

CUT, MTN sign MoU to forge alliance on technological innovations

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) and telecommunications service provider, MTN have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to forge a new alliance. The focus being the role the two partners can play in advancing socio-economic development through innovation, research, and engagements with various communities.



Source: Supplied | From left to right: Felix Mbkoena, MTN Enterprise Business Manager; Sunette Els, General Manager Central Region at MTN; Dr Sally Dzingwa, CUT acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal and Prof Samson Mashele, CUT acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal: Research, Innovation and Engagement.

As part of the agreement, CUT and MTN intends to implement solutions in 3 phases.

Phase 1 is exploratory, which includes looking at all feasible upgrades of technology and infrastructure currently deployed on the two campuses.

Phase 2 will focus on enhancements of used cases as CUT already has used cases which could be enhanced by MTN's ability to provide bandwidth and potential private network.

Lastly, **Phase 3** will bring about co-creation, with a focus on potential co-creation of industry-specific solutions such as but not limited to AI offerings, SMART campuses, virtual reality, and extended reality centres.

"As a UoT (University of Technology) CUT has certainly ensured that it does not play in the same league as others. They have most certainly shown that when it comes to innovation, they want to be the leading UoT. And they have ensured that whatever the intellectual property, the whole world knows about this. And what better way than to accelerate this vision of CUT than by partnering with an organisation like MTN.

"As MTN we would like to use the technologies that we have, we would like to bring the successes that we've seen in the 23 countries that we operate in and bring those successes back to the Free State," says Felix Mokoena, MTN enterprise business manager.

Increasing impact through collaboration

"We intend to reinforce our relevance among our partners, and to enhance the profile of CUT as a leading university of technology, not only in the region but in Africa. This collaboration includes creating 5G and LTE technology solutions, enabling innovation and enhancements at our Bloemfontein and Welkom campuses. Initially, we will consider feasible technology and infrastructure upgrades and potentially co-create industry-specific solutions from there.

"Our current model with technological advancements will move us closer to our vision of 2030 – to become a leading University of Technology in Africa," says Dr Sally Dzingwa, CUT acting vice-chancellor and principal.

The main purpose of the MoU is to establish amongst others, projects aimed at co-creating 5G- based solutions.

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