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UCT and Services SETA turn the sod on new African Skin Health Institute

13 February 2026 | 15:00 SAST | Faculty of Health Sciences Campus, IDM Building

The University of Cape Town's (UCT) [Faculty of Health Sciences](#), in partnership with the [Services Sector Education and Training Authority \(Services SETA\)](#), will host a sod-turning ceremony on Friday, 13 February 2026. This event will mark the start of construction of the Africa Research Institute for Skin Health (ARISE) building.

[ARISE](#) is an African-led research, training and skills development initiative based within UCT's [Division of Dermatology](#). The institute focuses on strengthening research, training and industry engagement in skin and hair health relevant to African populations, while responding to broader national priorities related to public health, skills development and industry growth.

The purpose-built ARISE facility will expand South Africa's capacity for practical, industry-aligned training, applied research, cosmetic product safety testing and occupational skin health research. The new infrastructure will support increased student intake, expand short course offerings and strengthen industry-facing service units.

ARISE builds on nearly a decade of research, postgraduate training and industry collaboration. To date, the programme has trained more than 100 cosmetic formulation graduates, many of whom were previously unemployed, and has established strong partnerships with industry and small businesses.

ARISE project lead at UCT, Professor Nonhlanhla Khumalo, said: "ARISE represents an important step in strengthening African-led scientific capacity in skin and hair health. The new facility will enable us to expand training, deepen research and strengthen industry partnerships, while ensuring that African populations are better represented in science, product development and safety standards. At its core, ARISE is about creating opportunities - for graduates, entrepreneurs and communities."

Services SETA Administrator Lehlogonolo Masoga added: "Our fundamental purpose is to facilitate skills development within our sector. Initiatives like this are crucial, as they help equip stakeholders such as UCT to produce world-class talent. This talent will not only gain

employment but will also go on to create it, directly contributing to the goals of the National Skills Development Plan 2030."

The ARISE initiative supports national priorities related to youth employment, skills development and innovation-led growth. Through its flagship Advanced Diploma in Cosmetic Formulation Science and related training programmes, ARISE provides unemployed science graduates with practical, industry-relevant skills and structured workplace experience.

The sod-turning ceremony marks the transition of ARISE from a successful pilot programme to a scalable national training and research platform, positioning South Africa as a leader in African-relevant skin and hair health research and training.

The Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr Mimmy Gondwe will also be in attendance.

Members of the media are invited and requested to [RSVP](#).

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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