

MEDIA RELEASE

University of Pretoria ranked ‘highly innovative university’ in 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation



The University of Pretoria (UP) has been ranked as a highly innovative university in [the 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation \(WURI\)](#).

UP’s high-tech business incubator, [TuksNovation](#), is ranked 44th on the WURI Industrial Application ranking, while the University itself is ranked in the 101-200 band in the WURI Global Top 100 Innovative Universities ranking, which evaluated 423 universities for the 2023 list. UP is the only South African university ranked in the 2023 WURI.

Unlike the more traditional rankings, such as the UK’s Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and Times Higher Education (THE), which analyse historical data when ranking universities, the WURI rankings gather information on and evaluate forward-looking, new, and innovative projects underway at universities around the world.

The WURI rankings have been published since 2020 and are coordinated by the Institute for Policy and Strategy on National Competitiveness (IPSNC) in Seoul, South Korea, and supported by four other organisations including the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Hanseatic League of Universities (HLU) with 120+ member universities around the world, the Institute for Industrial Policy Studies (IPS) in Seoul, and the Tailor Institute of Franklin University Switzerland (FUS) in Lugano, Switzerland.

“The University of Pretoria is proud to be named among the top 200 universities on the 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation,” said Interim UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Themba Mosia. “We are especially pleased because these rankings evaluate universities’ practical contributions to society, highlighting the ways in which research and educational programmes are being used to create real change in our local and global societies. These rankings are in line with UP’s vision of being a leading African research-intensive university that makes a meaningful contribution to our society through all our research and educational programmes and efforts.”

In its Industrial Application ranking, WURI applauded UP’s TuksNovation business incubator as a “supportive environment for entrepreneurs and start-ups to develop and grow their businesses”. TuksNovation is a technology business incubator based at UP’s Hatfield Campus that provides specialised product and business

development support to start-up businesses. It also helps start-ups connect and partner with investors, and collaborates with student entrepreneurial challenges and events to give students the opportunity to engage with the start-up community.

60 start-ups supported in five years

“The incubation programme at the University of Pretoria provides a unique opportunity for entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into successful businesses with the help of a supportive community, mentorship, and access to resources,” WURI said in its notes about TuksNovation’s 44th-place finish on the Industrial Application ranking.

“TuksNovation occupies a special place in the South African start-up, technological, and entrepreneurship ecosystem,” Prof Mosia said. “This high-tech business incubator is only in its fifth year of operation, but by last year TuksNovation had worked with 60 start-ups, which collectively generated revenues of over R20 million, and trained 1 200 students in entrepreneurship and related entrepreneurial development initiatives.” He added that TuksNovation’s success exemplifies UP’s striving to be an entrepreneurial university in line with the need to help alleviate South Africa’s high unemployment rate.

“We greatly value your expertise and innovative programmes, which we believe are invaluable to share with other institutions of higher education,” Dr Tae Hyun KIM, Chairman of the WURI coordinating body, Seoul’s Institute for Policy and Strategy on National Competitiveness, said in his congratulatory letter to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal. “Although the WURI Ranking 2023 ranked MIT, Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, and Harvard at the top of the list, it also included many lesser known yet remarkably innovative higher educational institutions which had not appeared before in other traditional university rankings... Their emergence highlights the way in which the WURI ranking is not based on tradition, reputation, or popularity, but rather is focused on new concepts such as innovativeness, entrepreneurship, social responsibility, openness, crisis management, and [progress during] the fourth industrial revolution.”

In addition to its Global Top 100 Innovative Universities and Industrial Application rankings, the 2023 WURI rankings also released rankings based on Value-Creating; Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Integrity; Student Mobility and Openness; Crisis Management; and Progress during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

WURI is a non-profit programme, and the first round of blind evaluations are done by the vice-chancellor/president (or their representative) of each participating university. The WURI Evaluation Board, including representatives of university leagues and higher education-related media, review the evaluators’ scores and send their recommended lists to the WURI office for the global top 100 rankings.

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ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a Faculty of Veterinary Science, which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2023 QS World University Rankings by Subject ranked UP first in South Africa in Accounting and Finance, Law, Economics and Econometrics, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Mathematics, and Veterinary Science.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za