Tshwane University of Technology
We empower people

TUT CONNECT
GOLAGANYA | CHUMANISA | KGOKANYA

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TUT empowers rural tourism educators through an innovative teacher development programme



Tourism educators receiving their Visitor Attraction Passport.

For 42 tourism educators from rural schools across Mpumalanga's Ehlanzeni District, giving up their Saturdays in 2026 meant gaining more than just knowledge – it meant rediscovering their passion for teaching, building confidence and finding new ways to inspire learners.

Through the TUT Tourism Educator Empowerment (TUTTEE) initiative, the Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT) Tourism Department, in partnership with local NGO Penreach, equipped teachers with practical skills, fresh teaching approaches and renewed enthusiasm to bring the tourism curriculum to life in their classrooms.

Dr Sam Bouwer approached the NGO with a partnership proposal to deliver workshops for tourism educators in Grades 10 and 12 as part of its existing Teacher Development Workshop.
Read More...

TUT champions academia-industry collaboration to turn innovation into market-ready solutions



Dr Khuliso Sigama, Academic Manager for the Department of Computer Science at the Polokwane Campus.

The importance of collaboration between universities, industry and the broader innovation ecosystem in transforming promising ideas into market-ready solutions took centre stage at the Limpopo AI Rising Summit, where the University contributed to discussions on strengthening innovation and entrepreneurship.

Representing TUT, Dr Khuliso Sigama, Computer Science Academic Manager at the Polokwane Campus, participated as a panellist in a session titled *"From Innovation to Market: Connecting Academia, Industry and the Wider Innovation Ecosystem"*, held on Friday, 30 October 2026, at the Seshego Digital Hub in Limpopo.

The discussion explored how early-stage innovations can progress from concept and prototype development to testing, validation, piloting and eventual commercialisation. Two innovation case studies informed the conversation: Abiri Innovations' cattle-tracking solution and a proposed smart medicine collection system to improve access to repeat medication for rural communities.
Read More...

Building Sciences Forum champions innovation and collaboration

Students from the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE) were challenged to look beyond traditional approaches to construction and find new ways of addressing challenges in the built environment at the Next Generation Built Environment Forum, hosted by the Department of Building Sciences. The forum also saw the launch of a student competition aimed at turning innovative ideas into practical solutions.

Held at the Pretoria campus on 29 October, the forum brought together students, academics and industry professionals under the theme "Build. Innovate. Transform".

One of the highlights was the launch of the Buildathon Competition by the Head of the Department of Building Sciences, Dr Rudzani Muthelo. The competition invites students to form multidisciplinary teams and develop practical, innovative solutions to challenges in the built environment.
Read More...



CIDB CEO Bongani Dladla spoke on the importance of building a strong professional reputation.

Prof Mathonsi's commitment to mentorship, innovation and service earns him TUT Excellence Award

For Prof Topside Mathonsi, service goes beyond the responsibilities of an academic title. It is reflected in the researchers he mentors, the research capacity he helps build and the technological solutions he champions. This commitment to making a lasting contribution to the University and the wider research community has earned him the University's Service Beyond the Call of Duty Award at the recently held 2025/2026 Academic Excellence Awards.

An accomplished researcher and academic leader, Prof Mathonsi serves as Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Information Technology in the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology. His work spans cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT) and other emerging technologies.

He is also a National Research Foundation (NRF) Y-rated researcher, which recognises young researchers who demonstrate the potential to establish themselves as independent researchers, based on the quality and productivity of their research outputs during their doctoral and early postdoctoral careers.
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Prof Topside Mathonsi

Prof Viljoen celebrates 100 postgraduate graduates and outstanding research achievements



Prof Alvaro Viljoen

Graduating 100 postgraduate students is more than an academic milestone; it represents 100 research journeys shaped, knowledge shared, and future scientists equipped to contribute to society. For Prof Alvaro Viljoen, this achievement reflects a career dedicated to advancing pharmaceutical sciences, strengthening research capacity and unlocking the scientific potential of South Africa's medicinal plants.

Prof Viljoen, an NRF B2-rated researcher in the Faculty of Science, recently reached this milestone while earning the Best Publication Award in Pharmaceutical Chemistry from the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of South Africa (APSSA). His achievements were celebrated at the 2025/2026 Academic Excellence Awards, where he received the Service Beyond the Call of Duty and Special Recognition Awards.

In addition to being the highest-rated researcher at TUT, he holds the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation-National Research Foundation (DSI-NRF) South African Research Chair Initiative (SARChI) Chair in Phytomedicine and serves as Unit Director of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) Herbal Drugs Research Unit, based in TUT's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.
Read More...

TUT Interior Design students bring their designs to life in RAW Modular challenge

Two weeks of creative experimentation, technical problem-solving and hands-on manufacturing challenged second-year Interior Design students to take their ideas beyond the drawing board at the 2026 RAW Modular Design Camp.

Now in its third consecutive year, the collaboration between TUT's Department of Interior Design, within the Faculty of Arts and Design, and RAW Modular continues to provide an immersive industry learning experience that bridges academic learning and professional practice. Hosted at RAW Modular's design and manufacturing facilities, the camp introduces students to modular design principles, material efficiency and the practical realities of translating creative concepts into functional products.



Peet van Straaten (RAW Modular's founder) troubleshoots design solutions with students.

A creative brief with real-world constraints

The 2026 challenge placed a fresh emphasis on user-centred design, tasking student groups with developing multifunctional workstations for artisan content creators. Each group was assigned a fictional client profile representing a creative entrepreneur to design for, ranging from chefs and seamstresses to multimedia artists and instrument makers.
Read More...

TUT's inaugural symposium equips students with entrepreneurship and innovation knowledge



Students attending the symposium.

The University, through its Innovation and Technology Transfer Office (ITTO), hosted the TUT Innovation, Incubation, Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship (TIICE) Symposium at its Polokwane Campus, to equip students with knowledge of entrepreneurship, intellectual property protection and the commercialisation of innovative ideas.

Opening the programme, Professor Ilze Swarts encouraged students to gain entrepreneurial knowledge, make informed decisions, and recognise the potential of their skills to create employment and establish successful businesses.

In her keynote address, Dr Kim Lamont-Mbawuli of the ITTO outlined the process of turning an invention into a commercial opportunity, emphasising the importance of disclosing it to the ITTO before publishing or pitching it. She further explained how inventions can be protected, marketed and licensed, or developed into businesses.
Read More...

Empowering entrepreneurs to prioritise mental health for sustainable business growth

The pressure to build a successful business can sometimes come at a personal cost, with long working hours, financial uncertainty and the weight of responsibility taking a toll on entrepreneurs' mental wellbeing.

To help entrepreneurs find practical ways to manage the demands of running a business while protecting their mental health, TUT's Wellness Office, in collaboration with the Innovation and Technology Transfer Office and the Rail Manufacturing Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator, held a workshop on Mental Health and Entrepreneurship.



Facilitated by Tertia Anthony, the interactive session focused on helping entrepreneurs recognise common mental health challenges throughout the entrepreneurial journey and equipping them with practical coping strategies to navigate uncertainty, decision-making pressures, and business-related stress.
Read More...

Employability Forum prepares students for the workplace

Unemployment remains a significant concern, particularly for graduates who complete their qualifications with the hope of securing employment. Recognising the challenges graduates face when transitioning from university into the workplace, the Department of Economics hosted an Industry Engagement and Graduate Employability Forum.

The engagement, aimed at bridging the gap between academic learning and industry expectations, brought together students and industry representatives to share insights on employment opportunities and to discuss the skills required in the job market.



Keynote speaker Ornica Mukhavhuli.

Acknowledging the high unemployment rate in South Africa, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Finance, Prof Polly Mashigo, reassured students that they would be better equipped to navigate the job market by the time they completed their qualifications. She emphasised that the knowledge and practical skills they acquire throughout their studies would prepare them for the demands of the workplace. She highlighted the importance of Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), describing it as a stepping stone that helps students transition from university into the workplace.

Read More...

An Ode to TUT's 2026 Magnificent Seven Students


Prof Tinyiko Maluleke, Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

Chancellor's Awards to the 2026 Top Performing students at TUT – 31 October 2026.

A few years ago, we rebranded the Chancellor's Awards – an event honouring top performing students in each of the seven faculties at TUT – into the Magnificent Seven. Unlike the militarised seven characters in the original film called the magnificent seven from which we borrowed the name; the magnificence of TUT's magnificent seven lies in their academic tenacity and their sheer love for knowledge.

If it is true that life is a story, then the life stories of the top performing students at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) constitute some of the most beautiful that come out of TUT, annually. These are the stories of grit and grime - the stories of the students who, like cream, rise up to the top of the milk bowl, every single year.

And yet theirs are not just the stories of individual students, they are the stories of South African families who nurtured the students. The stories of the 2026 Magnificent Seven belong to students who hail from villages in Qwaqwa, Ga-Mamabolo, Empangeni, Burgersfort, as well as Pretoria itself. If it takes a village to raise a child, then it takes a university of the calibre of TUT to guide that child to the top of the class.

Read More...

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Building future-ready entrepreneurs

Rail Manufacturing Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (RMCERI)







Left: the RMCERI–IFoW Future-Ready Entrepreneur Development Programme. Right, from top: the Personal Branding & Entrepreneurship Bootcamp with the Faculty of Economics and Finance; RMCERI at the TIICE Symposium, TUT Polokwane Campus.

Future-Ready Entrepreneurs

With the Institute for the Future of Work (IFoW), RMCERI hosted Future-Ready Entrepreneurs: Building the Future of South Africa at Ditsela Place, Hatfield. Entrepreneurs, industry leaders, academics and partners explored opportunities in the rail manufacturing and industrial economy.

Tshwane Varsity Hackathon 2026

RMCERI sponsored prizes at the Awards Ceremony, helping winning teams advance their prototypes and turn promising ideas into practical solutions.

A bootcamp for 350+ students

With the Faculty of Economics and Finance, RMCERI ran a Personal Branding and Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for second- and third-year students, covering branding, innovation, leadership and spotting viable business opportunities.

TIICE Symposium, Polokwane

At the symposium organised by ITTO, RMCERI introduced students to its SMME development support and networked with partners including SEDFA, with a focus on IP protection and market readiness.

Entrepreneurship, innovation and value creation as pathways to addressing youth unemployment.

PARTNERSHIPS

Thirty years of F'SATI

French South African Technology Institute (F'SATI)

30

YEARS

of South Africa–France cooperation

F'SATI celebrated its 30-year anniversary at Kievits Kroon Wine Estate, bringing together its Executive Management Board, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), French partner institutions, industry representatives, academics and alumni.

The celebration recognised three decades of academic excellence, skills development and bilateral cooperation between South Africa and France. It also strengthened institutional partnerships and opened discussion on expanding collaborative research and innovation into water, healthcare, biodiversity, artificial intelligence and robotics.

Pictured on the cover.

DOCTORAL SUCCESS · CEEP

Congratulations, Dr Hillary Chika Idoko

We are proud to celebrate Dr Hillary Chika Idoko, who graduated with his doctorate in October 2026. His research was supervised by Dr Akuru and co-supervised by Prof Popoola. Over the course of his studies, his work led to seven peer-reviewed publications, a strong contribution to the field. Congratulations to Dr Idoko and his supervisory team on this achievement!

7

peer-reviewed publications

CENTRE
Centre for Energy and Electric Power

SUPERVISOR
Dr Akuru

CO-SUPERVISOR
Prof Popoola

RESEARCH & RECOGNITION

Newsmaker of the Year

TUT-CSIR Cannabis and Hemp Research Hub



The TUT-CSIR Cannabis and Hemp Research Hub receives the Newsmaker of the Year Award at the 2025/2026 TUT Academic Excellence Awards.

Newsmaker of the Year

The Hub received the award at the 2025/2026 TUT Academic Excellence Awards on 28 October, recognising its research contributions, visibility and work to translate research into practical impact.

Visit to Manica University

From 7–9 October, the Hub-affiliated Pharmaceutical and Biotech Advancement in Africa (PBAA) Research Group visited Manica University, Zambia, sharing research experiences with pharmacy students.

PharmaConnect Africa 2026

On 7–8 October in Lusaka, Zambia, PBAA joined the conference themed "Sustainable and Resilient Health Systems for Last-Mile Access in Africa", exchanging ideas on pharmaceutical innovation, regulation and traditional medicine.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship Expo 2026

Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED)



Participants on stage at the Entrepreneurship Expo 2026.

Co-hosted by CED, the Youth in Business Network (YBN) and TUT, the Expo brought student and alumni entrepreneurs together with industry leaders, government support agencies, financial institutions and enterprise development practitioners.

Its purpose: to open up enterprise development opportunities and business support programmes, and to give entrepreneurs a platform to network, showcase and pitch their ideas, connecting them with funding, mentorship and market access.

A particularly inspiring moment was reconnecting with a student who attended the first Start-Up Huddle of 2026 and has since launched a clothing business.

ON THE PROGRAMME

Dr Eric Pule, Director: Advancement and Partnerships, opened the Expo.

Dr Patrick Ebewo, Director: CED, outlined the importance of entrepreneurship development at TUT.

Mr Karabo Malapane, CEO of YBN, delivered the keynote address.

A panel from SARS, NYDA, CIPC and FNB, with business coach Ms Thato Morenong, moderated by Ms Lebogang Rampa.

Prof Ingrid Mokgobu, Campus Rector of Pretoria Campus, delivered the vote of thanks.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPO 2026

The pitch: more than a prize

At the Entrepreneurship Pitching Competition, student and alumni entrepreneurs presented their business ideas to a panel of judges. Through a partnership with CED, the winners earned a place in the Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) Programme 2027 Cohort, a nine-month business development programme.

WHAT THE WINNERS RECEIVE

01 Nine months of structured mentorship, coaching and business development support

02 Interventions to strengthen business performance and sustainability

03 A chance to secure up to R20 000 in seed funding

04 Consideration for the supplier database, opening procurement and market access

05 Exposure to networks, partnerships and resources that accelerate growth



Winners recognised on stage.

Entrepreneurship development is not only about recognising great ideas, but about investing in entrepreneurs' journeys.





Speakers addressing delegates at the Entrepreneurship Expo 2026.

YOUTH ENTERPRISE

Growing young contractors

Amahle Youth Contractor Development Programme

Implemented through a partnership between Amahle Commerce (Pty) Ltd, the Gauteng Provincial Government Department of Economic Development (GPGDED) and CED, the programme is empowering unemployed youth across Gauteng to build sustainable businesses in the construction and infrastructure sectors.

Following a rigorous selection process, 40 young beneficiaries enrolled in a structured entrepreneurial development journey. Attendance has ranged between 32 and 40 participants across the initial modules, alongside mentorship, coaching, networking and exposure to industry stakeholders.

TRAINING COVERED

- Entrepreneurship and New Venture Creation
- Business Plan Development
- Entrepreneurial Finance and Financial Management
- Project Management
- Entrepreneurial Marketing
- Personal and Professional Development
- Business Compliance and Governance

40 young entrepreneurs supported towards sustainable youth-owned enterprises, market and supplier access, funding readiness, job creation and township enterprise development across Gauteng.







Facilitators leading training sessions for programme beneficiaries.

TOURISM INNOVATION

Students reimagine tourism

Centre for Sustainable Tourism & Innovation (CSTI)

62
student innovators

8
participating universities

30 Oct
Summit with the National Department of Tourism

Student-Led Tourism Innovation Summit 2026

On 30 October 2026, CSTI hosted the Summit in collaboration with the National Department of Tourism (NDT), giving 62 students from eight universities (UKZN, UP, NWU, VUT, UMP, Univen, TUT and UJ) a national platform to turn research into technology-driven solutions for tourism.

The Summit strengthened ties between academia, government, industry and potential investors, opening routes to develop and commercialise student innovations.

City of Tshwane Tourism Branding Challenge

About 18 TUT students from different disciplines developed creative solutions to strengthen Tshwane's destination identity, tourism competitiveness and marketing, showcasing interdisciplinary, experiential learning and deepening CSTI's engagement with the City.

Tshwane Tourism Showcase

In January, under the theme "Shaping a Safer, Stronger Capital for Tourism", CSTI promoted its programmes, short courses, research and innovation. The Director delivered a keynote on sustainable tourism, digital transformation and the role of higher education in resilient destinations.

INNOVATIONS ON SHOW AT THE SUMMIT

- Digital tourism dashboards
- Artificial intelligence applications
- Heritage tourism technologies
- Digital nomad solutions
- Conservation intelligence platforms
- Smart accommodation systems

CSTI IN 2026

Research, partnerships and the road ahead

Strategic industry engagement

CSTI advanced its engagement with the Tshwane Tourism Association (TTA). The proposed membership is expected to increase visibility and support networking, market intelligence, student internships, applied research and third-stream income.

Research and knowledge production

Journal publications covered tourism digital transformation, artificial intelligence, sustainable tourism, supply chain resilience, visitor experiences and virtual reality, alongside national and international conference presentations and contributions to scholarly books.

5

journal publications reported in 2026

R16,081.30

invested in CSTI trademark registration in June 2026

The way forward

CSTI PRIORITIES

01 Translate student-led innovations into market-ready solutions through industry partnerships and technology transfer

02 Strengthen collaboration with the City of Tshwane, TTA, NDT and private-sector stakeholders

03 Expand multidisciplinary student participation in tourism innovation challenges

04 Develop industry-responsive research, training and consulting for third-stream income

05 Establish sustainable mechanisms for student innovation incubation, mentorship and commercialisation

2026 marked an important period of growth for CSTI, connecting research, students, industry and government in advancing sustainable tourism innovation.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Technology skills beyond campus

Technology Station in Electronics (TSE) · January–August 2026

488
participants trained

13
interventions

WHERE
TUT and communities across Gauteng: Mabopane, Mamelodi, Hammanskraal, Soweto, Lynnwood and Rosslyn

Working with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), TVET Colleges, The Innovation Hub, AI Hub, CED, the Automotive Industry Development Centre (AIDC) and TUT's Department of Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering, TSE delivered hands-on training in smartphone repair, robotics and digital concepts, IoT, automotive circuits and wiring, and appliance repair.

The Robotics and Digital Concepts programme followed a train-the-trainer approach, equipping TVET College lecturers to present it at their own colleges and creating a multiplier effect across the TVET sector.

Community programmes in smartphone and appliance repair build skills participants can use to earn an income, while extending the life of devices and reducing electronic waste.

Training in robotics, IoT and automotive electronics gave participants exposure to automation and digitalisation technologies needed in modern industry.

Just as important as the numbers is the growing network of people and institutions equipped to pass on knowledge and create opportunities for learning, entrepreneurship and employment.

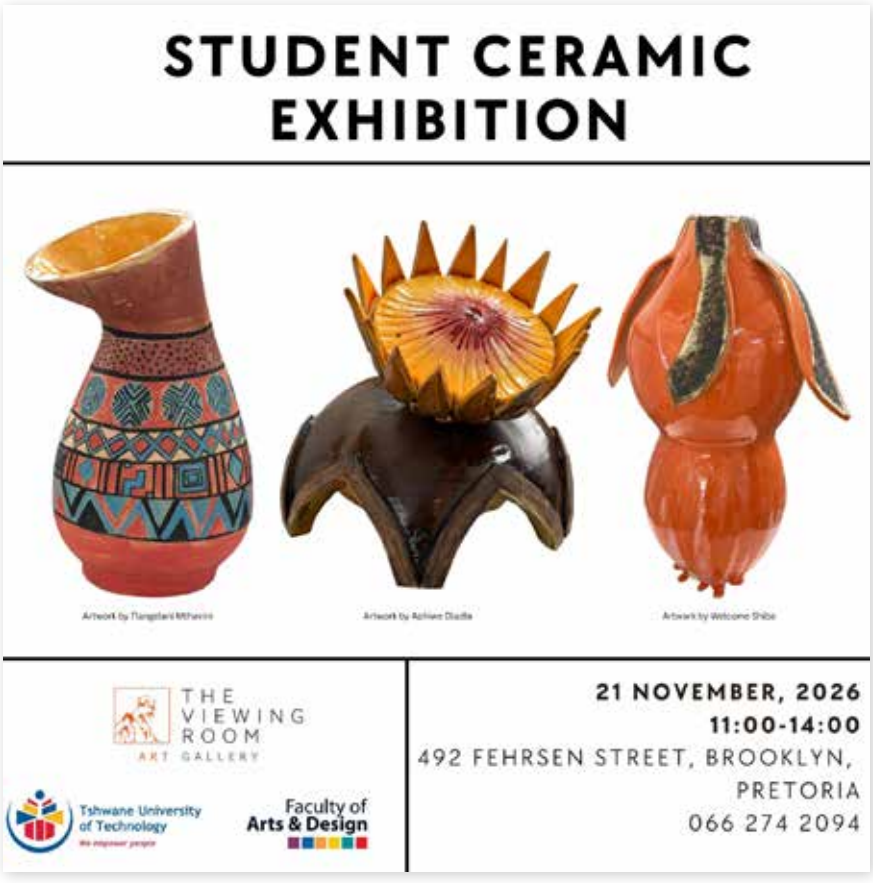




TVET lecturers being trained on Robotics and Digital Concepts.

EVENTS


CERAMIC SALE
25-26 November 2026
9:00-16:00
Arts Campus: 24 Du Toit Street
Building 14: Ceramic Studio
Inquiries: RobertsMB@tut.ac.za
Tshwane University of Technology
Faculty of Arts & Design


STUDENT CERAMIC EXHIBITION
THE VIEWING ROOM
ART GALLERY
Tshwane University of Technology
Faculty of Arts & Design
21 NOVEMBER, 2026
11:00-14:00
492 FEHRSEN STREET, BROOKLYN,
PRETORIA
066 274 2094

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