

Creating a productive environment for innovators

Universities, as the creators and custodians of knowledge, have the important task to create productive environments for innovation.

Innovation means different things to different people. For policy-makers in government, innovation is an important factor in the economic growth of the country. Companies drive innovation in order to become more competitive in their respective industries. Individuals see innovation as a way of becoming successful business owners. There is, however, one common factor between all these objectives and that is the goal to create more wealth, whether it is for the country, the company or the individual. Universities around the globe view innovation as part of their task to serve the community around them. South African universities are no different.

The University of Pretoria is a powerhouse of knowledge and a leader in research. It is in the ideal position to be a major driver of innovation in all spheres of the community. The combination of bright minds, modern equipment and facilities, appropriate funding and commercialisation structures provide ample opportunities to potential innovators to transform their mind-boggling ideas into valuable products and services.


Creating an environment where innovative academics and students can produce their innovations in the most productive way is a high priority for the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT), as is evident from the many contributions in this edition of *Innovate!*

The addition of a modern engineering facility to the existing infrastructure is a milestone in the history of the faculty and a major boost for the preparation of an innovation generation of graduates. Read more about this environmentally friendly building with its innovative design, and the very interesting views from the well-known architect, Anton de Jongh, on the urban context of the design. This is certainly an important contribution in creating an innovative environment for both academics and students.

This edition also features very interesting research and innovation contributions across a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from chemistry, health, materials, electronics, industrial engineering, water research and biotechnology to architecture. There are contributions from the services disciplines as well, including project management, which is an ever growing and urgently needed skill in South Africa.

The goal of EBIT is to deliver well-educated, innovative graduates to the world out there. South Africa as a country is facing huge services and infrastructural challenges that ask for innovative solutions. Think about the energy shortages, road infrastructure problems, bad service delivery, poor water quality and many other situations that ask for bright and innovative minds to take care of the solutions.

I trust that you will enjoy this fourth edition of *Innovate!* 📖



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