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UCT's urine researcher takes up prestigious three-year guest researchership with Swedish university

Associate Professor Dyllon Randall of the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Future Water Institute will take up a prestigious [August T Larsson Guest Researchership](#) at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala, Sweden. This will strengthen the institutions' collaborative research on circular sanitation technologies, specifically using human urine to make fertilisers.

Associate Professor Randall will be based at the university's Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (NJ). The August T Larsson Foundation Guest Researcher initiative was established in 2011 to strengthen links with established guest researchers working within strategic fields.

He will spend one month per semester at the faculty over three years, teaching, supervising and working with researchers at the faculty.

A member of staff in UCT's Department of Civil Engineering, Randall is a multi-award-winning researcher. His trailblazing research focuses on resource recovery from wastewaters. He and his postgraduate students have already pioneered two world-firsts in sustainable resource recovery systems: a waterless urinal that produces fertiliser and a bio-brick process that uses human urine.

The guest researchership is a welcome development. "This award is a great recognition of our pioneering work in the sanitation space, and I am very excited about this opportunity to further collaborate with urine researchers from SLU. There are many synergies in the work we do as both teams have similar goals to concentrate human urine and create value-added products from it," said Randall

He is thought to be the first African recipient of the award, and while it's a feather in his cap, it underscores UCT's research reputation and further emphasises the relevance of their work internationally, he said.

Cutting-edge work

Randall's guest researchership will cement the collaboration between UCT's Future Water Institute and the SLU. This partnership began in March 2020 when he was invited to work

with SLU's Kretsloppsteknik Research Group in the niche area of urine source-separation-based sanitation systems.

Randall and the group's Bjorn Vinnerås and Prithvi Simha are among a handful of global experts who have been systematically working to develop circular sanitation technologies. In only two years they have published three journal articles and conceptualised various joint projects.

In his motivation for the researchership award, Simha said both research groups would benefit from a knowledge exchange with a university from a developing country. The interface will also expose Randall's UCT students to broader perspectives from the Global North. "It's a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge and skills in this space and I am sure I will be including some of their work in my UCT postgraduate courses as theory and case studies," he said.

What is he most looking forward to? "Meeting the collaborators in person after so long and also seeing real-life urine treatment processes operating in the field."



Associate Professor Dyllon Randall

Photo: Candice Lowin

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