



NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2025

SHAPING EXECUTIVE MINDS IN AFRICA





A WORD FROM THE CHIEF DIRECTOR

By Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Chief Director, NWU Business School

The final quarter of the year offers an important pause. It is a moment to assess not only what has been delivered, but whether our efforts are coherently advancing the kind of business school we intend to be.

We have continued to strengthen our academic and societal role in deliberate ways. Our staff have contributed meaningfully to public conversations on economic conditions, governance, and leadership, reinforcing the School's responsibility to engage beyond the classroom. These contributions reflect a growing confidence in our scholarly voice and a clear commitment to relevance in a complex and contested environment.

This quarter also marked significant progress in our postgraduate and doctoral agenda. The consolidation of the PhD Hub for Africa represents a strategic investment

in the future of African scholarship. It signals a commitment to building rigorous doctoral pathways that are contextually grounded, internationally credible, and institutionally sustainable. The depth of proposals and the calibre of engagement during selection processes point to a doctoral ecosystem that is maturing with purpose.

Across our teaching programmes, the year has concluded with a sustained focus on quality and coherence. Ongoing curriculum refinement, assessment review, and delivery improvements have been undertaken to ensure that our offerings remain academically rigorous while responsive to the realities faced by working professionals and emerging leaders. These efforts speak to a School that understands quality as a continuous responsibility rather than a periodic exercise.

Equally important has been the steady work of our professional and academic staff, whose contributions

often sit behind the scenes but are essential to institutional effectiveness. Their consistency, judgement, and commitment underpin the progress reflected in this newsletter.

As we prepare for the year ahead, the School's direction is increasingly defined by integration rather than expansion, by depth rather than volume, and by impact rather than visibility. We remain focused on strengthening academic excellence, advancing responsible leadership, and ensuring that our work contributes meaningfully to business and society in Africa.

Thank you to our staff, students, alumni, and partners for your continued engagement and commitment throughout the year.

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PITSO 2025:7/8

A gathering of experts as our Pitso series explores South Africa's key societal questions

The Pitso Series takes its name from the African tradition of communal gatherings for discussion and collective problem-solving. True to this spirit, the NWU Business School hosts a monthly Pitso where experts from academia, business, government, and civil society come together to examine the major societal questions shaping South Africa and the continent. Topics span governance, entrepreneurship, sustainability, economic reform, and issues of inclusion.

The series continues to demonstrate that our thought leadership extends well beyond theory – it is actively engaged with the complex moral, social, and developmental challenges of our time.

Our seventh Pitso of the year (10 October 2025) brought together a panel of experts to explore the urgent challenge of deindustrialisation and its

impact on jobs, growth, and competitiveness. The discussion unpacked the decline of ArcelorMittal's long-steel plants and what this means for South Africa's path to reindustrialisation.

[Watch the full conversation here.](#)



Our final Pitso for 2024 took place on 13 November and provided timely reflections on the 2025 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement – and what it signals for South Africa's broader economic trajectory. If you were unable to join us live, you can now revisit the full discussion and engage with the valuable insights shared by our panel

[Watch the full conversation here.](#)



We look forward to more enriching conversations in next year's Pitso series.

NWU BUSINESS SCHOOL

PITSO 2025:7 Webinar! 10 OCT 2025 12:00 - 13:15

INVITE

The closure of ArcelorMittal's long steel business and the implications for manufacturing in South Africa

REGISTER NOW

JACO VERWEY, JOHN MEGANON, KHAYA SITHOLE, PROF JAN HAVENGA

NWU BUSINESS SCHOOL

PITSO 2025:8 Webinar! 13 NOV 2025 12:00 - 13:00

SAVE THE DATE

Reflections on the 2025 MTBPS

REGISTER NOW

SIKONATHI MANTSHANTSHA, PROF RAYMOND PARSONS, KHAYA SITHOLE, DR AZAR JAMMING

Inside the AMP Mini-company project where strategy meets impact

The Short Learning Programme on Advanced Management Strategy (AMP) and its accompanying Mini-Company Project form the cornerstone of the NWU Business School's Executive Education flagship programmes, exemplifying the school's commitment to experiential learning and strategic excellence.

On 24 October this highlight event brought together participants who, throughout the year, have worked in syndicate groups to conceptualise and present their Mini-Company Projects. Acting as simulated executive teams, they apply strategic management, investment, innovation, leadership, and e-business insights to real or hypothetical business scenarios - culminating in final presentations before a panel of lecturers and programme directors.

“This capstone experience not only showcases their analytical, financial, and leadership acumen but also reflects the programme’s central ethos: transforming theory into practical, real-world decision-making”, says Mr Morné van den Bergh, Manager of the NWU Business School's Executive Education Programmes.

GROUP A

Calculated Victory: Business strategy case study: North West Cricket “The Dragons”

This group's case study focuses on designing a sustainable business model and strategic plan for the North West Cricket Club, aiming for both long-term financial stability and sporting excellence.

Using the Business Model Canvas framework, the analysis covers key areas such as operational activities, resources, partnerships, and revenue streams. It also addresses current challenges, including limited funding, player retention, community engagement, and competition from other sports.

The ultimate goal is to create a practical roadmap to boost revenue, strengthen stakeholder relationships, support youth development, and position the North West Cricket Club as a leading provincial cricket institution in South Africa.



Photo above: Ismail Minty (CEO NW Cricket), Surprise Tebogo Kaise, Philemon Matsebe Komane, Prof Ronnie Lotriet, Prof Christo Bisschoff, Komaneso Petrus Komane, Prof Louis van Staden, Prof Leon Jackson, Mpho Selina Malefane, Prof Stephan vd Merwe, Nkululeko Doctor Malatjie, Modesta Lovian Oliphant, Paulus Retselisitsoe Ramokhethi. Photo: Ismail Minty (CEO NW Cricket), Surprise Tebogo Kaise, Philemon Matsebe Komane, Prof Ronnie Lotriet, Prof Christo Bisschoff, Komaneso Petrus Komane, Prof Louis van Staden, Prof Leon Jackson, Mpho Selina Malefane, Prof Stephan vd Merwe, Nkululeko Doctor Malatjie, Modesta Lovian Oliphant, Paulus Retselisitsoe Ramokhethi.

GROUP B

Grade Diggers: Turnaround and sustainability plan for Udolpho: a case study in rural tourism management

The Grade Diggers group presents a strategic turnaround plan for Udolpho, a 240-hectare holiday destination and semi-functional farm near Parys, managed by the FAK since 2004. Despite its scenic location, Udolpho has faced continuous financial losses between 2020 and 2023, relying on FAK loans to stay afloat.

The proposed “Sustain and Build” strategy includes staff and operational restructuring, investment in off-grid infrastructure (solar and water systems), expanding digital marketing efforts, and forming ecotourism partnerships. A feasibility study is also recommended to assess implementation costs and timelines. These initiatives aim to turn Udolpho into a sustainable and profitable family destination.



Photo left: Otto Viljoen, Prof Christo Bisschoff, Prof Ronnie Lotriet, Magdalena Albertha van der Merwe, Anandi Alet Kearney, Prof Stephan vd Merwe, Trevor van Niekerk, Johann Christiaan Venter, Prof Leon Jackson, Prof Louis van Staden and Hermanus Hendrik Maree (online participant).

GROUP C

(Known as Group C): Driving innovation and partnership: Chryso SAF's strategic roadmap 2025-2029

This case study focuses on Chryso Southern Africa (Chryso SAF), a construction chemicals company under the Saint-Gobain group. The presentation outlines Chryso SAF's strategic pillars - innovation, proximity, partnership, and sustainability - and provides a detailed SWOT analysis of the company's complex external environment, influenced by political, economic, and social factors across Africa.

The strategic roadmap includes seven objectives aimed at aggressive growth, margin expansion, and alignment with Saint-Gobain's global targets. The presentation also includes five-year financial projections to achieve these objectives.



Photo left: Prof Christo Bisschoff, Pyetlane Tlhogeloko Lekoane, Greyling Jansen (Chryso SA's Company Representative), Prof Ronnie Lotriet, Bhenkinkosi Luphahla and George Mpho Seleke.

The NWU Business School extends its heartfelt appreciation to all Business School staff members involved. In these photos are Prof Stephan van der Merwe, Prof Leon Jackson, Prof Ronnie Lotriet, Prof Christo Bisschoff, and Prof Louis van Staden. Thank you for your invaluable leadership, guidance, and unwavering commitment to the success of this programme. Your dedication continues to inspire both participants and colleagues, reinforcing the School's mission to cultivate excellence and innovation in executive education.

Entrepreneurship students impress with investor-ready business pitches

In November, our Phase Two Entrepreneurship students showcased their talent and strategic thinking as they delivered their investor pitches, presenting business ideas crafted for real-world funding. Under the guidance of Prof Lerato Mdaka, the session created a meaningful bridge between students and an experienced panel of industry professionals who offered valuable insights into market readiness, feasibility, and investment potential. The presentations provided students the opportunity to apply the theory learned in class, exposing them to the real world of becoming an entrepreneur.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the panellists, Ratanang Selomane, Dr Elona Ndlovu, Khensani Nyambi, and Lodewyk Bronn—for their time, expertise, and thoughtful guidance. Their input strengthened the students' concepts and reaffirmed our commitment to experiential learning as a Business School for societal impact.

Entrepreneurship remains vital in addressing unemployment and unlocking African innovation. Opportunities like this prepare our students to develop relevant, sustainable solutions that make a meaningful difference.

Well done again to all the teams for their professionalism, creativity, and forward-thinking ideas.



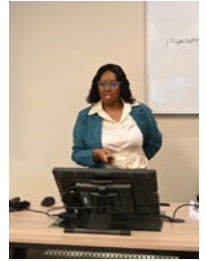
MBA COMPANY PROJECTS



MBA STUDENTS TAKE CENTRE STAGE WITH THEIR COMPREHENSIVE COMPANY PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Our Phase 2 MBA students recently presented their Company Projects, the culmination of months of in-depth organisational analysis and strategic problem-solving.

Over two days in mid-November, the groups shared detailed case studies, growth strategies, and practical implementation plans with a panel of academic mentors. Their work showcased not only technical knowledge but the creativity, grit, and business acumen expected of future leaders.



Alliance Syndicate Group - Smartview Fencing

Mentored by Prof Ronnie Lotriet, this team explored Smartview Fencing, a regional leader in high-security perimeter solutions. Their presentation outlined a strategic roadmap designed to support the company's next phase of growth.



Pen Pals - Bophelo Imaging

Under the mentorship of Small Business Advisory Bureau (or SBAB) amanger, Oarabile Manyapel, Pen Pals examined the operations of RH Bophelo's diagnostic imaging arm and presented key findings aimed at enhancing operational effectiveness.



The Front Runners - Vunani Limited

With guidance from Prof Stephan van der Merwe, The Front Runners provided insights into Vunani Limited's financial services operations and offered targeted suggestions for improvement.



TACT-X7 - KC Chemicals

Guided by Prof Anet Smit, TACT-X7 analysed KC Chemicals and delivered practical, actionable recommendations to strengthen the organisation's competitive position.



The People Bytes - Master Drilling Group Limited (MDG)

Mentored by Dr Khali Mofuoa, this group combined rigorous analysis with strategic recommendations to support MDG's continued expansion in the drilling industry.



The Spartans - Mooirivier Beskerming

Supported by Prof Emmanuel Mutambara, The Spartans evaluated this Potchefstroom-based, family-owned security company and delivered operational insights and strategic recommendations.



Ithemba - B2P Funeral Services

Mentored by Prof Leon Jackson, Itthemba presented a thoughtful analysis of B2P Funeral Services and identified opportunities for sustainable growth.



Masters@Work - Dreiers Hardware

With mentorship from Prof Hein Prinsloo, Masters@Work analysed Dreiers, a family-run hardware retailer, presenting key observations to support its long-term development.



MBA Matlosana - Gateway Airports Authority Limited (GAAL)

Guided by Philadelphia Sedio, this group presented a strategic analysis of GAAL, offering recommendations to support the organisation's growth and performance.



The Incredibles - LifeStyle Pharmacy Group (LPG)

Under the guidance of Albert van Zyl, The Incredibles offered a detailed assessment of LNG's operations, along with practical steps to drive performance and service delivery.



The Syndicate - Aupa Phadi Bus Services (APBS)

Mentored by Dr Theresa Lisita, The Syndicate evaluated APBS, a community-focused transportation enterprise, and delivered insights to strengthen its operational footprint.



Third Law Avengers - Saints Christian School (SCS)

With mentorship from Prof Christoff Botha, the Third Law Avengers examined SCS and presented a range of proposals to enhance institutional effectiveness.



Change Agents - Benny's Sports Development & Academy

Under the mentorship of Prof Jan van Romburgh, the Change Agents delivered an in-depth look into the academy's operations and provided key recommendations for improvement.



Visionary Alliance - Africars and For Keeps Laser

Guided by Prof PA Botha, Visionary Alliance presented a dual-company analysis and offered strategies to support both businesses' growth trajectories.



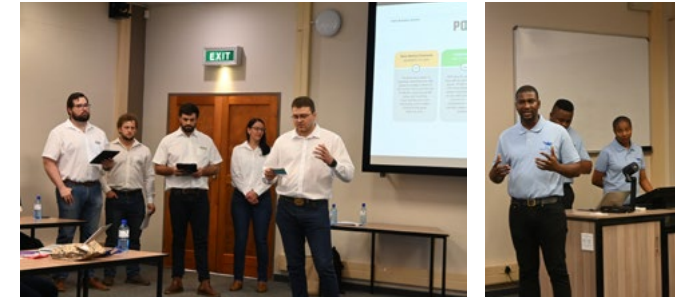
The Eagles - Independent Development Trust (IDT)

Mentored by Prof Joseph Lekunze, The Eagles analysed IDT and proposed a series of recommendations to support its ongoing development initiatives.



Lions - ArcelorMittal South Africa (AMSA)

Under the guidance of Dr Tshidi Khumalo, the Lions explored AMSA's operational environment and presented strategic insights to the panel.





Beyond BEE: The DA's post-racial vision and the politics of forgetting

By Prof Joseph Sekhampu

The Democratic Alliance's Public Procurement Amendment Bill proposes replacing the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) framework with a non-racial, outcomes-based procurement model that measures inclusion through poverty, performance and social impact. It calls for a shift from identity-based policy to measurable developmental results, arguing that empowerment should now be about poverty rather than race, about performance rather than participation.

The proposal speaks to a growing public fatigue with policies seen as politicised or captured, and to a desire for a system that rewards competence and delivery. Yet beneath its administrative logic lies a deeper question: *can justice be pursued through neutrality, or must it remain anchored in the historical conditions that produced inequality in the first place?*

For nearly three decades, BEE has been the state's main instrument of economic redress, conceived as a moral response to centuries of exclusion from property, capital and opportunity. Its intent was restorative, linking justice to historical repair, but its implementation has often fallen short. Over time, the policy's moral purpose was weakened by limited oversight, political capture and the concentration of benefits among a small elite. While it expanded ownership and representation in some sectors, broad based participation and structural change have remained elusive. The JSE's transformation dashboard shows black economic interest at about 14 percent in 2024, with voting rights around 25 percent; black women's economic interest stood at 5 percent and their voting rights at 11 percent. These figures reflect progress in form but not in substance.

This vacuum has led to the DA's proposal, which promises inclusion without ideology and reform without history. The Bill redefines empowerment in the language of developmental equity. It introduces a procurement scorecard weighted 80 percent for value for money and 20 percent for social and developmental outcomes.

These outcomes are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on job creation, environmental responsibility and support for small businesses. In theory, this approach could reduce fronting, professionalise tendering and redirect public spending towards measurable developmental outcomes.

Yet the philosophical shift it represents is significant. Where BEE sought restorative justice, the DA model privileges distributive efficiency. It advances

the view that equality is best pursued through race neutral measures, with poverty positioned as the primary marker of disadvantage and the basis for redress.

This marks a transition from a deontological conception of justice, grounded in moral duty to correct past wrongs, to a utilitarian one, focused on maximising aggregate welfare. **Yet this transformation raises a fundamental question about the ethics of equality: can a society that remains structurally unequal claim to be fair by pretending to be colour blind?**

South Africa's inequality remains deeply racialised. The legacy of exclusion continues to shape patterns of ownership, employment and opportunity. Wealth and privilege still align closely with race, while poverty and vulnerability remain disproportionately concentrated among those historically dispossessed. The geography of inequality, from who lives closer to economic opportunity to who depends most on public services, mirrors the moral map of the past. To remove race as a category of intervention is to pretend that history has completed its work when it continues to structure the present.

Proponents of the Bill counter that race based policies have become instruments of corruption and exclusion. They argue that non-racial developmentalism can achieve what BEE has not: broad based upliftment rather than narrow enrichment. BEE compliance costs small businesses significant sums each year, deterring genuine entrepreneurs and entrenching incumbents. Procurement inefficiencies have also suppressed competition, inflated costs and distorted markets. From this perspective, the DA's model seeks to restore merit, competence and efficiency as the true engines of transformation.

*Beyond BEE:
The DA's post-racial
vision and the politics
of forgetting (cont.)*

However, the question is whether efficiency can substitute for justice. Market rationality alone does not reverse structural inequality. In societies where the moral economy has been disrupted by dispossession, justice cannot simply mean procedural fairness; it must mean historical repair. Fairness requires not equality of treatment, but equality of opportunity, and this cannot exist when inherited advantage remains intact. Therefore, a racially neutral policy may produce a racially unequal outcome if the starting points are asymmetrical.

Procurement has long been the principal instrument of redistribution in South Africa. To shift its moral logic from empowerment to efficiency is to redefine the state's developmental role. It risks transforming the state from a vehicle of social justice into a regulator of market performance. Such a shift may restore investor confidence, but it could also alienate a society that is still waiting for the material promise of democracy to be fulfilled.

However, there is a valid insight in the DA's critique. The moral intent of BEE cannot excuse its failures in governance. The capture of empowerment policy by political and business interests has eroded public trust. Reform is not optional; it is necessary. However, genuine reform must integrate efficiency with empathy. It must design mechanisms that deliver measurable outcomes while still confronting structural inequities. This may require a hybrid approach, one that retains race as a diagnostic lens but moves beyond it as the sole basis for entitlement.

Ultimately, the debate on the DA's Bill is not about procurement alone; it is about the philosophy of nation building. It tests whether South Africa's moral economy can evolve from redress to reconstruction without erasing memory. The danger lies not in the pursuit of efficiency but in the temptation to forget. True empowerment must be historically conscious and future oriented, capable of linking justice with performance and dignity with delivery. A just economy is not one that ignores race, but one that no longer needs it to recognise fairness.



IS IT “SINFUL” TO INCUR DEBT?

by Prof Tommy du Plessis



We were hit hard again last week with the interest rate adjustment of 0.5%. The man on the street who must repay his overdraft facilities, or a mortgage will know that a half percent increase in the interest rate hits one's wallet.

The business owner is just as influenced by such an interest rate adjustment, which is why the more conservative business owners, especially the older generation, warn young entrepreneurs *“not to incur debt.”*

It's probably always better to do business on a cash basis. But sometimes, it can also work against the business. If we always must wait until we have enough cash, good opportunities might pass us by. If one must wait until there is enough cash for raw materials or inventory, a profitable tender might have to be let go. If there are not enough funds for a new machine or new equipment, potential customers might support a competitor.

On the other hand, it is certainly not a good business decision to buy everything on credit. The principle should still be that the owner or owners must always

have a healthy equity interest in the business. If the foreign capital in the business is more than the owner's interest, it means that “others” own the business. But the question can now be asked: what is the ideal situation? How much foreign capital in a business is enough or too much?

To answer these questions, the principle of leverage must first be explained. Just as one can use a small stone as a lever to move a large stone (easily) with a long stick, one can use one's own capital, foreign capital, and the return realized to keep the business financially healthy, even in times of rising interest rates.

Suppose a business has a very high foreign capital or borrowed funds ratio to the owner's interest; the return on total assets should only be higher than the interest rate paid on the borrowed funds. Then we have what they call positive leverage. If the return on total assets is less than the interest rate, the leverage is negative, and the business will struggle.

So, sometimes it is in the interest of the business to borrow money but make sure that the return on total

assets in the business is higher than what is paid to the creditors. Speaking of foreign capital, I would like to remind you of one of the golden principles of financial management, and that is the financing form that should be used for assets.

Long-term assets such as land and buildings should be financed by long-term capital (mortgages, long-term loans, or equity). Medium-term assets such as vehicles and equipment should be financed by medium-term capital, including term loans, instalment sales agreements, and lease agreements. Short-term assets such as inventory and debtors should be financed by short-term capital like overdraft facilities and creditors.

In all cases, business owners must inform themselves of the interest rate cycle. For example, unless there are sufficient funds available, it is not a good idea to undertake a large development at the beginning of a rising cycle.

Many business owners have missed the mark because they did not plan far ahead and could not understand the writing on the wall.

The Government of National Unity and the persistence of the old order

By Prof Joseph Sekhampu



The Government of National Unity has now settled into the political landscape and is no longer an experiment, but a lived reality. Its existence invites a deeper reflection on what it reveals about the state of our democracy and the enduring instinct for survival. Far from signalling a rupture, the ANC's participation in the GNU may represent a familiar trend in our political history, one in which power yields just enough to preserve itself.

What began as an act of accommodation has become a study in continuity and shows how institutions adapt to new conditions without transforming their essence. The question that remains is whether the GNU serves as a bridge to renewal or as a careful continuation of the same political logic that has long defined the South African reality.

The ANC has never been a conventional party. It is a broad ecosystem of legitimacy and influence that binds the state, society, and liberation memory together into a single governing identity. Its authority has always depended as much on narrative as on numbers, and rests on the belief that it embodies the moral centre of the nation. The GNU does not dismantle that claim; it rearticulates it in new form.

Political theorists describe this as adaptive hegemony. When a dominant movement facing erosion of its base preserves influence not through control but through accommodation.

In this sense, the ANC's embrace of the GNU is not a reluctant surrender but a structural adaptation. It has accepted that in a post-majority democracy, power must be shared in appearance but maintained in effect.

The GNU emerges not as a bold experiment, but as the instinctive adjustment to preserve equilibrium. Power, long shaped by the habits and hierarchies of the ruling party, is redistributed to prevent rupture. Shared governance becomes a mechanism through which blame is diffused, fatigue is managed, and legitimacy renewed. This is not the outcome of deliberate design, but rather the quiet logic of a political order that adapts to preserve itself through accommodation. The GNU restores a sense of moral order without requiring transformation, and allows the governing structure to appear responsive while remaining fundamentally unchanged. It functions less as a political breakthrough than as a reflex of survival in a system that bends just enough to keep itself intact while ensuring the centre holds.

The recent GNU leadership retreat at the Cradle of Humankind revealed how this dynamic plays out in practice. The gathering projected an image of collective resolve and shared purpose, yet beneath the language of unity lay the steady hand of ANC stewardship. The scene captured a deeper truth about South African politics: that even with a weakened majority, the ANC remains the gravitational centre around which others orbit. The GNU thus functions less as a rupture and more as a reconfiguration of the same order.

There are precedents for this trend. Italy's Christian Democrats ruled for half a century by folding rivals into endless coalitions that spread responsibility but preserved influence. Japan's Liberal Democratic Party repeatedly lost majorities but re-emerged as the indispensable centre of governance. In both cases, adaptation replaced victory. South Africa's GNU fits this global script of managed decline: pluralism in form, continuity in substance.

Adaptation, while it allows political systems to endure, does not in itself bring renewal or transformation. When power is dispersed too widely, accountability weakens, and leadership loses its authority. What begins as inclusion can settle into inertia, where scrutiny fades and inefficiency hides behind the language of consensus. The GNU risks becoming a structure that sustains stability without progress, broad enough to survive, but constrained from acting with purpose.

However, this moment may still be part of South Africa's democratic learning curve. Although stretched, the country's institutions have shown the capacity to absorb uncertainty and resist collapse. The Government of National Unity may not signal decline, but rather a pause between eras.

It is a moment for the nation to face its own reflection as a weary, adaptive, and yet resilient democracy. In that reflection, the ANC remains both the author and subject of the story, still editing the script long after the audience thought the play had ended.





STAFF NEWS

New extraordinary appointments at the NWU Business School

Our Business School proudly announced the appointments of Dr Yuanyuan (Gina) Cui and Dr Patrick van Esch from Coastal Carolina University's E. Craig Wall Sr College of Business Administration in October. Their arrival brings exceptional expertise, research leadership, and international distinction to our academic community.

Dr Gina Cui, Assistant Professor of Marketing, specialises in consumer behaviour with a focus on online consumption, emerging technologies, and ethical decision-making. Grounded in psychological theory, her experimental research explores the mechanisms behind consumer choices. Dr Cui also contributes to leading journals as a guest editor and reviewer and is widely recognised for her expertise in experimental design and analysis.

Dr Patrick van Esch, Associate Professor of Marketing, holds a DBA from Southern Cross University in Australia. His research examines artificial intelligence, consumer psychology, and political ideology—areas at the cutting edge of marketing science. He has published extensively in top-tier journals, authored two books, and contributed multiple book chapters on marketing and technology.

These appointments reflect NWU Business School's commitment to research excellence, innovation, and global collaboration. We warmly congratulate Dr Cui and Dr Van Esch and look forward to their contributions in shaping the future of business and marketing scholarship.

NWU BUSINESS SCHOOL

**MEET OUR NEW
EXTRAORDINARY
APPOINTMENTS**

Dr Yuanyuan (Gina) Cui

Dr Patrick van Esch

CONGRATULATIONS & ALL THE BEST IN YOUR NEW ROLE!

Dr Alexander Samuels recognised at the 2025 NWU Excellence Awards



We are proud to celebrate Dr Alexander Samuels from the NWU Business School, who was recognised as the co-winner of the Overall Productive Emerging Researcher Award at the recent 2025 NWU Excellence Awards. The NWU Excellence Awards is a yearly award ceremony and among the most treasured occasions in the university's calendar, as it honours the outstanding academics across the three legs of the NWU's core business: teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, and Community Engagement.

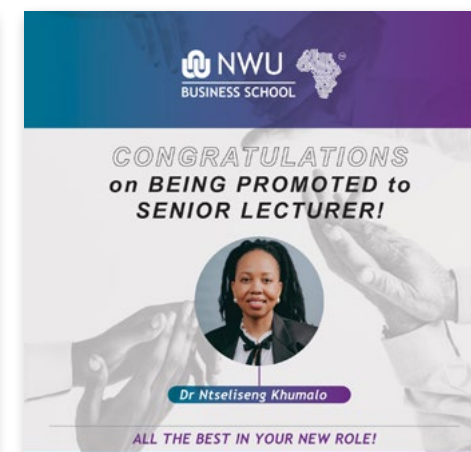
Dr Samuels's dedication, innovative thinking, and impactful research inspire both colleagues and students, and his achievement reflects not only his personal commitment but also the bright future of research at the NWU—made possible by leaders like him. Reflecting on the event, Prof Bismark Tyobeka, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the NWU, highlighted the remarkable calibre of people who shape the university.

"It was a privilege to recognise colleagues whose dedication to teaching, research and community impact continues to strengthen our institution. Thank you to every honouree for raising the standard for all of us. Your contributions strengthen the NWU and move us closer to the institution we aspire to be," Prof Tyobeka said.

We are proud to celebrate the promotions of our academic colleagues

We are incredibly proud to once again extend our heartfelt congratulations to our NWU Business School academic colleagues. Prof Joseph Lekunze and Prof Anna-Marie Pelser have both recently achieved the distinguished milestone of being promoted to full professor, while Dr Ntseliseng Khumalo has been promoted to Senior Lecturer — a recognition of her growing academic leadership and contribution.

These promotions reflect not only their individual excellence but also their dedication to teaching, research, and the development of future leaders. Their ongoing commitment continues to make a meaningful and lasting impact on our students, our institution, and the broader academic and business communities.





Extraordinary professors contribute influential, peer-reviewed insights to global conversations by publishing in A-rated academic journal

We recently celebrated the appointment of Dr Yuanyuan (Gina) Cui and Dr Patrick van Esch as Extraordinary Professors at the NWU Business School and now have the pleasure of sharing that their article “Disentangling Uncertainty in Mysterious Consumption” (Zhang, Cui & van Esch, 2025) has been published in the highly prestigious, A-rated Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ) - the official journal of the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC). They also published “Interactions in Self-Service Contexts: Comfort, Trust and Competence as Drivers of Post-Help Customer Citizenship” in AMJ with Estelle van Tonder and Stephen Saunders.

The AMJ is a leading international outlet known for advancing cutting-edge scholarship in marketing science, and its A-rating reflects its reputation for rigorous peer review and academic excellence, as well as its influence on shaping contemporary marketing theory and practice. Securing publication in an outlet of this calibre positions their research among the most respected scholarship in the field.

For us as a Business School, this significant achievement demonstrates how our professors are contributing influential, peer-reviewed insights to global conversations in business and leadership and how our academic team are enriching the learning environment for our students, who benefit directly from the cutting-edge knowledge generated by our academic staff.

Dr Cui and Dr Van Esch’s article “Disentangling Uncertainty in Mysterious Consumption” appears in AMJ 13(1) and represents a significant contribution to global marketing thought. The article investigates why uncertainty - traditionally seen as a deterrent in consumer decision-making - has become an appealing feature in modern marketing formats such as blind boxes and mystery products. Through two registered experiments and a single-paper meta-analysis, the authors reveal that higher outcome uncertainty can significantly increase consumers’ purchase intentions, provided that probability uncertainty is also high.

Their research identifies sensation-seeking as the underlying psychological mechanism that drives this behaviour. In doing so, the study offers both theoretical advancements and practical implications for marketers aiming to harness uncertainty ethically and effectively in product design and promotional strategies.

In the article “Interactions in Self-Service Contexts: Comfort, Trust and Competence as Drivers of Post-Help Customer Citizenship” published in AMJ 00(0) the authors argue that customer citizenship behaviours (CCBs) like helping and recommending are especially important in self-service settings, where customers often rely on each other instead of staff. This study explores how people’s perceptions of peer helpers - how approachable, supportive, and trustworthy they seem - shape their willingness to help again.

Using a survey of 264 South African fast-food app users, the findings show that social skills and the comfort users feel after the interaction matter far more than technical know-how. Trust also boosts the impact of perceived competence on positive behaviours. In short, peer helpers act much like informal employees, and their friendliness keeps the cycle of support going. For platforms, this means designing self-service systems that encourage warm, helpful interactions - think gamified rewards for supportive users and simple trust-building features like verified badges.

Their findings in both articles translate into a deeper understanding of how behavioural science informs real-world marketing decisions - equipping future business leaders with evidence-based tools to design products and promotional strategies that are both effective and responsible. This not only enriches our academic environment with cutting-edge insights at the intersection of consumer psychology and strategic marketing but also directly supports what the NWU Business School is all about: changing the way people think about business.

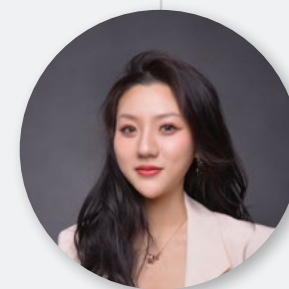
By integrating research of this calibre into our teaching, we empower students to become manager-leaders who can inspire greatness and make informed, ethical decisions in a rapidly evolving marketplace. **Whether through our internationally accredited programs - ranging from postgraduate diplomas and MBAs to executive education courses - students gain access to knowledge that elevates their careers and sharpens their ability to lead with purpose.**



Dr Patrick van Esch: Associate Professor of Marketing at Coastal Carolina University and Extraordinary Professor at NWU Business School.

Dr Van Esch is an Associate Professor of Marketing at Coastal Carolina University and holds a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) from Southern Cross University in Australia. His research explores the intersections of artificial intelligence, consumer psychology, and political ideology - areas that reflect some of the most dynamic developments in contemporary marketing and behavioural science.

Dr Van Esch has an extensive publication portfolio, with articles appearing in top-tier journals including the Journal of Business Ethics, European Journal of Marketing, Annals of Tourism Research, International Journal of Research in Marketing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Advertising, Journal of Advertising Research, and Business Horizons. In addition to his journal work, he has authored two books and multiple book chapters, contributing meaningfully to global conversations on marketing, technology, and consumer behaviour.



Dr Yuanyuan (Gina) Cui: Assistant Professor of Marketing at Coastal Carolina University and Extraordinary Professor at NWU Business School.

Dr Cui is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at Coastal Carolina University, where her research centres on consumer behaviour with a special focus on online and digital consumption, decision-making in emerging technologies, pro-social and ethical consumption, and consumer irrationality. Grounded in psychological theories of human behaviour, she primarily uses experimental methods to uncover the causal processes that shape decision-making and consumer psychology.

Beyond her own scholarship, Dr Cui contributes broadly to the field as a guest editor and member of several editorial review boards for leading peer-reviewed journals. She is also widely regarded for her expertise in experimental research design and analysis, frequently delivering workshops and presentations that help strengthen methodological rigour among fellow scholars.

IN THE NEWS AND AT EVENTS

Prof Raymond Parsons appointed as Extraordinary Professor in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of the Western Cape (UWC)

We congratulate Prof Raymond Parsons, one of South Africa's most respected economists and public commentators, on his recent appointment as Extraordinary Professor in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of the Western Cape (UWC).

Prof Parsons continues to make an indelible contribution to South Africa's economic thought leadership. His appointment affirms a lifelong commitment to scholarship that bridges academia, policy, and public dialogue in service of the country's development goals. At the NWU Business School, Prof Parsons serves as Chair of the School's Advisory Board and as a respected member of the faculty, contributing to our mission of shaping executive minds in Africa.

His new role at UWC expands his platform to deepen engaged scholarship and promote economic insight that drives societal impact. We are proud to celebrate this milestone with him and look forward to the continued value his leadership brings to both institutions and the broader public discourse.



Prof Alistair Mokoena is appointed as Dean of the UJ Business School

Prof Alistair Mokoena - Advisory Board member and Professor of Practice at the NWU Business School and distinguished alumnus - was appointed as Dean of the UJ Business School in October.

His leadership, scholarship, and industry impact are an inspiration, and we wish him every success as he shapes the next generation of business leaders. We wish you all the best with your new role, Prof Mokoena!



Theo Venter shapes public dialogue through media and cultural platforms

October saw Potchefstroom buzzing during the Aardklop arts festival. Theo Venter, renowned political analyst and professor of practice at the NWU Business School, has become known for sharing his insights with audiences across South Africa and also took part in a public debate at Aardklop. Other recent appearances include participation at Innibos in July and joining the discussion series at the Woordfees in Stellenbosch later in October.

Theo is one of the country's most respected commentators, and through his involvement at major cultural festivals, Theo extends his influence beyond academic and political circles, engaging directly with the public and reinforcing his role as a leading thinker in South Africa's national conversations. **Thanks for flying the NWU Business School's flag high, Theo!**

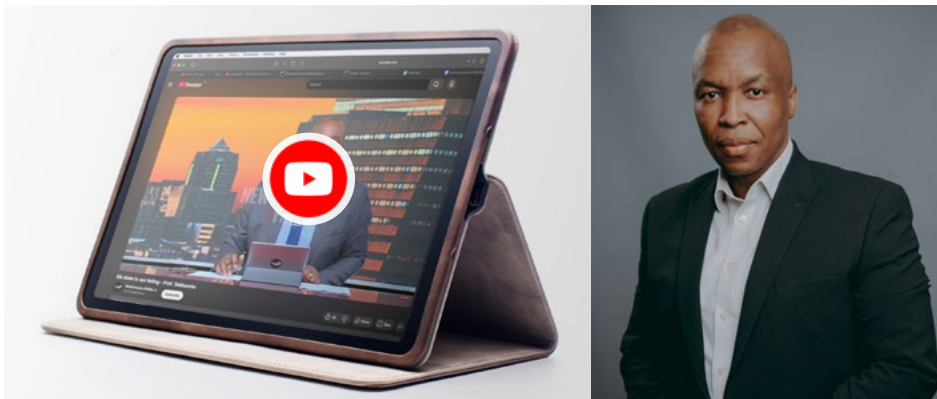


Prof Sekhampu addresses contentious topic on Newzroom Afrika

In October, our Chief Director, Prof Joseph Sekhampu, reflected on the polarising question of whether South Africa's state is really failing or working exactly as designed on Newzroom Afrika.

Prof Joseph Sekhampu specifically reflected on how history and incentives have shaped governance in South Africa and called for professionalising the public service and rebuilding systems that reward integrity and genuine development.

Watch Prof Sekhampu's interview on Newzroom Afrika.



Alumnus Dr Kutlwano Mukokomani receives the Community Involvement Award at the NWU Alumni Excellence Awards

We proudly congratulate Dr Kutlwano Mukokomani, an alumnus of the NWU Business School (MBA and PhD in Business Administration), on receiving the Community Involvement Award at the North-West University (NWU) 2025 Alumni Excellence Awards.

Dr Mukokomani's leadership as Chief Executive Officer of the Botswana Red Cross Society reflects the spirit of purpose-driven service and societal impact we aim to nurture through our programmes. For more than nineteen years, he has advanced humanitarian excellence, empowering communities, strengthening resilience, and fostering inclusive development across Botswana and the southern African region.

His recognition honours not only his personal dedication but also the values we uphold as a School: ethical leadership, African relevance, and commitment to the public good. We celebrate Dr Mukokomani as an example of what it means to shape executive minds in Africa.

Watch his acceptance message below.

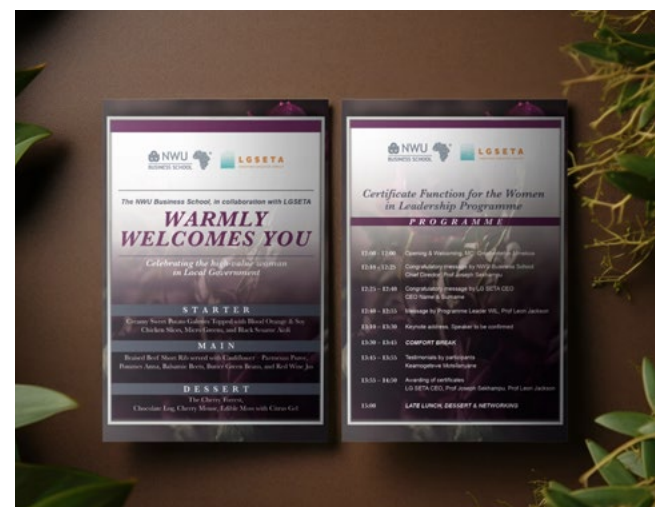


Celebrating WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

In October we proudly celebrated the women who completed the Advanced Short Learning Programme for Women in Leadership during a certificate function held at the Birchwood Hotel.

The programme was presented by Prof Leon Jackson and brought together 300 women leaders employed across municipalities nationwide. Supported by the LGSETA, the initiative equipped participants with strategic leadership skills to advance ethical, inclusive, and impactful governance.

Under the theme ***“Celebrating the High-Value Women in Local Government”***, the event featured a congratulatory address from Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Chief Director of NWU Business School, and Ms Linda Budaza, who delivered a heartfelt message on behalf of the management of the LGSETA, commending the participants for their leadership and resilience. We also heard from keynote speaker Gugu Mkhize, CEO of INSETA, who reflected on authentic leadership, reminding the women that ***“a leader must pour from her own cup before she can pour into others.”***

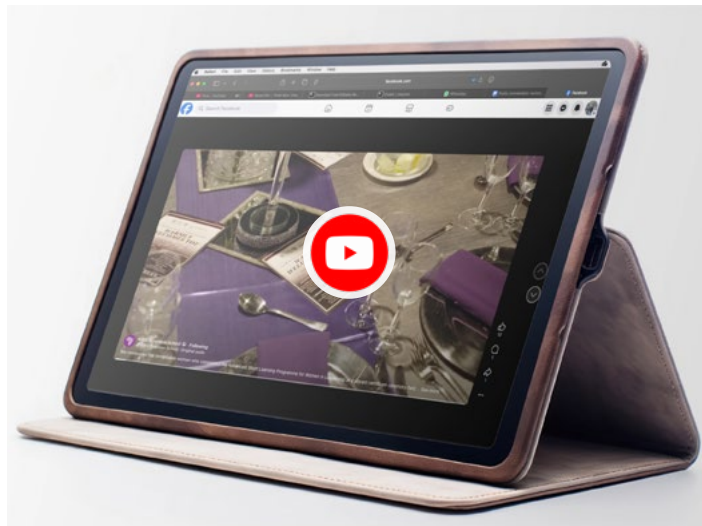


*“a leader must pour from
her own cup before she can
pour into others.”*

Gugu Mkhize

At the NWU Business School, we remain committed to shaping executive minds in Africa and contributing to a society led by ethical, capable, and socially conscious leaders. Through our Executive Education programmes and strategic partnerships with institutions like the LGSETA, we continue to empower leaders who strengthen governance, build communities, and drive sustainable impact across the continent.

Get a glimpse of the event here.



A dialogue on **ETHICAL LEADERSHIP** *in Vanderbijlpark*

The NWU Business School hosted a gathering of business leaders and alumni from the Vanderbijlpark area for a dialogue on Ethical Leadership for Societal Impact: Building Organisations that Matter on the 29th of October.

The event, featuring MBA alumnus Siphwe Moyo, created a space for reflection on how values-based leadership can strengthen workplaces and communities.

Prof Joseph Lekunze welcomed guests on behalf of the School's leadership, while Prof Verona Leendertz, representing the broader North-West University (NWU) community, delivered the word of thanks. The dialogue encouraged participants to share the realities of leading with integrity in today's complex business environment and to explore ways to build ethical, inclusive, and impactful organisations.

Our School is deeply committed to engaging business stakeholders in the shared quest for a better, more ethical, and sustainable society. This dialogue forms part of our ongoing effort to shape executive minds in Africa and to champion leadership that serves both business and the public good.





Benchmarking visits to Rhodes and Stellenbosch Business Schools

Our leadership team recently visited Rhodes Business School and Stellenbosch Business School as part of a mutual benchmarking engagement focused on academic excellence, quality assurance, and strategic management practices.

Hosted by Prof Owen Skae and his team at Rhodes and by Prof Chris van der Hoven, Yolanda van der Westhuizen, and colleagues at Stellenbosch, these engagements created valuable spaces for shared learning, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

As a Business School for societal impact, we recognise the importance of collective progress within the South African higher education landscape. Benchmarking visits such as these strengthen our collective commitment to international accreditation standards, responsible management education, and the pursuit of academic distinction that serves society.



PGDip and MBA teams prepare for 2026 with a two-day strategic workshop

Our PGDip and MBA academic and administrative teams kicked off November with a two-day strategic workshop to prepare for the next phase of our academic journey.

On **day one**, our PGDip and MBA teams each focused on reflection and planning for 2026. The sessions created space to review progress, share insights, and consider priorities for programme renewal and an enhanced learning experience. The teams reflected on 2025 achievements and set a shared course for continued academic excellence in the year ahead.

Day two brought both teams together for a joint accreditation session, reflecting on the School's current standing and the path toward 2026 accreditation milestones.

The day also featured enriching presentations:

Prof Linda Du Plessis introduced the NWU AI Hub and the new LMS system.

Prof Marieta Jansen van Vuuren shared insights into the CTL department's support for effective teaching and learning.

Yolandi Dreyer-Steward led an important discussion on academic integrity, reinforcing our shared commitment to ethical academic practice.

As we round off 2025 and prepare for 2026, we do so with renewed purpose, to deliver transformative learning experiences that shape executive minds in Africa and contribute to the public good through excellence, relevance, and integrity.



STRENGTHENING AFRICA'S KNOWLEDGE FUTURE.

NWU Business School Concludes Proposal Presentations for the Inaugural PhD Hub for Africa

The NWU Business School recently reached an important milestone in its ambition to strengthen doctoral education rooted in African contexts and responsive to the continent's development priorities.

From 28 November to 2 December 2025, the school concluded the research proposal presentations for the inaugural cohort of the PhD Hub for Africa, an innovative pilot initiative designed to reimagine the doctoral journey through collaboration, Africanisation, and regional knowledge exchange.

Nominated doctoral candidates from across the continent presented the research proposals they had developed over the past four months. Candidates who meet the required academic standards will progress toward full enrolment in the PhD in Business Administration in 2026. This model provides a structured and supported pathway into doctoral studies and contributes directly to the school's strategy of expanding Africa-focused postgraduate research output.



In his opening address, Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Chief Director of the NWU Business School, reaffirmed the School's commitment to advancing African-led scholarship. He emphasised that the PhD Hub strengthens continental collaboration and supports the School's ambition to be recognised as the leading centre for doctoral education in Africa. Reflecting on the spirit of collective learning, he reminded the cohort that ***“at the NWU Business School, we believe it takes a community of practitioners to guide a PhD student toward contextually relevant and socially impactful research”***.

The programme also featured an address from Prof Linda du Plessis, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning. She highlighted the urgent need for strengthened research capacity across the continent and commended the nominees as part of Africa's long-term solution to this challenge. Prof du Plessis noted that the pilot cohort contributes to the University's internationalisation efforts and affirmed the institution's responsibility to develop leaders who can respond to Africa's business and economic challenges with integrity, courage, and scholarly excellence. She reminded the group that Africa needs scholars who will generate homegrown knowledge and practical solutions for the continent's development.

The pilot cohort represents South Africa, Rwanda, Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda, and Botswana. Their proposals address critical areas such as green

finance, climate resilience, ethical leadership, inclusive entrepreneurship, SME transformation, financial innovation, and women's economic empowerment in informal economies. Through structured academic preparation, mentorship, and cross-border collaboration, the PhD Hub is cultivating a new generation of African scholars equipped to contribute to global academic conversations from a grounded and contextually relevant point of view.

This pilot initiative also strengthens the School's internationalisation agenda and extends its footprint within the African research ecosystem. It aligns with the NWU Business School's vision of shaping executive minds in Africa and supports the University's broader objective of increasing doctoral enrolments and research intensity. The PhD Hub is laying the groundwork for a long-term continental platform that promotes academic excellence, ethical leadership, Africanised scholarship, and sustainable knowledge production.

We express our gratitude to all staff, partners, and contributors who made this milestone possible. Your continued commitment strengthens the School's mission to serve society with purpose and impact.



PhD Selection Workshop

The NWU Business School hosted the PhD selection workshop on 1 December 2025 for the incoming 2026 cohort. A total of over 160 applications were received, and approximately 69 candidates who met the minimum requirements were invited to participate in the workshop, held from 1-3 December 2025.

The PhD Programme Leader, Dr khali Mofuoa, opened the event by welcoming both academics and candidates. Prof Joseph Sekhampu addressed the attendees, emphasizing that the Business School PhD programme upholds high standards through a rigorous process, with research aimed at creating societal impact. He noted that the day marked the beginning of a journey, either as a successful entrant into the program or as a moment of reflection for those not selected. He encouraged candidates to approach the process with integrity and curiosity and expressed gratitude for their interest.

The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Mala Singh, Extraordinary Professor at the NWU Business School, who gave a compelling presentation on pursuing a PhD as a personal investment. She highlighted that pursuing a PhD is a profound personal investment requiring clarity of purpose, emotional readiness, and unwavering commitment. It encourages prospective students to reflect deeply on their motivations, passions, and desired legacy, as these will sustain them through the challenges of an often demanding and unpredictable journey. While

the PhD offers significant rewards, expertise, personal growth, transferable skills, enhanced career opportunities, and the ability to make meaningful contributions—it also involves substantial sacrifices, including time pressures, emotional strain, and high dropout risks. Prof Singh framed the PhD as both an elite academic pathway and a transformative journey of purpose, discipline, and impact.

At the end of this three-day selection workshop, twenty candidates will be chosen as the final successful cohort for 2026 to begin their journey at the NWU Business School.

We wish all our candidates of the best with their PhD journey!





INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
**GREEN AND
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

NWU Business School to host the 2026 International Conference on Green and Sustainable Development

We proudly announced on 20 October that the NWU Business School will host the 2026 International Conference on Green and Sustainable Development (ICGSD) from 8-12 March 2026 at the Protea Hotel, Stellenbosch, Cape Town.

Themed “Reimagining Innovation Pathways for Sustainability: Research, Practice and Policy,” ICGSD 2026 will bring together researchers, policymakers, innovators, and thought leaders from across Africa and the world to engage in transformative dialogue on advancing sustainable development.

Building on the success of the inaugural 2025 edition held in Kigali, Rwanda, this year’s conference will serve as a dynamic platform for exploring how indigenous knowledge systems, emerging technologies, and Afrocentric innovation can shape sustainability research, policy, and practice across the continent.

African Collaboration for Global Impact

The 2026 ICGSD is hosted by the NWU Business School in collaboration with the University of Kigali (Rwanda), University of Fort Hare (South Africa), Tshwane University of Technology (South Africa), and KCA University (Kenya).

Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union’s Agenda 2063, the conference envisions a more just, resilient, and regenerative world, driven by African innovation and global cooperation.

A Call to Reimagine Africa’s Sustainability Future

“The International Conference on Green and Sustainable Development (ICGSD) is more than an academic gathering—it is an African-led continental call to action,” says Professor Joseph Lekunze, Chairperson of ICGSD 2026 and Deputy Director of Research and Innovation at the NWU Business School.

“We are inviting the world to join us in reimagining innovation pathways for sustainability—anchored in indigenous knowledge, inclusive collaboration, and transformative research. ICGSD 2026 will be a landmark moment for Africa and the global community to co-create solutions for a resilient

and regenerative future. As climate change continues to impact all nations, Africa—though least responsible—remains among the most affected. This conference is both a platform and a promise to act for humanity’s shared future,” he adds.

Call for Papers Now Open

Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit abstracts and papers aligned with the conference theme. Submission guidelines and details are available on the official conference website: <https://icgsd.com>.

Delegates can look forward to keynote addresses, expert panels, interactive workshops, and exhibitions showcasing the latest innovations in green and sustainable development.

Media and Conference Enquiries:

info@icgsd.com | <https://icgsd.com>

Prof Joseph Nembo Lekunze
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Deputy Director of Research and
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HONOURING OUR COLLEAGUES ON THEIR RETIREMENT



Ms Elma Senekal

The NWU Business School extends its heartfelt appreciation to two colleagues whose service has shaped the quality and character of our programmes.

Ms Elma Senekal has been a valued member of the MBA administrative team, known for her steady professionalism and genuine care for students and staff. Her work ensured smooth operations and a supportive learning environment. We thank her for her commitment and wish her a fulfilling new chapter.

Prof Stephan van der Merwe, a dedicated lecturer in the MBA programme, leaves a legacy of academic excellence and thoughtful engagement. His teaching has influenced many leaders across sectors, and his commitment to reflective, ethical practice has strengthened our mission as a business school for societal impact.

We are grateful for their contributions and wish both colleagues continued purpose, rest, and joy in their retirement.



Prof Stephan van der Merwe

RETIRING

UNIT FOR *CORRUPTION* & *INTEGRITY* STUDIES

REINFORCING FUTURE EXECUTIVES IN
COMBATting COMMERCIAL CRIME



www.nwubusinessschool.co.za

Ensuring the safety and prosperity
of our communities

Ms Nina du Toit swoops Vice-Chancellor's
medal as best Masters' student

UCIS Launch Short Course in
Investigative Interviewing Skills

UCIS

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ENSURING THE SAFETY AND PROSPERITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES

The NWU Business School's Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies was honoured to participate in the 4th Annual Prestige Awards of the Directorate for Priority Crimes Investigation (the Hawks) in the Western Cape on 31 October 2025.

Awards were presented at the event to members of the Hawks who excelled in their duties. Significant breakthroughs made during the past year in combating the scourge of crime were celebrated. The Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies received a Certificate of Appreciate for our valued and continuous support of the DPCI. Partnerships between the public sector, the private sector and academia is crucial in ensuring the safety and prosperity of our communities.



MS NINA DU TOIT SWOOPS VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL AS BEST MASTERS' STUDENT

The North-West University (NWU) honoured exceptional staff and students at the annual NWU Excellence Awards ceremony, held in Potchefstroom on 20 November, during which occasion the Vice-Chancellor's medal for the best Masters's student in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences was awarded to Ms Nina du Toit.



Ms du Toit was a researcher with the Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies during 2024 when she started and completed her MCom in Forensic Accountancy on the risk of economic crime in post-disaster funding. Two articles were published in the Journal of Financial Crime: (1) An analysis of measures to combat the risk of economic crime associated with post-disaster funding in South Africa; and (2) Analysing the characteristics of post-disaster funding that make it susceptible to the risk of economic crime: a South African frame of reference.

The Unit for Corruption and Integrity studies is proud of Ms du Toit's exceptional achievement in delivering impactful research.

UCIS LAUNCH SHORT COURSE IN INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING SKILLS



In a historic first the NWU Business School's Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies, in collaboration with the NWU Programme for Forensic Accountancy, launched a brand new Short Course in Investigative Interviewing Skills during October 2025. The first cohort of participants were selected professionals from the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), as part of the ongoing MOU between the FIC and the NWU.

According to Professor Constant van Graan there is a major lacuna in investigative interviewing skills countrywide and limited dedicated training courses exists to inform and practically train investigators in evidence-based methods. This course fills the gap by training investigators in the basic principles of the PEACE model, person-centred approach (PCA) and Ponaletso CFI Framework - a technique that was developed at the NWU!

These techniques centres on respecting the human dignity of the person being interviewed (the interviewee) whilst being effective in eliciting information that may serve as evidence in criminal and civil matters. This course is unique because it consists of both theoretical and practical sections - the latter of which was facilitated by an internationally acclaimed expert, Professor Cornelia Wessels, which consisted of roleplay and rigorous training in small groups.

Mrs Madilonga, Head of Human Resources at the FIC remarked that *"The training is highly relevant for stakeholder engagement in compliance inspections, intelligence briefings, and collaborative investigations."* Participants shared positive feedback on the training, noting that the content was insightful and highly practical.

According to the FIC the participants *"highlighted how the combination of theory and role-play exercises deepened their understanding of ethical interviewing techniques and improved their confidence in applying these skills during real-world engagements. Many expressed that the training offered fresh perspectives on stakeholder interaction and investigative approaches, making it a valuable addition to their professional development"*.





THE DRIVE NETWORK - SMME Lekgotla



The Drive Network, in collaboration with the NWU Business School and other key stakeholders, hosted an SMME Lekgotla on 20 November 2025 at Ikageng, Potchefstroom.

The purpose of the event was to empower small, micro, medium enterprises (SMMEs) through targeted capacity-building sessions focusing on compliance, mentorship, financial education, and entrepreneurial acumen. The Lekgotla aimed to strengthen the operational capabilities of SMMEs, enhance their business competitiveness, promote sustainable economic growth within the district.

The NWU Business School made a meaningful contribution to the success of the SMME Lekgotla. As part of its commitment to advancing entrepreneurial development and supporting small businesses, the NWU Business School donated textbooks to all participating SMMEs, promoting ongoing learning and capacity building.

Additionally, the institution announced that it will be awarding two bursaries for the short learning programme in Entrepreneurial Skills to selected SMMEs, offering them an opportunity to further their education and

strengthen their business management skills. Representatives from the NWU Business School actively engaged in programme discussions, sharing academic insights and practical guidance aimed at fostering sustainable business growth. Through these efforts, the NWU Business School demonstrated its strong dedication to empowering entrepreneurs and contributing to local economic development.

By attracting over 100 SMMEs, the event served as a vital platform for empowering entrepreneurs and strengthening the business sector. Through informative sessions, resource contributions, and collaborative engagement, the event provided SMMEs with practical tools, strategic knowledge, and renewed confidence to advance their enterprises. The collaboration between The Drive Network and the NWU Business School showcased a strong commitment to building resilient and competitive businesses.

The success of the event highlights the importance of continued support, capacity-building and collaborative efforts aimed at promoting sustainable economic development across the district.





SHAPING EXECUTIVE MINDS IN AFRICA

