



Tshwane University  
of Technology  
*We empower people*

# INTERNATIONALISATION NEWSLETTER

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# Remarks by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement

## *Dr Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka*

**I**t is my pleasure to present the TUT Internationalisation Newsletter, covering June to October 2025. This edition showcases TUT's progress in global engagement, academic mobility, and international partnerships, aligning with its goal to be a leading, globally influential university of technology.

Recently, we've seen growth in student and staff exchanges, research collaborations, and international events, establishing TUT's strong global network. Student mobility programmes exceeded expectations with 55 students participating in inbound, outbound, and virtual exchanges across Europe, Asia, and Africa. These experiences broaden students' perspectives, enhance employability, and develop global skills.

Our staff also excel, representing TUT through Erasmus+, DAAD, Fulbright, and other programmes. Their efforts strengthen professional development and enrich our educational environment. Notably, initiatives like the Erasmus+-funded SAMTIC Project demonstrate TUT's leadership in leveraging international partnerships for sustainable development and innovation.

Thanks to our students, staff, and partners for their vital contributions. Let us continue to strengthen collaborations, embrace innovation, and build a relevant, socially responsible, and globally connected university. 🌐



## Students Exchanges

The Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) showcased outstanding achievements in student mobility, surpassing its yearly exchange goals.



A total of **55**  
students participated in  
various mobility  
programs.



**16**  
inbound exchanges.



**28**  
outbound exchanges.



**11**  
virtual exchanges.

These initiatives highlight TUT's commitment to developing globally skilled graduates and fostering international academic collaboration.





## TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ULM (THU), GERMANY

**T**UT's longstanding collaboration with Technische Hochschule Ulm (THU) continues to flourish through student mobility initiatives within the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE). In July 2025, a Master's and a PhD student completed their semester exchange, gaining valuable insights into Germany's advanced engineering education system, with particular focus on renewable energy technologies and embedded systems. Their participation enhanced both technical skills and intercultural understanding, essential competencies in modern engineering practice.

Speaking on the experience of the exchange program, Obaro Adewale Zakariyahu, a Doctoral candidate from the Department of Electrical Engineering, said, "Spending five months at the Technische Hochschule Ulm (THU) has been one of the most transformative experiences of my academic life. The programme deepened my technical knowledge, enhanced my professional skills, and expanded my global perspective. Engaging with students from Germany, Brazil, Finland, and South Korea was eye-opening. The cultural immersion, combined with hands-on learning in renewable energy and embedded systems, has inspired me to drive innovation back home in South Africa. 🌐"

## UNIVERSITY GUSTAVE EIFFEL (UGE), FRANCE

**I**n September 2025, students from the faculties of Engineering and the Built Environment (3), and Management Sciences (3), embarked on an Erasmus+ exchange initiative at the University Gustave Eiffel. This initiative fosters interdisciplinary learning, integrating engineering innovation with management and entrepreneurial skills. The participants explored cutting-edge research in sustainable infrastructure, transport systems, and innovative technologies. The UGE partnership underscores TUT's dedication to linking academic mobility with forward-thinking education and enhanced employability. 🌐



>> The Copernic Building for Engineering  
Photo by Xaviertian - Own work

## FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP, UNITED STATES

**T**umisang Lekgetho, a PhD Chemistry candidate at the Faculty of Science, was honoured with the esteemed Fulbright Scholarship in 2025 to undertake research in the United States. The Fulbright Programme is internationally renowned for fostering future leaders and enhancing cross-cultural understanding. Tumisang's research concentrates on environmental sciences and renewable energy, thereby making a direct contribution to South Africa's sustainability objectives. This achievement underscores TUT's increasing research prominence and its capacity to develop candidates who competitively acquire prestigious global scholarships. 🌐



## Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences (HSWT), Germany

**I**n September 2025, 11 students from the Faculty of Science participated in a Virtual International Semester organised by HSWT. The online exchange integrates academic coursework with collaborative international group projects centred on sustainability, food technology, and environmental management. Participants engaged with peers from various countries, thereby acquiring cross-cultural insights while enhancing digital collaboration and communication skills. This initiative underpins the concept of Internationalisation at Home, guaranteeing that students unable to travel abroad can still partake in global educational experiences. 🌐



## Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain



UNIVERSITAT  
POLITÈCNICA  
DE VALÈNCIA

**T**wo Master's and two PhD students from the Faculty of ICT, Department of Informatics, have been nominated for an exciting exchange program at the Polytechnic University of Valencia, set to begin in February 2026. This opportunity will immerse them in European innovations in sustainable architecture and environmental engineering, enhancing TUT's academic strength in these vital areas. Moreover, it will bolster TUT's connections with southern Europe through increased student exchanges and collaborative research. 🌐

## III International Geological Championship, Russia

**F**ive students from the School of Science represented the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) at the Third International Geological Championship held in September 2025. The competition assembled the world's leading young geoscientists to address real-world geological and environmental challenges. TUT's participation demonstrated the University's scientific capabilities and its commitment to global engagement through knowledge exchange and competition-based learning. These experiences not only foster scientific

excellence but also cultivate teamwork, problem-solving skills, and international competitiveness.

During the send-off ceremony, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation, and Engagement, Dr Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka, encouraged the students to approach the competition with confidence, to wear their TUT and South African colours with pride, and to embrace not only the challenge of competing but also the friendships, collaborations, and global networks that await them. 🌐





# Stipendium Hungaricum Scholar

**F**rom Mbombela to Hungary: A Journey of Excellence and Global Aspiration. Mr Thulani Mlangeni, a graduate in Finance and Accounting from TUT, has been awarded the esteemed Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarship to pursue postgraduate studies at the University of Pécs in Hungary. Reflecting on his journey, Mr Mlangeni said, "My journey at TUT has been transformative. I enrolled as an ambitious student and have developed into a confident, purpose-driven professional. In addition to my academic pursuits, I served as the CSRC President at the Mbombela Campus, advocating for student development and transformation." He acknowledged the guidance of the TUT Internationalisation Office in the application process, "Their encouragement and support were instrumental during the rigorous stages. I am grateful for TUT's dedication to expanding international opportunities." Mr Mlangeni's experience exemplifies TUT's mission to prepare graduates for global leadership and innovation. 🌐



## THE GLASS SAFARI – *Shaping Creative Exchange*



**I**n July 2024, TUT's Glass Studio launched the ground-breaking Glass Safari, South Africa's first glass-focused international exchange programme. The initiative hosted seven globally acclaimed glass artists, including Mary White and Katrina Hude (USA), fostering collaboration, cultural exchange, and skills transfer. Two South African artists, Kgomotso Mtsweni (TUT Postgraduate student) and Thato Kokwana (TUT alumnus), later completed residencies in California and Whidbey Island, Washington, deepening their artistic practice. 🌐

## Faculty of Arts and Design Coil Project with Southampton University, United Kingdom

**O**n 10 September 2025, the Faculty of Arts and Design, the Department of Visual Communication's Student Film Fest showcased the work of second-year Motion Picture Production students, who screened video essays and short films they produced as part of a collaborative project with peers from the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom, focusing on Third Cinema Today. This collaboration was part of an official COIL initiative between the two universities. The films were presented at the TUT Arts Festival, with three representatives from the UK High Commission, Sarah Meisch Lionetto, Vhuthshilo Makananise, and Kgothatso Tshabangu joining us for the opening and screening. These guests, pictured here with the Faculty of Arts and Design staff, engaged with the event and its innovative approach to intercultural learning. 🌐



## Incoming students

**T**UT will host two Swedish students, Viktor Oscarsson and Malarchy Byrne, from Jönköping University (JU), as part of their final-year research project in orthotics and prosthetics. Both TUT and JU offer Bachelor-level Orthotics and Prosthetics programmes accredited by the International Society of Prosthetics and Orthotics. TUT, as co-leads of the SASUF Work Package 3: Students as Game Changers, is proud to facilitate student exchanges between South Africa and Sweden, bringing together students and researchers to address global challenges guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

During their research, Viktor and Malarchy will investigate decision-making by Clinical Prosthetists and Orthotists. Their work will not only enhance knowledge in the field but also support curriculum development at TUT. While supervised by Professor Nerrolyn Ramstrand in Sweden, our staff will guide the South African context and assist with focus groups across the country. 🌐



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## Russian Language and Cultural Exchange Programme

**I**n September 2025, four academic staff members from the Faculty of Humanities participated in a Russian Language Exchange Programme, coordinated by the Russian Embassy in South Africa. The Programme aimed at enhancing intercultural communication, foster mutual understanding, and promote cooperation between South African and Russian institutions. The participants received intensive language training, attended cultural immersion sessions, and visited several universities in Russia to explore potential areas for academic collaboration.

For TUT's Faculty of Humanities, this exchange was particularly valuable in strengthening language education, translation studies, and international cultural programmes. It also opened the door to collaborative teaching, student exchange, and joint research initiatives focused on language, culture, and global communication. The participants returned with renewed insights on integrating multilingualism and cultural diversity into their teaching practice, aligning closely with the University Language Policy and the focus on SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). 🌐

## Staff Exchanges

**A**s the global higher education landscape continues to evolve, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) remains steadfast in its commitment of enhancing international collaboration, staff development, and academic excellence. During the reporting period, TUT academics and professional staff participated in a range of mobility and capacity-building initiatives that have not only expanded

their professional networks but also strengthened the University's internationalisation profile. These exchanges are essential in deepening institutional partnerships, promoting intercultural understanding, and transferring global best practices into TUT's teaching, research, and management systems. Below is a detailed discussion of each staff exchange. 🌐

## Erasmus+ Mobility at Eskişehir Technical University (ESTU), Turkey

**T**hree staff members from the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE) participated in an Erasmus+ staff mobility programme at the Eskişehir Technical University (ESTU) in Turkey. This exchange provided a platform for academic collaboration, curriculum innovation, and joint research planning between the two universities. The programme included guest lectures, laboratory demonstrations, and discussions on sustainable engineering and renewable energy projects.

Exposure to Turkey's higher education system, which emphasises applied learning and technology integration, inspired the participating academics to explore similar pedagogical innovations at TUT. The collaboration was further strengthened when an ESTU delegation visited TUT in July 2025, leading to the drafting of a joint concept note outlining future cooperation in areas such as student mobility, joint supervision of post-graduate research, and collaborative projects on engineering for sustainable development. This exchange marks a significant step towards the establishment of a long-term partnership that aligns with TUT's Vision of being a leading institution of technology with global impact. 🌐





# DAAD Internationalisation of *Higher Education Programme*

**M**r Caiphus Motadi, Manager: Internationalisation at TUT, participated in a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) capacity-building project, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 21 to 26 September 2025. The week-long workshop brought together international officers and managers from several African universities under the theme "Strengthening Internationalisation Management in African Higher Education Institutions". TUT's participation provided an opportunity to benchmark its internationalisation practices against leading African institutions and to identify innovative ways to integrate digital internationalisation, virtual exchange, and capacity-building into its strategic framework.

The exchange also facilitated networking with representatives from the DAAD, the African Union, and partner universities across East, West, and Southern Africa, further strengthening TUT's continental partnerships. Upon return, the participant contributed valuable insights to refine TUT's Internationalisation Strategy, particularly in mobility coordination, staff development, and diversification of alliances.

In his remarks, Mr Motadi mentioned that through the DAAD experience, he has gained valuable exposure to international academic practices, strengthening research collaboration, intercultural competence, and institutional capacity for global engagement. 🌐



## Research Funding: Erasmus+ Award for SAMTIC Project



**T**he Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) continues to enhance its global research and innovation profile through international collaborations. Under the Erasmus+ Programme, TUT has obtained a new research grant for the South African Music Technology and Innovation Capacity-Building (SAMTIC) project, with a total award value of R7.6 million. TUT serves as the primary coordinator of this multi-institutional project, receiving a substantial R3.6 million (approximately €160,435) allocation to lead the initiative. The consortium integrates expertise from three South African universities, alongside partners from Germany and Bulgaria, exemplifying a truly global alliance for creative and technological progress.

To date, R5.3 million of the total funding has been disbursed, indicating significant advancement toward the implementation of project activities. The SAMTIC project seeks to promote innovation in music technology, strengthen capacity-building within higher education institutions, and facilitate knowledge exchange across continents. This accomplishment highlights TUT's expanding reputation, its endeavours in international collaborative research, and its dedication to leveraging innovation for sustainable development and cultural enrichment. 🌐

## Internationalisation Events

# Erasmus+ National Information Day

## Highlights Collaboration, Innovation, and Skills Development

**T**he Erasmus+ National Information Day served as a crucial platform to bolster South Africa's engagement with the European Union's flagship education and training programme. The two-day event convened higher education institutions, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, and policymakers to explore collaborative opportunities under Erasmus+.

**Day 1** concentrated on Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE), emphasising the various opportunities available for international cooperation, mobility, and innovation. Presentations highlighted successful case studies of partnerships that have augmented institutional capacity, facilitated academic exchange, and advanced research and teaching

excellence across borders.

**Day 2** emphasised on TVET partnerships, underscoring the importance of aligning skills development with the evolving demands of the labour market. Discussions centred on promoting digitalisation, green transition initiatives, and strengthening industry-academia linkages through Erasmus+-funded projects. The Day also showcased examples of impactful collaborations that are helping to build a more agile, inclusive, and future-ready TVET sector in South Africa. The event reaffirmed the growing role of Erasmus+ in driving transformation and fostering global partnerships that contribute to education, innovation, and sustainable development. 🌍



## SASUF: Hybrid Coffee Break Sessions Foster Dialogue on Climate Change and Physical Activity

**A**s part of its ongoing South Africa Sweden University Forum (SASUF) to promote research collaboration and interdisciplinary dialogue, the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) hosted two Hybrid Coffee Break Sessions in 2025, creating a platform for knowledge exchange among academics, researchers, and students.

The first session, held on 24 June 2025, focused on Climate Change, bringing together experts and scholars to explore the global and local implications of environmental challenges. Discussions centred on innovative solutions, sustainability practices, and the role of higher education in ad-

ressing climate resilience through research, policy, and community engagement. The second session, held on 25 July 2025, in partnership with Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU), focused on Physical Activity. This dialogue highlighted the importance of active lifestyles, health promotion, and preventive strategies within communities, emphasising collaborative research and student engagement across institutions. Both sessions reflect TUT's strong commitment to fostering collaborative learning environments and leveraging hybrid platforms to address societal issues aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).





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