

UCT is committed to increasing the number of women researchers at the institution because it is critical to the future of the university, the country and of research itself. Greater diversity brings greater creativity and innovation, and we cannot afford to lose – or never attract – the brightest minds of over 50% of the population.



“As a university, as researchers and teachers, we can give this gift to the world: creating opportunities for more of us, for more kinds of us, to have a voice. Women in positions of power and leadership have a responsibility to do the kinds of things that will build up our collective womanhood ... I am committing UCT to that responsibility.”

**PROFESSOR MAMOKGETHI PHAKENG**  
Vice-Chancellor

## Did you know?

1 UCT Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng is the first black South African woman to hold a PhD in mathematics education.

2 Professor Jill Farrant was the first female researcher at UCT to receive an A rating from the National Research Foundation in 2008.

3 Unusually for higher education institutions globally, UCT has an all-women executive academic leadership made up of Vice-Chancellor Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng and deputy vice-chancellors Professor Sue Harrison, Associate Professor Lis Lange and Professor Loretta Feris.

4 In 2017 Maryam Fish, Gasnat Shaboodien and Sarah Kraus made up the all-female team that discovered a heart-attack gene that is a major cause of sudden death among young people and athletes.

5 UCT joined the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) in 2007, the first international forum to unite eminent women scientists from the developing and developed world.



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## Women in research at UCT



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## Advancing womxn awards

UCT's strategic framework requires the university to address gender inequality both in our practices and in our scholarship. Earlier this year, UCT awarded R22.5 million to women researchers over the next five years under the banner of "Advancing womxn: a call for change".

Three researchers will receive funding of R1 million per year for five years.

- **Dr Katye Altieri** aims to enable a cohort of postgraduate black women and transgender oceanographers to become leaders of oceanography in South Africa and the global south.
- Psychology **Professor Floretta Boonzaier** aims to shift ways of thinking about and doing research on gender-based violence.
- **Professor Janet Hapgood** will investigate the molecular mechanisms behind the potential increased risk of HIV infection for women using the hormonal contraceptive that's most widely employed in sub-Saharan Africa.

Additionally, **Professor Patricia Kooyman** and **Dr Robyn Pickering** received meritorious awards to the value of R750 000 per year for five years. Kooyman will explore ways to remove carbon monoxide gas from hydrogen gas with the goal of improving methods for preparing fuel for fuel cells. Pickering wants to move towards transforming the field of paleoanthropology.



"I hope that these awards will target human capital development, but also help us rethink our views of gender in South Africa and give us new insights into ourselves and others."

**Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng**  
Vice-Chancellor

# Women in research at UCT in numbers



**48%**  
of the permanent academics at UCT are female.

The Department of Science and Technology's South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) is managed by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and is designed to attract and retain excellence in research and innovation at South African public universities.

**1/5** of the country's SARChI Chairs are held at UCT. Of those, **40%** are held by women.



UCT's Emerging Researcher Programme for early career academics includes a wide range of professional development seminars and workshops, as well as research development grants.

**58%** of the Emerging Researcher Programme members are women.

The Thuthuka Funding Instrument is a key intervention of the NRF aimed at supporting emerging researchers.

**76%** of the 2018 Thuthuka grant recipients were women.

The Alan Pifer Award is the vice-chancellor's annual prize in recognition of outstanding welfare-related research.

**36%** of all winners of the Alan Pifer Award – and 4 of the last 6 – have been women.

Half (5 700) of the postgraduates at UCT are women.



66% of postgraduates at the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine (IDM) are female.



Half (170) of UCT's postdoctoral fellows are women.

National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings are a national indicator of research excellence.

**25%** The increase in the number of female NRF-rated researchers at UCT in 2018 compared to 2014.

NRF P-ratings are given to young researchers, usually younger than 35 years, who have the potential to become leaders in their field.

6 out of 16 P-rated scholars in South Africa are at UCT.

4 of the 6 are women, out of 5 in the country.

Latest figures available at the time of going to print:  
July 2019.