

# The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ Stimulating Research Future



## *The wealth of Africa*

Wealth producing innovation does not occur in a vacuum. Technological breakthroughs do not automatically lead to increased wealth. More wealth does not lead to a better society.

## *Research for a better life*

The beneficitation of research into wealth requires

- Skilled people;
- And ideas;
- That translate into novel practices;
- Organisations;
- And products

In other words, it takes social innovation to make wealth through research and it takes research to make innovation in the 21st century.

## *The NRF - A South African national mandate in an African context*

### *Support and promote research*

- through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities

### *To facilitate*

- the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including indigenous knowledge.

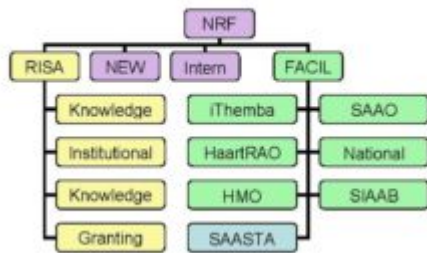
### *In order*

- to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the

## Republic

Managing and stimulating research across the knowledge spectrum

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### *Strategic priorities*

- High quality research;
- Equity and redress;
- Internationalisation of research;
- Focus on Africa;
- Positioning the NRF within the NSI;
- Organisational transformation.

### *PhDs as the driver*

Strategy requires multiple interventions at different nodes along the Higher Education and National Innovation system.

### *The key driver for the NRF is the production of PhDs*

- In sufficient quantities;
- Of sufficient quality;
- Across the knowledge spectrum;
- In order to create an innovative and entrepreneurial knowledge society.

### *The challenge is*

- To efficiently feed and create high levels of knowledge resource;
- To offer graduates visible, meaningful career paths;
- To translate the benefits of sustained Higher Education into people able to produce or use new knowledge to meet challenges of democratic development.

### *Social Science, Law and Humanities = The Significant Other*

- Requirement for creating a democratic, culturally informed and innovative society (social);
- Awaken new directions in scholarship (social);
- Create a platform for understanding and building the interface between and across knowledge systems (systemic);
- Present the need for research in humanities in the NSI (policy).

### *NRF-driven SSLH initiatives*

- Shifting boundaries of knowledge;
- Developing the study of science as a research field;

- Introduction of SSLH into Large Science Platforms - African Coelacanth;
- Stimulation of Science and Society.

*Shifting boundaries - first draft themes*

- Theories of knowledge;
- Theories and knowledge;
- Social functioning a.k.a. development;
- Globalisation and community;
- Social structure - race, class and gender.

*Approach to international partnerships*

*Purpose is to build*

- Research links;
- Individual and institutional capacity;
- Networks and partnerships.

In a way that is enduring and self-sustaining.

*Compelling arguments*

- Expertise;
- Performance;
- Relevance;
- Intellectual leadership;
- Social accountability;
- Prospective thinking.

*Compelling engagement*

- Direct institution to institution linkages for SA capacity building;
- System to system dialogue and exchanges;
- Scholarships;
- Research partnerships;
- Access to EU Framework Programmes;
- Active public scholarship.

Note: This contribution is the unadapted text from a Powerpoint presentation.

