



VC's VOICE



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Giving Tuesday: how we can help to change a life

Nelson Mandela University is asking all alumni, donors, corporates, students and supporters to pledge from 14 November for "Giving Tuesday" on 28 November as part of our global Giving Campaign launched in July.

The multi-year Giving Campaign is in support of four projects based on empowerment and social redress.

"Giving Tuesday – the first Tuesday after the US celebration of Thanksgiving – focuses specifically on student hunger and bursaries. It aims to raise R2.5-million (approximately US \$135 000).

The reality today is that all universities need to raise additional income to help maintain high quality education, as well as to broaden the net to accommodate academically deserving and indigent students who cannot fund their studies.

Sadly, hunger is another serious threat to student success across South Africa. Nelson Mandela University is no exception, with over 30% of students skipping a meal due to lack of money.

Student hunger

Student Health Services Deputy Director, Sister Althea Hawkins outlined the magnitude of the problem, noting that the University issues more than 13 000 food parcels per year.

"We hand out 1100 per month, while under 'normal' circumstances it would feed 1100 students per year," she said. "Due to the demand, it is not always the same students receiving the same parcels every month."

The parcels include maize meal, rice, pasta, beans, peanut butter and vegetables and other grocery cupboard staples.

The University targets parcels to go to recipients who are unfunded, that is, those who do not receive a National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) allowance.

However, even NSFAS students sometimes go to bed on an empty stomach, as the bulk of their allocation goes to tuition and accommodation, leaving very little over for nutritional meals.

Student bursaries

At Nelson Mandela University, more than two-thirds of students received financial aid to study in 2023.

However, not all students in need are supported by NSFAS. Funds raised therefore will support three categories of students:

- The so-called "missing middle"
- Those with historic debt who cannot register until this is cleared
- Postgraduates in need of support, as NSFAS does not fund postgraduate qualifications.

The Giving Campaign recognises that raising funds for bursaries for deserving students is not only a moral duty, but also a strategic investment in the future of South Africa.

The office of the Vice-Chancellor, with the endorsement of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, is leading this initiative. It is driven by the ethos that no academically deserving student should be denied access to education due to their financial situation.

A key message of Giving Tuesday is that a donation – no matter how big or small – can help provide opportunities for thousands of young people who are facing hardship and adversity daily.

Although it is a global campaign, we invite the Nelson Mandela University family to join in and give generously to help change a life.

See more at our [Giving page](#)

Our academic links with Brazil, Russia, India and China are growing

Visits this year by senior government officials from four BRICS nations have affirmed the significance of international collaborations to academic progress.

Delegations of Russian, Brazilian, Indian and Chinese ministerial officials visited Nelson Mandela University. This was part of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Ministers' meeting in Gqeberha in August.

The academic engagements took place against the backdrop of the 15th international BRICS Summit in Johannesburg.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation, the Ministry of Higher Education Science and Innovation, and the Department of Higher Education and Training, as well as respective diplomatic missions facilitated linkages with Russian, Brazilian, Indian and Chinese universities.

Nelson Mandela University participates as a member on behalf of South Africa in the BRICS Network University, and its International Governing Board.

These visits were opportunities for Mandela University to highlight numerous active collaborations that will advance sustainable development for this collective of nations.

Brazil

His Excellency Inácio Arruda, Vice Minister of Science and Technology for Social Development of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, led the Brazilian delegation.

Of the three BRICS nations represented, the most similarities – positive and negative – may be between South Africa and Brazil. Both countries, for example, are grappling with the question of inequality in society and the impact of climate change.

Although Nelson Mandela University does not yet have formal relationships with universities in Brazil, a number of academics have been collaborating with counterparts in that country.

Initial engagements have included a visit in June by Professor Guilherme Nogueira from Sao Paulo State University, which is already collaborating with the Department of Forestry at the George Campus.



From left, Brazilian Vice-Minister of Science and Technology for Social Development, Inácio Arruda; Prof Sibongile Muthwa; DSI Director Multilateral Cooperation, Cecil Masoka; Dr Thandi Mgwebi and members of the Brazilian delegation.

In July, Nelson Mandela University engaged with Bahia State University, which has expressed interest in collaborating with the faculties of Engineering and Business and Economic Sciences.

There are also talks between the Federal University of Minas Gerais with the School of Architecture from Nelson Mandela University.

On a separate date, Nelson Mandela University hosted 40 Brazilian Rectors of State and Municipal Universities to explore areas of mutual collaboration. Potential areas of collaboration identified were in health, especially electronic health record keeping (digitisation), chronic diseases burden, maternal health, cancer and mental wellness. Energy and earth sciences were other areas earmarked for collaboration.

Russia

Over the years, Nelson Mandela University has developed small yet valuable partnerships with higher education institutions in the Russian Federation.

In May this year, the University entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with University of Saint-Petersburg, where South Africa's Ambassador to Russia, His Excellency Mzuvukile Maqetuka played a catalytic role.

In August, this relationship deepened when Mandela University welcomed a delegation led by Dr Valery Falkov, Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation.

Researchers at the Centre for High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscopy, together with the Joint Institute of Nuclear Research in Dubna, Russia, have produced 55 journal articles. Future areas of research collaboration include hydrogen production and nuclear energy.

In addition, although engagements are at an early stage, the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia has expressed interest in collaborating with Mandela University.

India

South Africa and India have long-standing ties that have solidified over the years and encompass



Mandela University and Russian delegation role players.

various fields such as bilateral trade, politics, sport, and culture. Most of Nelson Mandela University's partnerships with BRICS countries are with Indian higher education institutions, eight in total. In early January, Woxsen University, based in Hyderabad, India, invited Nelson Mandela University to participate in a week-long workshop on the Metaverse, which is seen as the next evolutionary iteration of the internet that could completely change the world.

In the first week of August 2023, Nelson Mandela University hosted the Advisor and Head of International Cooperation Division of India Science and Technology Department, Mr SK Varshney, who was hosted by Dr Thandi Mgwebi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Internationalisation. It was agreed that additional areas of collaboration between Mandela University and Indian universities in the ocean's economy, entrepreneurship and indigenous knowledge systems should be explored.

China

Chinese Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Wang Zhigang, led a delegation that visited the Ocean Sciences Campus.

This accentuated the fact that Ocean Sciences research is a key priority for Nelson Mandela University, and was reinforced by a subsequent visit by the President of the Ocean University of China to Nelson Mandela University in October.

Representatives of the Institute for Coastal and Marine Research, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity and South Africa's Environmental Observation Network Elwandle Coastal Node presented their research during these visits.

At the same meeting, Mandela representatives shared a snapshot of the work being done in the fields of maritime law and revitalising the humanities, highlighting the new Mandela Institute for Sustainable Futures, the Marine Robotics Centre and eNtsa.

Various meetings included discussions on research cooperation and possible staff and student exchanges.

The hope is that these visits will catalyse and cement more formal relationships with like-minded universities in Brazil, Russia, India and China through the multilateral platform provided by BRICS.



From left, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation: Prof Andre Keet; Chinese Minister of Science and Technology, Wang Zhigang and Dr Thandi Mgwebi.

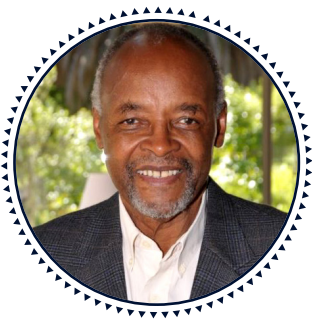
Meet our four new honorary doctorates

The Summer Graduation ceremony of 2023 saw Nelson Mandela University confer honorary doctorates on four highly respected citizens of Africa: Mandla Langa, Justice Jody Kollapen, Professor Chabani Manganyi and Nkemdilim Begho.



MANDLA LANGA

Cultural activist and writer Mandla Langa is one of our country's most highly respected cultural activists and novelists. He was among the first people behind the idea of using culture as an instrument to defy apartheid and to build support for the South African liberation struggle. Nelson Mandela University conferred the degree of Doctor of Literature (honoris causa) on Langa.



PROFESSOR NOEL CHABANI MANGANYI

Much-published author and distinguished psychologist Professor Noel Chabani Manganyi has made an immense contribution to education. He also is known for his thought-leadership and intellectual activism in terms of Black consciousness and Black identity. Prof Manganyi was conferred with the degree of Doctor of Industrial Psychology (honoris causa).



JUSTICE NARANDRAN JODY KOLLAPEN

Respected human rights lawyer, Justice Narandran Jody Kollapen, has held various leadership roles in organisations and institutions committed to the protection and promotion of human rights, both within South Africa and abroad. For his commitment to justice and his contribution to the development of our law in the area of justice and human rights advocacy, Nelson Mandela University conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) on Justice Kollapen.



NKEMDILIM UWAJE BEGHO

Digital transformation entrepreneur Nkemdilim Begho was born in Nigeria and later studied Bioinformatics in Germany. She is a technology influencer with integrity who uses her position to create real change in legislation, communities and in the lives of the young people and women her initiatives serve. For her leadership and for dedicating her career to serving her community, and more specifically the African continent, the University conferred the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Information Technology (honoris causa) on Begho.



Summer Graduation

Master's and doctoral students took centre stage at Nelson Mandela University's Summer Graduation on 13 December.

Close to 150 degrees, including 44 doctorates, were awarded to postgraduate students across the institution's seven faculties.



Medical scholarships help seven doctors in training



Representatives of the University and the South African Medical Research Council congratulate the recipients of the scholarships

The Chan Soon-Shiong Family Foundation (CSSFF) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) have presented scholarships to seven Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) students at Nelson Mandela University.

The scholarships, totalling R6-million, cover all six years of the medical degree programme.

The awards hold a special meaning for CSSFF chair, Dr Patrick Soon-Shiong, who was born and bred in the Eastern Cape.

"I have very fond memories of growing up in the Eastern Cape and I am thrilled that the Foundation has been able to contribute to support the studies of young doctors.

"Africa needs more doctors, and I am delighted to be able to support them in such a way. The Foundation wishes them the best with their studies, and we look forward to seeing their progress," Dr Soon-Shiong said.

SAMRC President and CEO, Professor Glenda Gray highlighted how doctors were "the lifeblood of the health system".

"We are particularly thrilled to be able to support students at Nelson Mandela University. These pioneers will be some of the first to graduate and the SAMRC is excited to chart their progress," said Dr Gray.

The life-changing scholarships are aimed at allowing academically and financially deserving students to pursue their dreams of becoming medical professionals.

The seven Nelson Mandela University recipients are: Keagan Brown, Zintle Mxishi, Khanyisile Mtsweni, Lukhona Mvovo, Michola Samuels, Nomcebo Sangweni and Noxolo Zulu.

The scholarships they have received will not only alleviate financial burdens but also empower them to make a meaningful impact on healthcare and society.

As Nelson Mandela University continues to nurture future healthcare leaders, this funding contribution plays a vital role in shaping the future of medicine and advancing the mission of providing quality healthcare to all, regardless of background or financial circumstances.

New AIDC-EC Chair in Automotive Engineering

Nelson Mandela University's new AIDC-EC Chair in Automotive Engineering is a major boost for automotive industry research, innovation and development.

The Automotive Industry Development Centre – Eastern Cape (AIDC-EC) has endowed the new research chair in the Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Technology for an initial three-year period.

Backed with a financial investment of R14-million, the launch on 12 June strengthens the University's position as a centre of excellence in the automotive industry.

Newly appointed AIDC-EC Chair of Automotive Engineering, Martin Sanne, brings 33 years of engineering and management experience to his new role.

At the launch, Sanne outlined the cornerstone value of the automotive industry to the Eastern Cape economy, noting that Nelson Mandela University is perfectly positioned to host this chair.

He highlighted various automotive engineering research and innovation platforms that the University could – and would – be focusing on. These included Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), digital transformation, Advanced Manufacturing and the three areas of innovation: product, process and organisational.

Until 2020, Sanne was cluster Executive Manager and Executive Director at the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the manufacturing cluster focusing on material science, manufacturing and the 4IR.

The qualified electrical engineer holds an MSc in Digital Systems, and has extensive experience in end-to-end, integrated engineering, quality services and management consulting, specialising in digital transformation.

AIDC-EC CEO Thabo Shenxane thanked AIDC-EC chairman Phumzile Zitumane for supporting the vision to create the Chair.

"We had a dream last year on the future of training, manufacturing and engineering – and that led us to the University," said Shenxane. "This is work that we are committed to, not only for the AIDC-EC but for the province, and Martin's appointment is a clear indication of where we want to go."

In addition to the AIDC-EC Automotive Chair, the new agreement makes funding provision for postgraduate bursaries and provides support for undergraduate capstone projects in the School of Engineering.

Mandela University Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research, Innovation and Internationalisation, Dr Thandi Mgwebi, welcomed the new partnership, highlighting the importance of research chairs connecting with industry.

"Industry partnerships are critical as they promote a multi-disciplinary approach to problem solving, and create an atmosphere of collaboration," said Dr Mgwebi.

The Advanced Mechatronic Technology Centre in the School of Engineering will host the Chair. As Sanne is based in Gauteng, he will travel between the two provinces.

The Chair will lead research, innovation, and technology in automotive, manufacturing and multi-disciplinary projects across the sector, particularly in the areas of advanced automotive and manufacturing production processes.

It also will manage research projects and engage industry on new product development processes, aspects of commercialisation and knowledge generation.

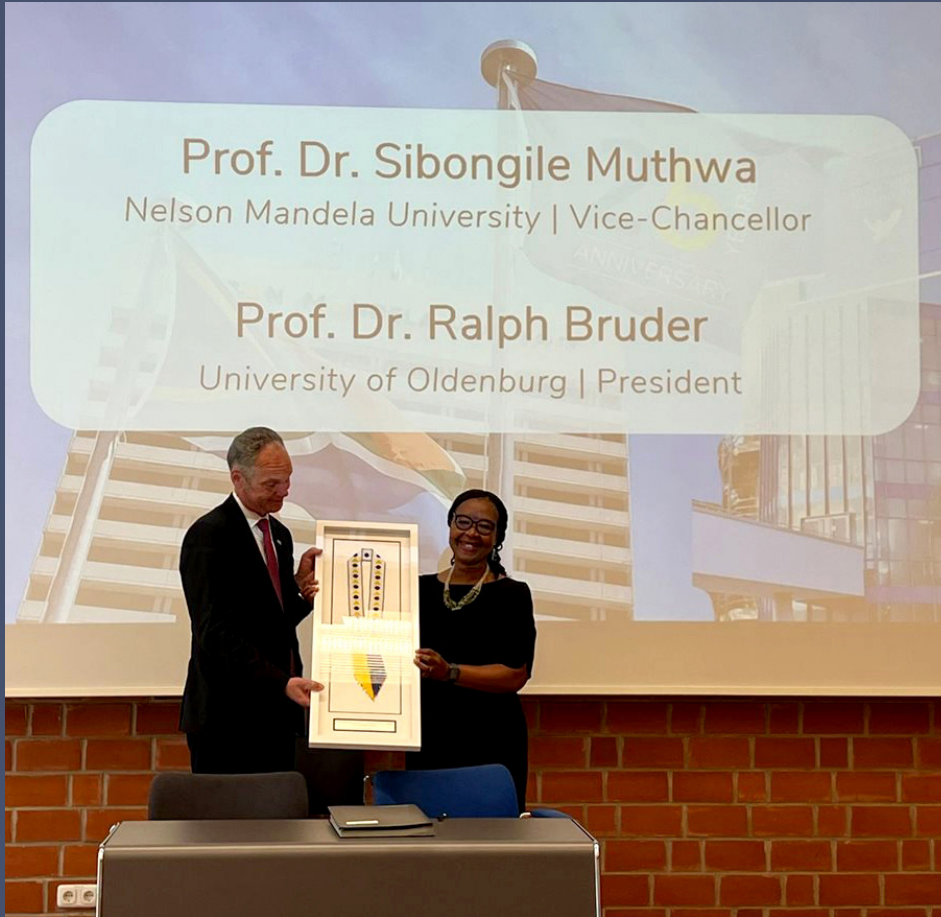
This work will also facilitate continuous engagement with external higher education institutions and industrial stakeholders including international student and staff exchange programmes and knowledge transfer in automotive engineering.

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25 years of Oldenburg partnership

Vice-Chancellor Professor Sibongile Muthwa presented University of Oldenburg President Professor Ralph Bruder with Xhosa beadwork in the colours of Mandela University.



// **Both universities have much to share and learn from each other.** //

– PROF SIBONGILE MUTHWA

The next five years

As part of the renewed five-year partnership, the two universities are intensifying efforts to support early career researchers. This will include joint training courses, as well as organising joint summer schools and applying for exchange programmes.

The partnership also will prepare students and graduates for more flexible career paths within and outside the university environment.

Nelson Mandela University and the University of Oldenburg in Germany are commemorating the 25th anniversary of a productive academic partnership.

Events to mark this included a delegation from Oldenburg visiting Nelson Mandela University at the end of 2022.

Following this, in June 2023, a Mandela delegation paid a reciprocal visit to the German university which saw the signing of a Roadmap for Cooperation 2023-2028.

This strategic implementation plan is intended to consolidate, strengthen and further develop existing relations. The two universities also held symposia discussing the outcomes of collaborative research projects and initiating new ones.

It is a valuable partnership, with both universities having much to share and learn from each other.

It enables both institutions to pursue various niche collaborations that straddle the three academic missions of learning and teaching; research and innovation, and engagement.

Professor Ralph Bruder, President of the University of Oldenburg, said that internationalisation was “at the heart of everything we do”.

“To find answers to the major questions facing society in the 21st century, researchers, students and administrative staff work closely together,” said Prof Bruder.

“Within our network, Nelson Mandela University is one of our closest partners.”

The relationship was first established in the field of education in 1998 and today is active across a wide range of disciplines.

In the next five years, collaborations will focus on areas that include:

- Education: internationalising teacher education, diversity and inclusion and research on digitalisation of higher education institutions
- Sustainability Science and deep transitions
- Marine Sciences: ocean and coastal environments
- Humanities and the Social Sciences
- Medicine and Health Sciences
- Renewable energy.

Our Virtual Academy gets ready to launch

Nelson Mandela University's Virtual Academy (VA), due to launch early in 2024, is a major boost to enable our vision of "human-centred digital innovation".

The academy is being incubated as a catalytic, strategic innovation in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

Originally proposed in 2018, the Academy is growing into a large interconnected system for human-centred digital innovation, advancing knowledge and fostering collaboration and efficiency throughout the entire University.

It has drawn from lessons learned about the role technology played to catalyse new ways of learning and working in the pandemic era and beyond, leading to a broad consultation process to conceptualise it as a flagship programme of the University's digital transformation (DX) strategy.

Bringing this work to life will take centre stage in 2024, along with greater digitalisation of systems. At all times, however, the focus will be on human-centred digital innovation and an inclusive, social justice approach to enabling this.

To be led by a Director, the VA Steering Team and programmatic leaders, its programmes are grouped into digital communities of practice and digital innovation projects. These align with Vision 2030's core principles and focus on future skills readiness to enhance graduate employability and empower staff to unlock their talents.

What will the Virtual Academy do?

The overarching rationale of the VA will be to prepare Nelson Mandela University students, graduates, and staff by developing the digital competencies and citizenship needed to function effectively in the future world of work.

Its primary goal therefore is to empower individuals to realise their potential, both personally and professionally, to employ digital technologies effectively and ethically in various aspects of their studies, life and work.

The initial priority is to tackle a multidimensional project that touches many aspects of the University's functioning.

The VA will develop a suite of online qualifications and short learning programmes, and all the related online services and support for such offerings. These will give effect to the institution's goals of broadening access to education for adult learners and fostering greater digitalisation of its systems.

While staff and students are the primary beneficiaries, various programmes and digital innovations can be accessed by communities through the University's engagement and Hubs of Convergence initiatives.

The Academy will also have a makerspace, where those working on digital innovations can "play" with advanced digital technologies and brainstorm solutions. To enable broad access, the new Science Centre on the Ocean Sciences Campus has been suggested as a possible base.

VIRTUAL ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS



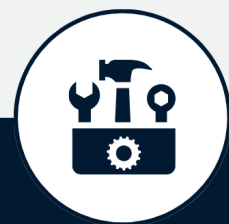
HUMAN CENTRED

Focus on "human-centred digital innovation" and digital competence development.



SKILLS READINESS

Emphasises future skills readiness, graduate employability, and staff empowerment.



INNOVATION MAKERSPACE

Makerspace for digital innovation, digitalisation of systems, and advanced technologies.

Congratulations to our international stars



ITUMELENG ZOSELA

PhD Physiology student Itumeleng Zosela is one of four South African students accepted to join the Novartis and University of Basel Next Generation Scientist Internship Programme in Switzerland. Her PhD research focuses on using plant material to synthesise gold nanoparticles for colon cancer treatment. The internship ran from June to August this year. She also works part time for the University's research office.



SIJEKULA MBANGA

Professor Sijekula Mbanga has won international recognition for his work in the field of human settlements. The United States-based National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) presented Prof Mbanga with an International Research and Global Exchange Award. This award is for his outstanding contribution to the international understanding and exchange of global experience in the housing and community development field. Prof Mbanga, the Chair for Human Settlements at Nelson Mandela University, accepted the award during a NAHRO conference and exhibition in New Orleans in October 2023. The award recognises his contributions to policy development, inclusive human settlements and sustainable housing in South Africa and beyond.



RONNEY NCWADI

Professor Ronney Ncwadi from the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences and Dr Palesa Makhetha-Kosi from the University of Fort Hare were recently awarded the South African Sweden University Forum Virtual Exchange Grant. This will enable Prof Ncwadi and Dr Makhetha-Kosi to partner with two professors from Sweden who also were awarded this grant.



JANET WESSON

The International Federation for Information Processing Technical Committee on Human-Computer Interaction (IFIP TC13) has named Professor Janet Wesson the IFIP TC13 Pioneer in Human-Computer Interaction. Prof Wesson was recognised along with four other world-renowned academics, but she is the only recipient of the prestigious award from Africa. IFIP is an international organisation for ICT professionals and researchers, covering five continents with more than half a million members.



Partners in the drive to transform higher education through Africa-centric internationalisation are (from left) Mzwakhe Lubisi (Councillor: Economic), Natasha September (IO Mandela), Dr Priscilla Mensah (Acting Senior Director: IO Mandela), His Excellency Thando Dalamba (Councillor: Political), Asanda Tele (IO Mandela), Sandra Appertey (Travel liaison) and Dr Nehemiah Latolla (IO Mandela).

Forging ahead with our African footprint

The Mandela International Office (MIO) has been continuing to advance its African Engagement and Partnership Programme over 2023.

The first leg of this programme in 2022 renewed existing relationships and forged new ones with universities in the East African countries of Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya. In 2023, the MIO took this into new areas with a substantial increase in partnerships fostered on the African continent.

The West African expansion leg, due to take place in 2023, has moved to 2024 owing to conflicting scheduling. However, the MIO has conducted a successful West African student recruitment drive, which focused on recruiting undergraduate students, with a fruitful media communication campaign that placed Mandela University as a first choice for students seeking to study abroad. Engagements with South African High Commissions were an important aspect of the trip.

The conceptualisation of a third leg to North Africa is underway, with at least one country, Algeria, identified.

Accessing the continent

The University's expansion contributes to realising the African Union's Agenda 2063 Goals on The Africa We Want and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also helps to deliver on South Africa's national priorities as listed in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030.

Dr Nehemiah Latolla, who works on the MIO's Global African Footprint Expansion Portfolio, outlined how Nelson Mandela University, as a dynamic African university, places the African continent at the centre of its internationalisation initiatives.

"In doing this, we are also responding to the call for higher education institutions to contribute to the development agenda of the African continent," said Dr Latolla. An Africa-centric internationalisation is viewed as a significant vehicle to transform higher education, societies and the world.

Work is now in the final stages to complete a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate collaboration in indigenous knowledge systems with four other African universities:

- Great Zimbabwe University
- National University of Lesotho
- University of KwaZulu-Natal and
- Walter Sisulu University.

That coalition is focusing on multi-disciplinary research in the field of indigenous knowledge systems, guided by Professor Luvuyo Ntombana in the Faculty of Humanities' Anthropology Department.

The University is also in the final stages of signing MoUs with Ba Isago University, the Ghana Institute of Journalism and the Ugandan

Management Institute.

These MoUs cover activities in academic areas of mutual interest such as, but not confined to:

- Exchange of staff to teach, conduct research and exchange expertise
- Student exchanges
- Collaborative research projects
- Co-organising symposia, seminars and conferences
- Exchange of academic information and materials and
- The development of joint PhD qualifications.

The aim is to encourage Mandela graduates to add to the body of knowledge dedicated to scientific and innovative discoveries that contribute to the development of the African continent. At the heart of the University's objective to expand its African footprint lies the responsibility to produce graduates oriented in their African identity.

The Global African Footprint Expansion programme is framed as a collaborative effort between the University and the Nelson Mandela Foundation to promote social justice and advance human rights for all.

It is rooted in the travels of Nelson Mandela in 1962 when he secretly left South Africa in search of support for the anti-apartheid struggle. During his travels across the African continent, he met with African leaders and worked to find scholarships for Black South Africans.

In addition to the 16 countries Mandela visited in 1962, the mapping of the University's African footprint expansion will include countries visited after his release from prison. It will include countries he visited when he was president of South Africa and which formed part of his peace-keeping missions.

Public lectures give expression to institutional identity

Nelson Mandela University uses its series of Institutional Public Lectures to reflect our identity and ethos as an institution in the service of society.

The following four events have been significant expressions of this over the second semester.

Griffiths and Victoria Mxenge Memorial Lecture



Chief Justice Raymond Zondo delivered the prestigious Griffiths and Victoria Mxenge Memorial Lecture, honouring the memory and legacy of two prominent South African anti-apartheid activists, on 20 July.

Chief Justice Zondo's lecture, titled "The Role and Significance of a Strong Judiciary in SA's Constitutional Democracy", drew on the inspirational lives and contributions of Griffiths and Victoria Mxenge.

As a symbol of hope and progress, the lecture served as a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggle for a just and inclusive society in South Africa and beyond.

On the same date, the Justice joined Vice-Chancellor Professor Sibongile Muthwa in officially launching the Pius Langa building in the Faculty of Law.

Dr Brigalia Bam Inaugural Institutional Public Lecture



Dr Brigalia Bam delivered the Faculty of Humanities' inaugural Institutional Lecture on 25 August on "Democracy: more than just elections."

Born in 1933, Dr Bam was a teacher, social worker, church leader, and is a renowned activist and feminist.

She served as a commissioner of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) for the first democratic elections in 1994 and as IEC Chairperson from 1999 to 2011.

As one of South Africa's pre-eminent wise elders, Dr Bam addressed a capacity audience of academics, citizens and learners from several schools in the Nelson Mandela Metro.

Her hope is that through the Brigalia Bam Foundation, and the archive in her name that Mandela University has created, "we have created a space where the dialogue about the issues of democracy can be renewed; where as members of civil society we can revive our spiritual energies to bring about change for all of us."

Former Deputy President, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and University of Pretoria political science lecturer, Dr Sithembile Mbete also spoke, covering leadership themes, including the representation of women in political leadership.

Raymond Mhlaba Annual Institutional Public Lecture



The late anti-apartheid struggle stalwart Raymond Mhlaba, affectionately known as Oom Ray, dedicated his life to fighting social injustice and the move towards a learned South African society driven by agency and service before self.

This was the message presented by Professor Sydney Mufumadi (pictured above), an anti-apartheid activist and former cabinet minister, when he delivered the second annual Raymond Mhlaba Memorial Public Lecture on 6 September.

His theme was "What does it take to create a society of Raymond Mhlaba's aim: The nexus of moral competence, good governance, and ethical leadership".

The annual public lecture series in Oom Ray's name was launched in 2022 with the inaugural keynote delivered by Mandela University Chancellor, Dr Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, titled "Asinakuthula Umhlaba Ubolile: Amplifying the call to action".

Earlier in the day, Prof Mufumadi also presented a masterclass to students from the School of Governmental and Social Sciences.

13th Steve Biko Institutional Public Lecture



This public lecture is dedicated to the late Steve Biko, visionary founder of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, an inspiring figure who blended theory, practice, empathy, and an indomitable revolutionary spirit.

Former SA statistician-general Dr Pali Lehohla (pictured above) presented the keynote on 13 September, speaking on "Activating the agency of the people to free the land, the mind and the spirit".

Human rights lawyer Prof Barney Pitso was the respondent.

As the University revisits Biko's teachings, it too has to recommit to advancing an inclusive society and to position institutions of higher learning in particular as safe spaces free of discrimination, exclusion and fear.

These public lectures each have played a significant role in contributing to the University's institutional drive towards social justice.

New campus league a success for Madibaz Sport

The first Madibaz Sport Campus League kicked off this year and has been such a success that not only will it be repeated in 2024, but may also expand.

More than 1200 students participated over 18 weeks from April to October 2023 in the sports of netball, soccer, futsal and rugby.

Most participants were players but each team also had a coach, team manager and technical officials.

“There was a strategic need for a competition of this kind and it holds many benefits for a number of stakeholders,” said Petrus Boukes, Madibaz Sport Deputy Director.

As well as increasing healthy social interaction among students on campus, the new league also created opportunities for personal skills development and growth.

It was a chance to identify talented sportsmen and women already in the university system, while at the same time developing others to strengthen Madibaz teams.

To set up and run the league, Madibaz Sport worked with Student Governance and Development, Student Housing, Student Health Services, Universal Accessibility and Disability Services, HMS Sport Management/HPC, Protection Services, SHE Department and Arts & Culture.

One important benefit of the competition was that it created access into organised social sport, in addition to the formal club sport programme of Madibaz Sport.

Another major developmental benefit is that, as the programme stretched over several months, participants developed sport skills through on-going training and participation.

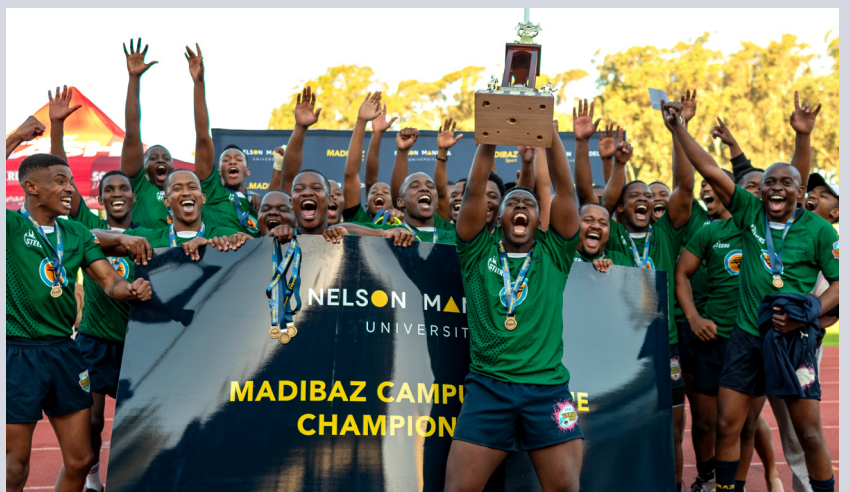
The total number of participants, officials and spectators over the duration of the league exceeds 20 000.

A campus sport league had been identified as a catalytic programme at the 2022 Student Life and Development strategic planning session to stimulate student life and vibrancy on campus.

However, after three years of disruption to sporting activities due to COVID-19, 2023 was the first full year of “normality”, and the first chance to make it a reality.

The aim is to further expand the programme by adding new sporting codes each year.

One important benefit of the competition was that it created access into organised social sport, in addition to the formal club sport programme of Madibaz Sport



The winning teams for the 2023 Madibaz Sport Campus League are, from top to bottom, Kings Student Accommodation for soccer; Metro Rez, for women’s futsal; Phase 3 New Residence for netball and Vikings (Oppidani) for rugby