

UCT aspires to be a globally competitive institution while remaining conscious of its position in South Africa and Africa, and in a world that is beset by socio-economic challenges. It is this consciousness of its locality that steers UCT's research efforts towards developing knowledge with social impact.

The social responsiveness portfolio presents itself as a key site for transformation from which the university speaks in powerful ways to its context, but it is also a space that nurtures critical self-reflection.



“The social challenges that confront our country, Africa and the world have enormous impact on the teaching and research thrusts of socially engaged universities such as UCT. The complexity of these challenges means that more and more is demanded of research, teaching and learning at our institutions of higher learning.”

DR MAX PRICE
Vice-Chancellor



“Higher education is not just about producing graduates that are ready for the job market. It's also making sure that we produce graduates who are relevant to the context. For us in Africa, it's even more important.”

PROFESSOR MAMOKGETHI PHAKENG
Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Internationalisation

MILESTONES

2003 UCT produces the first Social Responsiveness Report.

2006 UCT Senate formally endorses a definition of social responsiveness that stipulates that it must have an intentional public purpose or benefit.

2012 UCT further hones the definition - a desirable form of social responsiveness in the university requires two things: a clear sense of what expertise is being mobilised, and an equally clear sense of public benefit.

2014 For the first time the biennial Social Responsiveness Report recognises the contributions of students who participate in socially responsive initiatives.

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Social Responsiveness at UCT



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200+ individual academics; students; and professional, administrative, service and support staff were recognised for their contributions to social responsiveness in 2014 and 2015.

70+ social responsiveness initiatives at UCT in eight major areas of endeavour:



education



human rights and social justice



culture and heritage



innovation



environment



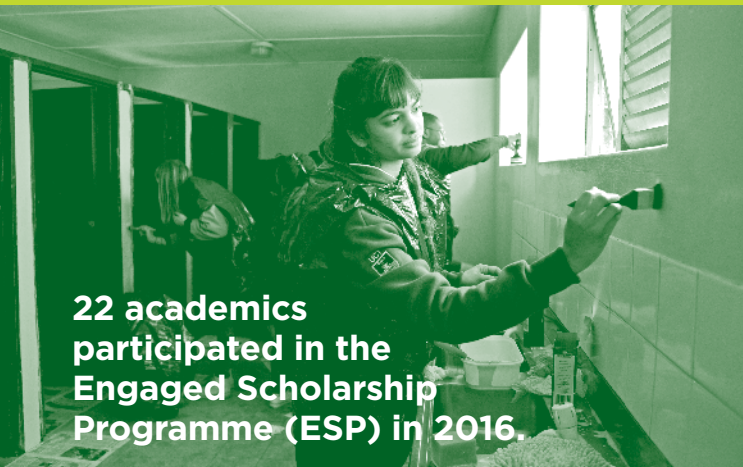
health



economic development



sustainable development



22 academics participated in the **Engaged Scholarship Programme (ESP)** in 2016.

What is engaged scholarship?

UCT's engaged scholarship policy, adopted in 2012, refers to the utilisation of an academic's scholarly and/or professional expertise for an intentional public purpose or benefit, which demonstrates engagement with external, non-academic constituencies.

ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

1 helps generate new knowledge

2 promotes knowledge integration

3 encourages the application and dissemination of knowledge.



7 institution-wide programmes

- 1** **The Engaged Scholarship Programme** launched in 2015 with 20 academics participating in a series of workshops aimed at building a catalytic, multidisciplinary group of academics interested in enhancing and theorising their practices of engaged scholarship.
- 2** **The Knowledge Co-op** was developed by the university to make its knowledge and expertise available to communities in ways that are both helpful and respectful.
- 3** **The Safety and Violence Initiative (SaVI)** comprises a core group of researchers that focuses on understanding and intervening in the promotion of safety and the reduction of violence in South Africa.
- 4** **The Schools Improvement Initiative (SII)** is a direct response to the education crisis in South Africa, which has negative implications for the country and poses serious challenges for tertiary education.
- 5** **The African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI)** uses UCT's breadth and depth of research and teaching to respond to climate change issues and development challenges in a unified manner.
- 6** **The Poverty and Inequality Initiative (PII)** was set up to tackle the question of why, in a country of rich resources, poverty is persistent and inequality is deepening.
- 7** **The UCT Global Citizenship (GC)** programme was founded in 2009 to allow students to consider their relationships with democracy, citizenship and social justice. This forms the cornerstone of the programme in the curriculum, the pedagogy and the service-work students engage in beyond the university.

30 staff members from the Faculty of Health Sciences consulted and participated in public health policy.

R19 million in funding was accrued by the Land and Accountability Research Centre, a public law initiative that supports struggles for change by rural people, particularly women.

12 projects were conducted by the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment in such diverse topics as urban water management, construction, mapping, spatial planning and social entrepreneurship.

70+ STUDENTS and NGO staff members participated in the annual free social science research course run by the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) in the Faculty of Commerce.

31 ACADEMICS in the Faculty of Humanities worked in socially responsive projects, varying from community dance initiatives and early childhood education to coding clubs for youth and personal history projects.



Associate Professor Roshan Galvaan and Liesl Peters received the 2015 UCT Social Responsiveness Award for their contribution to the development of occupational therapy graduates who engage with social realities.