"The university is fortunate to have been able to gather so many people doing amazing work that has an impact on our society. UCT is committed to ensuring that the research and development efforts of our researchers result in outcomes that benefit society in its broadest sense."
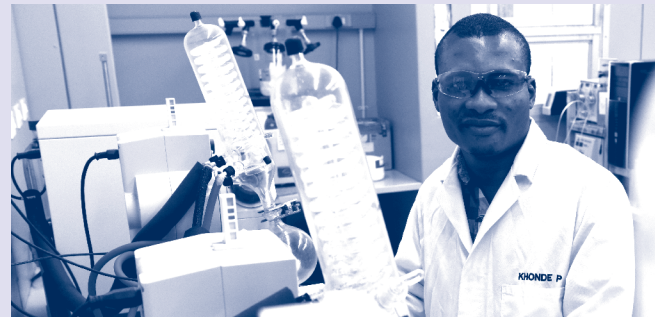
MR PIET BARNARD
Director of Research Contracts & Innovation (RC&I)

"Innovation is a cornerstone of the research enterprise at UCT: we have a dedicated team that supports our researchers from concept development through to implementation and commercial roll-out. One of the major drivers of innovation is enabling researchers to uncover solutions to real-world problems – and this is particularly critical in the global south."

PROFESSOR SUE HARRISON
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation

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RESEARCH CONTRACTS & INNOVATION
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Meet three UCT inventors

1 **Dr Lutete Khonde** co-created a simpler, faster and cheaper way of synthesising ergothioneine in a lab, with a much greater yield than previous processes. Ergothioneine, a super antioxidant, is studied all over the world for its role in ageing, its ability to increase athletic performance and for developing new anti-tuberculosis drugs. Khonde's process has now been patented and he is working with the Department of Chemistry to find ways to bring the process to market.
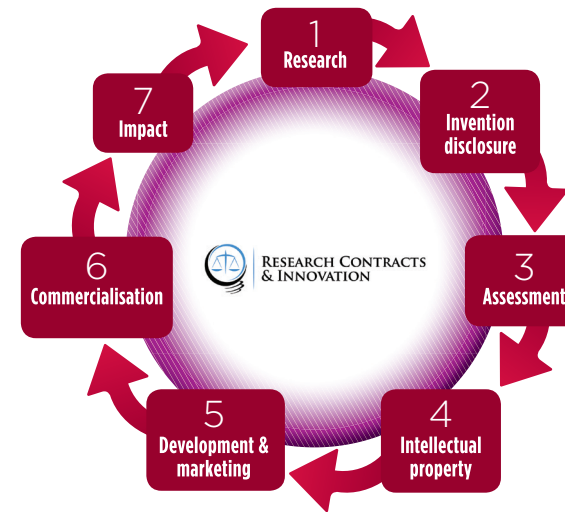
2 **Associate Professor Sudesh Sivarasu** draws inspiration from nature to design his patented medical devices. In the five years since Sivarasu arrived at UCT, he has invented numerous devices with applications ranging from stroke rehabilitation and asthma therapy to devices that aid orthopaedic surgeons in resolving problems with knee joints. These devices have received a number of national and international awards.

3 **Dr Ann Meyers** from the Biopharming Research Unit is studying how plant proteins could produce a cheaper alternative to conventionally produced vaccines and the reagents used in diagnosing diseases. She is currently working on the production of vaccines against African horse sickness, Rift Valley fever and foot-and-mouth disease, as well as the expression of antibody reagents against several of these viruses for diagnostic purposes.

The research and innovation process

The innovation management process is circular and iterative rather than linear:

RESEARCH CONTRACTS & INNOVATION

1 Research
2 Invention disclosure
3 Assessment
4 Intellectual property
5 Development & marketing
6 Commercialisation
7 Impact

Innovation transforms the university's inventions, discoveries and ideas into new applications, products and services. Some technologies are commercialised through new spin-off companies and others are licensed to existing companies. These processes are often described as technology transfer.

Technology transfer

- enables the transformation of research into tangible benefits for society
- leads to the creation of jobs through, for example, spin-off companies
- enhances university–industry engagement
- enriches the educational experience for staff and students
- helps to reward, retain and recruit faculty and students
- provides opportunities for additional income and resources.

16 Research Contracts & Innovation at UCT

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA · UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Funding to support innovation

RC&I manages several internal innovation funds and works with the University Technology Fund (UTF) to fund technology development within the university or its spin-off companies. RC&I also helps source other innovation grant and investment funding and identifies commercial partners.

Funding amount	Development (post research)	Spin-off	Business growth (post revenue)
< R100k	UCT PreSeed Fund		
< R500k	UCT Innovation Builder Fund		
	UTF PreSeed		
< R1.5m	UTF Seed		
< R6m	UCT Evergreen Fund		
< R17.5m		UTF Series Seed	UTF Series A

Equity in spin-off companies

UCT holds equity in a number of spin-off companies, either due to intellectual property (IP) that has been assigned or by investment by either the Evergreen Fund or alongside the University Technology Fund. IP is licensed to other spin-off companies.

DRONESAR

Elemental NUMERICS

CAPE BIO PHARMS

CapeRay

CAPE catalytiX

NIsonic

REGISTREE

SAT STRAIT ACCESS TECHNOLOGIES

HyPlat

- IP / other
- Evergreen
- UTF

Innovation in numbers

>2 200 research contracts processed per year

Total value of research contracts signed annually exceeds **R1.5 billion**

75% non-South African funding

191 active inventions

25 spin-off companies launched in 15 years

538 patents granted over 20 years

In excess of **R100 million** of equity in spin-off companies

R42.5 million in accumulated income since 2001 from intellectual property (IP) exploitation activities

RESEARCH CONTRACTS & INNOVATION

RESEARCH CONTRACTS

The volume of research conducted at UCT has grown to about 2 500 contracts a year with a value exceeding R1.5 billion. This requires effective processing, while protecting the university's and researchers' interests and ensuring that contracts comply with university policies, particularly with regards to publication and intellectual property issues.

The Research Contracts and Innovation (RC&I) office is mandated by UCT Council to approve all research-related contracts. Researchers must accordingly engage with a contracts manager as early as possible.

Electronic Research Administration

The online Electronic Research Administration (eRA) system improves the turnaround times of the contract review and approval process. The system must be used for applications that are in proposal stage and for contracts that require budget approval, before they can be logged with RC&I. Further information on using eRA is available in the how-to guide: **www.researchsupport.uct.ac.za/era-overview**.

Budget approval

All contracts require budget approval prior to sign-off of the associated research contract. Budgets are primarily approved by faculty finance offices once submitted on eRA. Researchers should discuss budgets with their faculty finance office while developing their research proposals, prior to presenting them to clients. The costing template is available at **http://www.rci.uct.ac.za/rcips/contracts/costing**.

Contract review and finalisation

Once the faculty has finalised the pre-award budget review, the request is routed to RC&I for review of the contract, which takes up to seven days. Depending on the complexity of the documents and the response time of the contracting institution, finalising simple contracts takes as little as a day, while more complex agreements, such as license agreements, may take several weeks or even months. Providing the assigned contracts manager with all the relevant information will expedite this process.

Contracts that do not require budget approval, such as subcontracts, material transfer agreements, data transfer agreements, non-disclosure agreements or any other agreements with no associated budgets should be sent directly to researchcontracts@uct.ac.za to be logged by RC&I's central administrator on eRA. These contracts will then be allocated to a contracts manager for review, negotiation and sign-off.