



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

UNIVEN Weekly e-Newsletter



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First-year students receive financial literacy lessons from Capitec Bank



Capitec Branch Manager, Ms Brenda Murulane

The University of Venda (UNIVEN)'s first-year students recently benefited from a financial literacy workshop organised by UNIVEN Convocation and the Student Affairs Department. This Financial Literacy Workshop took place on 19 March 2026 at the University's Research Conference Centre.

Capitec Branch Manager, Ms Brenda Murulane, thanked UNIVEN for inviting Capitec Bank to address students on financial literacy matters. She mentioned that the workshop was not only about money but also about advising students about setting personal goals in life. Ms Murulane told

them that the decisions they make now will have a huge impact on their lives. "Financial wellness is very important because failure to plan and manage your financial matters could lead to stress and depression." She said first-year students are chosen to attend this workshop because most of them are becoming independent for the first time in their lives. Now they are getting a lot of money that they have never handled or managed in their lives. "Students need to know how to manage what they have. They need to spend less than what they have and also avoid being in debt."

Ms. Murulane concluded by noting that statistics indicate that most graduates, when they start working, begin with a poor record due to financial decisions they made while still students. "Choose the right path for your brighter future. Take decisions that will empower your life," she advised.



As the Programme Director of this workshop, Ms Shonisani Masutha, who is a member of UNIVEN Convocation, advised UNIVEN first - year students to spend their money sparingly if they want to achieve anything in life.



UNIVEN SRC President, Mr Calvin Mogale, thanked the UNIVEN Convocation for bringing Capitec Bank to assist students with managing their money. Mr Mogale also requested that Capitec Bank representatives bring an ATM to UNIVEN, as most students use Capitec as their primary bank.

MashonzaEdu_Project: Strengthening Community Partnerships in Masisi



Research team with the Tshenzhelani Royal Council L-R Back Row: Page Alexander, Prof Karren Murphy, Chief Tshenzhelani, Machevele Simoni, Khwilimba Glender, Mathavha Dakalo, David Rambiyana, Nembudani Nkhumeleni, John Chikololo, Joseph Masikhwa and Mamphodo

L-R Front row: Mpondo Phindulo, Prof Liesel Ebershon, Dr Mangoba Zungu, Likhovha Simon, Thabelo Sawada and Olugaho Sawada

The DSI-NRF SARChI Chair in Biodiversity Value and Change, under the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, led a series of participatory engagements in March in the Masisi area as part of the MashonzaEdu_Project. The project is a transdisciplinary sustainability initiative implemented in collaboration with the University of Venda, the University of Pretoria, Pennsylvania State University, and the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve to strengthen community partnerships in Masisi, specifically in the Tshenzhelani Village (Limpopo Province, South Africa).

The visit focused on building and strengthening partnerships with local stakeholders, co-developing a participatory research framework, and ensuring that the planned five-year study reflects community priorities, ethical standards, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Engagements with community members and ecosystem service partners highlighted the importance of locally grounded research approaches that integrate community knowledge and address socio-ecological needs. A key institutional meeting with the University of Venda's Directorate of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation and Commercialization (DCEEIIC) emphasised

opportunities to link biodiversity research with community livelihoods, including sustainable use of resources such as mopani worms, and pathways for local enterprise development.

Consultations with the Tshenzhelani Royal Council confirmed strong support for the project, with emphasis placed on respecting cultural protocols, ensuring community participation, and promoting sustainable resource use. This engagement established an important foundation for continued collaboration with traditional leadership structures.

These activities resulted in strengthened partnerships across academic, community, and governance sectors, alignment with institutional innovation and engagement strategies, and progress in refining the project's ethics application. The process also reinforced a participatory research approach, ensuring that community perspectives and Indigenous Knowledge Systems are embedded in the study design.

The initiative contributes directly to SARChI objectives by advancing transdisciplinary research and enhancing the societal relevance and impact of biodiversity science.



L-R: Front row: Dr. Marisa Leask, Paige S. Alexande, Prof. P. Karen Murphy, Prof. Funke Omidire, Nengwekhulu Adivhaho, Glender L-R: Back row: Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn, Mr Nkhumeleni Nembudani, Mr Mamphweli Rudzani, Dr Manqoba Zungu Khwilimba, Dakalo Mathavha, Nakisani Nemabodzi Mathavha, Nakisani NemabodziMathavha, Nakisani Nemabodzi

Gift Netshirenzheni Shines at the 20th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars Conference



In the picture: Gift Netshirenzheni (second from left) poses with conference representatives and organisers following the award presentation, receiving a Token of Appreciation at the 20th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars Conference, in recognition of his research on strengthening young farmers' operational competencies for sustainable agri-business development.

Gift Netshirenzheni, a second-year Master's student at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), has thoroughly distinguished himself on the continental stage after being recognised at the 20th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) Conference, held recently at the University of Mpumalanga.

Mr Netshirenzheni's achievement strongly aligns with the University of Venda's strategic vision of being "a university leading in engaged scholarship" and its mission to produce graduates who are locally relevant and globally competitive. His research, which focuses on empowering young farmers and strengthening the sustainability of agribusiness, reflects the institution's commitment to high-impact research that responds to societal needs.

The conference was jointly hosted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), in partnership with the National Research Foundation (NRF) Future Earth Africa Hub Leadership Centre, the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR), and other leading academic and policy institutions.

This was graced by several emerging scholars from across the continent. The AYGS conference aims to interrogate Africa's position in the global knowledge economy and explore how innovation can drive sustainable development. Anchored in Agenda 2063, the platform recognises young people as key drivers of Africa's future, equipped to lead inclusive, resilient, and transformative change.

The transdisciplinary gathering also provided a dynamic space for collaboration, networking, and knowledge exchange among young African researchers. Key thematic areas for the conference included: innovation and climate action; inclusive economic growth and employment; youth empowerment and education; health and wellbeing; governance; and global trade dynamics.

Representing the University of Venda's Faculty of Science, Engineering and Agriculture, within the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, Mr Netshirenzheni was selected among only 40 participants from across Africa, a notable achievement. He is currently pursuing his Masters degree under the supervision of Dr Mpho Tshikororo.

At the conference, Gift presented his research titled: "Upskilling Emerging Young Farmers' Operational Competencies Contributing to the Sustainability of Incubated Agribusiness Enterprises."

His work, which focuses on strengthening young farmers' capabilities to ensure long-term agribusiness sustainability, was highly commended for its relevance and practical contribution to inclusive economic development.

In recognition of his outstanding presentation, Gift was awarded Best Paper Presenter under the Inclusive Economic Growth sub-theme. His achievement reflects not only his academic excellence but also the University of Venda's growing contribution to impactful research that addresses real-world challenges across the African continent.

Furthermore, his work directly aligns with the University's broader mandate to support rural development and contribute to economic growth through skills development and applied research. In this way, his success is not only an individual milestone but also a reflection of UNIVEN's strategic commitment to excellence, transformation, and meaningful societal impact.

Prof Natasha Potgieter congratulated Mr Netshirenzheni on his achievement, noting that it reflects the faculty's commitment to academic excellence and impactful research. "We are incredibly proud of Mr Netshirenzheni's accomplishment. His success is a testament to the quality of our postgraduate training and our dedication to developing research that contributes meaningfully to society and economic development," she said.



In the picture: Gift receiving the Best Paper Presenter Certificate at the 20th Africa Young Graduates and Scholars Conference

NEW VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION AND MISSION

"Vision is the art of seeing the invisible"
~ Jonathan Swift

Our vision defines what we want to become by 2040. It is an aspirational description of what we would like to achieve in the long term.



VISION

A University leading in engaged scholarship



MISSION

The University of Venda produces graduates who are locally relevant and globally competitive



INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

The University of Venda is guided by a set of core institutional values that shape its culture, inform decision-making, and underpin the university's strategic priorities. These values include:



EXCELLENCE

Striving for the highest standards in teaching, research, and service



INTEGRITY

Acting with honesty, ethics, and transparency in all we do



ACCOUNTABILITY

Taking responsibility for our actions and delivering on our commitments



DIVERSITY

Embracing and promoting inclusivity, equity, and different perspectives



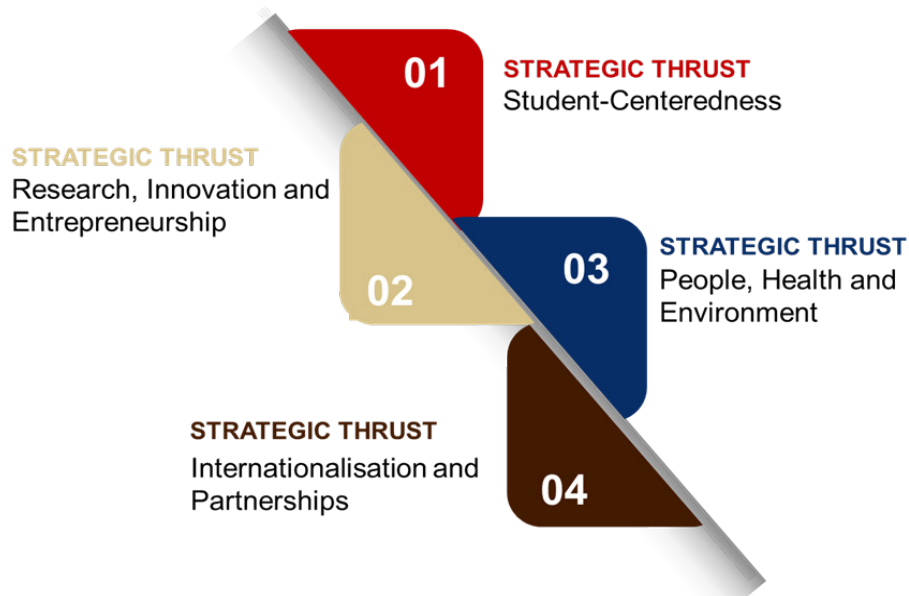
RESPECT

Valuing the dignity and contributions of every individual

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Positioning the University of Venda for Relevance, Excellence and Impact

Did you know that the UNIVEN Strategic Plan 2026-2030 has four Strategic Thrusts listed below?



13-17
APRIL
2026

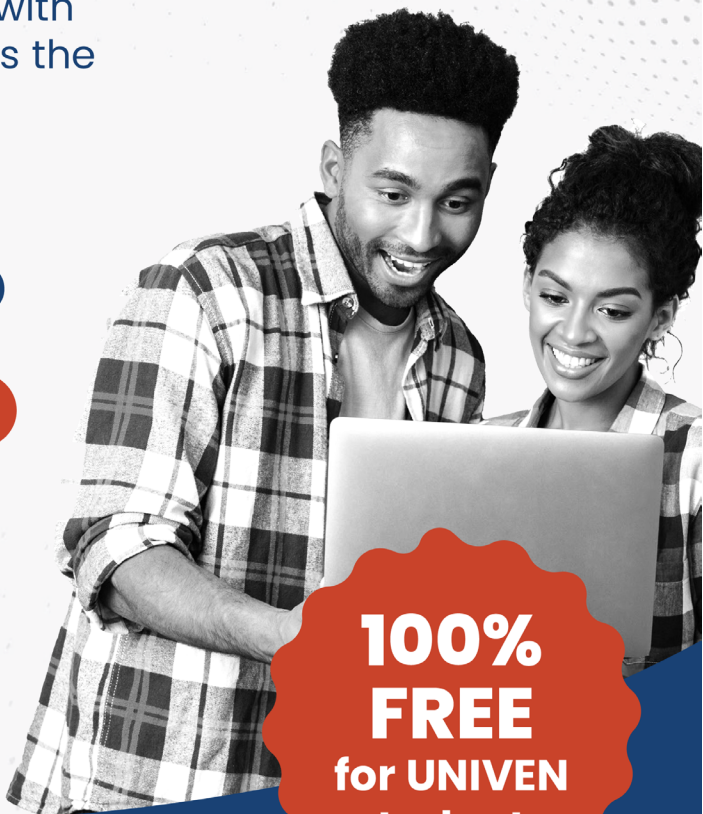
University of Venda in partner with Wadhvani Foundation Presents the

IGNITE BOOTCAMP

STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

 **Time:** 16:00-18:00 Daily

 **Venue:** Virtual (Zoom)



100% FREE
for UNIVEN students

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION: 12 APRIL 2026

CONTACT: wfafrica@wadhwanifoundation.org | donald.morema@univen.ac.za