

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH DR LINDA ZIKHONA LINGANISO: DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

Please let us know the steps you have taken towards Research and Innovation (R&I) at DUT?

We have established quite a lot of programs and they are in line with the Research Capacity Development unit of the directorate coordinated by Ms Vaneshree Govender. We have introduced programs such as women in R&I. This program is specifically tailored to take care of women's academic needs. Another program we launched in year 2020 is the social innovation hub which was in line with the Envision2030 as the new strategy for DUT to attract industrial partnership. So far, we have been able to attract a few private sectors and also the social hub is a platform where our researchers meet with industries. The purpose of the hub is to bring industries on board while ensuring an effective collaboration between industries and DUT researchers. This platform also provides an opportunity to generate and commercialize patents. Our students and research fellows here at DUT are tailoring their research into solving industrial challenges. Hence, we have considered this social innovation hub as a structure that will serve the entire university towards managing research output and in line with the Envision2030.

As the year ends, how has been the performance targets for the year?

The performance plan for the year is to raise funds for the universities and one of the ways we are doing that is to boost research outputs. The next step now is to raise funds from NRF, DSI and other funding agencies so we can have a fund channelled towards R&I which is also one of the objectives of the social innovation hub. Another plan was to engage board of directors or develop an advisory board that will be made up of people from the private sector. I want the board to be the voice of the private sector industries and to align with the research here at DUT. There is always a gap, and that is why we seek to get partnership from the government. The goal is to develop an academic trinity at DUT, which would comprise DUT academic researchers, private

industrial researchers, and government support. This would help us achieve some part of the Envision2030 goals.

What are your expectations and aspirations for the RPS?

I am looking into how we can translate ideas into research that can be commercialized and translated into patents in the future. Secondly, I am looking at the advancement of Envision2030, setting the structure for students to adopt and engage with research that will bring to life the visions of DUT's Envision2030 with more focus on societal development. One of the aspirations I also have is that I want our own black students to learn to solve industrial problems, once we get the industries coming onboard, there will be students' engagement with these industries which will improve high impact learning among our students. In addition, once we begin to engage students and industries in research, the opportunity for our students to get employed by these industries will be on the rise and thereby decreasing unemployment amongst our youths.

What steps have you taken to ensure dissemination of research output to the immediate society?

The university needs to have a system where there is cogent community engagement. Most times, we conduct research and just publish the output in journals meanwhile the community in which we conducted this research do not benefit from the output. The blueprint strategy of Envision2030 will engage the community immediately about the results of a study and by community, I mean, the society, the government, the private sector, as well as the local industries around. What we must do now as an institution of higher learning is to ensure that when we bring industries on board with our research, we must upscale the dissemination of research outputs into data or prototypes that must be accessible to all parties.



DR LINDA ZIKHONA LINGANISO:
DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

How would you assess your progress so far as the Director of the RPS?

The RPS has been run on a traditional mechanism and this is how most offices run their services. However, we have been able to strategically improve the quality of our services at RPS. One such development is the launch of the Social Innovation Lab which started off as an idea and we have been able to sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with various industries in partnership with the university. We now collaborate with academic researchers and industry partners which has been favourable to the university. We also introduced the short learning programs that have been accredited at DUT, which aligns with DHET policies. We are also hosting the inaugural conference "Conversations on Sustainable Development" scheduled for December 2021. Everything we have set out for the year is getting accomplished and before the year runs out, we would have accomplished all goals for 2021.

RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (RCD)

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ONLINE EXHIBITION ENCOURAGES INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In a program themed Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Online Exhibition which was held on the 28th of April 2021, the Research and Postgraduate Support (RPS) Directorate at the Durban University of Technology had invited staff and students to participate in a competition to present their research findings dwelling mainly on how the results can be translated to SMMEs or innovation. The competition required that participants present their research findings via a mini video of not more than 5 minutes, or through a banner/poster, or a 3-5 slide PowerPoint.

The virtual competition featured participants from the Faculties of Health Sciences, Applied Sciences, Accounting and Informatics, and Engineering and the Built Environment all from the Durban University of Technology. At the feedback session Programme Director, Mr. Themba Zitha, welcomed and introduce attendees to the purpose of the session. The RPS Director, Dr Linda Liganiso, encouraged

students and staff to imbibe the culture of translating research findings into commercial value while stating that DUT is currently moving towards entrepreneurial-based university. In her remarks, she mentioned that "with the support being received from government and institutions, it is important that we produce tangible commercial outputs and innovation in order to catch up with the fast-changing world".

The winners of the competition were supported with in their endeavour to commercialize their research. Amongst the forms of support were 1st Prize – R20,000 including one year incubation contract; assignment of technology development/business mentor; and entrepreneurship business acceleration. The 2nd Prize was R10,000 alongside a one-year incubation contract as well as assignment of technology development/business mentor. The 3rd Prize was R5000 including one year incubation contract. Ms Nomnikelo Lundall announced the winners as follows:

- 1st Prize: Mr Ademola Rabiu**
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment
- 2nd Prize: Ms Saffia Hassanally**
Faculty of Applied Sciences
- 3rd Prize: Mr Olusegun Ayodeji Olagunju**
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment and **Ms Nokuthula Hloniphani Mavela**
Faculty of Health Sciences

Dr Liganiso said that the initiative of the competition was directly linked to the DUT Strategy ENVISION2030. She recommended that the participants and listeners continue to link their research works to the provisions of ENVISION2030 and make their research relevant to their society and especially, the local communities. The winners appreciated the opportunity being given to them and the support being provided by the RPS. They reinforced their commitment to continue to conduct research and produce findings that are globally relevant and that will solve national and international problems.

THE A TO Z OF GRANT PROPOSAL WRITING WORKSHOP

Professor Tennyson Mgutshini, Researcher in Residence, facilitated a virtual workshop on the A to Z of Grant Proposal Writing to DUT staff, postgraduate students and fellows of the university. Professor Mgutshini was able to share his wealth of knowledge with the DUT community. He explained the Dos and Don'ts of grant application in the workshop.

During the workshop, Professor Mgutshini advised all academics and researchers to ensure that their proposals are systematically formatted

and detailed with intent and the investigation plan of their study must be included and a detailed justification of the financial budget of the study should also be included. While highlighting the intricate dynamics of various grant awarding institutions, Professor Mgutshini affirms that most grant awarding bodies have a theme or objective that regulates their selection process, he therefore implored the attendees to pay more attention into building a very detailed and confident research proposal before sending it out for application. Professor Mgutshini said "grant

awarding bodies want to be confident that if you are awarded a grant, the outcome of the study is trusted, and their money does not go to waste. Funders want to trust you with their money, therefore, your proposal must be solid".

Concluding his presentation, Professor Mgutshini highlighted the 10 trademark descriptors that will assist post graduate students develop a successful grant proposal. The recordings of the session can be accessed on the link below: [The A to Z of Grant Proposal Writing](#)

ADVANCING WOMEN IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME

The global gender gap reports that in South Africa, there is about only 13% of women graduate in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) field. This report currently proves that there is a shortage of critical STEM skill among women. As part of the Directorate initiative to capacitate female researchers in the STEM disciplines the Director, Dr Linda Liganiso help launched the Advancing Women in Research and Innovation Programme.

This dedicated programme aims to empower women researchers from the different disciplines at the university with opportunities for women to come together to define and find sustainable solutions that address the shortage of women in STEM, as well become leaders and role models for female

researchers of younger generation. The main objective of the programme is to provide resources in form of research project grants, mobility grants, sabbatical grants, as well as provide mentorship and offer female researchers opportunities on national and international platforms.

The programme is in its inaugural year and already female researchers in STEM have started benefiting from this grant. These resources provided have greatly assisted the researchers to improve their research productivity thus contributing to the university's research outputs.

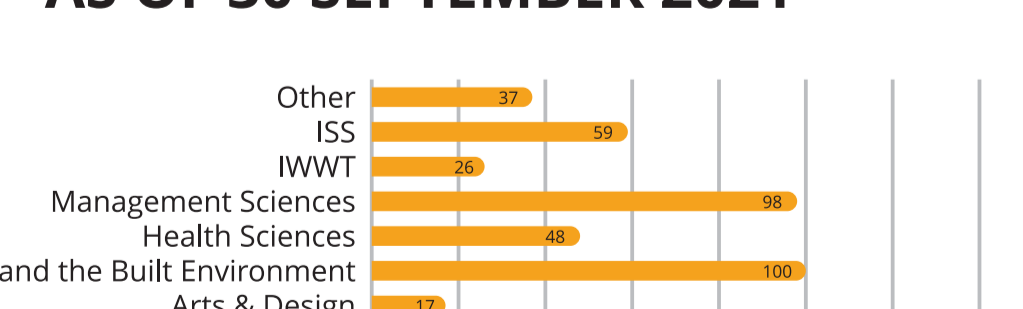
Past recipients of these grants will be interviewed in subsequent issues of the Newsletter.

RESEARCH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (RIMS)

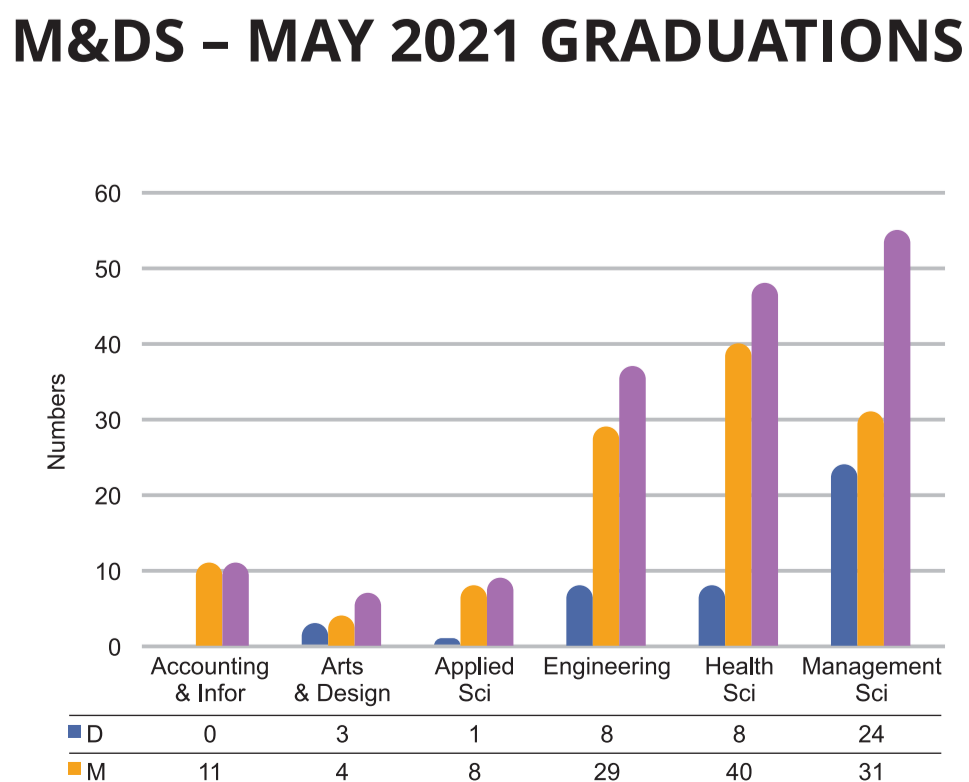
RESEARCH OUTPUTS REPORT AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

Publication Type	Number of Publications (Captured)
Journals	481
Proceedings	59
Books	3
Chapters	54
TOTAL	597

RESEARCH OUTPUTS PER FACULTY AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2021



M&DS – MAY 2021 GRADUATIONS



PROGRESS PERTAINING TO ORCID REGISTRATIONS & ELEMENTS USAGE

