

Communication from Council

On Monday 28 November 2022, the Stellenbosch University (SU) Council held the last of its four scheduled meetings for the year. The meeting took place in hybrid mode, with most members opting to participate in person.

As part of our ongoing practice, Council started its session by reflecting on the University's restitution statement.

Stellenbosch University (SU) acknowledges its inextricable connection with generations past, present and future. In the 2018 Centenary Year, SU celebrates its many successes and achievements. SU simultaneously acknowledges its contribution towards the injustices of the past. For this we have deep regret. We apologise unreservedly to the communities and individuals who were excluded from the historical privileges that SU enjoyed, and we honour the critical Matie voices of that time who would not be silenced. In responsibility towards the present and future generations, SU commits itself unconditionally to the ideal of an inclusive world-class university in and for Africa.

The Khampepe report, which an independent commission had drafted following an investigation into incidents of alleged racism on campus, enjoyed rigorous discussion. While the report notes that SU has made significant strides in its transformation efforts, it does shine a spotlight on areas of weakness and shortcomings that are dampening these efforts.

In his [report and highlights](#), and [addendum to the highlights](#), to Council, the Rector focused on, among others, developments and successes in building our international profile, our performance on the *Times Higher Education* ranking, research excellence, sport achievements, and the significant increase in student applications for 2023, confirming SU's appeal among prospective students.

Council noted with appreciation the successes of the School for Climate Studies and the School for Data Science and Computational Thinking, and the strides they had made in a relatively short period.

Prof Tulio de Oliveira and Dr Sikhulile Moyo were congratulated on having received this year's German Africa award. German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz had conferred the award on the two scientists in recognition of their work in the field of genomics and epidemiology.

Another noteworthy event for research development in Africa was the Nobel in Africa Symposia, which took place at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS) in October. This first Nobel symposium series hosted outside of Scandinavia attracted top scientists and featured both public and closed sessions for scientific discourse.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the commitment and determination of all who have contributed to SU's success over the past year – staff, students, alumni and all other stakeholders alike. You have kept the proverbial lights on and the wheels turning. Thank you.

I wish you all a joyous and festive holiday season and look forward to a prosperous new year.

Please read on for further details.

Kind regards
Ainsley Moos
Chair: SU Council

IMPLEMENTING THE KHAMPEPE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of his report to Council, the Rector presented the executive management's proposal on the way forward regarding the findings and recommendations of the Khampepe Commission. Council noted the proposed roadmap to give further momentum and impetus to the University's transformation endeavours and requested a separate meeting to discuss the Commission's findings and recommendations. The meeting will be scheduled in the first quarter of 2023.

Click here to view [the Khampepe report](#).

ADOPTION OF TOBACCO MORATORIUM

After rigorous discussion and with the concurrence of Senate, Council formally adopted the following position statement with regard to the tobacco industry:

"Stellenbosch University henceforth declines any engagement with the tobacco industry or entities furthering the interests of the tobacco industry (this includes declining to receive financial support channelled from the tobacco industry)."

The decision follows directives to this effect from the World Health Organisation (WHO) to secure future research funding. It is also in line with steps taken by many other institutions of higher learning around the globe. SU will continue to engage with the WHO in this regard.

ACADEMIC RENEWAL AS GAMECHANGER

Prof Deresh Ramjugernath, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching, presented his annual report to Council. Among others, he provided an overview of progress made in the field of learning and teaching since July, when in-person lectures finally resumed after the two Covid-plagued years. His presentation focused on SU's student success rates as well as the comprehensive planning already done to implement academic renewal as one of the gamechangers that will set SU apart from other institutions of higher learning going forward. Click [here](#) for Prof Ramjugernath's full report.

VARIOUS GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS APPROVED

Council approved a number of governance documents. These include Code 2040 (SU code of conduct), the revised Policy on the Use and Licensing of SU's Trademarks, the revised Protection and Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Policy, the revised Policy in respect of the Indirect Cost Recovery Rate (ICCR) with regard to Third-Stream and Fifth-Stream Income at SU, the revised Policy on Costing and Pricing of Research and Research-Related Grants and Contracts, and the revised Policy for Responsible Conduct of Research. Council also unanimously approved the 2023 Institutional Plan, which will now be submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) by 15 December 2022.

BUDGET 2023

Chief Operating Officer, Prof Stan du Plessis, presented the University's 2023 budget, along with some insightful facts. He also elaborated on the challenges facing the

institution in the short to medium term. These include a state subsidy that is lagging behind inflation and is dwindling even further as a result of the ever-increasing demands that the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is making on government resources.

Council approved the 2023 Budget and financial planning 2023 to 2028 as presented subject to confirmation of the expected government subsidy to SU for the coming year.

Highlights of the 2023 budget are:

- an 8% increase in tuition fees;
- an 8.9% increase in student accommodation fees;
- a 6% increase in staff salaries; and
- a proposed R7 500 lump-sum payment to eligible employees at post levels 9 to 19.

MOTIONS

Council unanimously endorsed a motion of appreciation for the University's achievements as articulated in the Rector's management report. These successes had been achieved amidst huge challenges in both the local and global context.

Council also passed a motion thanking Prof Ramjugernath and his responsibility centre of Learning and Teaching for a well-drafted and presented annual report.

END OF COUNCIL TERMS

Council bid farewell to Ms Sindi Lingela and vice-chair Mr Hubert Brody, whose terms had come to an end. They were thanked for their commitment and contributions as members of Council.

NEW VICE-CHAIR

Dr Nicky Newton-King was unanimously appointed as the new vice-chair of Council.