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UCT Research Development Academy celebrates fifth anniversary

The University of Cape Town Research Development Academy (UCT RDA) celebrated five years in existence this July, with an ongoing commitment to bolstering the development of research capacity in South Africa, and on the African continent.

The UCT RDA aims to help ensure that African scholars are equipped with the tools and expertise necessary to thrive in a competitive global research landscape.

The academy grew from the solid foundation laid by the highly successful Emerging Researcher Programme (ERP), an internal initiative, which has been supporting UCT academics since 2003. In response to the many requests from other universities for their staff to participate in the ERP, it was decided to extend that support to other universities through the UCT RDA.

Tailored programmes to meet diverse research requirements

The UCT RDA offers a variety of customisable programmes to address the needs of researchers at all stages of their careers at institutions across Africa. Cohorts of participants are able to build a range of relevant and appropriate skills including grant proposal writing, writing for publications, pursuing and supervising postgraduate degrees, career and research planning, research ethics and integrity and many more. Course content is designed in close consultation with participating universities, resulting in these academic development programmes being uniquely configured to meet the unique needs and complimenting the strengths of each institution while also cultivating a new generation of research leaders.

All UCT RDA programmes are designed and delivered by PhD-qualified staff with extensive research, publishing, and researcher development experience. The UCT RDA also collaborates with subject-matter experts to ensure that each programme draws on cutting-edge knowledge and best practices.

A new chapter for African scholarship

By providing tailored support and resources to researchers throughout the continent, the UCT RDA is poised to help advance African scholarship and ensure that the voices of African scholars are heard on the global stage.

Dr Gaëlle Ramon, Manager: Researcher Development at the UCT RDA, remarked: "At the UCT RDA, we recognise the importance of nurturing the next generation of research leaders across Africa. The UCT RDA mission is a testament to our commitment to equip these individuals with the tools and resources necessary to thrive in a competitive global research landscape. By offering personalised and flexible support, the academy will help researchers grow their skills, accelerate their careers, and ultimately contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields."

- [Find out more about the UCT RDA and its programmes.](#)

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