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## **2023- 2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **1. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK SUMMARY**

#### **Wits 2033: Changing Our World. For Good.**

##### **Our Context**

We live in a world characterised by global change and inequality, energy and water insecurity, inadequate healthcare and burdens of disease, unemployment and poverty, sub-standard primary and secondary education, gender-based harm and xenophobia, and a lack of ethics and governance across society. These are just some of the complex planetary problems confronting society every day, many of which are exacerbated in Africa and the Global South.

At the same time, Wits' 100-year record of academic and research excellence, our innovation, our commitment to social justice and the advancement of society, and our locale in the Global South, places us in good stead to address some of these challenges, and others yet to come.

The Wits 2033 Strategic Framework provides an ambitious vision for how we can harness our intellectual talent and resources across disciplines, institutions, sectors and geographic boundaries to change our world for good.

##### **Our Values**

We can continue to make a positive impact on society if we remain true to our values – to search for and stand up for the truth, to hold those in power to account, to act with integrity, to entrench proper governance systems, to guard our academic freedom and institutional autonomy, to tolerate differences of opinion, and to stand up for democracy, justice, equality, and freedom.

We must continue to promote freedom of enquiry and the search for knowledge and truth, foster a culturally diverse, intellectually stimulating and harmonious environment within which there is vigorous critical exchange and communication, and encourage freedom of speech and public debate, through facilitating dialogue and interaction between different parties, with the goal of increasing mutual respect and trust, amongst others.

##### **Our Purpose**

Our purpose is to make a positive impact on society through creating and advancing global knowledge and nurturing graduates who lead with integrity.

##### **Our Strategy**

We will do this by:

- Advancing academic excellence;
- Enabling social impact;
- Fostering a shared identity; and

- Ensuring our sustainability.

These pillars are underpinned by excellence, innovation, collaboration, collegiality, impact, and people-centredness, as and our values.

We will strive to:

### **1. Advance Teaching and Learning in a Changing World**

Wits will increase flexible and life-long learning opportunities; enhance the training of academics as university teachers; strengthen institutional capacity for curriculum development and renewal; diversify assessment methods; expand postgraduate education; create innovative formal and informal learning spaces; and use data analytics to promote student success.

We will offer an excellent education and student experience both within and beyond the classroom, eliminate barriers to student success, and ensure that more students graduate in time. We will develop our own academic pipeline, grow our postgraduate cohort and become the postdoctoral hub of choice on the continent. This will all be conducted in a tech-savvy, multidisciplinary, flexible academic environment.

### **2. Create and Advance Knowledge that Transforms Society**

Wits will create and advance collaborative cross-, trans- and inter-disciplinary knowledge (discovery, applied and innovative) from the perspective of Africa and the Global South, that will have a profound impact on the world, for good. We will use our intellectual prowess to tackle current and future challenges, be it through translating research into innovative technologies, policies, social innovation, or commercial endeavours.

Some of our focus areas include:

- Climate change, sustainability and energy security;
- Social justice and inequality;
- Better healthcare for all;
- Technologies for societal development; and
- The future of work and the economy.

### **3. Graduate a Generation of Global Leaders**

We will nurture graduates who are socially responsible, ethical, employable critical thinkers and entrepreneurial leaders. These are students who are resilient, tech-savvy, innovative, adaptable change-makers and scholars, who will use their diverse high-level skills, and their place in the world, to change society for good.

### **4. Find Solutions to Global Challenges**

We will bring the best of our intellectual talent, knowledge, expertise, experience, research, innovation and entrepreneurial activity to bear to tackle current and future global challenges, from our locale in the Global South, for the benefit of the public good.

## 5. Strengthen Democracy and Governance in South Africa

It is our duty to ensure that we strengthen democracy and governance in South Africa, and that we develop the next generation of ethical leaders who can contribute to society and grow the economy. We must use our intellectual and social leadership to influence policy, ensure the sustainability of institutions in society, speak truth to power, and hold those in power to account. We must promote civic engagement and advocate for a just and sustainable society for all.

## 6. Foster a Shared Identity

Wits is a national treasure that occupies a special place in the hearts and minds of South Africans. The University exists because of **our people** – we celebrate the diversity of our academic and professional and administrative staff, students, and graduates. We seek to develop and cultivate talent, and nurture a culture of agility, innovation and entrepreneurial thinking to advance the academic project.

Our **staff and students** must feel enabled and empowered in an environment that fosters a sense of belonging, care and holistic wellness.

Our **staff** will enjoy continuous professional development in their respective areas, will be service oriented, and will work together – academics and professional and administrative staff - to deliver an excellent academic programme. We will not compromise on service excellence, and we commit to working collaboratively and collegially, with integrity, to deliver on Wits' strategic goals.

Our people represent **our brand** – we will build on our 100-year history of innovation and promote Wits' achievements and reputation, both locally and globally.

## 7. Secure a Sustainable Future

All the aspirations described above cannot be realised without bringing the best talent and resources to bear in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century environment, both physical and virtual. We will optimise our talent and resources, and use them efficiently and effectively, to enable access, and to secure our future, and that of the next generation, for good.

We commit to expanding and diversifying our income streams, growing Wits' financial reserves and maximising the use of our resources. We will digitise processes, develop people and systems, and strive for carbon neutrality through being a leading model for water, energy and waste efficiency, for good.

## Our Location

Wits is well-placed on the ridge of the Witwatersrand to serve as the shining city on the hill that exuberates excellence, and that creates hope in society. At the same time, it allows us to gaze further, to serve as an interlocutor between the Global North and South, in the quest for an equitable global university landscape, and to claim our place at the centre of the Global South. Located in the heart of Johannesburg and with a rural campus in Mpumalanga, our position on the continent, our strategic partnerships and networks, and our 200 000 illustrious alumni making their mark across the world, enables us to connect across the public and private sectors, academia, and civil society; across geographical and intellectual borders; and rural and urban communities, to serve as a catalyst for change, for good.

## **In Summary**

Wits remains a beacon of hope in society, and one that is rising to the challenge. We will continue to create new knowledge, to apply that knowledge, and to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, to solve the current challenges of our time. Our invigorated teaching and learning programmes will enable the next generation of skilled, ethical leaders and active social citizens who will advance society. We must bring the best talent and resources to bear, across sectors and disciplines, for Africa, for the world, for future generations, for good.

## **2. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

### **2.1 Demonstrable Leadership and Accountability**

Ensure that there is clear alignment in the Senior Executive Team as well as executive accountability for each Key Area.

### **2.2 Alignment between Academic and Professional and Administrative Staff**

Develop a programme that drives better collaboration, alignment and relationship building between academic and professional and administrative staff.

### **2.3 Enhance Institutional Culture**

Nurture a culture of collaboration, capitalise on the momentum created through the consultation process, and hold open conversations across the University.

### **2.4 Optimal University Structure**

Explore the possibility of reviewing the location of professional and other schools within the broader University and review the career progression path and recognition of teachers.

### **2.5 Effective Communication and Stakeholder Engagement**

It is essential to ensure that the difficult and important conversations take place in the University, that key information is communicated at all levels, and that an internal communication strategy is developed that addresses and recognises staff efforts.

### **2.6 Strategy Cascading and Operationalising**

Establish a strategic project team to ensure the alignment of departmental strategic and operational plans. The project team should manage the rollout and implementation as well as ensure the measurement and communication of key milestones

### **2.7 Wellness**

Create an improved, integrated, holistic wellness progress that addresses the needs of staff and students, and determine how staff wellness impacts directly on student wellness and experience, etc.

## **3 Recognition and Reward**

Develop an inclusive reward and recognition programme for academic and professional and administrative staff and students, and improve staff wellbeing and morale – people must be recognised and feel appreciated.

### **3. STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**

#### **3.1 Wits' Identity**

##### **Description**

- Develop an all-encompassing definition and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Create a sense of belonging, social cohesion and institutional affinity and a home for students, staff, and alumni.
- People must feel heard, welcomed, valued, accepted and proud to work at Wits.
- Create an environment in which diversity is appreciated and celebrated, and where shared learning about each other is encouraged.
- Reflect and represent the national population demographics at all levels of the institution.
- Staff and student must develop a sense of ownership and accountability for the future of Wits and work towards its goals and ambitions (including Wits2033).
- The holistic development of students must be prioritised, including a diverse and inclusive university experience.
- Graduate world-class, well-rounded students who are employable or entrepreneurial.
- Nurture students who are proud to be at Wits, who are brand advocates, who become leaders of society and captains of industry, and who remain actively involved in Wits when they graduate.
- Invest in capacity building and skills transfer.
- Develop and retain world class academic and professional and administrative staff and build global expertise.
- Enable staff to achieve their full potential.
- Leverage University programmes and partnerships.

##### **Themes:**

- Culture
- Connection
- Relationships
- Language
- Recognition
- Sexuality
- Appreciation
- Class
- Mental Health
- Disability
- Nationality
- Race
- Gender Identity
- Socio Economic Status

- Listen
- Dialogue
- Ethical
- Positive Social Change
- Meaningful Contribution
- Empowerment
- Partnerships
- Sustainability
- Social Commentary
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Relevance
- Social Justice

- Staff morale
- Leadership
- Retention
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Empowerment
- Support
- Partnerships
- Leaders in Society
- Team Building
- Shared Values
- Succession
- Growth
- Mindsets and Thinking Styles

### 3.2 Academic Excellence

#### Description

- Ensure high quality teaching, learning and research outputs
- Work towards trans-, cross-, and multidisciplinary collaboration
- Ensure social relevance and impact
- Nurture graduates so that are ready for industry
- Ensure that Wits leads from the Global South
- Employ the best academics and professional and administrative staff to deliver world class education.

#### Themes:

- Funding
- Decolonisation
- Quality
- Responsive and Relevant
- Empowerment
- Social Impact
- World-class
- Employable Graduates
- Innovative and Future Oriented
- African Footprint
- Ranking
- Inclusive

### 3.3 Social Impact

#### Description

- Influence and make a difference in society
- Be a leading voice in society and shape its thinking
- Develop innovative research for social impact and benefit
- Leverage Wits' 100 year history
- Partner with like-minded entities to solve real world problems
- Contribute to the national debate, policy development, commentary through intellectual discourse
- Generate new knowledge to solve societal challenges
- Teach critical thinking and produce independent thought leaders in society
- Graduate leaders who advance the public good

#### Themes:

- Listen
- Ethical
- Relevance
- Meaningful Contribution
- Empowerment
- Positive Social Change
- Dialogue
- Sustainability
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Partnerships
- Social Commentary
- Social Justice

### 3.4 Sustainability

#### Description

- Build a culture of collaboration and partnerships within and beyond Wits to impact on society
- Create a conducive space for innovative thinking and collaboration
- Leverage technology, infrastructure, and intellectual resources to benefit Wits
- Partner with those who share Wits' values
- Influence and make a difference in society
- Leverage Wits' 100-year history to attract funding
- Develop a sustainable financial plan for the institution so that it becomes financially independent

- **Conversations**
- **Alignment**
- **Knowledge Sharing**
- **Partnerships**
- **Culture**
- **Support**
- **Integration**
- **Shared Values**

- **Listen**
- **Ethical**
- **Relevance**
- **Meaningful Contribution**
- **Empowerment**
- **Positive Social Change**
- **Dialogue**
- **Sustainability**
- **Social Entrepreneurship**
- **Partnerships**
- **Social Commentary**
- **Social Justice**

**WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**  
*\*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)*

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WITS' IDENTITY							
	COMMITMENT	Scorecard Indicator	WHAT	WHO	WHEN		
People and Culture	A diverse, inclusive, people-centered university	1.1.1 1.1.2 1.1.3 1.1.4	Review and update recruitment, induction, succession planning, promotion policies, skills development policies and programmes, share developmental feedback with line managers. Update Wits Transformation Charter, Pillars, and thrusts.	DVC People and Culture	Q1 2023		
	A culture of agility, and innovative and entrepreneurial thinking		Develop and implement a training programme that includes coaching and mentorship (mentors and coaches to include Alumni)	Advancement Team and Dean of Students	Q2 2024		
	Nurturing and cultivating talent across all spheres of the University		Institute a culture survey to define and measure DEI, Climate, Stakeholder satisfaction and sense of belonging	DVC People and Culture	Q1 2023		
	An environment which allows all our people to thrive		Assess options/rewards programmes to drive recognition		Q2 2023		
	Brand and Reputation	Leveraging our history of being an innovator for advancement across all disciplines	1.2.1 1.2.2	Continue building a Wits brand and reputation that is anchored in embracing diversity, equity and inclusion.	SET, Advancement Team	Annually starting 2023	
		Promoting Wits' achievements to enhance our reputation both locally and globally		Increase in the number of publications with social impact and increase number of Wits alumni visible in society who are in leadership positions.	Deans, Advancement Team, Alumni Team	2023	
				Create an effective marketing, communications plan for internal and external audiences, including alumni	Advancement Team	Midyear 2023	
				Align marketing and communications strategy to include creating public awareness of Wits' social impact	Advancement Team		



				and to provide visibility for academics, researchers and innovators and entrepreneurs.		
<b>WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> <i>*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)</i>						
<b>1</b>	<b>WITS' IDENTITY (cont.)</b>					
		<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Scorecard Indicator</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
	<b>Place and Partnership</b>	Leveraging our location to build partnerships that are based on shared goals, values and achieving societal impact.	<b>1.3.1</b>	Engage with City and other civic organisations to map way forward w.r.t infrastructure and services	DVC Systems & Operations, Pro VC Climate, Sustainability & Inequality	Q 2 2024
		Partnering with other universities to strengthen the academic project locally, on the continent and in the Global South.		Develop strategic partnership guidelines and principles and create partnership agreements and SLAs	DVC Systems and Operations, SET	2025
		Using our campuses and academic resources to work with and in local communities, particularly to address climate sustainability, inequality, public health, and social justice		Increase in the number of training programmes developed in collaboration with business and social partners	Senior DVC Academic; DVC Research & Innovation and Deans	2025
	<b>Student Experience</b>	Exposing our students to a cosmopolitan student life and experience that fosters a sense of belonging and the development of lifelong networks and friendships	1.4.1 1.4.2 1.4.3 1.4.4 1.4.5 1.4.6 1.4.7	Establish regular networking and industry information sharing sessions	Dean of Students	Q1 2023
		Offering our students, a wide range of student development experiences and challenging intellectual engagements that enables them to become active citizens	Set up programme where Alumni mentor, coach, motivate and share knowledge and experience with students		Q2 2023	

		and leaders in all sectors of a diverse society				
		Promoting an environment of care and holistic wellness		Conduct an annual student survey to better understand their needs		Q2 2023
		Encouraging an appreciation for the arts, culture, and sport				
<b>WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> <i>*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)</i>						
<b>2</b>	<b>ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE</b>					
		<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Scorecard Indicator</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
	<b>Student Success</b>	Using evidenced-based data, science, and research to identify barriers to student success	<b>2.1.3</b>	Capture and analysis of data from student success interventions	Senior DVC Academic, Deans	Q1 2023
		Investing in initiatives that support more of our students to complete their degrees in the minimum expected time		Increase student throughput with higher number of students completing their academic programme in record time	Senior DVC Academic, Dean of Students, Deans	Annually starting 2023
		Providing opportunities for continuous professional development to our academic and academic support staff so that they provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities for our students		Review and update the recruitment and talent strategy, rollout of framework for continuous professional learning of academics as university teachers	Senior DVC Academic Deans	Q2 2023
	<b>Graduates of the Future</b>	Nurturing critical thought, robust reasoning and debate based on factual foundations	<b>2.2.2</b>	Early introduction of research into undergraduate programmes	Senior DVC Academic, Deans	2024
		Instilling in our graduates a sense of social responsibility		Experiential activities and service for students in their various fields	Senior DVC Academic, Deans	
		Providing our students with a multidisciplinary, flexible academic environment		Develop programmes to enable students in professional schools to gain practical (technical) work experience	Senior DVC Academic, Deans	

		Expanding our academic offering to provide other forms of bespoke teaching and training that allow for lifelong learning opportunities		Set up a multidisciplinary/multi-faculty team to review and establish a set of standards for all Wits curricula	Senior DVC Academic, Deans	
<b>Advancing the Pursuit of Fundamental Knowledge</b>		Creating an environment that allows for the pursuit of knowledge that will have a profound impact on the world and the potential for Nobel Prize-winning work	2.3.2 2.3.3	Increase in the number of A-rated researchers	DVC Research and Innovation	Annually starting 2023
		Translating fundamental knowledge into technological innovation that will spawn companies to change the world		Resource the Wits Innovation centre		Q1 2023
<b>WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> <i>*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)</i>						
<b>2</b>	<b>ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (cont.)</b>					
		<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Scorecard Indicator</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
<b>Knowledge Generation for Societal Advancement</b>		Leveraging our research and using innovative thinking to tackle future global challenges using the Global South perspective	2.4.1	Increase number of publications with SDG impact	DVC Research and Innovation	Annually starting 2023
		Developing multidisciplinary research teams that address global challenges		Increase in the number of multidisciplinary projects, research, and funding		Initiate in 2023
		Pursuing research endeavours that involve national, continental, and international collaborations aligned with our strategic goals		Build a culture of collaborating and partnering in and out of Wits based on strategic partnership guidelines and principles		Q2 2023
<b>Building a Pipeline</b>		Developing a culture of research and innovation in both our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes	2.5.1 2.5.2	Expand research methods to include innovative and creative research types such as artistic research	DVC Research and Innovation	2024
		Investing in becoming the leading postdoctoral hub on the continent		Increase in the number of post-doctoral students		
		Motivating and investing in people to be research active and innovative		Create shared spaces for collaboration and innovation		

		Expanding research leadership opportunities for both professional and academic staff		Using existing programmes like ECAD, Now@Wits, and future programmes related to leadership the university will develop a development pipeline to ensure succession and sustainability and excellence.		
	Innovation and Academic Entrepreneurship	Encouraging academics to use innovative and extraordinary ways to create and fund impactful research endeavours	2.6.2	Targeted fundraising programmes	DVC Research and Innovation	2024
		Ensuring that our knowledge economy translates into novel and purposeful solutions		Increase visibility of Wits on public platforms that facilitate debate, social discourse & thought leadership		
		Creating the opportunities and processes to transform research findings into commercial opportunities		IP and Patent support and registration		
<b>WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> <i>*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)</i>						
<b>3</b>	<b>SOCIAL IMPACT</b>					
		<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Scorecard Indicator</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
	<b>Active Citizenship and Advocacy</b>	Teaching and research for the good of society	3.1.1 3.1.2 3.1.3 3.1.4 3.1.5	Collate data and records of social impact initiatives and projects, and their current status.	SET, Strategic Partnerships, and WCCO, Advancement Team	Initiate Q2023 - 3-year development
		Promoting civic engagement by students and staff		Establish a PMO office to maximise the impact of existing initiatives, before proposing new initiatives. Set up a measurement matrix/dashboard to track and monitor progress.		
		Using our knowledge and expertise to advocate for a just and sustainable society for all		Prioritise social projects that change people's lives and advance the public good and make these stories visible.		
		Driving critical thought, reason, and open debate in all discourse and public engagement		Revive Wits' intellectual life and social leadership activities for example through hosting public debates on key issues, hosting public lectures and events, and publishing opinion pieces, etc.		
				Set up and/or participate in advisory boards, think tanks and task teams in partnership with stakeholders that		2023

				share similar social impact goals	Senior DVC Academic	
				Set up faculty task teams to drive curriculum review and update		
	<b>Strengthening Democracy and Governance in South Africa</b>	Using our intellectual and human capital to make a purposeful impact on evidence-based policy decision-making	3.2.1 3.2.2			
		Leading assertively from a position of values-based integrity with government and civil society stakeholders				
	<b>Climate Change and Inequality</b>	Developing a multifaceted approach to deal with climate change and inequality that goes beyond teaching and research and includes integration into national and international policy networks, social activism, and the internal management of the transition within the University	3.3.1 3.3.2 3.3.3	Achieve carbon neutrality, Grow the number of food gardens	Pro VC Climate, Sustainability and Inequality	Q2 2024
<b>WITS 2023-2033 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> <i>*(Document to be reviewed on an ongoing basis)</i>						
<b>4</b>	<b>WITS' SUSTAINABILITY</b>					
		<b>COMMITMENT</b>	<b>Scorecard Indicator</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
	<b>Reimagining Work and Institutional Life</b>	Using innovation to reimagine how we work in the interests of improving sustainability, efficiency, and access	4.1.1 4.1.2 4.1.3	Identify underutilised assets such as buildings, for additional revenue generation	DVC S&O	
		Enhancing access for multiple publics to the university precincts both through real-world and virtual platforms.	4.1.4 4.1.5 4.1.6			

<b>Financial Strength</b>	Growing the University's financial reserves		Motivation for an increase in grant funding	DVC S&O / CFO	2024
	Expanding and diversifying our income streams	4.2.1 4.2.2 4.2.3 4.2.4 4.2.5 4.2.6	Improved effectiveness in the collection of fees and reduction in bad debts create a mechanism where alumni can become actively involved in fundraising including increasing donations from the alumni community	CFO and Advancement	2024
	Maximising cost-effective resource utilisation		Reduction in student debts and establish student and staff led fundraising projects – conceptualised and driven by them	CFO and Advancement	2024
<b>Modernising Systems and Operations</b>	Digitalisation of our University processes	4.3.2 4.3.3	- Increase in the number of digital classrooms - Continue rollout in admin departments of digitalisation programme	DVC S&O	
	Ensuring cost-effective and efficient operations				
	Optimising our university through the continuous development of our people, systems, and operations				
<b>Campus of the Future</b>	Leveraging our knowledge and human capital to design a leading model for energy, water, and waste efficiency on our campuses that will serve as an example for our surrounds	5.4.1 5.4.2 5.4.3	Repurpose wastewater, Invest in renewable energy and go off the grid, Increase in the number of recycling bins in the physical environment.	Pro VC Climate, Sustainability and Inequality	
	Improving access and security on and around our campus				