Tshwane University of Technology

We empower people

INTERNATIONALISATION NEWSLETTER

Entrepreneuring the Future Together

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#fromGood2Great

A message from

Dr Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Engagement



It is a privilege to share the latest achievements advancing Tshwane University of Technology's global research and internationalisation agenda. During 2026, TUT has continued to strengthen its international standing through improved global visibility, expanded student and staff mobility, international research funding, and strategic partnerships across Africa, Europe, Asia and Australia. Our participation in initiatives such as SASUF, AAUN, SANORD, the Sustainability Olympiad and the BRICS+ Youth Innovation Summit demonstrates our commitment to providing students and researchers with meaningful opportunities for global engagement, innovation and knowledge exchange. These achievements directly support the TUT Strategic Plan 2026–2035 and our ambition to develop future-ready graduates, strengthen research excellence and position TUT as a globally connected entrepreneurial university. I extend my appreciation to our faculties, staff, students and international partners whose commitment continues to expand TUT's global footprint and create opportunities for impactful collaboration.

TUT 2026 Rankings

TUT was prominently featured in two prestigious rankings during the first semester of 2026: UniRank and EduRank. UniRank, an international higher education ranking system, evaluates universities primarily on web presence, digital visibility, popularity, and outreach efforts rather than on research output. In this ranking, TUT secured the 9th position nationally and the 1,202nd position globally, placing it within the top 36% of South African universities. EduRank, another global ranking system, assesses universities based on research performance, scholarly impact, and institutional reputation. TUT achieved the 13th spot nationally, 34th in Africa out of 1,104 universities, and 1,663rd worldwide among 14,131 institutions. This impressive performance places TUT in the top 12% of ranked universities globally, highlighting its ongoing commitment to research excellence, institutional visibility, and scholarly influence.

UinRank Rankings

The UniRank Rankings are an international higher education ranking system that assesses universities mainly based on their web presence, digital visibility, popularity, and institutional outreach rather than research output.

National Rank:	World Rank:	National Rank:
9th place	**1 202**	**13th place**

This places the university in the **top 36%** of South African universities.

EduRank Rankings

The UniRank (formerly 4 International Colleges & Universities) Rankings are an international higher education ranking system that evaluates universities based primarily on their web presence, digital visibility, popularity, and institutional reach rather than research performance.

Africa Ranking:	World Rank:
34 out of **1 104**	**1 663** out of **14 131**

This performance places the university within the **top 12%** of ranked universities globally, reflecting sustained research productivity, institutional visibility, and scholarly impact.

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STUDENT MOBILITY PROGRAM

Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) continues to demonstrate outstanding achievements in student and staff mobility. These initiatives underscore TUT's commitment to developing globally skilled graduates and to fostering international academic collaboration.

Henan Polytechnic International Summer School

The Henan Polytechnic University (HPU) International Summer School in Jiaozuo, China, was a focused 10-day intensive from 20 to 29 June 2026. It brought together diverse international cohorts dedicated to pioneering work in artificial intelligence, engineering, and environmental remediation. Three Master's students from the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at TUT, including Sikhosana Luthando Bongiwe, Agisanang Palesa Mogwera, and Sydney Sebopetse, represented our university at this prestigious programme.

Sydney Sebopetse reflected that the study visit to China was both academically enriching and socially inspiring. The blend of lectures and hands-on demonstrations provided participants with a thorough understanding of cutting-edge technologies, engineering solutions, environmental strategies, AI, geoscience, and industrial innovation. The programme's practical focus helped bridge the gap between theory and real-world application, exemplifying how research drives innovation.

JOINT SUPERVISION INNITIATIVES

Joint-Supervision Initiatives

TUT strengthened international postgraduate collaboration through co-supervision, co-examination and joint degree initiatives with partner universities in Kenya and France, respectively. Within the Faculty of ICT, two staff members served as co-supervisors with Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), Kenya, while one TUT academic served as an external examiner. The collaboration also includes a TUT Master's student under international co-supervision, whose research has been submitted for ethics approval. The Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (FEBE) is also engaged in a PhD joint degree programme with Université Paris-Est Créteil (UPEC), France, involving TUT supervision and strengthening international doctoral collaboration.

GRANTS

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TUT has actively expanded its international research collaborations in the second semester of 2026. The Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (FEBE) secured funding from the Royal Academy of Engineering and DAAD/TUM Energise, while the Faculty of Science obtained support from AJ Core Japan, the Leakey Foundation, Erasmus+ ROOTS, and Erasmus+ VISAGE. These efforts strengthen TUT's global research partnerships, diversify external funding sources, and advance the university's broader research and internationalisation initiatives. Additionally, the Internationalisation Office partnered with Erasmus+ Coordinators in Pretoria to host an information session on upcoming funding opportunities on 04 August 2026.

4th BRICS+ Youth Innovation Summit 2026

The 4th BRICS+ Youth Innovation Summit 2026 was successfully conducted on April 9–10, 2026, at TUT's Pretoria Campus, under the theme "Harnessing Youth Innovation for Sustainable Development and Global Prosperity."

This summit convened over 250 participants from BRICS nations, Africa, and the Global South, including more than 40 youth innovators who showcased practical, scalable solutions to critical socio-economic and technological challenges. Hosted by the South African BRICS Youth Association (SABYA) in collaboration with the TUT Internationalisation Office and the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (Faculty of Management Sciences), the event served as a dynamic platform for innovation showcase, collaboration, and ecosystem growth. TUT's third-year students in Journalism, Events Management, and Marketing gained valuable international work-based learning experience through participation in the summit.

The summit highlighted the growing capacity of youth-led innovation and emphasised the importance of structured post-summit support, including funding, incubation, and mentorship programs. Keynote speakers included:

Her Excellency Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former Chairperson of the African Union Commission, emphasised that the summit unites youth across nations to craft a shared future, noting BRICS's increasing global influence and its potential to foster a more inclusive, equitable world through cooperation.



Hon. Sindisiwe Chikunga (MP), Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities, highlighted that BRICS leaders recognise youth as pivotal in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. She stressed that innovation must uphold sovereignty and support self-determination, all while nurturing entrepreneurship and inclusive development. She also mentioned government efforts to boost youth development through initiatives like coding and robotics education in public schools, and the development of a cohesive national education system led by the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation.



Dr Vathiswa Papu-Zamxaka, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of TUT, stated that the university's Strategic Plan 2026–2035 aims to position TUT as South Africa's premier entrepreneurial university—fostering future-ready graduates capable of critical thinking, problem-solving, and creating value in a rapidly changing global landscape. She underscored how strategic partnerships, such as with SABYA, enhance knowledge exchange, joint research, and capacity building across BRICS institutions, enabling solutions to global challenges like climate change, digital transformation, and more. economic inequality.



TUT was represented by four (4) innovators from the Rail Manufacturing Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (RMCERI). First Principles (MyTender), Mzansi Group, Expobyte, and Zarl_SA, who had the incredible opportunity to present their businesses and prototypes across various industries, showcased the depth of talent, creativity, and innovation within our ecosystem. In the highly competitive Artificial Intelligence and Digitisation category, we are especially proud to celebrate a remarkable achievement. First Principles (MyTender) placed 2nd, and Expobyte placed 3rd in the Artificial Intelligence track.

The Sustainability Olympiad

TUT's Faculty of Information and Communication Technology (Department of Informatics), in partnership with the Internationalisation Office, hosted the Sustainability Olympiad — a strategic collaboration between TUT and the University of Geneva (Switzerland). The initiative brings together universities, industry, communities, and students to develop innovative solutions to global sustainability challenges aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and was implemented in line with internationalisation principles and protocols to give students opportunities for meaningful international engagement.

This journey positions TUT students within a global innovation ecosystem, offering international exposure, intercultural collaboration, future-ready competencies, and technopreneurial skills to help them turn ideas into commercialisable, market-ready products with meaningful social and economic impact.





INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS

SAMTIC Project

The South African Music Technology Innovation and Capacity-building (SAMTIC) project, under the Faculty of Arts and Design, launched in November 2025 and moved into its next phase in April 2026. This phase enabled person-to-person interaction, training, and mentoring at the Hochschule für Musik Nürnberg and the University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski." Through staff training sessions and workshops, South African academics engaged directly with their institutional counterparts in Europe, gaining first-hand experience with advanced music technologies, artificial intelligence, and educational frameworks.

A delegation of lecturers and professors from the South African institutions involved in the project — TUT, the University of Pretoria (UP), the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), and UNISA — made their first visit to partner universities in Germany and Bulgaria. These visits form part of SAMTIC's strategy to strengthen academic capacity, foster collaboration, and ensure the transfer of knowledge and expertise between consortium partners.

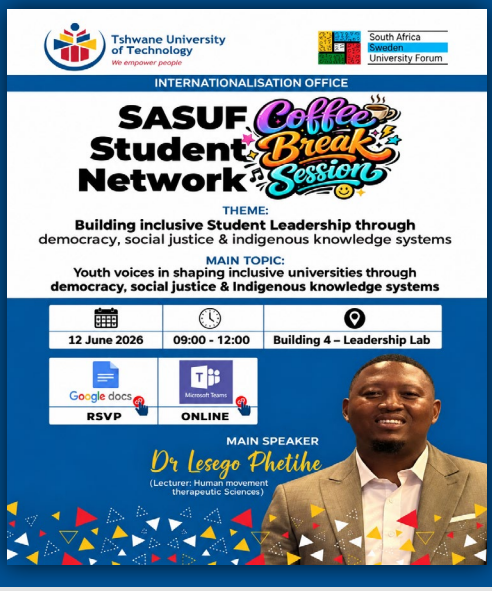
Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR)

The Internationalisation Office welcomed a delegation from the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) to the Arcadia Campus for strategic discussions on strengthening research collaboration in the sciences. The visit featured presentations by TUT's Faculty of Science and the JINR delegation, led by Professor Grzegorz Kaminski, Deputy Director of the Flerov Laboratory of Nuclear Reactions, followed by discussions on potential areas of collaboration. The delegation also toured TUT's Pharmaceutical Sciences, Chemistry, Biomedical Sciences, and Physics laboratories, gaining first-hand insight into the University's research capabilities and state-of-the-art facilities.

This engagement marks another important step in TUT's commitment to expanding international research partnerships, fostering scientific excellence, and creating opportunities for collaborative research, postgraduate training, and staff and student mobility. Through partnerships with globally recognised institutions such as JINR, TUT continues to strengthen its position as a leading university of technology with a growing international research footprint.

South Africa Sweden Universities Forum (SASUF)

The SASUF Student Network hosted a Coffee Break Session on 12 June 2026 at the Leadership Lab, Building 4, under the theme "Building Inclusive Student Leadership through Democracy, Social Justice and Indigenous Knowledge Systems." The session offered a platform for meaningful dialogue among students, staff, and student leaders on issues affecting higher education and student leadership. Dr Lesego Phetlhe, TUT Council member and lecturer in the Faculty of Science, highlighted the importance of social justice in creating equitable university environments and explored how indigenous knowledge systems contribute to student development and leadership.



Australia-Africa Universities Network

TUT participated in the 2026 Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN) Annual Conference, strengthening the University's engagement in Australia–Africa higher education collaboration.

TUT showcased its research and innovation capabilities, including an emerging researcher's participation in the conference poster programme and the Cannabis Hub exhibition.

A TUT Master's student also participated in the Emerging Leaders in Australia-Africa Diplomacy (ELAAD) Programme, strengthening student leadership and international exposure.

TUT's participation provided opportunities to expand research partnerships, researcher development, postgraduate collaboration and international funding opportunities within the AAUN network. The engagement supports TUT's strategic objective of strengthening its global research networks, international visibility and Africa-focused partnerships.

About the Emerging Leaders in Australia-Africa Diplomacy (ELAAD) Programme

The ELAAD Programme is a six-month initiative that ran from October 2025 to April 2026, designed to strengthen Australia-Africa literacy and academic diplomacy among emerging leaders. It brought together a diverse cohort of emerging leaders from different countries and professional backgrounds. Master's student Ms Anza Phidana was nominated to represent TUT in the programme.

Ms Phidana shared that the ELAAD Fellowship strengthened her confidence in participating in international conversations, demonstrating that emerging professionals play an important role in shaping discussions about the future of their regions. As a postgraduate student and communications professional, the programme encouraged her to recognise the value of her own perspective while remaining open to learning from others.

Southern African Nordic Centre (SANORD)

TUT-SANORD Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition

The Internationalisation Office, in partnership with the Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD), hosted the TUT-SANORD Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) competition for PhD students giving them the chance to present their doctoral theses in a clear, engaging, and accessible way to a wide audience. As a SANORD member, TUT aims to strengthen academic collaboration and student engagement through this competition.

Ms Tanja van der Merwe won the TUT 3MT competition. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Humanities, at TUT.

Her presentation focused on her thesis, "*Development of an Assessment Framework for Work-Integrated Learning in Business Administra-*



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