



NEWSLETTER | JULY 2026

SHAPING EXECUTIVE MINDS IN AFRICA





A WORD FROM THE CHIEF DIRECTOR

The first half of 2026 has been a period of purposeful progress for the NWU Business School.

As you read this Mid-Year Review, you will see more than a collection of achievements. You will see a School intentionally building the capability required to fulfil its purpose. Whether through growing student enrolments, strengthening our doctoral programmes, advancing accreditation, expanding executive education, deepening partnerships, or investing in our people and systems, each milestone contributes to a stronger and more resilient institution.

Progress is rarely defined by a single achievement. Rather, it is found in the steady accumulation of purposeful decisions that strengthen an institution over time. This edition reflects that journey. It demonstrates our commitment to academic excellence, research, responsible leadership, and meaningful engagement with industry, government, and society.

One of the highlights of this period has been the beginning of our journey towards a new Business School home. More than a building, it

represents our confidence in the future and our commitment to creating a place where ideas will flourish, partnerships will grow, and future generations of leaders will be prepared.

None of this is possible without our dedicated staff, students, alumni, partners, and stakeholders. Thank you for your continued commitment to our shared vision.

As we look ahead to the second half of the year, we do so with confidence, humility, and the determination to continue building a Business School that is rooted in Africa, connected to the world, and committed to making a meaningful contribution through education, research, and engagement.

Warm regards,

*Prof Joseph Sekhampu,
Chief Director, NWU Business School*



C O N T E N T

Chief Director's foreword

- Twenty new doctors, twenty fresh contributions to African scholarship 4
- Top marks and teamwork: honouring our 2025 MBA achievers 5
- NWU Business School celebrates MBA and PhD graduates at elegant Black & White Soirée 6
- **Articles**
 - What South Africa's immigration debate is revealing by Prof Joseph Sekhampu 10
 - Leading from the storm within by Prof Joseph Sekhampu 12
- The future belongs to the curious: celebrating our Executive Education graduates 14
- Certification of participants: Short Course in the Control of Money Laundering and Terror Financing 15
 - First cohort of participants in Investigative Interviewing Short Course celebrated 16
- **Recent Pitso webinars**
 - Pitso 2026:3 Investigative Journalism in Defence of Democracy 18
 - Pitso 2026:4 Because it matters: voting on 4 November 2026 19
 - Pitso 2026:5 Elections Series Session 2: Youth participation and the 4 November elections 20
- 5th South African Financial Crime Symposium 21

In the news and at events

- NWU Business School marks 10 years of the Policy Uncertainty Index (PUI) 24
- Perspectives emanating from the MIT Sloan School of Management 25
- Hosting SALGA and the North West Chamber of Commerce and Industry 26
- Leadership in Agriculture Dialogue and the launch of CEOs in Agriculture 27
- PGDip Study Schools prepare students for the second semester 29
- MBA Research Days: learning in motion 31
- Breaking silos: the future of intelligence sharing 32
- **Staff news**
 - Prof Joseph Lekunze reflects on resilience in a VUCA world during inaugural address 33
 - New Advisory Board Members 34
- 1,000 citations and counting: celebrating Dr Olaleye's research impact 35
- A seat at the global table: AMBA & BGA Conference, Madrid 36
- NWU Business School and Provincial Treasury advance municipal capacity assessment initiative 37
- A seat at the global table: AMBA & BGA Conference, Madrid 39
- A new home for the NWU Business School 40



TWENTY NEW DOCTORS, TWENTY FRESH CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFRICAN SCHOLARSHIP

The NWU Business School's MBA & PhD Graduation Celebration 2026 paid special tribute to twenty new PhD graduates on 1 June, at The Feather Hill just outside Potchefstroom. Their research spanned an impressive range of contemporary business issues - from performance management, corporate governance and credit rating methodologies to technostress, women in leadership, business incubation and integrated reporting readiness.

Congratulations to our newest doctors and the promoters who guided them:

- Dr Debapriyo Nag - Prof Christo A Bisschoff and Prof Christoff J Botha
- Dr Edward Khumalo - Prof Jan van Romburgh and Prof Jacqui-Lyn McIntyre
- Dr Elmarie Hamman - Prof Gisele Mah
- Dr Sumarie Nel - Prof Anet Smit
- Dr Abdul Feroz Maluleke - Prof PA Botha
- Dr Bafana Mkhwebane - Prof Hein Prinsloo
- Dr Kutlwano Mukokomani - Prof Gisele Mah
- Dr Maphidi Irene Mafokwane - Prof Nelda Mouton
- Dr Johan Pretorius - Prof PA Botha
- Dr Nomusa Dube - Prof Leon Jackson
- Dr Peter Malekane Madike - Prof Christoff Botha and Prof Anna-Marie Pelser
- Dr Bonginkosi Dladlamba - Prof Nelda Mouton
- Dr Bernard Ayuk Obasi - Prof Wedzerai Musvuto
- Dr Matsepiso Jeminah Chalaste - Prof Ronnie Lotriet
- Dr Stanley Ngobeni - Prof Anna-Marie Pelser
- Dr Bongani Sibiya - Dr Johan Jordaan
- Dr Xolie Ngubane - Prof Stephan van der Merwe
- Dr Malebo Keebine - Prof PA Botha
- Dr Moloti Mogashoa - Prof Kaizer Ndlovu
- Dr Bangani Mpangalasane - Prof Jan Meyer

Their work reflects exactly what we strive for: scholarship that is academically rigorous, yet deeply relevant to industry, institutions and communities across South Africa and the continent.



Top marks and teamwork: HONOURING OUR 2025 MBA ACHIEVERS

Congratulations to our entire 2025 MBA cohort, celebrated in style on 1 June at The Feather Hill after their graduation ceremony. Every graduate in this class put in two years of hard work, late nights and real sacrifice to get here, and each one of you should be proud of what you've achieved.

Among this outstanding group, a few achievements stood out. Yvette Labuschagne took home a double honour - the Best Mini Dissertation Award and overall MBA Top Achiever 2025 - one of the standout moments of the evening. Thabiso Mabina was named MBA Student Ambassador 2025.

Our Top Achiever runners-up were Sebastian Lombard and Carien Orton (third runners-up), and Pieter Blom, Rini Van Vuuren and Beandré Du Toit (second runners-up). The Best Company Project Award was shared between two outstanding teams - the Alliance Group (PF Janse van Rensburg, AW Muller, SP Lombard, HP Van Vuuren, M Van Breda, PF Blom and Yvette Labuschagne) and the Lions Group (NL Sebabi, ZE Sandlana, SL Motaung, NS Gungubele, O Mosiane and BF Matshelane) - a fitting reminder of how much of the MBA journey is built on collaboration.

Well done and biggest congratulations again to all our MBA graduates!





Celebrating our MBA and PhD graduates at elegant Black & White Soirée

The NWU Business School's MBA & PhD Graduation Celebration 2026 took place on Monday, 1 June 2026, at the prestigious The Feather Hill venue, just outside Potchefstroom. Hosted under the theme Black and White Soirée, the event brought together more than 200 guests for an evening of elegance, recognition and celebration.

Set in a grand and sophisticated venue, the annual celebration honoured the achievements of the NWU Business School's MBA and PhD graduates, while also recognising outstanding academic performance, leadership and applied business excellence among its students.

In his message to the graduates, Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Chief Director of the NWU Business School, reflected on the demanding journey behind every qualification. He described the graduation as “the culmination of years of commitment, sacrifice, resilience, and personal growth”, noting that each graduate's journey required courage, discipline and perseverance.

Prof Sekhampu also reminded graduates that academic achievement is only one part of their future contribution. ***“Qualifications may open doors,”*** he stated, ***“but it is character, integrity, wisdom, and humanity that ultimately determine the impact you will have in the world.”***

The evening's keynote address was delivered by **Prof Bismark Tyobeka, Principal & Vice-Chancellor of the North-West University**. A distinguished academic and leader, Prof Tyobeka has held several prominent positions in higher education, nuclear sciences and engineering, both in South Africa and internationally. His presence as keynote speaker added further prestige to an evening dedicated to postgraduate excellence and leadership.

"Tonight is also a celebration of resilience and dedication, and takes you to the next level of responsibility. If there was ever a time where the world and our country need capable and responsible leadership, it is now. We need you to make a difference. Our country remains a place of amazing opportunity, but we need ethical and courageous leadership. I encourage you to use your modern leadership skills to build enterprises, opportunities and solutions," he said.

The programme also included a congratulatory message by **Dr Lungile Ntsizwane, MBA Programme Leader at the NWU Business School**, followed by the announcement of the evening's award recipients.



Recognising MBA excellence

A key highlight of the evening was the presentation of the MBA awards, which recognised academic excellence, leadership, research and applied business learning.

The MBA Student Ambassador 2025 award was presented to **Thabiso Mabina**.

The **Best Mini Dissertation Award** was presented to **Yvette Labuschagne**, who was also named the overall **MBA Top Achiever 2025**. This double recognition marked one of the standout achievements of the evening.

The **MBA Top Achiever Awards** further recognised several high-performing students. The two **third runners-up** were **Sebastian Lombard** and **Carien Orton**, while the three **second runners-up** were **Pieter Blom**, **Rini Van Vuuren** and **Beandré Du Toit**.

The **Best Company Project Award** was shared between two groups, highlighting the importance of collaborative, practical and industry-relevant learning within the MBA programme.

The Alliance Group recipients were:

PF Janse van Rensburg, AW Muller, SP Lombard, HP Van Vuuren, M Van Breda, PF Blom and Yvette Labuschagne.

The Lions Group recipients were:

NL Sebabi, ZE Sandlana, SL Motaung, NS Gungubele, O Mosiane and BF Matshelane.

Celebrating the PhD graduates

The evening also paid special tribute to the NWU Business School's PhD graduates, whose research reflects the breadth, relevance and societal importance of advanced scholarship in business, management, governance, finance, entrepreneurship, leadership and organisational development.

Their research topics covered a wide range of contemporary and practical issues, including performance management, regulatory models, credit rating methodologies, internal auditing, technostress, entrepreneurship, corporate governance, personal finance management, work-life balance, women in leadership, bargaining frameworks, venture capital, SME competitiveness, insourcing, human resources management, business incubation, judicial wellness, lean facility management and integrated reporting readiness.



The PhD graduates recognised during the celebration were:

PhD graduate	Promoter/study leader
Dr Debapriyo Nag	Prof Christo A Bisschoff and Prof Christoff J Botha
Dr Edward Khumalo	Prof Jan van Romburgh and Prof Jacqui-Lyn McIntyre
Dr Elmarie Hamman	Prof Gisele Mah
Dr Sumarie Nel	Prof Anet Smit
Dr Abdul Feroz Maluleke	Prof PA Botha
Dr Bafana Mkhwebane	Prof Hein Prinsloo
Dr Kutlwano Mukokomani	Prof Gisele Mah
Dr Maphidi Irene Mafokwane	Prof Nelda Mouton
Dr Johan Pretorius	Prof PA Botha
Dr Nomusa Dube	Prof Leon Jackson
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Dr Xolie Ngubane	Prof Stephan van der Merwe
Dr Malebo Keebine	Prof PA Botha
Dr Moloti Mogashoa	Prof Kaizer Ndlovu
Dr Bangani Mpangalasane	Prof Jan Meyer

This strong research output reflected the NWU Business School's commitment to producing scholarship that is not only academically rigorous, but also relevant to industry, institutions, communities and the broader South African and African context.

A celebration of perseverance, leadership and possibility

The evening concluded with a word of thanks by Prof Linda du Plessis, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning at the NWU, followed by entertainment, dinner and networking.

The NWU Business School's MBA & PhD Graduation Celebration 2026 was more than a formal recognition event. It was a celebration of perseverance, professional growth and the transformative role of postgraduate education.

As Prof Sekhampu expressed in his message, the graduates' achievements represent *“more than personal success”*. They represent possibility, perseverance and the continuing hope that education remains one of the most powerful instruments for transformation, leadership and societal progress.

Against the elegant backdrop of The Feather Hill and the refined Black and White Soirée theme, the evening offered a fitting tribute to graduates, families, supervisors, academic leaders and all those who contributed to these remarkable academic journeys.





WHAT SOUTH AFRICA'S IMMIGRATION DEBATE IS REVEALING

By Prof Joseph Sekhampu

When the government can no longer credibly promise expanding opportunities, politics begins to change. Public debate shifts from how opportunities should be created to who should have access to those that remain. Arguments about growth and redistribution do not disappear, but they increasingly become entangled with questions of entitlement, priority, and belonging. South Africa's immigration debate suggests that this shift may already be underway.

Concerns about immigration are not new. What appears to be changing is the extent to which the issue has moved from the margins towards the centre of political contestation. The current debate about undocumented migration extends well beyond questions of border control. It increasingly encompasses access to public services, employment opportunities, and competing claims on scarce resources. Political parties across the ideological spectrum have adopted tougher rhetoric. Community organisations and activist movements increasingly frame migration as a question of fairness, security, and economic competition.

Concerns about crime and security also feature prominently in public discourse, regardless of whether available evidence consistently supports the strongest claims made about these links. The issue has become sufficiently prominent that the president has found it necessary to address it directly.

The moral dimensions of the migration debate are obvious and important. Anti-immigrant mobilisation has too often produced discrimination, intimidation, and violence against vulnerable people. Yet the political significance of immigration cannot be understood through those dimensions alone. Its prominence derives less from migration itself than from its ability to concentrate competing claims to opportunity.

Economic growth has remained weak for more than a decade, limiting the expansion of opportunities that might otherwise soften distributional conflict. Labour market exclusion remains deeply entrenched, while upward mobility has become increasingly difficult for many households.

At the same time, electoral fragmentation has reduced the dominance of older political narratives and created incentives for parties and movements to mobilise around new sources of grievance. Together, these developments have created fertile ground for debates that focus less on expanding opportunities and more on determining who should have access to them.

Part of immigration's political appeal lies in its ability to make abstract constraints tangible. Slow growth, labour market exclusion, and declining mobility are difficult to observe directly. Migrants, by contrast, are visible. The debate therefore often serves as a vehicle through which broader anxieties about scarcity, competition, and economic inclusion are expressed.

One indication of this shift is the extent to which immigration debates are now surfacing in arenas far removed from border management itself. Contestations about the employment of foreign academics, for example, illustrate how questions once framed around skills, merit, and transformation are increasingly being recast through the language of citizenship and priority. Similar dynamics

are emerging in debates about hiring, trading opportunities, and access to economic participation more broadly.

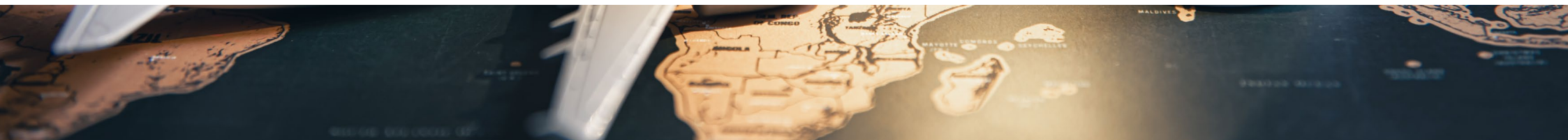
The prominence of immigration in public debate should not be confused with its contribution to South Africa's underlying economic challenges. A society can become politically preoccupied with migration even when its main constraints lie elsewhere. Weak growth, poor educational outcomes, labour market exclusion, stagnant social mobility, and concentrated economic opportunity remain the country's most significant structural challenges. The political significance of migration is therefore analytically distinct from ongoing debates about migrants' economic contributions, which vary across sectors and contexts.

Democratic South Africa has been governed as much by expectations as by institutions. For much of the democratic era, legitimacy rested on the belief that inclusion, mobility, and improvement remained possible, even when progress was uneven. Political settlements built on expectations can endure disappointments, policy failures, and uneven performance for longer than many observers

expect. Their greatest vulnerability emerges when citizens no longer judge them by the promises they make, but by the constraints they fail to overcome.

South Africa's immigration debate has acquired significance not because it offers answers to the country's deepest challenges, but because it reveals a broader shift in political conflict. As opportunities become harder to access, debates that once centred on expanding opportunity increasingly revolve around its allocation. Immigration has become politically powerful because it sits at the intersection of that transition. It has become a site through which wider questions about access, priority, and belonging are increasingly contested.

In that sense, the debate matters less for what it says about migration than for what it reveals about a society adjusting to the realities of slower growth, limited mobility, and intensifying competition for opportunity. What appears to be a debate about immigration may ultimately be a debate about the future distribution of opportunity itself.





Leading from Within the Storm

By Prof Joseph Sekhampu

I remember the chair long before I remember the storm.

It sat opposite my desk, ordinary and unremarkable, bearing the accumulated weight of countless decisions, difficult conversations, strategic plans, and moments of quiet reflection. For years, it had been a place of certainty, a small island of stillness amidst the relentless turbulence of leadership. It was where I sat to think, write, to solve, and to carry. I did not know then that it would also become the place where certainty abandoned me.

The morning itself was very ordinary. Meetings crowded the calendar, and emails arrived with their customary urgency. The institution moved forward with the indifferent momentum of an organism far larger than any individual entrusted with its care. I closed my office door and lowered myself into the chair, only intending to rest my eyes for a moment.

What followed was a brief and unplanned surrender to exhaustion. Not quite sleep, but something close enough to it. The kind of drifting that occurs when the body quietly claims a debt the mind has refused to acknowledge.

When I opened my eyes, I thought I was returning to the day that I had left behind.

I was mistaken as the storm had already entered the room.

Like most dangerous storms, it had not announced itself with thunder or spectacle. It had arrived quietly, gathering force beyond the edges of my awareness long before I recognised its presence.

Some storms arrive through circumstance. Others arrive through people.

They emerge from ambition that has curdled into resentment, from misunderstandings nurtured into convictions, and from the quiet calculations of those who have persuaded themselves that belonging is not commonly held. Such storms move through corridors and conversations and gather strength in whispers. They feed on insinuation and acquire momentum in rooms where you are absent, becoming reality long before you are aware of their existence.

They arrive with suspicion and uncertainty as instruments of excavation, digging patiently beneath your confidence, certainty, belonging, and self-trust.

Those who have endured such seasons will recognise the feeling. There comes a moment when your reputation appears to detach itself from your person and begin travelling independently through the world. It enters rooms before you arrive and accumulates assumptions that facts struggle to dislodge. You discover that suspicion has a velocity that truth can seldom match.

The burden is not merely the weight of the accusation, whether spoken or implied. The burden is to carry that weight while continuing to lead.

You are expected to reassure others while privately confronting your own uncertainty. You are expected to project confidence while your foundations are being tested.

And this is where the storm becomes truly dangerous. What begins as external turbulence slowly colonises the interior landscape of the self. Doubt appears where conviction once resided. Questions begin to occupy spaces previously held by certainty. The leader who once walked confidently into a room becomes cautious. The voice that once spoke with clarity becomes measured. The self gradually becomes gaunt, not in body but in spirit, diminished by the exhausting labour of defending its own legitimacy.

There were days during that season when I felt less like a human being and more like a weary amoeba, stretched beyond recognition by competing pressures and struggling to maintain coherence while forces from every direction sought to distort my shape. I carried the fatigue of responsibility, while simultaneously carrying the burden of proving that I deserved to carry it.

Looking back, I realise that the chair occupies such a prominent place in my memory because it became

a metaphor for the moment everything changed. It was the last place where certainty felt ordinary before the storm revealed itself.

The irony is that storms are supposed to move. They are meant to arrive, disrupt, and depart. However, some storms refuse the logic of weather. They settle into memory and begin altering the emotional climate through which we interpret the world. They shape our understanding of trust, belonging, ambition, and power.

Long after the visible turbulence has subsided, they remain present beneath the surface of ordinary days.

So, I remain seated within it, listening to winds that never fully disappear, and is uncertain whether I am waiting for the storm to leave or whether, somewhere along the way, it became the place from which I now lead.

Follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram to never miss an article or news from the NWU Business School.



The future belongs to the curious: **CELEBRATING OUR EXECUTIVE EDUCATION GRADUATES**

Get a glimpse of
the evening here



On the morning of 12 June, Executive Education participants, staff and industry partners gathered at The Roots Venue in Potchefstroom to celebrate a well-earned milestone - certificates that represent real sacrifice, balancing full-time careers with the demands of study.

The morning carried a fitting undertone of resilience, with speakers drawing on Bafana Bafana's match the night before: progress, like a football season, is rarely a straight line, but South Africans have a knack for staying hopeful and united regardless of the scoreline. It's a spirit that mirrors the Executive Education journey itself.

Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Chief Director of our school, urged participants to remember why they started. ***"The most valuable investment you will ever make is investing in yourself,"*** he said, challenging the room to stay curious in the age of AI: ***"You cannot replace curiosity with artificial intelligence. Growth will always be a choice."*** He also pointed to our AMBA and BGA accreditation - a status held by only a handful of business schools worldwide - and to our valued, long-standing partnership with Sanlam in developing future-ready leaders.

Keynote speaker Pieter Geldenhuys, futurist and founder of the Institute for Technology Strategy and Innovation, pushed participants to think differently about what's ahead, building on William Gibson's famous line that "the future is already here - it's just not evenly distributed." Mr Alfred Banda, Regional General Manager at Sanlam, followed with a look at how our beliefs about money shape long-term financial wellbeing, encouraging participants to keep investing intentionally in their own growth.

The morning closed with certificates and the announcement of our top performers:

Fundamental Management Programme: Alexandra Susana Parsons

Middle Management Programme: Ruan Ferreira

Advanced Management Programme : Otto Viljoen

Congratulations to every participant. As the morning's message made clear: today's certificate isn't the finish line - it's the beginning of what's next.



CERTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS:

Short Course in the Control of Money Laundering and Terror Financing

Financial crime doesn't stand still, and neither do we. In April, the NWU Business School celebrated 28 money-laundering analysts and fraud investigators from a leading South African bank as they completed our Short Course in the Control of Money Laundering and Terror Financing.

Developed by our Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies under the leadership of Mr Albert van Zyl, and delivered in collaboration with our Programme in Forensic Accountancy, the course arms professionals on the front line with the practical tools they need to prevent, detect, and disrupt financial crime in an increasingly complex landscape.

Certificates were presented by Prof Tshediso Joseph Sekhampu, our Chief Director, marking more than just a certification moment but a reflection of our broader commitment to strengthening integrity and accountability within the financial system, one professional at a time.





First cohort of participants in Investigative Interviewing Short Course celebrated

The first certificate function for the very first cohort of participants in the Short Course in Investigative Interviewing was held on the 1st of June 2026 at the offices of the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) in Centurion. The first intake consisted of fourteen staff members of the FIC and was offered flowing from the memorandum of understanding between the NWU Business School's Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies and the FIC aimed at capacitating their newly established Shared Forensic Capability division.

This division was established to support the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), Special Investigating Unit (SIU), SARS and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) (including the IDAC) with complex financial crime cases. Its mandate is to produce forensic evidence using specialised analytical and scientific techniques.

The Short Course in Investigative Interviewing fills the current gap to provide training to forensic practitioners on the introductory principles of the person-centred approach and the PEACE model - techniques that respect the human dignity of the person being interviewed (the interviewee) and are effective in eliciting information that may serve as evidence in criminal and civil courts.

The course consists of both theoretical and practical sections, facilitated by an internationally acclaimed expert, consisting of roleplay and rigorous training in small groups. The course is presented by the NWU Business School's Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies and the NWU Programme in Forensic Accountancy.

In his address during the certificate handing-over ceremony, the Director of the FIC, Thabiso Thiti, said that in addition to the new skills, these staff members will contribute to strengthening the integrity and effectiveness of the broader criminal justice system by ensuring that the evidence the FIC generates meets the highest legal and professional standards. Mr Thiti also expressed his appreciation to the stakeholders responsible for this training intervention, namely the NWU Business School, ICFP, and FASSET for their funding support.

“Your contribution plays a critical role in supporting the professionalisation of the forensic discipline in South Africa, and in building a pipeline of skilled practitioners who can support national priorities,” he concluded.

This programme is an excellent example of an effective public-private partnership. Albert van Zyl, of the Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies at the NWU Business School said in this regard that *“when we consider the FATF requirements, we need to be able to demonstrate the effective implementation of legislation, show progress on projects to strengthen a whole of country ability to identify, investigate and prosecute money laundering and terrorist financing and demonstrate real results in the fight against financial crime”*. These training programmes form a significant part of these efforts.



Mr Albert van Zyl, together with Mr Pieter Smit (the previous acting Director of the FIC), Mr Chris de Beer (CEO of the Institute of Commercial Forensic Practitioners) and Mr Thabiso Thiti (Director of the FIC)





PITSO 2026:3

Investigative journalism in defence of democracy

On 16 April, we brought together some of South Africa's most respected forensic and investigative journalists for a 90-minute conversation on what it really takes to keep investigative journalism alive and effective.

The discussion explored the legislative and policy frameworks needed to protect this kind of reporting, as well as the practical tools and skills investigators need to navigate an increasingly complex information environment - from data-heavy paper trails to the pressures of disinformation.

It's a conversation that sits close to our own mission: strong institutions, informed citizens and ethical leadership all depend on journalism that can hold power to account.





PITSO 2026:4

Because it matters: Voting on 4 November 2026

As South Africa counts down to the Local Government Elections on 4 November 2026, we invited the public, students, academics, media and observers to join us on 29 May for the latest instalment in our Pitso series - a platform designed not to campaign, but to create an informed, balanced space for open and critical discussion.

This session tackled the issues shaping the ballot: fragile multi-party coalitions dominating metros and municipalities, service delivery pressures around water, electricity, housing and sanitation, the growing contest between the DA, EFF, MK Party and smaller parties, and the steady decline in voter turnout and trust in local government.

Joining the conversation were:

Khaya Sithole (Moderator) - Columnist and Analyst
Helen Zille (Panellist) - DA Mayoral Candidate for Johannesburg
Mbali Ntuli (Panellist) - Founder and CEO at Ground Work Collective

If you missed it, you could still watch it here:





PITSO 2026:5 Elections Series Session 2: ***Youth participation and the 4 November elections***

With South Africans heading to the polls on 4 November for the country's sixth Local Government Elections, one question keeps surfacing: will young voters actually show up? In the 2021 elections, 90% of 18- and 19-year-olds never even registered - but this year's voter registration weekends have told a different story, with youth under 30 making up the large majority of new registrations. That tension, between historic apathy and a possible turning point, was the starting point for our latest Pitso.

If you missed the live broadcast, the full recording of Pitso 2026:5 is now on YouTube. Our panel unpacked what's really driving youth participation (or the lack of it) this election cycle, and what it will take to turn registration numbers into votes on the day.

Thank you to our panellists and moderator for a sharp, honest conversation:

Michael Beaumont - National Chairperson, ActionSA

Masego Mokwele - Provincial Convenor, EFF Youth Command (NW)

Prof Ntsikelelo Breakfast - Associate Professor (Political and Conflict Studies), Nelson Mandela University

Moderator: Qaanitah Hunter - Freelance Journalist and Author

If you missed it, you could still watch it here:

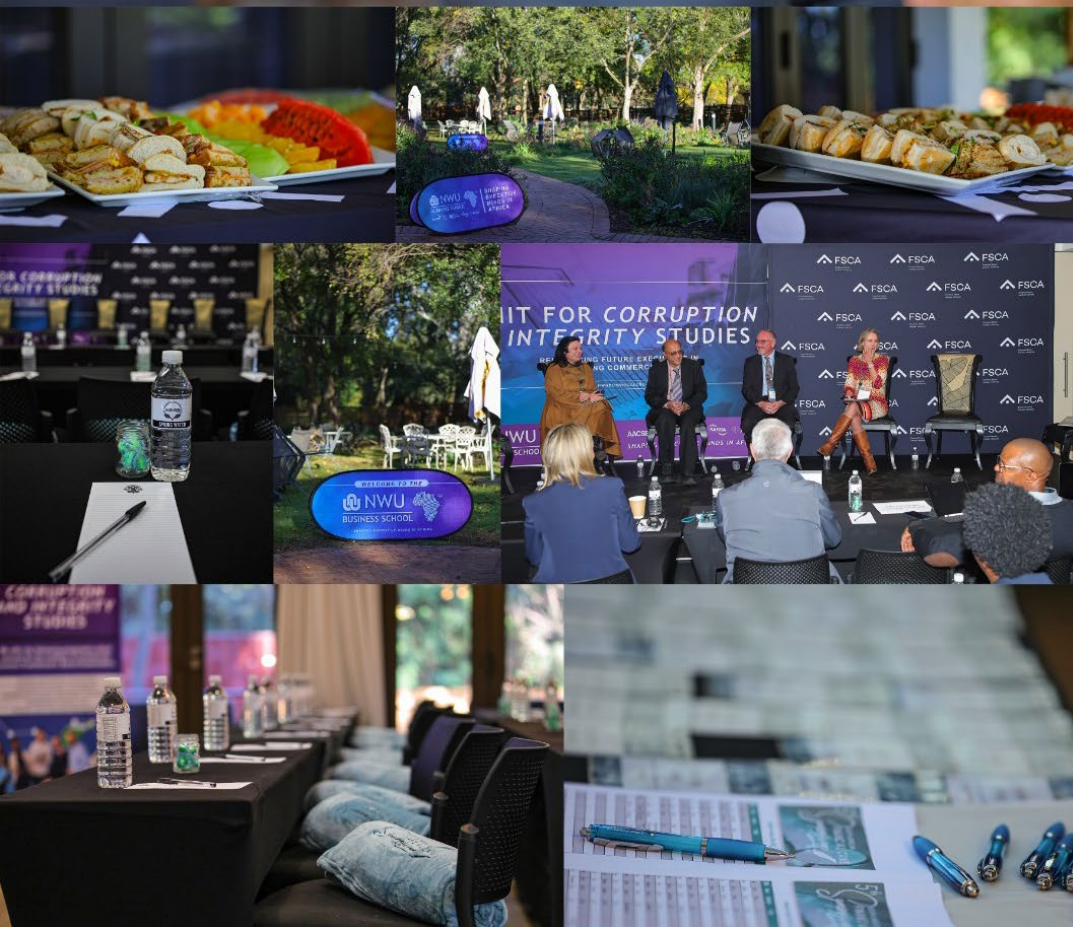




5th SOUTH AFRICAN FINANCIAL CRIME SYMPOSIUM

“The Symposium is a key platform for collaboration, insight sharing, and strengthening efforts to combat economic crime. It provides a valuable opportunity for engagement between industry leaders, regulators, law enforcement and other stakeholders to share insights, strengthen collaboration and drive meaningful conversations around economic crime”

Sadiyaa Amod, Banking Association of South Africa.



The 5th South African Financial Crime Symposium, organised by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) and NWU Business School’s Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies brought together regulators, law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, forensic specialists, legal practitioners, academics and industry bodies to discuss the evolving financial-crime landscape in South Africa and internationally. This year’s Symposium was hosted in Irene, Centurion from 12 to 13 May 2026 with a strong focus on practical disruption of financial crime, inter-agency collaboration, regulatory reform and operational implementation.

A major theme throughout the conference was that South Africa is transitioning from a primarily compliance-driven anti-financial-crime environment toward one focused on measurable operational outcomes. Discussions repeatedly emphasised that financial crime is becoming increasingly sophisticated, technology-enabled, cross-border and networked, requiring a more integrated response between the public and private sectors.

Topics covered included FATF Mutual Evaluation Round 5 preparedness, the Conduct of Financial Institutions Bill, crypto-assets and digital-asset recovery, online gambling and betting risks, scams and fraud influence operations, collaborative disruption models, and private-to-private information sharing.

The conference highlighted the growing convergence between traditional financial crime, cybercrime, digital platforms, social engineering and organised criminal networks. Speakers noted that scams increasingly leverage deepfakes, social media influence, mule-account networks, crypto-assets and cross-border payment flows to rapidly move and obscure stolen funds. The symposium therefore focused heavily on the need for earlier intervention, faster tracing of funds, improved data-sharing mechanisms and stronger disruption capabilities across the financial ecosystem.

The symposium demonstrated strong industry appetite for practical collaboration but also confirmed that legal certainty and regulatory alignment remain essential to enabling institutions to act quickly and confidently against scams, mule-account networks and organised criminal syndicates.



A man with a beard, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt, is smiling while talking on a white smartphone held to his ear. He is also holding a newspaper or magazine in his left hand, looking at it. The background is a modern office with large glass windows. In the foreground, on a desk, there is a small potted plant with green leaves and red flowers, a rolled-up white document, a laptop, and a white hard hat.

IN THE NEWS AND AT EVENTS

**NWU Business School marks 10 years
of the Policy Uncertainty Index (PUI)**

**Perspectives emanating from the MIT
Sloan School of Management**

**Hosting SALGA and the North West Chamber
of Commerce and Industry**

IN THE NEWS AND AT EVENTS



NWU Business School marks 10 years of the Policy Uncertainty Index (PUI)



A decade of tracking one of South Africa's most closely watched economic barometers deserved a proper celebration. On 2 July, we marked the 10th anniversary of our Policy Uncertainty Index (PUI) at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Sandton, bringing together economists, business leaders and policymakers to honour an initiative founded and led by Prof Raymond Parsons.

Launched in February 2016, the PUI has quietly become an indispensable reference point for how South Africa reads its own economy, a joint effort between the NWU Business School and the School of Economics of the North-West University, combining news-based sentiment tracking, a survey of leading economists, and input from Stellenbosch University's Bureau for Economic Research. Over ten years, it has captured the economy's mood through "Nenegate,"

the optimism of "Ramaphoria," the shock of COVID-19, and, most recently, a swing from a record high of 81 in Q3 2025 to 64.9 by year-end, before climbing again amid global energy-market shocks in Q1 2026.

The milestone morning featured remarks from Prof Mabutho Sibanda (Executive Dean of the NWU Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences), Prof Waldo Krugell, and Prof Parsons closed with a look back at the index's journey and the latest quarterly results - followed, fittingly, by a cake-cutting to mark the occasion.

As the PUI enters its second decade, it carries the same purpose that inspired it: helping South Africa navigate uncertainty with clarity and confidence.

[CLICK HERE to read the Q2 PUI](#)



Watch Prof Parsons unpack the PUI's background and Q2 2026 results:



Perspectives emanating from the MIT Sloan School of Management

On 11 May, we hosted an engaging online session with Ms Charlene Selle, Assistant Director at the MIT Sloan School of Management - bringing a slice of one of the world's leading business schools directly into our own community.

Drawing on her experience supporting research and academic initiatives at MIT Sloan, Ms Selle unpacked how research infrastructure, interdisciplinary collaboration, and talent development come together to power innovation ecosystems. For our staff and students, it was a rare, practical look at how a global institution builds the systems and partnerships that turn ideas into scalable impact - insight we can draw on as we continue strengthening our own innovation capacity here in Africa.





Strengthening Partnerships to Develop the Next Generation of Leaders



On 5 May, the NWU Business School hosted business leaders from across the North West province, together with representatives from the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the North West Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NWCOCI).

The engagement brought together stakeholders from business, local government, and higher education to consider how the province can more deliberately develop the next generation of leaders.

The discussion was grounded in a shared recognition that the challenges facing South Africa and the North West province are complex. However, they are not insurmountable when institutions work together with clarity, commitment, and a shared sense of responsibility.

A central message emerged from the engagement: leadership is not developed in isolation. It is shaped through sustained partnerships between business, local government, institutions of learning, and the communities they serve.

The session also provided an opportunity to begin mobilising support for joint Youth Month celebrations. The proposed initiative is intended to be more than a networking event. It will serve

as a platform to strengthen relationships, create opportunities, and support meaningful youth development in the province.

The NWU Business School extends its appreciation to Ms Xoli Moagi of the North West Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Ms Desiree Tlhoale of SALGA North West for their presence and contribution to the discussion.

We also thank keynote speaker Dr Mcane Mthunzi for a thoughtful and challenging contribution, and all stakeholders who participated with openness, purpose, and a willingness to collaborate.

This engagement marks the beginning of a more deliberate relationship between the NWU Business School and the North West business community. The task now is to translate the conversation into sustained action, clear commitments, and partnerships that create tangible opportunities for emerging leaders across the province.





LEADERSHIP IN AGRICULTURE

Dialogue and the launch of CEOs in Agriculture

On 11 May, we hosted a landmark Leadership in Agriculture Dialogue in partnership with Skillsbridge and the newly established CEOs in Agriculture (CEA), bringing senior executives, academics and industry leaders together at The Feather Hill Boutique Hotel in Potchefstroom for a day of candid conversation on leadership, innovation and the future of South African agriculture, right on the eve of NAMPO Harvest Day.

That energy carried through into late June, when CEA hosted its Founders Discussion Breakfast at The Roots Venue, formally introducing the new platform to the sector. Newly appointed chairperson Antois van der Westhuizen was quick to frame its purpose: **CEA isn't here to replace the sector's existing organisations, but to complement them - offering a more structured home for upskilling, developing farming businesses, and raising leadership standards across the industry.**

The model isn't untested. CEA is modelled on CEOs in Sport, the voluntary association founded by Prof Jacques Faul in 2019, which has built a thriving, connected leadership community in that sector. The founding message was clear: South African agriculture isn't short on strong leaders, it simply needs a platform where they can learn from one another and multiply that expertise across the industry.



Partnering with us and with Skillsbridge, CEA brings together industry heavyweights: Francois Strydom, Antois van der Westhuizen, Theo Rabe, Prof Joseph Sekhampu, Prof Joseph Lekunze and Prof Ronnie Lotriet, blending real-world expertise with academic insight in a way that fits naturally with our mission of shaping executive minds in Africa.

CEA is already looking ahead, with three flagship conferences planned: Bloemfontein in November, NAMPO Harvest Day in Bothaville next May, and NAMPO Cape in Bredasdorp next September.

Watch this video to hear Prof Jacques Faul and Antois van der Westhuizen explain the vision behind CEOs in Agriculture.



Highlights from the Leadership in Agriculture Dialogue:



Prof Joseph Lekunze



Prof Jacques Faul



Arrie Rautenbach

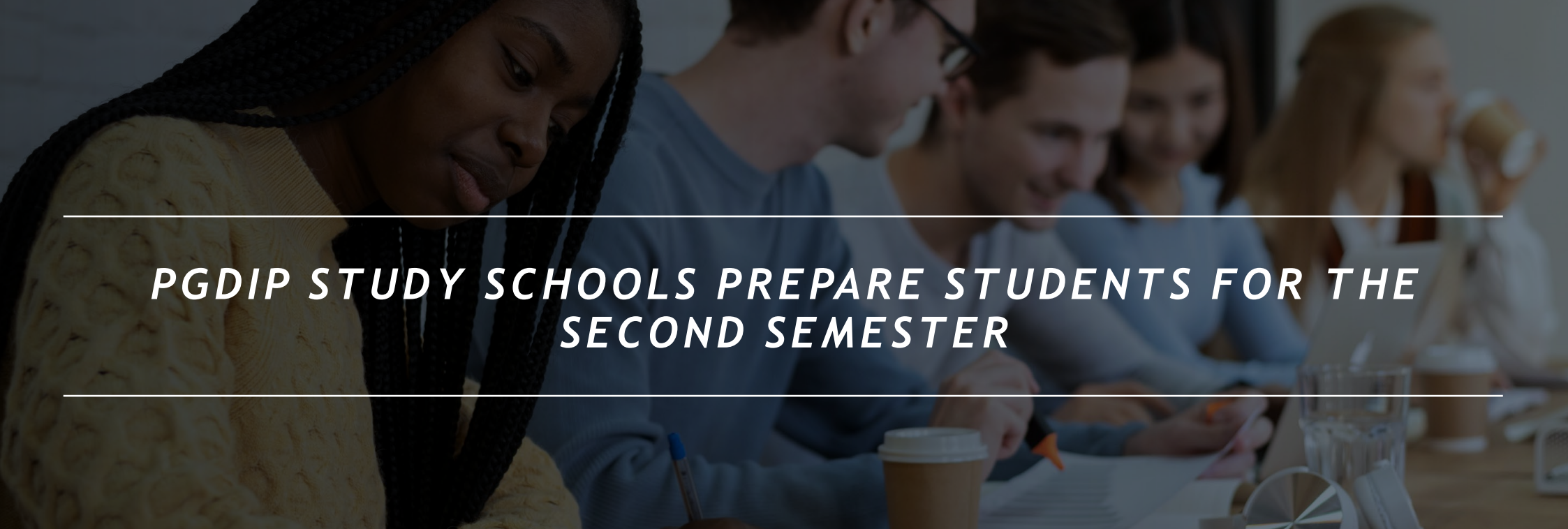


Francois Strydom



Antois van der Westhuizen





PGDIP STUDY SCHOOLS PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE SECOND SEMESTER

The NWU Business School hosted its Postgraduate Diploma in Management study schools in Potchefstroom from 29 June to 1 July and in Mahikeng from 1 to 3 July. Held ahead of the second semester, the study schools provided students with an opportunity to reconnect with their academic community, engage with important leadership themes, and prepare for the next stage of their studies.

In Potchefstroom, keynote speaker Lyndon Barends challenged students to reconsider what success requires in a world characterised by constant change. His address explored disruptive innovation, resilience, and adaptability, encouraging students to remain responsive when circumstances, industries, and expectations shift.

One observation from his session remained particularly memorable:

“When you fail, it is generalised; when you succeed, it is individualised.”

Students also heard from Yvette Labuschagne, the NWU Business School’s 2025 MBA Top Achiever. Drawing on her own progression from the PGDip to the MBA, she reflected on the demands of postgraduate study and the opportunities that can emerge from sustained academic commitment. Her journey offered students a practical example of how the PGDip can support continued personal, professional, and academic development.

The Mahikeng study school continued the conversation on leadership through a keynote address by Dr Naledi Moyo. Dr Moyo holds a PhD in Economic Statistics from Central China Normal University and currently serves in the Botswana Government. Her research interests include the psychology of leadership and followership.

Drawing on her academic work and professional experience, Dr Moyo described leadership as the ability to inspire people to achieve what they may not have believed possible under particular circumstances. She encouraged students to move beyond conventional ideas of leadership and to consider how leaders influence behaviour, shape environments, and unlock the potential of others.

Her presentation examined the qualities required of leaders operating in complex environments. Through philosophical perspectives, including reflections informed by Dostoevsky, she invited students to think more carefully about human behaviour, influence, responsibility, and the relationship between leadership and followership.

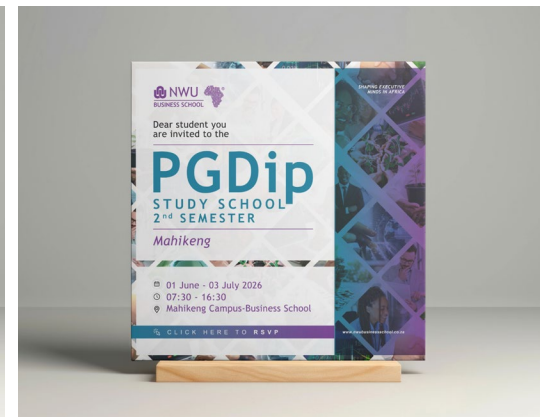
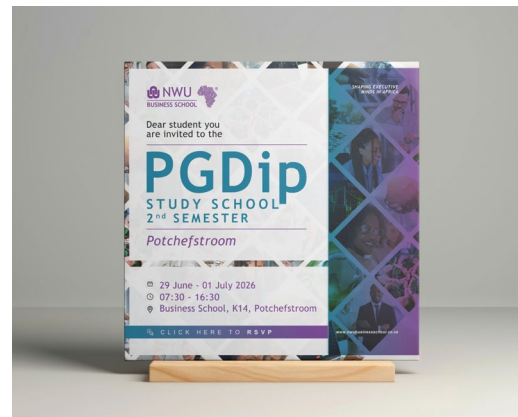
Dr Moyo also explored the factors that shape individual psychology, including past experiences, intelligence, environment, and lived experience. She identified mental positioning and resilience as two important foundations of effective leadership. Mental positioning concerns the mindset through which leaders interpret challenges and opportunities, while resilience enables them to persevere, learn, and adapt when faced with adversity.

She concluded with a reminder that leadership requires continuous discipline and development:

“Success is never owned; it is rented, and the rent is due every day.”

Across both study schools, students were encouraged to approach the second semester with adaptability, resilience, discipline, and a willingness to continue learning. The guest sessions reinforced that effective management education extends beyond technical knowledge. It also requires reflection on character, responsibility, influence, and the ability to lead constructively through change.

We wish all our PGDip students well for the second semester. May they approach the months ahead with renewed focus, confidence, and commitment as they continue their academic and professional journeys.





MBA RESEARCH DAYS

Learning in motion

In late June, our MBA students spent two days at the online MBA Research Days, sharpening the skills needed to conduct relevant, impactful research.

From research methodologies, literature reviews, and research design to data analysis, academic writing, and the ethical use of AI, students worked closely with experienced academics and researchers at every stage of the research journey. Interactive scientific committee sessions added valuable opportunities for collaboration, discussion, and one-on-one academic support.

We wish all our MBA students every success as they continue developing research and skills that contribute to organizations, communities, and society.

Breaking silos: the future of intelligence sharing

At the start of May, Albert van Zyl from the Unit for Corruption and Integrity Studies were invited to attend and participate in a panel discussion at the Financial Integrity Week in Sydney, Australia on the future of private-to-private intelligence sharing (P2P).

The Financial Integrity Week is organised by Australia's leading research centre on financial crime, the Financial Integrity Hub of the Macquarie University Law School, in partnership with Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and the Australian Federal Police (AFP). It is an Australia national initiative designed to bring together academia, government, and industry to engage in thoughtful, research-informed discussions on financial crime, regulatory enforcement, compliance culture, and the broader societal impact of economic misconduct.

In his presentation, Albert stressed that as economic crime continues to evolve globally greater sophistication and collaboration for better prevention, detection, and disruption, is

required. A legally sound, secure, and efficient P2P that leverages resources and information from a wide range of private sector stakeholders is essential for enhancing the effectiveness of measures aimed at disrupting economic crime. Legislative amendments have opened the door for a South African P2P framework, but the detailed embodiment thereof is still lacking.

The proposed P2P framework compares favourably with equivalent international frameworks. It is recommended that the participation, effectiveness, and ambit thereof be enhanced, not only for the next round of FATF mutual evaluations but also to bolster South Africa's ability to disrupt economic crime.

Financial Integrity Week 2026

FINANCIAL
INTEGRITY HUB

MACQUARIE
University
Sydney Australia



Prof Joseph Lekunze reflects on resilience in a VUCA world during inaugural address



On 25 June, we hosted the inaugural address of Prof Joseph Nembo Lekunze on the Potchefstroom Campus - a milestone moment for our Deputy Director of Research and Innovation, and a lecture that felt urgently relevant to the world we're all navigating.

Titled “Navigating uncertainty in a VUCA world: Risk management, sustainable agriculture, and organisational resilience,” the address wove together Prof Lekunze’s own journey - from his early life in Cameroon through decades in education, public sector work and agricultural economics - with a clear argument: uncertainty isn’t the exception anymore, it’s the condition we all have to learn to lead within.

His central message challenged old thinking on risk management, calling instead for adaptive, data-informed and collaborative approaches that help organisations anticipate disruption rather than just recover from it. He reframed sustainable agriculture as a strategic risk-reduction tool, not just an environmental goal, and argued that true resilience means learning to “bounce forward” - building agility, strong leadership and a culture of innovation under pressure.

The evening included a welcome from Prof Mabutho Sibanda, an introduction by Prof Joseph Sekhampu, a vote of thanks from Prof Yvonne du Plessis, and certificate presentation by Dr Joe Moleté - a fitting tribute to a body of work focused on building more resilient organisations and food systems across Africa.

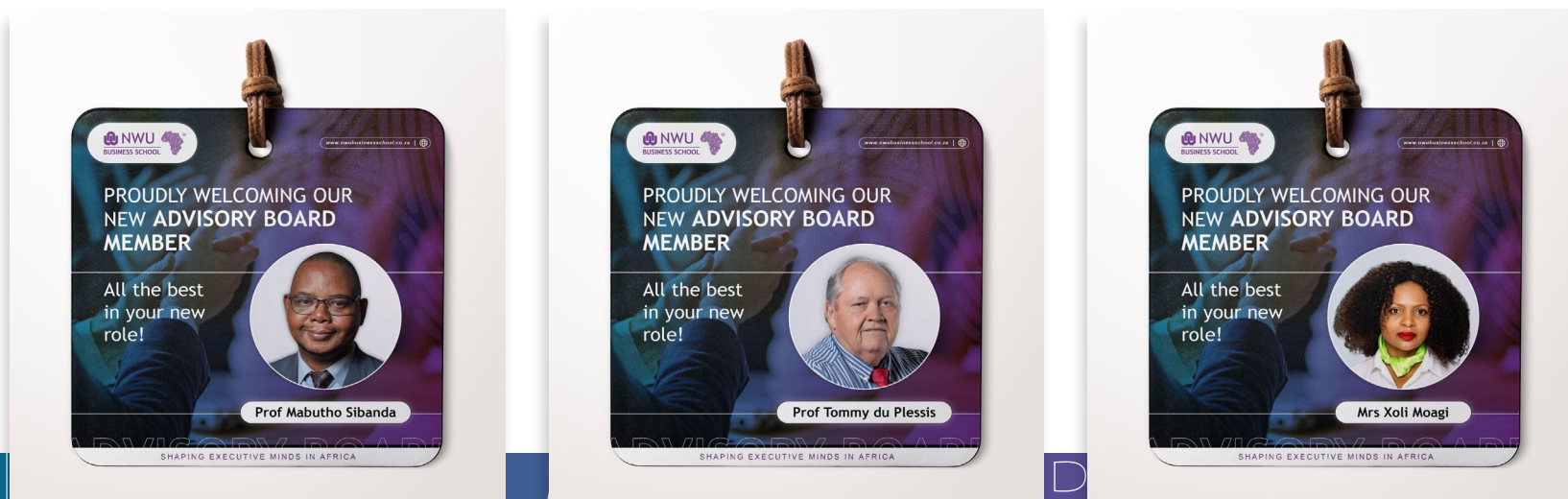
New Advisory Board members

In April, we welcomed three distinguished professionals to the NWU Business School Advisory Board: Prof Mabutho Sibanda, Prof Tommy du Plessis, and Mrs Xoli Moagi.

Between them, they bring decades of leadership, academic rigour, and real-world business acumen - exactly the kind of perspective that sharpens our strategic direction and pushes the impact of our work even further.

We're looking forward to the ideas, challenges, and insight they'll bring to our community in the months ahead.

WELCOME ABOARD!





1,000 citations and counting

CELEBRATING DR OLALEYE'S RESEARCH IMPACT

Early in June, we celebrated a remarkable milestone: Dr Banji Rildwan Olaleye, Postdoctoral Fellow at the NWU Business School, surpassed 1,000 citations on Google Scholar.

Citations are one of academia's clearest signals of influence - a measure of how much a scholar's work informs, challenges and inspires research well beyond their own institution. Reaching 1,000 is more than a number; it's a testament to the relevance and quality of Dr Olaleye's contributions across strategic management, innovation, sustainability, organisational behaviour and entrepreneurship, work that has drawn international recognition for tackling real organisational and societal challenges.

This milestone is a proud moment for all of us, and for the wider academic community that continues to draw on his insights. Congratulations, Dr Olaleye, may this be the first of many such achievements to come.



Benchmarking at the Wits Business School

The NWU Business School visited Wits Business School as part of a broader benchmarking engagement aimed at strengthening accreditation readiness, quality assurance practices, Assurance of Learning (AoL) implementation, stakeholder engagement and evidence-based continuous improvement. The engagement provided an opportunity to learn from Wits Business School's accreditation journey and to reflect on how accreditation-related work is structured, supported, communicated and systematised within a business school context.

The agenda included a welcome and campus tour, an overview of NWU Business School, an overview of Wits Business School and its accreditation journey, and separate breakaway sessions focusing on School leadership, MBA and postgraduate programmes, research, academic affairs / teaching and learning, and accreditation and quality assurance.



NWU Business School and Provincial Treasury advance municipal capacity assessment initiative

A proposed 18-month study would examine the financial-management capacity of all 22 municipalities in the North West Province and identify the institutional factors associated with stronger municipal performance.

The NWU Business School and the North West Provincial Treasury have begun preparatory engagements for a proposed Budget and Treasury Office Capacity Assessment covering all 22 municipalities in the province.

The initiative is intended to examine the financial-management capacity of the province's four district and 18 local municipalities. It would seek to identify the underlying factors influencing municipal financial governance and performance through a data-driven diagnostic approach.

The project responds to persistent financial-management and audit challenges within local government. It is intended to move beyond a conventional compliance assessment by

examining the institutional, human-capacity and resource factors that may contribute to stronger municipal outcomes.

The proposed study is being led on behalf of the NWU Business School by Francois Fouché, an Executive Economics lecturer on the School's MBA programme.

The research approach is expected to draw on advanced modelling and data-science methods, including panel econometrics, data envelopment analysis, labour-market and fiscal modelling, institutional governance indexing, and cost-benefit analysis. These methods would allow the research team to examine both the capacity available within municipal Budget and Treasury Offices and how effectively that capacity is used.



An initial stakeholder meeting was held on 12 June 2026 and was attended by North West MEC for Finance Kenetswe Mosenogi and other key role-players. The engagement focused on the proposed project's purpose, stakeholder collaboration and the anticipated implementation approach. Mosenogi's position as MEC for Finance is confirmed by the North West Provincial Treasury's June 2026 public communications.

The first Working Group meeting followed on 7 July 2026. Participants discussed project orientation, stakeholder responsibilities and matters requiring further development before implementation. A second Working Group meeting is provisionally scheduled to take place online on 29 July 2026.

The proposed assessment is expected to run for 18 months once the necessary institutional processes have been completed. However, no formal appointment, contractual agreement or confirmed commencement date was available at the time of writing.

Subject to formal approval and agreement, the study is intended to generate practical findings that could guide municipal capacity-development priorities, resource allocation and institutional interventions. The anticipated recommendations would support efforts to strengthen municipal financial governance and institutional capability across the North West Province.

For the NWU Business School, the initiative represents an opportunity to apply academic expertise and rigorous analytical methods to a significant public-sector challenge. It is also aligned with the School's emphasis on applied research that responds to its immediate context and contributes to institutional and societal improvement.

The value of the proposed project will ultimately depend on its ability to translate evidence into practical interventions. Rather than merely describing existing weaknesses, the assessment is intended to identify the capacity levers that government and municipalities can address to improve financial-management performance and support more effective service delivery.



CLICK HERE to track our
accreditation journey



A seat at the global table:

AMBA & BGA

Conference, Madrid



As we count down to our AMBA & BGA dual re-accreditation visit this October, our Accreditation Manager, Ms Geraldine Meyers, recently attended the AMBA & BGA Global Conference in Madrid, reflecting on what accreditation really means: a continuous commitment to academic quality and improvement, not just a badge on the wall.

It's a fitting note to end on - because for us, staying accredited means constantly asking how we can better equip professionals to thrive in a changing world.

And that brings us to the end of this quarter's newsletter. Thank you for reading, and until next time - keep shaping the future with us.

A NEW HOME

for the NWU Business School

The development of the NWU Business School's new purpose-built facility has reached an important milestone, with the construction site formally handed over to the appointed contractors. Located within the Innovation Hub in Potchefstroom, the new building will provide modern spaces for teaching, research, collaboration, executive education, and stakeholder engagement.



Watch the
design concept
animation [here!](#)



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