

Local NPO Inyathelo secures R3m Kresge Foundation grant

Inyathelo, the South African Institute for Advancement, has received a grant of nearly R3,047m (\$225,000) from the Kresge Foundation, a private foundation headquartered in Michigan, United States. Inyathelo is a non-profit organisation that works to sustain and strengthen civil society organisations and grow local philanthropy in support of a vibrant democracy in South Africa.



Inyathelo executive director Nazeema Mohamed. Source: Supplied

This two-year grant from the foundation for core operating expenses caps a successful long-term partnership between the two organisations.

According to the organisations, Kresge's prior R238m (\$17,3m) in funding to support higher education advancement over the past 15 years has enabled Inyathelo and its higher education partners to develop and implement programmes that have directly empowered nearly a third of South African universities and other institutions to forge relationships with major donors and attract resources to build state-of-the-art facilities, fund bursaries and conduct pathbreaking research to ensure South Africa's universities remain strong pillars of the economy and civil society.

Inyathelo executive director Nazeema Mohamed welcomed this latest tranche of funding, which will support innovation in Inyathelo's programme work. "We are absolutely delighted. This support will enable us to grow our technological capability for distance learning, which is highly relevant as we gear up to address the needs of our growing number of stakeholders.

“The pandemic has ushered in many pleas for assistance from university advancement offices and non-profit organisations for training on financial sustainability. The grant will allow us to implement our new strategy, research innovation in the field of financial sustainability and advancement, and provide general and targeted support to the non-profit and university sectors,” Mohamed said.

Advancement is an integrated, systematic approach to positioning an organisation to attract resources, a concept that Inyathelo says it has pioneered in South Africa.



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Nazeema Mohamed, Feryal Domingo and Soraya Joonas 8 Jan 2021



Past successes

Some examples of Kresge-supported projects with Inyathelo include:

- The first Kresge Special Initiative (KSI) between 2006 and 2010, which helped five high profile South African institutions (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, University of the Western Cape, University of Pretoria, University of the Witwatersrand and the Red Cross Children’s Hospital) to increase their private fundraising revenue more than threefold.
- The Kresge Inyathelo Advancement Initiative, which provided capacity building to a new cohort of four universities (Durban University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology, University of Johannesburg, and the University of the Free State) between 2012 and 2018. The original KSI universities also joined the Kresge Leader University Initiative from 2012-2016 to continue developing their Advancement operations, serve as mentors to the new cohort, and institutionalize professional Advancement practices throughout the sector.
- Annual research surveys that have reported reliable and consistent information about philanthropic support for South African higher education institutions since 2014.
- Ten annual retreats for higher education leaders enabled universities to examine issues and share insights on challenges facing the sector.
- More recently, Kresge funding supported Inyathelo and the Wits Business School to develop a postgraduate qualification in philanthropy and resource mobilisation, the first academic qualification of its kind in Africa. The first intake of students starts their studies in July this year.

“Our long-term partnership and support of Inyathelo was critical to Kresge’s work to improve the higher education ecosystem for underserved students across South Africa by increasing needed private resources for students, faculty and institutions,” said Bill Moses, managing director, Kresge Education Program.

“I’m humbled by the achievements of this organisation, proud that we have been a small part of that success, and certain that Inyathelo will continue to serve as a partner for higher education institutions and their students for years to come,” Moses concluded.

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