

JULY 2025

CARNEGIE DIVERSIFYING THE ACADEMY PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the latest CDTA Newsletter, keeping you informed on how the Carnegie Diversifying the Academy program continues to foster academic excellence and career progression at Wits.

In this edition, we're thrilled to highlight the remarkable achievements of our grantees, whose promotions underscore the tangible impact of CDTA's comprehensive support.

We also look back at recent successful events, including our largest-ever induction of new recipients and a crucial professional development workshop, and provide a glimpse into exciting upcoming opportunities.

Join us in celebrating the growth of our CDTA community and its profound contribution to diversifying the academy!

CARNEGIE DIVERSIFYING THE ACADEMY PROGRAM (CDTA)

Building Transformative
Academic Leadership



TRANSFORMATION OFFICE
KANTORO YA PHETOHO

2025 CDTA team

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CDTA Propels Careers: Celebrating Grantee Promotions!

We're thrilled to share inspiring stories of recent CDTA grantees who have achieved significant career milestones, demonstrating the program's powerful impact on their journeys to promotion. Their experiences highlight how CDTA's comprehensive support empowers academics to excel. These success stories underscore the CDTA's commitment to fostering a diverse and thriving academic landscape by providing crucial financial, academic, and personal development support. We are incredibly proud of our grantees' achievements and look forward to celebrating many more.



Dr. Matsidiso Sello, now a Researcher at the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Social Development in Africa, credits the CDTA with the successful completion of her PhD and subsequent career advancement. "The Carnegie grant provided comprehensive financial support for various aspects of my academic journey," she shares, emphasizing how this holistic support allowed her to "focus on the substance of my research and participate fully in the academic community, both locally and globally." Dr. Sello particularly valued the mentorship and emotional support from Professor Antonia Wadley, noting, "Having access to someone external to the supervisory relationship, who could offer perspective and encouragement, was incredibly meaningful." She also lauded the communication workshop facilitated by Jive Media, which provided "invaluable" skills in "communicating my findings more effectively to diverse audiences." Dr. Sello describes the program as "transformative," setting "a benchmark for what doctoral training programmes can and should be."



Dr. Chia Yu Chen, promoted to Senior Medical Scientist at the National Institute For Communicable Diseases (NICD), Wits University, found the CDTA "instrumental" in her career progression. The grant enabled her to pursue passionate research, leading to the acquisition of "many new scientific skills and techniques." Beyond technical expertise, Dr. Chen highlights how the CDTA provided "many opportunities to hone the softer, but equally as important, skills such as effective communication." The coaching and sponsored activities in science communication, like writing for Jive Media Africa and developing an elevator pitch, were crucial. "The new scientific techniques, personal development as well as science communication enabled me to stand out and transition from a postdoctoral researcher into a senior medical scientist," she affirms.



Dr. Khosi Radebe, now a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, Wits University, attributes her rapid promotion to the support received from the CDTA. Having received the grant in May 2023, she was confirmed in March 2024 and promoted to Senior Lecturer in July 2025 – all within two years. Dr. Radebe expressed deep gratitude for both the direct and indirect support, stating, "It really helped to support my academic journey as I managed to achieve all that I had set for myself." Her swift advancement is a testament to the program's effectiveness in accelerating academic careers.



We are also delighted to congratulate Associate Professor Kagiso 'TK' Poee (PhD), who has been promoted from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor within the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management! Associate Professor Poee expressed deep gratitude for the "generous support" from the Carnegie-WITS Alumni Diaspora and Diversifying the Academy Programmes, stating that the "enabling grant awarded to me" was "in large measure" responsible for his recent promotion. He highlighted that while the "financial assistance proved invaluable in advancing my research output and academic profile," the "true privilege lay in qualifying for and collaborating with the outstanding scholars and administrators linked to these initiatives." Associate Professor Poee affirmed his commitment to "mentoring upcoming academics, strengthening international research networks, and contributing to a more diverse and vibrant academy."

Recent Events

Induction of new CDTA recipients

On Monday 26th May we inducted the next round of new Carnegie recipients, which included 20 people, our biggest induction to date! This follows the largest allocation of grants in one sitting following the April 2025 Transformation Implementation Committee meeting.

As always, there was interesting conversation and much interdisciplinary and inter Faculty networking.



We welcome the following recipients:

Enabling Grant recipients

Dr	Mbuso Nkosi	School of Social Sciences
Dr	Michelle Small	School of Social Sciences
Dr	Mohlalankoma Ngwako	School of Information Engineering
Dr	Nceba Mhlahlo	School of Physics
Dr	Samuel Motitsoe	School of Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences
Dr	Siphiwe Dube	School of Social Sciences
Dr	Siyabonga Kunene	School of Therapeutic Sciences
Dr	Thabang Sefalafala	School of Social Sciences
Dr	Yigael Powrie	Department of Physiology
Dr	Khethisiwe Masuku	School of Human and Community Development
Dr	Kholofelo Mashola	School of Therapeutic Sciences
Prof	Nokuthula Nkosi	School of Therapeutic Sciences

Doctoral candidate recipients

Ms	Bulelwa Mbele	School of Arts
Mr	Faranani Gethe	School of Construction Economics and Management

Post-doc recipients

Dr Themba Isaack Mnguni	School of Language and Media
Dr Palesa Nqambaza-Lebea	School of Social Sciences
Dr Lerato Mokoloko	School of Chemistry

New appointments recipients

Mr	Zimkhitha Manyana	School of Social Sciences
Dr	Relebohile Matubatuba	School of Business Sciences
Mr	Sanele Gcaba	School of Electrical and Information Engineering
Mr	Thabang Rapudu	School of Electrical and Information Engineering

Skills for effective interpersonal engagement and conflict management in the workplace course



On Thursday 29th and Friday 30th May we held a 2-day course on Skills for effective interpersonal engagement and conflict management in the workplace. Following a theme of feedback this year from grant recipients that they are struggling with interpersonal conflict in the workplace, we asked Conflict Dynamics a leading company working in alternative dispute resolution in South Africa to run this course.

Over the two interactive days, we learnt our go-to conflict styles. It was surprising to learn that we can choose different approaches for different situations depending on how important the topic and person/people were to us. For example, avoidance is actually a good strategy when the matter and person is not important to us! We also learnt how to prepare for courageous and conflict conversations by thinking about three levels going on in such a conversation: facts, feelings and identity.



Mentoring and skills-training sessions for all CDTA recipients

Who are your publics? Thinking about public engagement in your research.

Mentoring session with Dr Bernadette Johnson followed by a networking tea
Monday 8th September 2-4pm
Hofmeyr House, Main Campus

Coaching skills for academic leaders

Learning the art of beautiful questions to empower yourself & those you lead
Workshop with Prof Toni Wadley
Tuesday 30th September, 8.30-3.30
Hofmeyr House, Main Campus

End of year reflection, celebration & networking

Event & networking
November - date tbc

Mentoring check ins for recipients doing their PhDs or postdocs

Check ins on Teams –
diary invites to come via Outlook or
contact Toni (antonia.wadley@wits.ac.za)

PhD check in
22.09.25

Postdoc check in
23.09.25

Upcoming events

Here are some events that our grantees and alumni should look forward too for the remainder of this year. Please always keep a look out for more details and any additions on our website:

<https://www.wits.ac.za/transformationoffice/programmes-and-projects/diversifying-the-academy/>

2025 SECOND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: CDTA

The TEEO has invited applications for the next round of Carnegie Diversifying the Academy (CDTA) Grants. The application window is now open and will **run for 10 weeks, from July 30, 2025, to September 26, 2025**. All applications must be submitted through the official registration link, which is available in the official call for applications cascaded through your Deans office.

Grant categories available:

New Appointments Grant: Supports early and mid-career academics at Wits.

Post-Doctoral Fellowship Grant: Open to recent PhD graduates pursuing a post-doc at Wits.

Doctoral Grants: For Wits staff pursuing a PhD.

Enabling Grants: Supports research productivity and career advancement for Wits academics.

Who can apply?

Black South African and Coloured South African academics at Wits.



Application period:

30 July – 26 September 2025

Please note that your application requires a support letter from your Head of School, that should co-signed by your Dean or a separate Deans letter of support which their office sends directly to the TEEO. To ensure sufficient time for this, all applications must be submitted online two weeks before the final deadline of September 26, 2025. This allows the Dean's office ample time to prepare and submit their recommendation directly to the Transformation and Employment Equity Office.

Further details and the application guideline booklet can be found through your respective Dean's office, where this information will be cascaded from. The online application link will be part of that communication

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