined traditions of thought. For more information on her research and publications, visit www.bendahofmeyr.com

Prof Hofmeyr received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Dr Hannelie Human

Dr Hannelie Human is an extraordinary lecturer in the Department of Zoology and Entomology, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

In 2006, she received her doctorate. Following a University of Pretoria Research Fellowship, her research approach moved from honeybees at the individual level to the colony level. She focuses on how nutrition, pesticides, and pathogens (or combinations thereof) may affect honeybee colonies during commercial pollination. Adverse side effects of chemicals necessitate investigating the potential role of honeybees as bio vectors to lessen the use of chemicals.

Her collaboration with high-value crop producers requiring large-scale pollination allows knowledge transfer to crop growers and beekeepers. Due to the significant expense of commercial pollination, agrotechnology is currently being investigated as a tool for honeybee hive quality control. Continuous data collection in this field contributes to sustainable pollination practices. It enables the conservation of pollinators, of which honeybees directly influence the food security of the growing human population. Dr Human received the IH Wiese Award for an outstanding technical contribution to beekeeping in South Africa in 2020.

Dr Human received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Samuel Iwarere

Dr Samuel Iwarere is a senior lecturer in the Department of Chemical Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology. In 2014, he received a doctorate in chemical engineering with a specialisation in plasma technology in a collaboration between the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and Mines ParisTech—now part of Paris Sciences et Lettres University in France. After completing his doctoral thesis, he was awarded a postdoctoral research fellowship at UKZN in the Thermodynamics Research Unit from 2014 to 2016.

Following the completion of his postdoctoral research experience, he moved his research into water and wastewater treatment using non-thermal plasma technology. During this period, he was the principal investigator and project leader on a Water Research Commission-funded project and, in 2020, was awarded the prestigious Future Leaders—African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowship funded by the UK Government through the Royal Society as part of the Global Challenges Research Fund from May 2020 to January 2023 during which time he worked as a senior researcher in the same department.

His expertise is in the field of plasma science and engineering towards environmental and energy-related applications, and together with his students, he established a low-temperature plasma laboratory in UP. Research in his laboratory on solar-powered plasma water purification was profiled in several media outlets in 2022 after some team members represented the University on the global stage and came second in the international Universities for Goal 13 competition to find multidisciplinary solutions to climate-related problems.

Dr Iwarere received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Dr Bertha Jacobs is a senior lecturer in the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences in the Natural and Agricultural Sciences Faculty. She attained her PhD in Apparel, Merchandising, and Design from Iowa State University in 2019. Her academic journey traces back to 1991, when she embarked on her studies at UP, starting with a Home Economics General degree and later pursuing Hons and Master's degrees in Clothing Management. She also holds a Diploma in Tertiary Education from UP.

Over 25 years, she has been a dedicated educator at UP, imparting knowledge in clothing retail management, merchandising (buying, planning, and sourcing), fashion forecasting, aesthetics and social psychology of clothing. Her research extends from her undergraduate teaching, focusing on clothing merchandising, experiential retailing, customer experiences, sustainable clothing practices and sociocultural aspects of clothing. Recent scholarly interests include graduate employability, service learning, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

A notable professional milestone is her PhD studies, which addressed a critical skills and knowledge gap in the South African clothing retail industry. This culminated in the development of an apparel merchandising competency framework published in accredited international journals. The framework is a valuable tool for curriculum development, equipping students with the necessary acumen for the industry. Beyond her professional endeavours, she treasures her faith and family, considering them paramount in her personal life.

Dr Jacobs received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Alexander Johnson is a distinguished composer and academic, currently a professor of Music at the University of the Free State. He previously served as Head of the School of the Arts and Chair of Music at the University of Pretoria. His expertise includes composition, music theory, orchestration, and analysis.

Internationally recognised, Prof Johnson's works are performed and broadcast in South Africa and globally, including the UK, USA, France, Russia, Canada, Germany, Italy, China, and more. Over 25 years, his piano compositions, spanning classical and jazz, have been included in the University of South Africa and Trinity College of Music, London syllabi. Notably, he is the only South African composer featured by this UK examination body.

His compositions are central to prestigious music competitions. His *Jazz Impromptu* was prescribed for the Seventh Unisa-Transnet International Piano Competition in 1994, *Colour-keys for Clarinet* in 2014, and *Vocalise Africa* in 2018. In 2022, his *Morning Prayer* and *Evening Prayer* were chosen for the Sixth Unisa International Strings Competition.

Esteemed ensembles like the Lucerne Festival Strings and the Zürich Camerata Orchestra have performed Prof Johnson's orchestral works. His contributions have inspired two doctoral dissertations, several theses, and numerous scholarly articles.

Prof Johnson received a C1 rating from the NRF.

Professor Elsabe Kearsley is a professor in the Department of Civil Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology.

Her research focuses on reducing the environmental impact of the cement and concrete industry. This can be achieved by using recycled materials and waste streams from industrial processes in cement and concrete, reducing the volume of raw materials used by optimising concrete mix compositions or improving assumptions made during the design and construction of concrete infrastructure. She has been supervising postgraduate research students and conducting experimental laboratory studies to determine the effect of different waste streams and mix compositions on concrete properties. She also conducted structural health monitoring (SHM) of concrete infrastructure to determine the effect of environmental conditions on concrete behaviour over extended periods.

Prof Kearsley received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Bertha Jacobs



Professor
Alexander Johnson



Professor Elsabe Kearsley



Professor Lize Kriel

Professor Lize Kriel is a professor of visual culture studies and chair of the Visual Arts Programmes in the School of the Arts in the Faculty of Humanities.

She has been doing research in mission archives for the past three decades, studying 19th and early 20th-century transnational encounters through cultures of inscription: images and performances captured in script, text and pictures. Her focus has been mainly on southern Africa, specifically the area known today as the Limpopo Province.

In 2022, she co-edited the book *Visual Cultures of Africa* (Waxmann) with Ernst Wagner and Mary-Clare Kidenda of the international Exploring Visual Cultures platform. In the same year, two publications she had contributed to were awarded by the NIHSS as Best Exhibition Catalogue and Best Collection of Scholarly Essays, respectively. She has written contributions to both the *Edinburgh History of Reading* (2020) and the *Edinburgh Companion to British Colonial Periodicals* (2024). She was a member of the international academic advisory board to the Berliner Missionswerk for reconceptualising their museum exhibition, which was due to open in September 2024.

Prof Kriel received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Karina Landman

Professor Karina Landman is a professor and HOD in the Department of Town and Regional Planning.

She has 25 years of experience as an urban planner and designer in academia and consulting. She holds a BArch master's in city planning and urban design and a PhD (Urban Design). She is a professional planner registered with SACPLAN and a member of the Institute of Urban Design in South Africa (UDISA) and the South African Planning Institute. Professor Landman joined the CSIR in 1998 and then moved to the University of Pretoria in 2009. She has published more than 60 peer-reviewed journal articles and 70 conference papers. She also wrote or contributed to over 40 technical research documents and 17 policy documents.

She was a member of the international network of gated communities and the CIB group, which worked on housing and sociology. She is a member of the Association of European Schools of Planning Thematic Group on Public Space and serves on the editorial board of two international journals. Her work focuses on spatial transformation, sustainable development, including resilient and regenerative cities and public space.

She published *Evolving public space in South Africa* (2019) and is currently the principal investigator of a National Research Foundation (NRF) Project on Regenerative Public Space in South Africa. She is also co-editing *Decolonising the built environment* (Routledge). She has edited and co-edited four special editions of *Urban design international* (x2), *Urban Planning* and *Built Environment*.

Prof Landman received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Jenni Lauwrens

Professor Jenni Lauwrens is an associate professor in visual studies at the School of the Arts. In 2014, she received a doctorate in art history and image studies from the University of the Free State (UFS).

Her research is positioned in the intersecting fields of visual studies, art history and sensory studies. She analyses images and artworks from the perspective of embodiment and the senses. She is particularly interested in the nature and significance of appreciating and interpreting images and artworks as a multisensory experience.

In 2022, Prof Lauwrens published the edited volume *Embodiment and the arts: views from South Africa* with PULP. In 2023, she received the ATKV-SA Akademieprys for her article, 'Behou kontak! Beliggaamde persepsie, aanraking en digitale kommunikasie oor 'n afstand' (Keep in touch: Embodied perception, touch and remote digital communication technologies), *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 61(2), 2021.

Prof Lauwrens received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Charlene Lew is a professor at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). She is the chair of the Ethical Business in Complex Contexts research community and serves as the lead of the MBA Decision-Making course.

After obtaining a doctorate in psychology at the former Rand Afrikaans University in 2001, she dedicated her career to academia in the business domain.

While her early research career focused on adult career development, she progressively shifted her interest to the broader domain of organisational behaviour. Over time, her work became focused on her interest in behavioural decision-making. Her international peer-reviewed outputs include publications on ethical decision-making and the role of personal, interpersonal and contextual factors that determine effective decision-making. Therefore, this work covers heuristics, identity, interpersonal processes, and risk culture in strategic decision-making.

In 2021, she received the GIBS' Most Prolific Researcher Award and Most Prestigious Paper Award.

Prof Lew received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Dr Linda Marshall is a senior lecturer in the Department of Computer Science in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology.

Dr Marshall's research is focused on Computer Science education (CSEd). This research includes how to teach and what to teach in computer science. Her main research interest is curriculum development.

She was part of an international team in 2020 that considered how to specify the competencies for computing curricula. Her doctorate, which she completed in 2014, proposed an algorithm that, when applied to curricula, would semi-automate curriculum comparison and visualisation, an almost impossible task if completed by hand. She is a member of an ITICSE 2024 working group looking at CSEd in Africa and teaching introductory programming on the African continent. A project that has enabled her to network more widely and opened doors to future collaborations in Africa beyond the borders of South Africa.

Dr Marshall has graduated one doctoral student, three master's by dissertation and ten mini-dissertation master's students. She is currently supervising two doctoral students and six master's students. She has 14 journal publications, the majority of which are in or related to CSEd. She has received the EBIT, Department of Computer Science Teaching and Learning Award in 2018, 2021 and 2023.

Dr Marshall received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Munyaradzi Marufu is an associate professor in the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases at the University of Pretoria. With a focus on veterinary parasites, his research addresses critical issues related to animal health, food security, and livelihoods. He specialises in helminths and tick-borne diseases affecting livestock, studying parasite-host interactions and developing sustainable methods to manage parasitic infections. His work also examines the impact of climate change on parasite spread and behaviour, with specific expertise in bovine fasciolosis, theileriosis, and the effects of nutrition and phytochemicals on livestock health and production.

Prof Marufu's research is crucial for improving livestock health and enhancing food security, particularly in tropical regions where parasitic diseases are a significant concern. His efforts contribute to developing innovative strategies to combat these challenges, ensuring better health outcomes for animals and communities reliant on livestock for their livelihoods.

Over the past three years, Prof Marufu has received several prestigious awards, including the International Veterinary Immunology Symposium Travel Award in 2023 at Kruger National Park, South Africa. He also won the Professor Gavin Thompson Best Presenter Award at the 2023 Southern African Society for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine Congress in Gaborone, Botswana. He received a travel bursary from the University of Pretoria Research and Innovation Office for the 16th International Symposium on Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics 2022 in Halifax, Canada.

Prof Marufu received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Charlene Lew



Dr Linda Marshall



Professor Munyaradzi Marufu



Professor Tyanai Masiya

Professor Tyanai Masiya is an associate professor in the School of Public Management and Administration, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

His research focuses on public administration, specifically emphasising public service delivery in all spheres of government. Prof Masiya has received research quality output awards such as the IASIA Pierre DeCelles Award for the best conference paper (2022) and the ASSADPAM Best Conference Paper Award (2022) and was nominated as one of the top three emerging researchers in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of Pretoria for research output in 2021.

Prof Masiya received a C3 rating from the NRF.



Professor Lyndy McGaw

Professor Lyndy McGaw is a professor in the Department of Paraclinical Sciences, heading the Phytomedicine Programme since 2015. Her research group, based at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, focuses on using plants to improve animal health. Current interests include evaluating antimicrobial, anthelmintic, anti-inflammatory, immune-modulatory and cytotoxic effects of plant extracts and purified compounds derived from plants. Research in the Programme targets the development of effective and safe antimicrobial and anti-parasitic remedies for use in animal and human medicine, as well as alternatives to antimicrobial feed additives.

Prof McGaw has published 230 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals and serves on the editorial boards of three international journals. Together with a senior postdoctoral fellow, she edited a book entitled *Ethnoveterinary medicine: current and future concepts*, published in 2022, and has contributed to 21 book chapters. She has delivered over 200 presentations at national and international conferences. In 2023, she was invited to give a keynote presentation at the prestigious 71st Annual Meeting of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) in Dublin, Ireland. Professor McGaw has supervised or co-supervised 49 doctoral and master's students to graduation. In 2024, she received the Researcher of the Year Award from the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

Prof McGaw received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Esias Meyer

Professor Esias Meyer is a professor in the Department of Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures in the Faculty of Theology and Religion. He received a doctorate from Stellenbosch University in 2004. Prof Meyer worked on his doctorate at Oxford University as a recognised student and at Phillips Universität Marburg as an exchange student before completing it. He joined UP in 2010 as a senior lecturer after being a minister of religion for five years.

He focuses on the study of the Pentateuch, especially on Priestly texts and the book of Leviticus. In the past 13 years, he has published extensively on Leviticus and other texts from the Old Testament. Initially, his research focused on the second half of Leviticus, in which the Holiness Legislation addresses ethical issues such as the treatment of strangers and land possession. More recently, his focus has shifted to the ritual texts, which dominate the first half of Leviticus, and most of his current research focuses on sacrifice.

In 2023, he shared the Faculty's award for best postgraduate supervisor. Previously, he was rewarded by the Faculty for being the best lecturer.

Prof Meyer received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Lorenzo Milani is an associate professor in the Department of Geology in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. In 1991 he completed his master's (cum laude), and in 1996 he received a doctorate from the University of Ferrara (Italy). He was then employed as a postdoctoral fellowship at the same university, the University of Hawaii at Manoa (USA) and the University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa). In 2019, he was appointed as a senior lecturer by the University of Pretoria. In 2024, he was promoted to associate professor.

His research has mainly focused on geochemistry and economic geology and on tectono-magmatic studies of large-scale areas to collect and contextualise a variety of petrographic, geochemical and geochronological features to build petrogenetic and metallogenic models and to reconstruct the tectonic evolution of the studied regions.

Prof Milani received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Lorenzo Milani

Dr Rebamang Mosa is a senior lecturer and researcher in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology (Biochemistry Division) in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. He obtained his PhD (Biochemistry) in 2014 from the University of Zululand.

He started his academic career at the University of Zululand from 2015 to 2019. He then joined the University of Pretoria in July 2019. Dr Mosa is a leader of the Diabetes and Vascular Disease Research Group. His research group evaluates the potential use of traditional medicinal plants, in the form of crude extracts or their pure isolated bioactive compounds, in treating diabetes and its related vascular complications.

He is a recipient of the 2020 NRF-Thuthuka and 2024 Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) funding awards. He is currently a leader of the Diabetes and Vascular Disease Research group. He has supervised two doctoral and nine master's students to date. The group has one doctoral and two master's students working on diabetes-related research projects. He has also authored and co-authored 40 publications, including a book chapter.

Dr Mosa received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Rebamang Mosa

Professor Kamalesh Newaj is an associate professor in the Department of Mercantile Law, with a doctorate in labour law completed in 2019. She specialises in teaching and researching labour and social security law.

Her research primarily explores the impact of the constitutional right to fair labour practices on statutory labour rights, including protection against unfair dismissal, unfair labour practices, and unfair discrimination. She has addressed critical gaps in labour legislation and its implementation through the prism of the Constitution.

Prof Newaj is also a steering committee member for the Labour Law Research Network (LLRN), an internationally recognised organisation that promotes research and dialogue in labour law. The LLRN comprises 81 prominent labour law research centres worldwide. Additionally, she was chairperson of the scientific committee for the tenth ILERA (Africa) Congress held in Victoria Falls (Zambia) in April 2024. ILERA Africa is a regional branch of the International Labour and Employment Relations Association (ILEREA), which advocates for the global study of labour and employment relations.

Prof Newaj received a C3 rating from the NRF.

Professor Kamalesh Newaj
(no photo available)



Professor Trevor Nyakudya

Professor Trevor Nyakudya is an associate professor in the Department of Physiology, School of Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences. He specialises in pre-clinical medical physiology research, focusing on investigating the efficacy of phytomedicines as alternative management strategies for non-communicable diseases. His research primarily involves using diet-induced and chemically-induced metabolic dysfunction in animal models to evaluate the therapeutic potential of phytomedicines and their constituent phytochemicals in managing metabolic disorders like diabetes and bone dysfunction.

Prof Nyakudya developed a neonatal animal model to explore the potential protective effects of phytochemical compounds and phytomedicines administered during the critical window of developmental plasticity, aiming to prevent metabolic dysfunction and hepatic disorders in adulthood.

Through his collaboration with colleagues in his department and other academic institutions, Prof Nyakudya has contributed to the development of a patented plant-based product for managing diabetes in partnership with researchers from the University of Johannesburg. Over the past three years, Prof Nyakudya has secured funding from several funding bodies, including the Technology Innovation Agency and DHET, to advance research phytomedicines using animal models.

Prof Nyakudya received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Johann Odendaal

Professor Johann Odendaal is a professor in the Department of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology, and the Director of the Centre for Electromagnetism.

His research focuses on achieving high excellence in electromagnetic technology, particularly in designing, developing and evaluating microwave antennas, radar backscatter and antenna measurements. He has contributed to developing various high-performance wide-band double- and quad-ridged horn antennas. A new design of a double-ridged horn antenna was proposed with improved gain and beamwidth performance. The most significant consequence of the proposed increase in ridge widths is the possibility of even more compact wide-band antennas with even larger operating bandwidths. He also proposed a procedure to perform bistatic radar cross-section measurements of canonical and large complex airframe scale models in a compact range.

He is a senior member of both the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers and the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers, as well as a member of the Antenna Measurement Techniques Association. He has authored and co-authored more than 85 papers published in international peer-reviewed journals.

Prof Odendaal received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Ugorji Ogbonnaya

Professor Ugorji Ogbonnaya is the Head of the Department of Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education. In 2011, he received his doctorate from the University of South Africa. From 2012 to 2015, he was a postdoctoral research fellow at Tshwane University of Technology.

He joined the University of Pretoria in 2016. He was awarded the first runner-up for the Best Researcher Award for the Faculty of Education in 2023. Besides his tertiary education experience, he taught mathematics and computer studies at secondary schools in Nigeria, Lesotho and South Africa.

He has researched students' mathematical proficiency, learning achievement, opportunities to learn, and teachers' knowledge and instructional practices. He has served on various committees of international learned societies in mathematics education, including the International Congress on Mathematics Education and Psychology of Mathematics Education. In addition, he has served as a member of the editorial board of academic research journals.

Prof Ogbonnaya received a C3 rating from the NRF.

Dr Chijioke Okorie is a lecturer in the Department of Private Law and the Faculty of Law.

She received a doctorate in intellectual property law and competition law from the University of Cape Town in 2018. After receiving her doctoral degree, she served as the inaugural postdoctoral research fellow under the South African Research Chair in Intellectual Property, Innovation and Development at the University of Cape Town from 2019 to 2020.

Dr Okorie practised law full-time from 2006, when she was admitted as an advocate and attorney of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, to 2015, when she embarked on her doctoral research journey. Dr Okorie has conducted research in the fields of copyright and the digital environment within the context of Africa. Over the past few years, she has adopted an information justice approach to address issues of law relating to emerging technologies, especially artificial intelligence. She leads a research group in this regard, the Data Science Law Lab, deploying research in law and producing evidence and policy advice to support the growth of all aspects of data science research and application across Africa.

Dr Okorie received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Chijioke Okorie

Dr Maria Oosthuizen is a researcher and lecturer in the Department of Zoology and Entomology in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. Following a Commonwealth Split-site PhD scholarship to study in the UK, she received her doctorate in 2007 from the University of Pretoria.

She is a behavioural physiologist whose research focuses primarily on the integration of behaviour and physiology, and she uses small mammals as study models. Her research includes comparative studies between solitary and social species, intra-species differences within the social hierarchy of social species, and over different age and reproductive stages. Furthermore, she is interested in the modulation and plasticity of circadian and circannual rhythms of animals by both natural and anthropogenic environmental factors. These differences are investigated at behavioural, physiological, and neurological levels to determine overarching generalities in different rodent groups and predict limits and vulnerabilities for free-living species in changing environments.

She collaborates widely, locally and internationally, and receives international recognition through invitations to present talks and plenary lectures at international institutions, workshops and conferences.

Dr Oosthuizen received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Dr Maria Oosthuizen

Dr Trudy Paap is a senior postdoctoral researcher in the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), linked to the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. She obtained her PhD from Murdoch University (Australia) in 2007.

Dr Paap's research focuses on plant health, with an emphasis on natural ecosystems as well as urban and peri-urban environments. Her work examines the impact of native and invasive plant pathogens on these ecosystems, aiming to understand the role of additional biotic and abiotic stressors in driving disease development and invasion success.

In recent years, Dr Paap has made significant contributions to the fields of plant pathology and invasion science. She has published influential reviews that bridge the gap between these fields, advocating for the integration of plant pathology into biodiversity conservation efforts. Her work has been recognised both locally and internationally, contributing to policy and practice, particularly in the management of invasive pests like the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB), which she discovered for the first time in South Africa. Dr Paap has been actively involved in various national and international research networks, producing high-impact publications and collaborations. Recently, she was invited as a keynote speaker for the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) conference on Phytophthora in Forests and Natural Ecosystems to be held in New Zealand.

Dr Paap received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Trudy Paap



Professor
Clorinda Panebianco

Professor Clorinda Panebianco is a professor of musicology and music psychology at the University of Pretoria. She completed her undergraduate studies at Stellenbosch University, majoring in piano, oboe, and music education, and earned her BMus Hons, MMus, and DMus at the University of Pretoria. With a foundation in high school music teaching, her tertiary career started as a contract lecturer at UNISA in 2005. She joined the University of Pretoria full-time in 2007, teaching various undergraduate courses in historical musicology, music education, research methodology, music psychology, and music philosophy.

In 2013, Prof Panebianco earned a master's in Music Psychology from the University of Sheffield, UK. Her research broadly focuses on the health and well-being of performing artists, revealing that South African musicians face health challenges similar to those of their international counterparts. Passionate about health education for musicians, she designed and presents an occupational health and wellbeing course for first-year music students at UP. Furthermore, she introduced Music Psychology as an undergraduate module. Prof Panebianco emphasises that music psychology provides much potential for innovative interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary innovative, values-based research.

Prof Panebianco is an active oboist, teaches piano and oboe privately, composes educational works, and frequently serves as an adjudicator at music competitions.

Prof Panebianco received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Leon Pretorius

Professor Leon Pretorius is a professor emeritus at the University of Pretoria. Having completed his Doctor of Engineering degree (D Eng) in 1983, he was invited, as a specialist researcher and senior fellow, to collaborate on technological system complexity at the University of Bologna, Italy, in 2010 and as a visiting professor and researcher at the University Weingarten, Germany, on several occasions from 2007 to 2016. He was also invited as a visiting professor at Shandong University in Jinan, China, periodically from 2014 to 2019.

He has supervised more than 270 master's and doctoral students' research. This includes the supervision and co-supervision of 64 successful doctoral theses. He is also the author or co-author of more than 350 technical peer-reviewed conference and journal papers and is still participating in publishing academic research. He serves on the editorial boards of several international journals. He is an honorary fellow of SAIMechE and a fellow of SAIEE. He was a member of ASME and IEEE until 2023. He is a member of the editorial (review) boards of the *R&D Journal* of SAIMechE (until 2018), *SA Journal of Industrial Engineering*, *SAIEE Africa Research Journal*, *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management* as well as the *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*, and was co-editor of a special edition of *International Journal for Learning and Change*. He was also an editor for the three international proceedings of IAMOT 2015, 2020, and 2021. He was also the chairman of the board of the International IAMOT Association from 2017 to 2022.

Prof Pretorius received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Marius Pretorius

Dr Marius Pretorius has been an emeritus professor in strategy, turnaround, and leadership at the Department of Business Management since 2000. As a strategy consultant and facilitator, he focuses on distressed ventures searching for turnaround and growth. Research interests from his publication record suggest turnaround post-mortem analysis, modelling, business rescue practitioner tasks and competencies, strategy critiques, leadership and simulation as areas of interest. As a motivational and public speaker, he is a devil's advocate who challenges the norm, leading to his interest in critical management studies as an associated research area.

Following the assessment of his research outputs in 2024, citations of his work surpassed 1221. He has supervised over 25 doctorate and multiple master's degree students while at UP. Part of his assignment is mentoring young and upcoming academics in research and supervision.

His most recent lectures are focused on distress following disruption by the changing environment and complexity, especially the effects of technology.

Dr Pretorius received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Melvyn Quan is an associate professor in the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases. In 2005, he received a doctorate from the University of Edinburgh. Prof Quan returned to the University of Pretoria as a research officer, working on African horse sickness surveillance, geographic information systems, molecular epidemiology, and the development and validation of diagnostic assays. He was promoted to specialist research officer in 2008, and in 2010, he moved within the Faculty to a senior lectureship position. He focused on developing and validating rapid, multiplex molecular assays of diseases of veterinary importance.

In 2017, he was promoted to associate professor. His current research focus is on the development of multiplex Luminex assays for veterinary haemoparasites and causes of bovine abortion. He also elucidates the epidemiology of transboundary diseases of veterinary importance, such as foot-and-mouth disease and *peste des petits ruminants*.

Prof Quan received a C3 rating from the NRF.



Professor Melvyn Quan

Professor Melanie Rademeyer is an associate professor in the Department of Chemistry in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

She has a keen interest in materials science, with her research focusing on structure-property relationships in multi-functional hybrid materials with applications in renewable energy. One of her research aims is to design, synthesise and characterise novel light harvesting materials for applications in solar cells to improve solar cell efficiency.

Prof Rademeyer received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Melanie Rademeyer

Professor Alecia Samuels is an associate professor in the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication in the Faculty of Humanities.

Her research is mainly in the interdisciplinary field of early childhood intervention, where she has focused on understanding the participation and involvement of children with disabilities in various life situations within low- and middle-income contexts (LMICs). While most children with disabilities reside in LMICs, the evidence related to their everyday functioning and participation in family, education and community life tends to come mainly from high-income countries. This limits the applicability of the evidence base to children with disabilities in LMICs.

She was recently selected to be part of the Department of Higher Education and Training's competitive Future Professors Programme (Phase 2 Cohort 2), preparing promising mid-career academics to become part of the South African professoriate. In 2023, she was part of the team that won the NIHSS Humanities and Social Science Award for the best Digital Humanities Project for Community Engagement with their Early Intervention Information Project.

Prof Samuels received a C3 rating from the NRF.



Professor Alecia Samuels



Professor Caren Scheepers

Professor Caren Scheepers is a professor at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria. She is chairperson of GIBS's Leadership and Performance in Africa Research Community. She is a qualified counselling psychologist and professional executive coach. Her research focuses on the influence of context on leadership, including digital and gendered entrepreneurial and corporate contexts.

Her research fits into specific dimensions of the typology of context, including the where (geographical: Global South), when (temporal: postcolonial), and who (intersection of gender and race diversity) dimensions. She is a member of the Academy of Management and a section editor of the *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*.

She is a reviewer and guest editor for several national and international journals. She authored and co-edited seven peer-reviewed business books, 50 internationally published teaching cases to advance local indigenous business knowledge, and more than 40 academic articles in local and international journals at the intersection of gender, leadership and entrepreneurship.

In 2020, she received the international Most Outstanding Contribution to the Case Method Award from the European Foundation of Management Development (EFMD) and The Case Centre. She dedicates her research and teaching to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to have a lasting impact, specifically SDG 5, on gender equality.

Prof Scheepers received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Hettie Schönfeldt

Professor Hettie Schönfeldt is a professor in the Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and an extraordinary lecturer in the School of Health Systems and Public Health. She holds the DSI/NRF SARCHI chair in Nutrition and Food Security.

Her research links nutrient quantity and food quality to sustainable food systems. She advocates for nutrition research, promoting excellence through creating, translating and disseminating science-based information into policies, programmes and training.

Professor Schönfeldt publishes evidence on why country-specific food composition data is essential to make it possible to interpret the dietary outcomes of countries. She is a scientific advisor to AFROFOODS, a network on the African continent, forming part of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences/FAO INFOODS Task Force.

She was honoured as a Pioneer Woman in Agriculture in 2024. At the 13th International Food Data Conference in 2019, she received the distinguished international Nevin Scrimshaw Award and a shared Success Story Award for the FAO/INFOODS Food Composition Table for Western Africa. Professor Schönfeldt is the designated UP representative to the United Nations Academic Impact Hub for SDG 2 on ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition. She was recently elected to the EUROFIR Board of Directors and appointed to the UN's 15-member High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition.

Prof Schönfeldt received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Herman Steyn

Professor Herman Steyn is an emeritus professor in the Department of Engineering and Technology Management, Graduate School of Technology Management.

He joined in 1996 as a professor and initiated a continuing education programme in project management in 1997 and a master's programme in project management in 1999.

He has supervised over 100 mini-dissertations at master's level and several doctoral studies. This research covered a variety of topics in the field of project management. His publications include, amongst others, critical chain project management, management of megaprojects, knowledge management in project environments, trust and collaboration in project teams, project leadership, renewable energy projects in Africa, project management maturity, project governance, and the project management office.

His project-management-related publications have been cited over 3 600 times, leading to an *h*-index of 26. He co-authored (with John M Nicholas of the Loyola University Chicago) an international textbook on project management with third, fourth, fifth and sixth editions published between 2008 and 2021. The manuscript of the seventh edition is in an advanced state, and publication is scheduled for early 2025.

Prof Steyn received a C1 rating from the NRF.

Professor Jacques Theron is a professor in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

His research activities focus on molecular virology and specifically on viruses of veterinary importance, including the African horse sickness virus (AHSV). African horse sickness, with the African horse sickness virus as aetiological agent, is a devastating disease among horses resulting in sudden death.

Prof Theron's immediate research focus is on the structural and non-structural proteins of AHSV, whose roles in viral processes such as cell entry, production of viable progeny virions, virulence and pathogenicity remain undefined but are required for the long-term goal of understanding the molecular genetic events underlying the infectious cycle of AHSV.

To this end he and his team have developed and established different reverse genetic platform technologies to enable the introduction of defined mutations into the viral genome. The data generated should not only contribute substantially to unravelling the molecular mechanisms underlying AHSV propagation, but may also find application in the development of a new generation of AHSV vaccines.

Prof Theron received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Marita Turpin is an associate professor in the Department of Informatics in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT).

Her research is in the field of Information Technology for socio-economic development. She is interested in the use of new and disruptive technologies to assist with job creation and employment in developing countries. Her second research area is concerned with preparing Information Systems students for the future world of work by developing their cognitive thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving and creative thinking.

She presented a keynote at Confluence 2020, Amity University Uttar Pradesh, titled 'Preparing students for 4IR: Introducing IoT and Makerspaces in University Education'. Following sustained research collaboration with Amity University Uttar Pradesh, she facilitated the signing of an MoU between Amity University and UP's EBIT Faculty in March 2024.

Prof Turpin received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor John van den Berg is a professor in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, having gained promotion to this rank in 2019.

Prof Van den Berg's research interests are varied, but all lie within a branch of algebra called ring theory with a primary focus on torsion theory. This topic, born in the mid-1960s, now has a rich and extensive literature. A recurrent theme of Prof Van den Berg's work has been to explore the extent to which internal properties of a ring are encoded in its topologizing filters. The latter are torsion theoretic objects that arise when generalised notions of rings of fractions are considered.

Communications in Algebra, *The Journal of Pure and Applied Algebra*, and *The Journal of Algebra* are widely seen by the community of algebraists as the three top algebra-specific mathematics journals. Prof Van den Berg has a record of publication in all of these. His work has also found place in non-specialist journals such as the prestigious *Transactions of the American Mathematical Society*.

In addition to fruitful collaborative links with former students and researchers in South Africa, Prof Van den Berg has published jointly with fellow ring theorists in the US, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Portugal and Romania.

Prof Van den Berg received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor Jacques Theron



Professor Marita Turpin



Professor John van den Berg



Dr Michael van der Laan

Dr Michael van der Laan is a specialist researcher in the Agricultural Research Council's Water Science Division. He completed his doctorate on modelling non-point source nutrient pollution from agriculture and then joined the South African Sugarcane Research Institute (SASRI) for two and a half years. Thereafter, Dr Van der Laan worked at the University of Pretoria as an academic in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences until 2021 before joining the Agricultural Research Council in his current role.

Dr Van der Laan's research focuses on various aspects of agricultural water, including modelling water and solute fluxes in agroecosystems, determining the impact of climate change on crop production, and applying big data and artificial intelligence in agricultural water management. He is actively involved in supervising doctoral and master's postgraduate students. Additionally, Dr Van der Laan is the treasurer of the South African National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (SANCID) and an extraordinary lecturer at the University of Pretoria.

Dr Van der Laan received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor
Jan Harm van der Walt

Professor Jan Harm van der Walt is an associate professor in the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics. In 2008, he received a doctorate in mathematics from the University of Pretoria, and the following year, he was appointed as a lecturer in the Department.

He conducts research in functional analysis, emphasising the interaction between vector lattices, convergence structures and spaces of continuous functions. His contributions to his field include a purely topological characterisation of hyper-Stonian spaces, which solves a longstanding open problem.

He is regularly invited to deliver plenary talks at local and international mathematics conferences and workshops. He serves on the editorial board of *Quaestiones Mathematicae*, the South African Mathematical Society journal.

Prof Van der Walt received a C1 rating from the NRF.



Professor
Este van Marle-Köster

Professor Este van Marle-Köster is a professor of animal breeding and genetics and former head of the Department of Animal Science, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. She joined the University of Pretoria in July 1995 as a lecturer. She graduated in 2002 with a doctorate titled *Genetic and phenotypic characterisation of native fowl populations in South Africa*.

Through her research focus on the application of molecular genetics in livestock, she established a genomics programme in the Department of Animal Science. She organised the first workshop on livestock genomics in 2012 at UP, which led to the establishment of a livestock genomics task team. She was the coordinator of the subcommittee for research for the Beef Genomics Programme (BGP) (phase 1, 2015 to 2017) and was the Dairy Genomics Programme (DGP) coordinator (2016 to 2020). She led the ARUA theme on improving African herds and is involved in the FoSTA One Health project.

She has served on several committees, including the SA Society for Animal Science Council, as a member and the first female vice president and president. The Society for Animal Science awarded her a silver medal in 2016. In 2019, she received the Agricultural Writers' Award for Agriculturist of the Year for Gauteng. In 2024, she was honoured by Women's Insight—Future Agric Perspectives as a woman pioneer in South African Agriculture. She is registered as a professional animal scientist with the South African Council for Natural Science Professions.

Prof Van Marle-Köster received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Stephanus van Zyl is a professor in Tax Law in the Department of Mercantile Law at the University of Pretoria, a visiting professor at the Gujarat National Law University, India, and a research fellow at the African Tax Institute at the University of Pretoria. He holds a doctorate of law in Value Added Tax from the University of South Africa.

He served as an advisor for the Davis Tax Committee, and he advises the National Treasury regularly. He is a member of the African Tax Administration Forum VAT Technical Committee, and he serves on the African Tax Research Network Advisory Board. Prof Van Zyl has been instrumental in Value Added Tax Law reform in South Africa, Mauritius, Nigeria, and Ghana.

During 2022, the African Tax Administration Forum awarded him a prize in recognition of his contribution to tax reform in Africa. The Supreme Court of Appeal cited his work titled "Just How Voluntary Is 'Voluntary' for Purposes of a Voluntary Disclosure Application in Terms of Section 226 of the Tax Administration Act 28 of 2011" co-authored by Prof TR Carney (UNISA) in the judgment in *Purveyors South Africa Mine Services (Pty) Ltd v Commissioner for the South African Revenue Service (Pty) Ltd* (135/2021) [2021] ZASCA 170 (7 December 2021). During 2024, he received the Lexisnexis prize for the best short contribution in the *Journal of Contemporary Roman-Dutch Law* for the work titled 'Tax Administration, Confidentiality of Information, The Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000, and Public Figures: A Matter of Former President Zuma's Tax Affairs' co-authored by Prof Keulder (WITS).

Prof Van Zyl received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Dr Els Vermeulen is a senior lecturer and research manager at the Mammal Research Institute (MRI) Whale Unit within the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. With over 20 years of experience in research on whales and dolphins, her main interest and expertise lie in population biology, ecology, and associated conservation management. As manager of the MRI Whale Unit, she is responsible for the continuous project development and execution, administration, fundraising, student supervision, and community and policy engagement. Due to her interest and expertise, the Whale Unit's research projects range across a broad national and international geographic and institutional spectrum and align mainly with the role of large baleen whales in the Southern Hemisphere Ocean Ecosystems.

Based on her expertise, she is a member of the South African National Committee for the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SANC for SCAR), the IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group, the IUCN Red List Authority and an annually invited participant to the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission. Additional to her research expertise, Dr Vermeulen has a solid capacity to bring together diverse experts across various fields to advance overarching global goals in cetacean research, as evidenced in her leadership in the IWC-SORP theme on southern right whales, the Southern Right Whale Consortium (SRWC), the South African Humpback Dolphin Consortium (SouSA), and the Indian Ocean Humpback Dolphin Network (HuDONET).

Dr Vermeulen received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Professor Maretha Visser is a professor in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities. Her research in community psychology focuses on the development, implementation and evaluation of large-scale community interventions to address psychosocial community issues and to promote mental health and human well-being. A specific focus is to develop structured group interventions that can be implemented by non-professionals in resource-limited communities to increase access to services that improve the well-being of specific at-risk groups (such as orphaned and vulnerable children, children exposed to violence, teachers who experience stress and burnout and to help couples to enrich their marriages and enhance parenting skills). Several research projects were done in collaboration with international and local research teams and in the form of contract research funded by international funders.

To date, she has published 72 journal articles in peer-reviewed journals, 15 book chapters, 31 research reports and delivered 81 national and 96 international conference papers. She is the editor of a prominent textbook in community psychology. She has supervised 51 master's and 16 doctoral students. She is a reviewer for several prominent psychology and health journals.

Prof Visser received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Stephanus van Zyl



Dr Els Vermeulen



Professor Maretha Visser



Dr Marc Wegerif

Dr Marc Wegerif is a senior lecturer and the coordinator of the Development Studies Programme in the Department of Anthropology, Archaeology and Development Studies in the Faculty of Humanities. In 2017, he received his doctorate from Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

Dr Wegerif's research focuses on food systems, including land and agrarian reforms. He leads the urban food systems project of the DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security, which has focused on the contribution of street traders to the food system, mainly through making food accessible in low-income neighbourhoods. From 2021 to 2022, he played a leading role in a multi-country and multi-institution research project on the impact of COVID-19 on food systems in Africa. In 2023, he completed a 12-country study of the governance of tenure of land, fisheries, and forests for a consortium of organisations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Before joining academia, Dr Wegerif worked on development and human rights issues in various organisations for 30 years. He continues to be involved with a range of development organisations and initiatives. His efforts as a lecturer led to him being awarded the Humanities Teaching Excellence Award in 2023.

Dr Wegerif received a C2 rating from the NRF.



Professor Gareth Zeiler

Associate Professor Gareth Zeiler is an extraordinary lecturer in the Department of Companion Animal Clinical Studies, Faculty of Veterinary Science. He is a dual registered specialist in veterinary anaesthesiology and emergency and critical care medicine. He heads up the anaesthesia and critical care services at Valley Farm Animal Hospital in Pretoria.

His research focuses on wildlife chemical capture and transfusion medicine in domestic cats and dogs. He and his postgraduate students investigate various drug combinations to chemically capture a wide range of wildlife species. The main focus is to investigate the pharmacodynamics of the drug combination on the captured animal's cardiovascular and pulmonary systems and acid-base balance. Furthering our knowledge will enable novel and safer drug combinations to be recommended. He investigates the pathophysiological processes of acute haemorrhage and rapid fluid resuscitation for domestic cats and dogs. Cats have a unique physiological response and respond differently to fluid resuscitation than dogs. He is particularly interested in blood physiology, emphasising acid-base balance, cardiopulmonary integration and haemostasis.

He has received the Young Researcher Award from the Faculty of Veterinary Science and the Young Veterinarian of the Year Award from the South African Veterinary Association.

Prof Zeiler received a C2 rating from the NRF.

Y-RATED RESEARCHERS

Dr Maria du Toit is a lecturer and clinical supervisor in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology in the Faculty of Humanities.

Her research focuses on providing universal access to timely developmental care for young children using Mobile Health (mHealth) technologies facilitated by various community stakeholders.

Dr du Toit completed her doctorate in 2020 and recently finished a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Pretoria. In 2023, she was awarded the Margaret McNamara Education Grant for her research contributing to improving the welfare of women and children in low-resource settings. Additionally, Dr Du Toit conducts research on voice education and care, particularly for professional voice users. She is committed to enhancing access to developmental care sustainably and cost-effectively by decentralising services to the homes and schools of young children and their families.

Dr Du Toit received a Y1 rating from the NRF.



Dr Maria du Toit

Dr Martha Harunavamwe is an accomplished senior lecturer, programme manager for Masters in Human Resource Management and Industrial Psychologist in the Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Economic Management Science. Her expertise lies in teaching, research, and professional practice.

Dr Harunavamwe holds a PhD in Industrial Psychology from the University of the Free State and has contributed significantly to the field through her research and publications. She has amassed over eight years of experience as a lecturer at esteemed institutions such as the University of Free State and now at the University of Pretoria. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence, curriculum development, and research supervision.

Dr Harunavamwe's teaching portfolio includes undergraduate and postgraduate courses in industrial psychology. Her research interests encompass a wide array of topics within industrial psychology, including work flexibility, technostress, work-life balance, organisational support, and workplace flourishing. She is particularly passionate about exploring the role of positive psychology constructs such as psychological capital, mindfulness, and authentic leadership in enhancing employee wellbeing work engagement and organisational effectiveness.

Dr Harunavamwe is a registered Industrial Psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and a registered HR Professional with the South African Board of People Practice (SABPP).

Dr Harunavamwe received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Martha Harunavamwe



Dr Zamantungwa Mnisi

Dr Zamantungwa Mnisi is an extraordinary lecturer at the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases, in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. She joined the University of Pretoria under this position in 2021, for supervision of a Masters student. She further solidified a relationship within the department by collaborating with researchers for Babesia-related projects.

Her research interests primarily revolve around vectors and vector-borne diseases, with a specific focus on rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal and Free State. Her investigations aim to update the distribution of ticks in these regions and potentially identify emerging vector-borne pathogens. She aims to highlight the multifaceted nature of tick-borne disease control by emphasising the importance of considering factors such as climate change, acaricide resistance, interactions between wildlife and livestock, and unregulated animal movements.

Being awarded the NRF Thuthuka Research Grant held a significant meaning for Dr Mnisi, it affirmed her capabilities as an independent researcher capable of conceptualising studies and overseeing students' research endeavors to completion, culminating in publication-worthy outputs. Her tenure at Clinvet International further deepened her passion for tick studies, highlighted by her leadership in successfully executing a Babesia challenge model. Over the past three years, Dr Mnisi has effectively supervised or co-supervised the research of two PhD students and one MSc student and to date, she has contributed to 24 publications.

Dr Mnisi received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Mohlamatsane Mokhatla

Dr Mohlamatsane Mokhatla is a lecturer in the Department of Zoology and Entomology within the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. He received his doctorate in 2018 from Stellenbosch University while researching the impacts of climate change on African amphibians. Before joining the University of Pretoria, he was employed as a Zoology lecturer in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Sciences at Sol Plaatje University. He also worked as a scientist at the South African National Parks, based in the Garden Route, where he developed a keen interest in conservation management and implementation. His primary interest was working on stakeholder relations to make research and conservation work for all.

Dr Mokhatla's research interest includes understanding the impacts of climate change, land use change and biological invasions, using amphibians as a model. He has also become interested in understanding the interconnectedness between conservation research and implementation.

Dr Mokhatla received several grants for his post-graduate studies, including his doctorate. He has served on several national committees working towards biodiversity conservation. He has supervised four honours and one master's candidate. He has also authored or co-authored 15 articles in peer-reviewed journals.

Dr Mokhatla received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Phanankosi Moyo

Dr Phanankosi Moyo is a senior postdoctoral fellow in the Biodiscovery Center, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. He is affiliated with the University of Pretoria's Institute for Sustainable Malaria Control.

In his role, Dr Moyo investigates the potential of natural products to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR). In his work, he explores a unique pre-fractionated natural product repository at the Biodiscovery Centre, searching for novel antimicrobial agents and resistance-reversing compounds. The goal is to enable the continued use of existing antibiotics that have become ineffective due to AMR. Additionally, his research focuses on discovering and developing antimalarial drugs from natural products, specifically targeting both the asexual and sexual stages of the malaria parasite within red blood cells.

Dr Moyo was awarded an Africa Oxford Visiting Fellowship in 2023, which allowed him to conduct research in Professor Schofield's lab within the Ineos Oxford Institute for Antimicrobial Research, Department of Chemistry, University of Oxford.

Dr Moyo received a Y1 rating from the NRF.

Dr Annette Potgieter is a senior lecturer in the Department of New Testament and Related Literature in the Faculty of Theology and Religion.

She completed her doctorate in theology (cum laude) at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. She has also obtained the following degrees: MTh (New Testament) cum laude, MA (Ancient Languages and Cultures) cum laude and MDiv cum laude, BAHons (Ancient Languages and Cultures) cum laude and BTh cum laude at the University of Pretoria.

Her research interests are metaphor, spatiality and resilience theory in Pauline literature and the Septuagint. She is the author of *Contested body: metaphors of dominion in Romans 5–8* (2020) and the co-editor of *From worshipping, sacrificing and mourning to praising and praying: key concepts of the Greek Bible* (2024) as well as co-editor of *South African spiritualities: experiencing God in everything and nothingness* (2024).

Dr Potgieter received a Y1 NRF rating from the NRF.



Dr Annette Potgieter

Dr Janette Reader was appointed to the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology. She is one of five international researchers who have produced transmissible forms of malaria parasites and the only one to stage-stratify transmissible forms of parasites for stage-specific antimalarial compounds globally.

Dr Reader is a hard-working and highly acclaimed academic in the field of *Plasmodium falciparum* with published papers, a strong track record of research projects and a doctorate in biochemistry. She possesses excellent presentation and communication skills and can prepare comprehensive documentation and reports as required.

Dr Reader works well independently and as part of a team, demonstrating the motivation and organisation required to meet demanding targets. She combines an analytical and professional approach with excellent interpersonal skills and can communicate concisely at all levels.

Dr Reader received a Y1 rating from the NRF.



Dr Janette Reader

Dr Alison Ridel is a prominent lecturer and researcher in the Department of Anatomy within the Faculty of Health Sciences. Having relocated from France to South Africa in 2015, Dr Ridel completed her doctorate in anatomy at UP in 2018, supported by the AESOP+ Erasmus Mundus scholarship. Her scholarly trajectory has been further distinguished by receiving two postdoctoral fellowships, awarded in 2020 and 2022, which have significantly advanced her research and professional development. Dr Ridel's research pioneers the development of advanced morpho-phenotyping tools for three-dimensional (3D) biological profile estimation and 3D facial approximation, particularly relevant to forensic anthropology within the diverse South African demographic.

Her methodological innovations, integrating cutting-edge computer techniques and 3D geometric analysis, have led to transformative advancements in estimating facial features and biological data based on human anatomical variations. These developments carry significant implications for forensic investigations and medical applications. Dr Ridel's research outputs include 13 peer-reviewed scientific articles, contributions to two book chapters, and presentations at both national and international conferences.

Dr Ridel is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of scholars, currently supervising the research of 13 postgraduate students at UP, including seven doctoral candidates. Additionally, 14 postgraduate students have completed their degrees under her supervision. Her interdisciplinary research aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supports UP's mission to drive scientific innovation while addressing broader societal challenges.

Dr Ridel received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Alison Ridel



Dr John Sanni

Dr John Sanni is a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria (UP), and he received his doctoral degree in philosophy at Stellenbosch University in 2018. Prior to joining UP, he was a post-doctoral researcher in the SA-UK Bilateral Chair in Political Theory at the University of the Witwatersrand and Cambridge University from 2019–2021.

Dr Sanni has served as associate editor, and he is currently the managing editor of the *South African Journal of Philosophy*. His research areas include phenomenology, African philosophy, philosophy of religion, philosophy and migration, political philosophy, coloniality and decoloniality, and philosophy of violence.

His research critically engages the nature of socialisations, understood here as a process through which one acquires values and belief systems and how, in their attempt to inform identity, they assume an absolute disposition that makes ingroups unwilling to engage in any discussion with outgroups. The potential risk of absolute kinds of socialisation is violence, the kind that legitimises the infliction of harm to others. As opposed to the implication of violence attributed to absolute socialisation, he proposes a different conception of violence, an internal kind. This new disposition to violence entails a commitment to revisit, intending to undo and reimagine, absolute claims that inform and valorise absolute socialisations.

He is a visiting research fellow in the College of Fellows, Centre for Intercultural Studies, at the University of Tübingen, Germany.

Dr Sanni received a Y2 rating from NRF.



Professor Christiaan Swart

Professor Christiaan Swart is an associate professor in the Department of Mercantile Law within the Faculty of Law. He holds a BCom (Law), LLB, LLM (Corporate Law) (Pret), and LLD (UNISA) and is a qualified attorney admitted to the High Court of the Republic of South Africa. In 2019, he completed his doctoral thesis titled 'Relief from oppressive or prejudicial conduct in terms of the Companies Act 71 of 2008.'

Prof Swart commenced his academic career at the University of South Africa, where he gained extensive experience in distance learning within a virtual educational environment. This background has greatly enriched his ability to teach a range of corporate law modules, including company law, law of securities, international mergers and reorganisations, corporate liquidations law, and business rescue. His scholarly contributions include chapters in internationally published books on the law of business structures. He has also authored numerous articles in local and international journals, focusing on statutory protections for shareholders under the Companies Act 71 of 2008 and issues related to business rescue.

In recognition of his expertise, Prof Swart was selected to participate in the International Insolvency Institute's NextGen Leadership Programme in 2023.

Prof Swart received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Velushka Swart

Dr Velushka Swart is a lecturer in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. Dr Swart has authored and co-authored 14 publications in peer-reviewed journals.

Her PhD research investigated the maize pathogen *Cercospora zeina*, which poses a significant threat to African food security. She characterised the gene cluster associated with the production of the phytotoxin cercosporin, a vital pathogenicity factor which mediates host plant infection. She also developed the first *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation system for *Cercospora zeina*, which opened the field for further functional genomics research. She received an NRF Innovation Scholarship from 2012 to 2016.

Since 2021, she has been a principal investigator in the Hans Merensky Chair in Avocado Research at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute. The overarching aim of the chair is to conduct research that is of benefit to the avocado industry. Through a multidisciplinary approach, which includes plant pathology, molecular biology, genomics and transcriptomics, her research has allowed significant progress in understanding the economically important avocado diseases caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, *Dematophora necatrix* and Avocado Sunblotch Viroid.

Dr Swart received a Y2 rating from the NRF.

Dr Nonhlanhla Tlotleng earned a bachelor's and a master's in biotechnology from the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. She further completed a master's in epidemiology and a doctorate from the University of the Witwatersrand while receiving the National Research Foundation (NRF) Freestanding master's and doctoral innovation scholarships.

She joined the National Institute for Occupational Health as an epidemiologist in 2016 and was later promoted to senior epidemiologist in 2021. Dr Tlotleng is focused on risk factors and exposures for occupation-related cancers, workplace exposures and their effect on health, and improving disease surveillance in workplaces. She is currently supervising master's students and doctorate students in Public Health.

Dr Tlotleng has published widely in occupational health, including reviews, book chapters and research pertaining to workplace hazards and their risk factors. She has been invited to be an editorial board member for several peer-reviewed journals as a reviewer and an academic editor. She has served as a member of expert committees within occupational health and surveillance programs.

Dr Tlotleng received a Y2 rating from the NRF.

Dr Marc Van Goethem is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biochemistry, Genetics and Microbiology within the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. He received his doctorate in biotechnology in 2018 from the University of Pretoria, where he also obtained his master's (2015), honours (2013) and bachelor's (2012) degrees.

In 2018, Dr Van Goethem received an offer from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) in California (USA) to become a postdoctoral researcher. Here, he published several important papers in metagenomics that focused on complex soil ecosystems. In 2021, he joined King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia to oversee bioinformatic research and student support in the Extreme Systems Laboratory. His extensive collaborations across continents and universities facilitate high-throughput data solutions that straddle ecology, microbiology, and bioinformatics.

To date, he has co-authored 25 articles and two book chapters. He has supervised multiple students, served as a reviewer on several international high-impact journals, and delivered oral presentations at conferences worldwide.

He enjoys travelling and cooking with his wife and two-year-old son.

Dr Van Goethem received a Y1 rating from the NRF.

Dr Madelien Wooding is a researcher in the Department of Chemistry in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Pretoria. She manages the liquid chromatography and high-resolution mass spectrometry facility.

At the forefront of her primary research, Dr Wooding utilises mass spectrometry methodologies to delve into intricate chemical compositions, enabling the detection and characterisation of minute quantities of substances in various matrices. With a keen focus on real-world applications, Dr Wooding's research extends beyond conventional boundaries. In addition to investigating chemical pollutants in water and leaching chemicals from food packaging materials, she ventures into innovative territories, such as probing the chemical landscape of the human skin surface. By employing advanced mass spectrometry techniques, Dr Wooding explores the intricate array of chemicals present on the skin, unveiling potential biomarkers and molecular signatures that hold significant diagnostic value.

Among her notable achievements, Dr Wooding was awarded the L'Oréal-UNESCO fellowship for the Women in Science Programme in 2018, recognising her contributions to the field. Additionally, she was listed on The Analytical Scientist Power List Africa 2020, further highlighting her influence and impact in analytical chemistry and scientific research. In 2022, Dr Wooding's exemplary efforts in communicating scientific insights to a broader audience were honoured with *The Conversation Africa* Awards for Communication Excellence.

Dr Wooding received a Y2 rating from the NRF.



Dr Nonhlanhla Tlotleng



Dr Marc van Goethem



Dr Madelien Wooding

NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION (NRF) RATING CATEGORIES

Definitions of rating categories

Category	Definition	Sub-category	Description
A	Researchers who are unequivocally recognised by their peers as leading international scholars in their field for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs	A1	A researcher in this group is recognised by all reviewers as a leading scholar in his/her field internationally for the high quality and wide impact (ie beyond a narrow field of specialisation) of his/her recent research outputs.
		A2	A researcher in this group is recognised by the overriding majority of reviewers as a leading scholar in his/her field internationally for the high quality and impact (either wide or confined) of his/her recent research outputs.
B	Researchers who enjoy considerable international recognition by their peers for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs	B1	All reviewers concur that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs, with some of them indicating that he/she is a leading international scholar in the field.
		B2	All or the overriding majority of reviewers are firmly convinced that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs.
		B3	Most of the reviewers are convinced that the applicant enjoys considerable international recognition for the high quality and impact of his/her recent research outputs.
C	Established researchers with a sustained recent record of productivity in the field who are recognised by their peers as having: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produced a body of quality work, the core of which has coherence and attests to ongoing engagement with the field and demonstrated the ability to conceptualise problems and apply research methods to investigating them 	C1	While all reviewers concur that the applicant is an established researcher (as described), some of them indicate that he/she already enjoys considerable international recognition for his/her high-quality recent research outputs.
		C2	All or the overriding majority of reviewers are firmly convinced that the applicant is an established researcher (as described).
		C3	Most of the reviewers concur that the applicant is an established researcher (as described).
P	Young researchers (normally younger than 35 years of age), who have held the doctorate or equivalent qualification for less than five years at the time of application and who, on the basis of exceptional potential demonstrated in their published doctoral work and/or their research outputs in their early postdoctoral careers are considered likely to become future leaders in their field		Researchers in this group are recognised by all or the overriding majority of reviewers as having demonstrated the potential of becoming future leaders in their field, on the basis of exceptional research performance and output from their doctoral and/or early postdoctoral research careers.
Y	Young researchers (40 years or younger), who have held the doctorate or equivalent qualification for less than five years at the time of application, and who are recognised as having the potential to establish themselves as researchers within a five-year period after evaluation, based on their performance and productivity as researchers during their doctoral studies and/or early postdoctoral careers	Y1	A young researcher (within five years from PhD) who is recognised by all reviewers as having the potential (demonstrated by research products) to establish him-/herself as a researcher with some of them indicating that he/she has the potential to become a future leader in his/her field OR A young researcher (within five years from PhD) who is recognised by all or the overriding majority of reviewers as having the potential to establish him-/herself as a researcher of considerable international standing on the basis of the quality and impact of her/his recent research outputs
		Y2	A researcher in this group is recognised by all or the overriding majority of reviewers as having the potential to establish him-/herself as a researcher (demonstrated by recent research products).



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The Academic Achievers publication proudly spotlights the esteemed researchers from our university. Under the resonating theme of 'UP the gateway to Africa,' we illuminate our institution's pivotal role as a gateway to African knowledge and innovation.

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