



Central University of  
Technology, Free State

# 2015

Innovation and entrepreneurship for  
regional development:  
**the focus of a successful university  
of technology in the 21st century**

**THE STATE-OF-THE-UNIVERSITY ADDRESS**

**The State-of-the-University Address (SoUA)** was delivered by Professor Thandwa Mthembu, Vice-Chancellor & Principal on:

- **5 February 2015 at Welkom Campus; and**
- **7 February 2015 at Bloemfontein Campus.**

The video of the Bloemfontein Campus SoUA 2015 is available on CUT's YouTube Channel, visit [www.cut.ac.za](http://www.cut.ac.za)

# CONTENT

Introduction	1
PLANNING to Succeed	2
Our PEOPLE with Crazy Ideas	4
PRODUCT - from steps to strides	8
PENNIES and pound-wise	13
Vision 2020: Delivering Socio-Economic Development	15
Conclusion	16



# INTRODUCTION

**On behalf of the Chancellor and the Chairperson of Council, I welcome all new and returning students and our staff, too, to the 2015 academic year.** To the new students and their parents/guardians, some of whom accompany them, we are thrilled that you will be joining our Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) family!

This address emanates from lots of institutional engagement and is therefore not mine alone. It is designed to do a number of things.

- Firstly, it is about welcoming all of our students, parents, guardians, staff, partners and stakeholders.
- Secondly, in a university setting, a speech should, by necessity, provide knowledge, information and facts. As a result, the address provides such, not just clichés and hollow fact-less marketing of CUT.
- Thirdly, the speech is about CUT's accountability to you as a university community, our stakeholders, and the broader society that looks up to us for solutions and innovations in socio-economic growth and development particularly here in the Central Region.
- Fourthly and lastly, this address gives hope, I hope, to those who wish to build and support this university on its journey to the future as a technological university of the 21st century.

In these respects, I will talk to phenomenal changes and achievements that have transformed and are still transforming our university and the Central Region of South Africa.

In the nine years that I have been Vice-Chancellor and Principal, CUT has shown, through its efforts and achievements, a strong sense of innovation; a dogged determination to succeed and be excellent; a huge capacity for hard work; and boldness to adapt and transform itself almost beyond recognition.

Today, we are well-poised to make use of our considerable strengths to chart exciting new paths into the future. The accomplishments and examples of excellence that I will be sharing with you today are, without question, the result of many people working diligently together; hence this address being theirs, too. These include staff, students, alumni and administrators; sponsors and donors; partners from business and industry; government and other stakeholders whose contribution cannot go unnoticed.

At CUT, we have over the years, developed a strategic implementation framework we call, the 4P's. This framework consists of, in no order of priority: **P**lans, **P**eople, **P**roducts and **P**ennies. Every strategy we put in place to realise our vision has to address, where practically possible, each of these P's.





# PLANNING to Succeed

In 2010, we adopted a new vision – 'Vision 2020' - which has, associated with it, various **PLANS** from academic and research plans to finance, human resources and physical resources plans. It simply states:

***"By 2020, Central University of Technology shall be an engaged university that focuses on producing social and technological innovations for socio-economic development, primarily in the central region of South Africa."***

A good vision has to have at least three fundamental elements, namely: **objective, comparative advantage and scope**. From our vision statement I will extract three phrases that represent these three fundamental elements:

- Our ultimate **objective** is socio-economic development, more especially regional development.
- Our **comparative advantage** is that we are a technological university and hence the social and technological innovations that we shall produce.
- Our **scope** is primarily the Central Region, with our timeline being 2020. Of course, once we can show the nation and the world that we can make things work right here in this region, then we will surely be world class.

**In aspiring to attain our vision, we continue to:**

- **Innovate our curricula** to deliver high quality appropriate Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) academic programmes and other programmes in the humanities and management sciences;
- **Refocus our research and innovation** towards regional development;
- **Engage with broader society** for mutually beneficial socio-economic development;
- **Promote access with success** by attracting potentially successful students and supporting them to become graduates that will not only be competent and innovative employees, but some of them, entrepreneurs and job creators, too;
- **Attract and retain expert staff** and support their development and wellbeing; and
- **Forge strategic partnerships** – locally, nationally and internationally – whose ultimate goal is to support us in socio-economic and broader regional development.



## Looking Ahead: Achievements and Challenges

Universities, globally, are faced with a series of common challenges. These include responding to increasing societal expectations and demands; more complex ways of imparting and disseminating curricula; diversifying revenue streams; improving and demonstrating quality while we increase our enrolments and class sizes; dwindling financial support to universities and its students; how to exploit and embed technologies; how we should confront globalisation; and so many others.

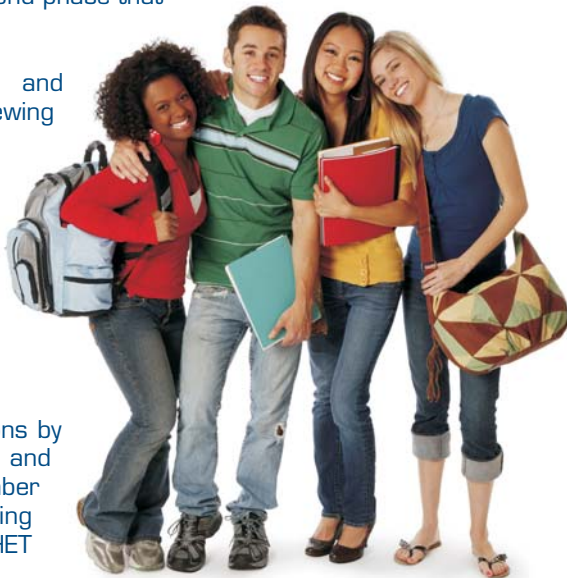
In the wake of these challenges, we can no longer shoot first, and thereafter call whatever we hit our target. That is why planning is a priority at CUT. Our plans should be consistent with what our region, our nation and our world expect and demand. Unlike universities of old, universities of the 21st century, no longer have *carte blanche* hegemony and legitimacy. Society expects them to earn these based on value-adding contributions they make to its development. That is much beyond simply churning out graduates!

We are driven by the ambitious goals we have set for the University, which are contained in our Vision 2020 and its associated plans like the Academic Plan (2014-2020), our Transformation Vision and many others.

Our infrastructure is expanding in order to meet the needs of our region and country. The University Master Plan, approved by Council in June 2014, seeks to establish a long-term estates framework and a medium-term development plan that supports the academic and growth aspirations of the University, the region and the nation. Construction of new buildings has been underway almost uninterrupted since the first phase that started in 2008 and the second phase that ended in 2013.

Currently, because we are organic and versatile, we are in the process of reviewing our strategic goals approved by Council in 2010. An updated strategic plan, which will be our refined roadmap for CUT's and regional development, will be submitted to DHET by the end of this year. We will re-align our goals with our vision and with the newest developments in higher education and the world.

The newly-introduced reporting regulations by DHET will help us to keep our planning and reporting systems aligned. In November 2014, Council approved a revised planning cycle that aligns with the new DHET reporting cycle.







# Our PEOPLE with CRAZY IDEAS

CUT continues to make a remarkable contribution to the intellectual, professional and skills development of its staff, students, its alumni and the citizenry of the broader central region. These are all the **PEOPLE** we have to continue to serve diligently.

Over the past decade, the profile and pedigree of the university's academic and research staff have improved and we are committed to making our university an even more inclusive and diverse community. For the period October 2005 to September 2012, the percentage of employees from designated groups increased from 76% to 82%, while the percentage of female employees remained unchanged, at 49%. These figures demonstrate the University's commitment to attaining a staff profile that reflects the country's population demographics. At CUT, equity is joined at the hip with excellence. For example, the number of academic and research staff that have doctorates now stands at 30% as against a number of our counterpart universities of technology where it hovers at around 15%! More will be revealed about excellence in academic programmes, in pass and graduation rates and in research and innovation when I deal with our **PRODUCTS** later.

## Looking Ahead: Achievements and Challenges

We recognise that attracting and retaining expert staff require a well-structured and a functional Human Resources (HR) Section. In 2014, we implemented a new HR turnaround strategy to ensure effective and efficient human resources management. This led to the appointment of a new senior team, including a new Director: HR with a wide experience in business and industry. With the leadership of this team, we are well-poised to make considerable improvements on our human resources management and on our way to attracting high performing individuals to join our 'crazy' A-Team.

The A-Team, supported by our facilities management staff, continues to impress with its innovative 'crazy' ideas. In 2014 they imagined Leonard Thuto, the red-blooded CUT alumnus at the Park Road gate. I am told that if any student ever enters the Park Road gate without kissing Leonard Thuto's foot, their chances of success at CUT will be greatly limited!

The latest initiative is the establishment of our "academic commons" area in front of the library whose name is still to be given. The space will be endowed with trees and seating areas ideal for contemplation, intellectual and social engagement for our students and staff over a drink, tea or coffee that will be sold at a kiosk to be built there.

In 2013, a total of R3.5 million was allocated to A-Team innovations from the strategic budget and in 2014 a total of R1.5 million was set aside for similar initiatives.

To make life better liveable for our staff, we have a remuneration policy that puts our salary scales at the 50th percentile of the broader market. For many years, our salary scales have trailed behind the market. Further, there has been what we call here “salary anomalies” as a result of historical and discriminatory disparities and practices. Such anomalies or disparities in salary can be found anywhere in South African organisations. Bold and trailblazing as CUT always is, it has just confronted these and made the necessary salary scale and actual salary adjustments without begging government for additional money as state owned companies like Eskom, SAA and the like always do. We did this without even getting a bank overdraft. Here, we plan for and use our resources carefully, wisely and frugally.

**We are proud that as of 1 July 2014, our Council made it possible for us to achieve the following results in this area:**

- 282 of our total permanent and long term contract staff complement of 753 employees, constituting 37.4%, had their salaries adjusted upwards.
- 236 of our black staff complement of 465 (including so-called African, Coloured and Indian/Asian), constituting 50.8% of our total black employees, had their salaries adjusted upwards.
- 148 of our female staff complement of 372, constituting 39.8% of our total female employees, had their salaries adjusted upwards.

Challenges still remain as not all anomalies and disparities could be eradicated in the first round simply because of the enormity and complexity of the problem and, of course, our limits of affordability. The University will be working with our Unions to explore additional strategies to eliminate the more glaring anomalies and disparities.

Complementary to adjusted salary scales we now have a performance management system that is linked to salary progression for the best performers. With the revised system, performance rewards will be realised through the notch system so that staff salaries do not stagnate, unless a staff member does not perform as expected. Previously, employees would remain on one notch and receive the same annual percentage salary increase, regardless of whether they have performed well or not. Their fortunes in salary would only improve when they get promoted to the next level or when they get appointed in another position.

## **Our Enrolment Figures and Success Rates**

In the last decade, CUT’s enrolment increased by almost 40%, from 10 320 students in 2005 to 14 334 students in 2014. In 2014, a total of 6 295 (43.9%) students enrolled in our priority area of STEM. Not many of our competitors can boast such a high percentage of enrolment in this critical area of our country’s development.

The number of postgraduate students at CUT has almost doubled over the past ten years, from 418 students in 2004 to 992 students in 2014, which is 6.9% of the total student headcount. CUT plans to increase the postgraduate student headcount at master’s and doctoral levels by 2020 to 10% of its total student headcount.

Pertaining to student success and throughput, the overall CUT success rate has increased from 69% in 2004 to 76.5% in 2013 – thus exceeding the DHET's target of 75%. The total CUT graduation headcount has almost tripled from 1 873 graduates in 2004 to 3 217 in 2013 (final audited figures). In 2014, a total of 3 360 students graduated (this figure is not final), which included 38 Masters and 13 Doctorates and an honorary doctorate conferred on Dr Gill Marcus, the previous Governor of the South African Reserve Bank.



**Dr Gill Marcus,**  
*received her honorary  
doctorate in  
Business Administration  
from CUT.*



## Academic life improvements

The library, being the nerve centre of our academic endeavour, has seen remarkable improvements and the creation of new library spaces for postgraduate students. At the Bloemfontein Campus, for example, we now have a newly-refurbished study hall that is open '24/7', as younger people would put it!

As a strategic intervention to assist students to cope better with academic challenges, especially first years, the Student Mentorship Programme has been in place in faculties, and the Peer Mentorship Programme has been introduced in the student residences. These programmes are designed to connect students with the faculty, staff, and resources that support their progress toward attaining a diploma or a degree. However, much more needs to be done in this area.

## New radical approach to Teaching and Learning

One of the major shocks and stresses of life in this country is our stagnant economic growth, which results in unemployment and misery for many, especially our young people. According to the 2014 World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Risk Report, more than 50% of young South Africans between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed. South Africa has the third highest unemployment rate in the world for this category of our youth!

There has to be a new radical approach to how we educate and train our students. Since time immemorial, universities have trained and educated their students for employment. But, now, there is no adequate supply of jobs. The 21st century question and challenge for universities is how to train and educate our students to create employment.

*Wikipedia* defines 'future-proofing' as the process of anticipating future events, and developing methods, skills and competencies that will enable one to minimise the effects of shocks and stresses arising from these events. One way we think our students could 'future-proof' themselves against the effects of almost non-existent economic growth is by being innovative and entrepreneurial. CUT seeks to transform its entrepreneurship education in line with the university's vision of becoming a robust agent for innovation and socio-economic development in the central region and South Africa as a whole.

We can no longer be content with simply producing graduates into a hostile, jobless and poverty-stricken socio-economic environment. We have to change course and provide a form of 'future-proofing' that will shape not only individual futures, but the future of our region and our country.

It is in the spirit of this 'future-proofing' through innovation and entrepreneurship that I took sabbatical leave last year, in order to gather knowledge on how we can reposition ourselves to be better aligned as a 21st century university confronting 21st century challenges of lacklustre economic growth that invariably results in youth unemployment, inequitable livelihoods and poverty.



***The best of the best!***  
*Eight greatest  
performing academics  
honoured in 2014.*

*From left: Prof. Dennis Dzansi,  
Ms Lisa-Mari Coughlan, Mr Paks Makhoahle,  
Dr Fidelis Emuze, Ms Noluntu Mpekoa,  
Dr Mohamed Mostafa, Mr Gerrie Booysen  
and Mr Wynand Viljoen.*



During my sabbatical, I visited 10 universities in Ireland, Finland, Germany, Mexico, Spain, the Netherlands, and the United States of America – these universities have similar characteristics to CUT in terms of size, shape and location. A report was submitted to Council last year. Arising from this and other engagements, CUT will develop a plan of action that will see entrepreneurship education being an integral part of our curriculum, and entrepreneurship embedded in how the university conducts its business.



Included in this report, therefore, are recommendations on how I see CUT developing an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit and products therefrom, for the benefit of our society – just as Vision 2020 implores us to do!

In today's world of global connectedness, graduates must be able to network globally, work creatively in teams of varied cultures, and foster informed citizenry anywhere in the world. As a result, internationalisation at CUT is both an academic enterprise and a behavioural mind-set. On the one hand, it is intended to strengthen and add value to our academic programmes. On the other hand, it is there to ensure that we have a diverse student body that will enhance the learning experience of all our students. Our objective is to increase our proportion of international students from the current 3.6% to 10% by 2020, with the majority of these students recruited from the rest of the African continent.

# PRODUCTS

## - from steps to strides

>>>

*Sasol Baja  
2014 Champs!*



Our **PRODUCTS** at CUT are not graduates. Students are not truly customers, either. Students and graduates are themselves part of the people I talked about earlier. They co-produce our research and innovations and they help us to re-imagine and shape our curricula. Our collective PRODUCTS are, for us, our academic programmes and qualifications, our research and innovations and the goods and services that arise out of these and our engagement with our broader society.



In this respect, we continue to work closely with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). In line with our new vision and strategies, thus far, we have introduced nine (9) new innovative, demand-driven and user-oriented programmes, four (4) of which were successfully implemented in 2014 and the next four (4) that got implemented on Monday as our classes started. These are:

- Advanced Diploma in Logistics and Transport Management;
- Bachelor of Sciences in Hydrology and Water Management;
- Higher Certificate in Community Development Work;
- Bachelor of Education in Senior Phase and FET Teaching; and

The last one, the Advanced Diploma in Health Management will be introduced in 2016.

A total of 149 students were enrolled in our newly implemented programmes in 2014. These include: a Higher Certificate in Renewable Energy Technologies (29); Diploma in Studio Art (53); an Advanced Diploma in Agricultural Extension (13); and Bachelor in Radiography (54). Success rate following implementation of these programmes was very impressive at 73%, 75%, 83%, and 85% respectively.

## Looking Ahead: Achievements and Challenges

Although research was not a priority for the then Technikons, universities of technology are improving their profile in the South African research and innovation landscape. We have seen improvements in our research outputs over the years, from 78 units in 2007 to 128.5 units in 2013. However, our research outputs are not commensurate with what a university is expected to produce; neither are they commensurate with the number of academic staff with doctorates as quoted earlier. In this regard, more work is still needed to scale up our research activities for our university to remain competitive. Some radical surgery of our research and innovation function will take place in 2015.

Establishing a research culture is a complex and costly exercise, in terms of time and resources invested. It cannot be tackled from one perspective alone, but needs a multi-dimensional strategy aimed at all “stages” of the life of a researcher – from post-graduate student to a well-established researcher.

CUT continues to invest in research development as one of its strategic priorities. In 2014, the total research budget was R24 million received from various sources, e.g. CUT, National Research Foundation (NRF), DHET and other sources. Of this total amount, R2.68 million was allocated to postgraduate students. For the year 2015 we have received, thus far, block grants from the NRF to the value of R 3.01 million and will work hard to re-assign or re-allocate resources to at least reach the levels of research funding of 2014.

Our research infrastructure is also improving. CUT received funding from NRF's Research Infrastructure Support Program (RISP) for a new state-of-the-art Objet Connex™ 350 3-D printing machine to the value of R1.94 million. In addition, the NRF recently approved the awarding of a Research Chair in Additive Manufacturing specializing in medical applications to CUT. CRPM was also awarded a research grant amounting to R1.03 million by the Department of Science and Technology for the increased roll-out of additive manufacturing in the South African industry in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. The contract will be signed by both parties in February 2015.

I am particularly pleased that CUT is proudly taking a lead in innovations that will change the face of medical science in South Africa. The Centre for Rapid Prototyping and Manufacturing (CRPM) continues with its ground-breaking work on the design, development and manufacturing of medical devices, and has assisted 12 patients to date. This is the first medical device of its kind in the country, and CRPM makes us stand proud at the forefront of innovation in this field!



**Medical Innovation**  
*in 3D Printing changed lives.*



With regard to teaching and learning, excellence in teaching and research is recognised annually through the Vice-Chancellor's Academic Excellence Awards. The prizes are awarded to academics displaying best practices in research, innovation, teaching and learning activities, and in curriculum development. Excellent learning is also rewarded at CUT, and students who achieve distinctions in their studies are awarded bursaries from the R15 million Council-approved fund that was set aside for scholarships and bursaries in 2014. In 2015, this amount will be R16.5 million. In this way, we hope to motivate all students to strive for excellence.

CUT continues to contribute to the improvement of the quality of education in our schools as part of community engagement and socio-economic development in the region. The Schools Advancement Academy continues to support the schooling sector in the Free State and enjoys the sound cooperation of the Free State Department of Education.



In partnership with the provincial department, the University of the Free State and the TVET Colleges, the academy will be expanded in 2015 into what we currently call the STEM Academy so as to host the broader post-school sector. This academy accords with and supplements what CUT has been doing since 2011 in coordinating all post-school focused projects. merSETA has been one of CUT's greatest supporters and funders in this field, having funded a Chair in Vocational Education that focuses on the confluence of STEM between TVET Colleges and CUT in the region, and our Saturday School, in 2013.

In 2014, the Saturday School, focusing on STEM subjects in Grade 11 and 12, experienced a dramatic increase in the number of learners to about 600 compared to 302 in 2013. The National Senior Certificate results of 2014 once again boasted a 100% pass rate for candidates who participated in our Saturday School, some of whom attained exceptional symbols in their subjects.

The Saturday classes received notable support from Mutual and Federal (R500 000) and the Council for the Built Environment (R651 628), while the contribution-in-kind from Interstate Bus Lines for transporting our learners is estimated at R600 000. During 2014, merSETA, once again, started joining this ground-breaking endeavour with a Memorandum of Agreement, committing R540 760 for 2015.

In 2014, the Winter School, mainly supported by Standard Bank to the tune of about R1 million, attracted 1 284 learners who benefited from our quality teaching, learning and supplementary programmes.

The Educator Mentorship and Development Programme (EMDP) project moved into its second phase for 2014/15, involving four primary schools in the Motheo District. The impact made by means of additional resources, teaching aids, classroom practice, lesson plans and professional development of teachers is significant. For the EMDP, the Telkom Foundation has committed R4.8 million for the years 2014/15 after it had already spent R4.5 million for 2012/13.

Amongst other things, creating a vibrant student life on our campuses is important to us. On 19 January 2015 our own, brand-new, community radio station – CUT FM - went live on air.



**LISTEN UP  
ON 105.8 MHz**

**CUT FM officially ON Air**

**CUT FM 105.8**  
My Campus . My Youth . My Radio

[www.cut.ac.za](http://www.cut.ac.za)

Thinking Beyond



Most pleasing about CUT FM is that the students who work here, from the production to the marketing team, form part of our work-integrated learning (WIL) programme that prepares our students to graduate from the university with much-needed experience in their chosen fields. WIL is one of the vital programmes that help us to produce world-class and employable graduates in many fields. This is an opportunity that will lead these students into successful careers in media-related fields like broadcasting, sound engineering, marketing and others.

CUT provides a holistic experience for our students, not just focusing on academe but many extramural activities including sports, too. For example, our Enactus CUT team participated in the Enactus National Competition from 10-11 July 2014. In the Harmony Local Economic Development Special Competitions, the team trumped all 26 participating institutions and came home with the first-prize trophy and the winning cheque! ENACTUS team took 3rd place in the national competition for their entrepreneurial actions.

CUT Sport has proven to be a force to be reckoned with too! The CUT Ixias Rugby Team won the 2014 Varsity Shield Championship.



***Varsity Shield  
Champions!***  
*Promoted to the  
Varsity Cup in 2015.*



As a result, the team was promoted to play in the premier Varsity Cup Competition, which commences on 9 February 2015. The CUT Soccer Team also continues to perform well in the Vodacom League, as the team currently holds the 6th position on the log of 18 teams. CUT Cricket's 2nd team won the 1st Division Tournament and was promoted to the Free Sate Super League for the 2014/15 season.

The CUT Dance Club obtained top three positions in the Gauteng Dance Competition and the CUT Choir, obtained an overall 2nd position in the silver category of the Old Mutual Provincial Competition. These are incredible sporting and cultural achievements, indeed!







# PENNIES and pound-wise

You have heard about what we do for our people, what plans we put in place and what our products emanate from those plans. All these would not be possible if we did not know how to generate and manage our financial resources, the **PENNIES**. You have never heard CUT, unlike some other universities and state owned enterprises like Eskom, SAA, SABC and the like who always go cap in hand to government from time to time to ask for more, going to government to ask for more. We make do with the little we have and continue to make progress.

For example, regarding the expenditure on salaries, our expenditure ratio, which once was 51:49 per cent in favour of support staff, has stabilised at 60:40 per cent, in favour of academic staff in our overall staff establishment. We put our money where our mouths are – in academe! In support of students, as stated earlier, an amount of R15.2 million was set aside for bursaries and scholarships in 2014. In 2015, this amount will increase to R16,5 million. To support our staff development, R2.09 million was allocated for 2014 and R2.23 million for 2015.

At CUT, we understand the importance of investing in the future; hence R29.5 million, i.e. 5.3% of the allocated 2014 budget, was set aside for capital expenditure. A total of R26 million has been set aside for similar capital expenditure for 2015. The Welkom Campus's bulk infrastructure will see an investment of close to R49 million by the end of 2015. No wonder our buildings and our grounds are well maintained. Of course, it is not just money that is responsible for our immaculate facilities, but our dear people.

## Looking Ahead: Achievements and Challenges

The Resources Allocation Model (RAM), developed in 2013, has resulted in increased flexibility and more efficient allocation of resources and strengthened the link between planning and budgeting. Resource allocation for the faculties for 2014/15 was implemented according to the Model. RAM will also be implemented in the support services divisions for the 2016 budget year.

In 2014, R111 million was earmarked for strategic projects. These are projects that support our strategic priorities, and are helping us move closer towards realising our vision. The allocations to the various categories were as follows: R 29 million went towards infrastructure projects, R7 million towards equity and excellence initiatives, R6.3 million for curriculum development, R1.7 million towards student activities, R6.3 million to instituting a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning, R1.3 million towards Enhancing SET, R14.8 million for research-related activities and R15.1 million towards strategic engagements and partnerships.

After all these strategic investments over the last 5 years, the year 2015 and onwards has to be the start of replenishing our reserves even more aggressively for more future development.





### ***CUT's Dental Assisting Programme goes green.***

*No more books, pens,  
and paper notes in class!*

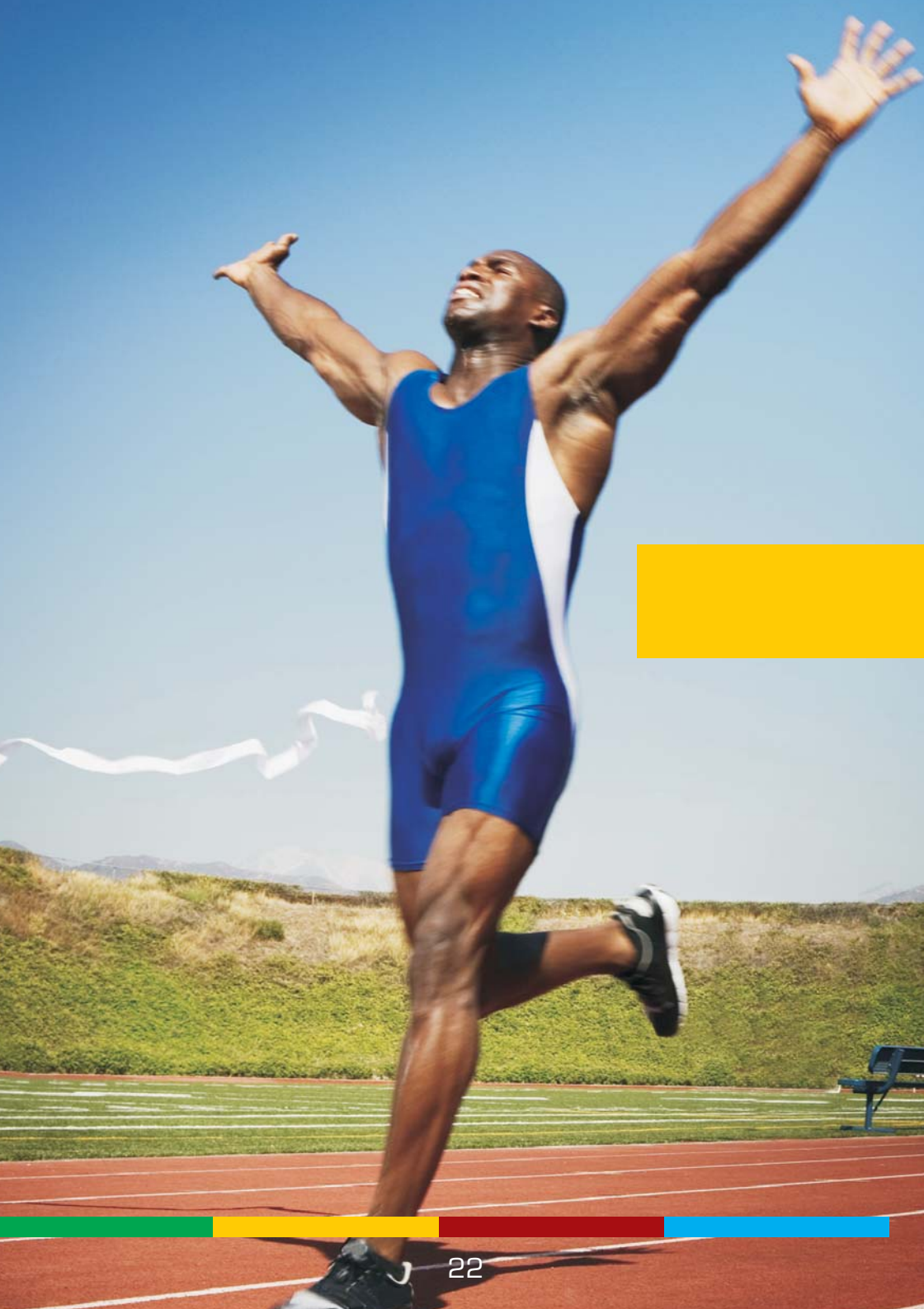


We continue to embark on ambitious infrastructural development projects in order to cater for the growing staff and student needs. CUT has grown substantially over the past few years, with major new world-class teaching and research facilities, courtesy of the then Department of Education's (DoE-140) Infrastructure Development Programme. The funding received from the department and from our own Council allowed CUT to construct new buildings as part of the first two phases of infrastructure development between 2008 and 2012, to the tune of about R250 million.

In addition to the new buildings from the first two phases, the third phase of infrastructure development: 2012-2015 has a total of R320 million that will go towards new infrastructure development, as part of the DHET 3-300 Infrastructure Development Programme. Of this amount, DHET contribution is R304 million, while Council will be injecting R16 million. R131 million has been set aside for the construction of residences on both campuses and R188 million towards academic infrastructure.

Construction of the new infrastructure is underway on both campuses, to be completed by the end of 2015. Thus, taking all the three phases of infrastructure development, between 2012 when the first and the second phases ended and 2015 when the third phase will end, we will have invested almost R600 million in brand new CUT facilities. This essentially, more than doubles the pre-investment asset value of CUT! I must hasten to add that not once did we run out of money during the construction period, like it happens with so many government projects in this country.

We are proud to announce that in terms of our accountability, the year 2014 was a good one for CUT, as we received yet another unqualified audit; something we have been receiving without fail for at least the past 8 years since I have been Vice-Chancellor here! Essentially, this means that we have met the requirements of the International Financial Reporting Standards. I mention this as a notable achievement – even though for us it is now part of life - because we know that in this country, most state departments at local and other levels hardly receive unqualified audits. As I said earlier, CUT has never taken any begging bowl either to government for more money to run our business. We manage our little resources responsibly.





# VISION 2020:

## Delivering Socio-Economic Development

The next six years to the year 2020 – which is the timeline for our Vision 2020 - will be about accelerating our contributions towards socio-economic development in an even more tangible manner. We must translate our successes in our classrooms and in our laboratories and engage our partners and the broader society in a mutually beneficial manner. If we are up to the challenge, the best is yet to come for CUT and those we serve, most importantly this region.

As I close, I would like to quote the Red Queen's advice to Alice in "Through the Looking Glass", a novel by Lewis Carroll:

***"If it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place; then, if you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"***

Even though we have certainly not kept in the same place, we have been making progress. But now, we have to run twice as fast because there is whole lot more we still need to achieve. When we cannot boast of so many new entrepreneurs we have churned out into the market, like JAMK University of Applied Sciences in Finland and many other universities elsewhere in the world do, we cannot say we are done. Our people expect and require us to do so as we make our contributions to regional development. With our modest achievements so far, we have generated higher expectations, and we therefore cannot rest on our laurels.



# CONCLUSION

**I believe there are key parts of CUT's vision that continue to be vital for our success in regional development that should be the ultimate outcome. We must keep a very strong focus on these.**

They include:

- our singular and powerful emphasis on the quality of our programme offerings;
- community engagement for mutually beneficial development;
- attracting potentially successful students and supporting them to become employable graduates, and better still
- to be innovators and entrepreneurs of note in the region;
- attracting and retaining expert staff and supporting their development and wellbeing; and
- leap-frogging forward through strategic partnerships with top institutions locally and abroad.

However, even as we continue to build on these, it is also true that we must make strategic adjustments to give a fresh and organic impetus to our development. This is needed because our external environment is changing profoundly and competition is even more intense. Our achievements are only as great as the end of their completion. By then, our competitors would have done more and better than our great. We must, therefore, seek new peaks of greatness and excellence. That is the story of successful life!

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the many departments and units that are advancing innovative curricula and teaching methods; that are advancing a vibrant research and innovation programme that will challenge and inspire this cohort of students we are welcoming. With the leadership, commitment and efforts of our Council, staff, students, alumni, benefactors, partners and friends, we are indeed well poised to push forward and make CUT a catalyst for city and regional development in the central region!

Thank you!



Central University of  
Technology, Free State





Central University of  
Technology, Free State

## THINKING BEYOND

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