



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Department of
RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Intellectual Property & Innovation

Newsletter

2024

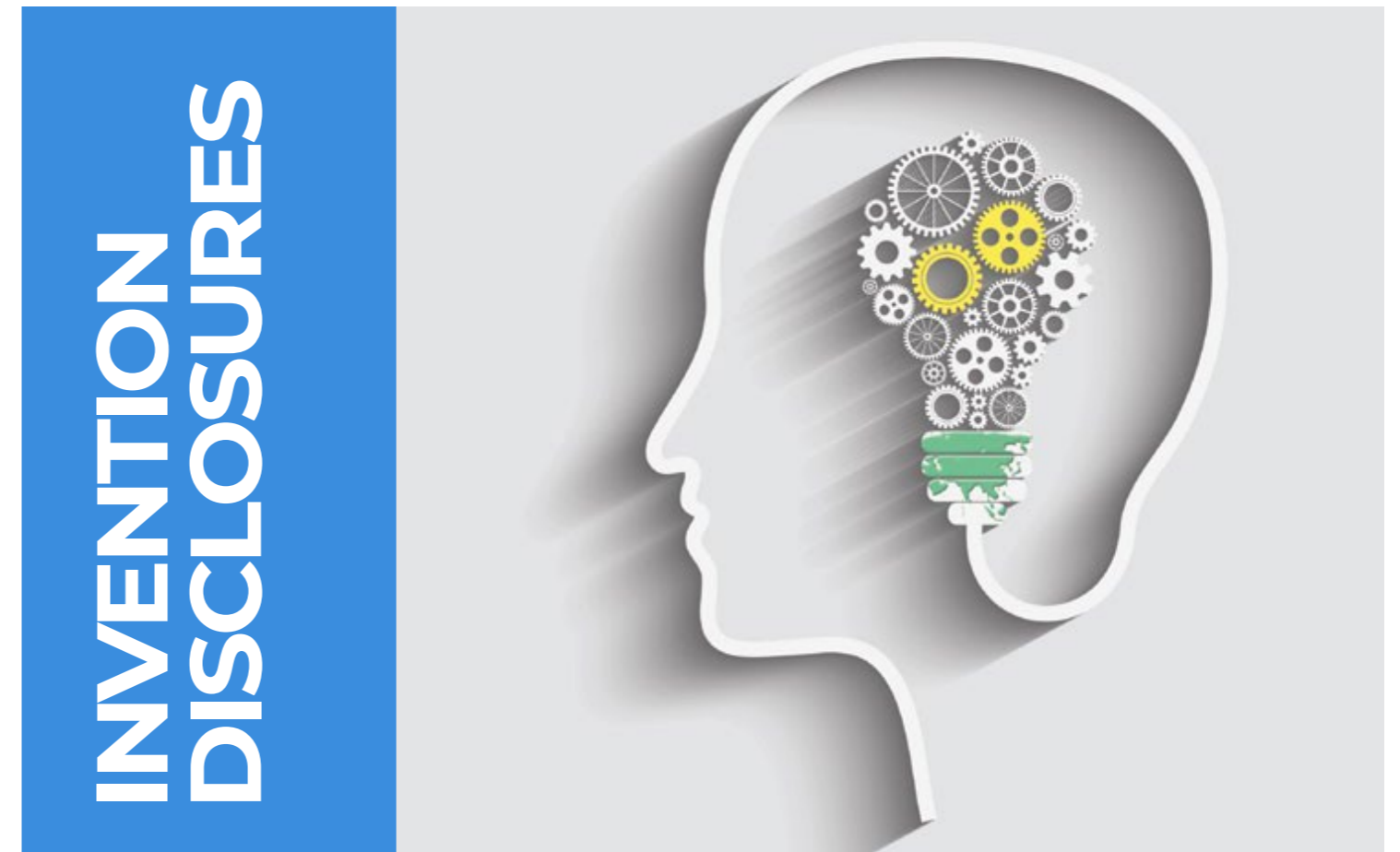


Message from the Innovation Manager

As we reflect on the progress made in 2024, I am pleased to share the remarkable strides we have taken in fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and commercialization at the University of Fort Hare. This year has been marked by significant achievements, from increased invention disclosures to strategic partnerships that propel our research towards real-world impact. Our commitment to supporting researchers in protecting and commercializing their innovations remains unwavering.

I extend my gratitude to all who have contributed to our successes, including our dedicated team, researchers, and industry partners. Your efforts ensure that UFH remains at the forefront of research-driven innovation. As we continue our journey, I encourage all members of our research community to engage with the resources and opportunities available through the Innovation Office. Let's work together to transform knowledge into impact.

Sincerely,
Athenkosi Matshini
IP & Innovation Manager



The Innovation Office successfully submitted both IP7 biannual reports for 2024 on the KIM system, reflecting a notable increase in invention disclosures compared to 2022.

All disclosures submitted by September 2024 have been registered with NIPMO.

The table below describes the number of invention disclosures for 2024:

Title	Inventor(s)
Indigo Medicine	Mr. Vuyo Masebe
LecturaLink SA	Dr. Kafile Masithembe
Therapeutic Medicinal Prickly Pear for Arthritis	Mr. Mzwabantu Slatsha Dr. Zuko Mpisana
Web and Mobile Bee-App	Prof. Amon Taruvinga
V-Crown Hair Products	Ms. Yonela Vice
Happy hot sauce	Ms. Sibongiseni Vena
Farm Wealth	Mr. Siphelo Ntozini
Cosmetic(body) products	Ms. Nandipha Mabindisa
Elysian Pulse Interactive	Mr. Daniel Okoko



Patents, Contracts & Funding

Key Agreements Signed

- **Manzini Energy Joint Venture Agreement:** A partnership for developing smart meters and leak detectors, leveraging financial and technological strengths.
- **IP.Com & UFH Professional Agreement:** Implementation of a digital IP management system to modernize institutional processes.
- **ZAZAR License Option Agreement:** Assessing commercialization potential of key intellectual property assets.

Commercialization of UFH Portfolio

One of the leading commercialization projects, the Integrated Child Protection Management Application (ICPMA), led by Prof. Schiller, is progressing accordingly:

- **Development Status:** WARP Developers contracted for minimum viable product (MVP) development.
- **Expected Projected Completion:** December 2025.
- **Next Steps:** Pilot testing in collaboration with the Department of Social Development and NGOs

Research Contract Management Key Funding Agreements

- **NIPMO - OTT Support Fund:**
- **NRF SARChI Chairs MOAs:** Strengthening research capacity despite initial technical delays.
- **AngloGold MoA:** R12.5M funding secured for Dairy Science & Technology, with UFH contributing R2.5M.
- **SAMRC Amendments:** Extended funding for maternal health and non-communicable disease research.
- **Water Research Commission MoA:** R2M secured for African ginger conservation research.

MOUs: 6 MOUs finalized, fostering diverse partnerships with academic and industry leaders.

Other Agreements: Amendments to 2 SAMRC agreements.

These agreements underscore UFH's commitment to advancing research and societal development.

Collaborations & Partnerships

EDHE

The office is in collaboration with the Faculty of Management and Commerce supporting the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) programme. The internal rounds represent the competition's pitching phase. Of the twenty candidates, nine made a pitch, and seven of those nine moved on to the next round of the competition. Three senior professors from UFH and members of the national SEDA served as judges.

The UFH hosted internal rounds on the 18-19 June 2024. At this stage 7 participants were selected to represent the university at the Regional Rounds as the next stage.

- **Regional Rounds:** This event was hosted at WSU Butterworth campus where all the participants from all Eastern Cape universities contested. 2 Mentorship sessions this was to prepare students to participate in the regional stage and national. They were mentored based on the programme judging criteria.
- **Student Entrepreneurship Week (SEW):** This session was hosted to raise awareness of entrepreneurship as a career, as well as emphasizing the benefits of having the best of both worlds as a student and an entrepreneur. Raise awareness about the entrepreneurship and the programme and sharing knowledge from the entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- **National Finals and Awards:** This is where 24 finalists (including our 2 students) from the 6 regions competed at the national finals in November 2024



Technology Higher Education Network South Africa

Ms. Ntonjane, the Acting IP & Innovation Officer, was selected alongside other senior leaders in South Africa's technology transfer sector to participate in the THENSA Mentorship, Shadowing, and Coaching (MSC) Programme, the candidate visited Esslingen University of Applied Sciences in Germany, to exchange ideas, foster collaboration, and gain insights from well-established university TTOs

Events & Workshops



TLC Exhibition/IP Tech Pop-Up

In February, the IP Tech Pop-Up engaged students and researchers in interactive sessions on IP protection and commercialization strategies. The event was through the UFH Teaching and Learning initiative.

Creative Output Workshop

In April 2024, the virtual Creative Outputs Workshop provided practical tools to enhance research translation, increasing awareness of marketable creative outputs. Facilitated by speakers from DHET & NIPMO.



World IP Day

On May 8, 2024 (Alice Campus), the World IP Day "Themed 'IP and the SDGs,' World IP Day 2024 engaged over 150 participants through panel discussions and workshops, emphasizing IP's role in technology and economic growth. Key Participants were from NIPMO, DHET, TIA, Adams & Adams, and Walter Sisulu University (WSU).



IP Awareness Session

An engaging virtual Intellectual Property Awareness session focusing on patent filing and common mistakes, best practices, and patent filing processes was organized by the IP and Innovation Office and Thomas Schmidt from Adams & Adams in July 2024.

Researcher's Brunch

On the month of August 2024, the UFH IP & Innovation Office hosted the Researcher's Brunch at the Senate Chamber, Alice Campus. Speakers presented on the following topics "an overview of UFH's research outputs (last 5 years)", "UFH's IP & Innovation journey, highlighting successes & challenges" and an official address by Dr. Anathi Njokweni (NMU) - "From Research to Impact: A Journey of Innovation & Success."



Indigenous Knowledge Systems

On the month of October 2024, the office hosted a virtual event focused on the evolution and legal framework of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in South Africa. The event was hosted in collaboration with the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation.

Research Week of Excellence: Innovation Day

In November 2024, the Research Week of Excellence spotlighted IP and Innovation as pivotal to translating research into practical solutions. Showcasing UFH's inventions, patents, and interdisciplinary collaborations, the event featured impactful panel discussions and guest speakers, exceeding attendance expectations with over 250 participants.

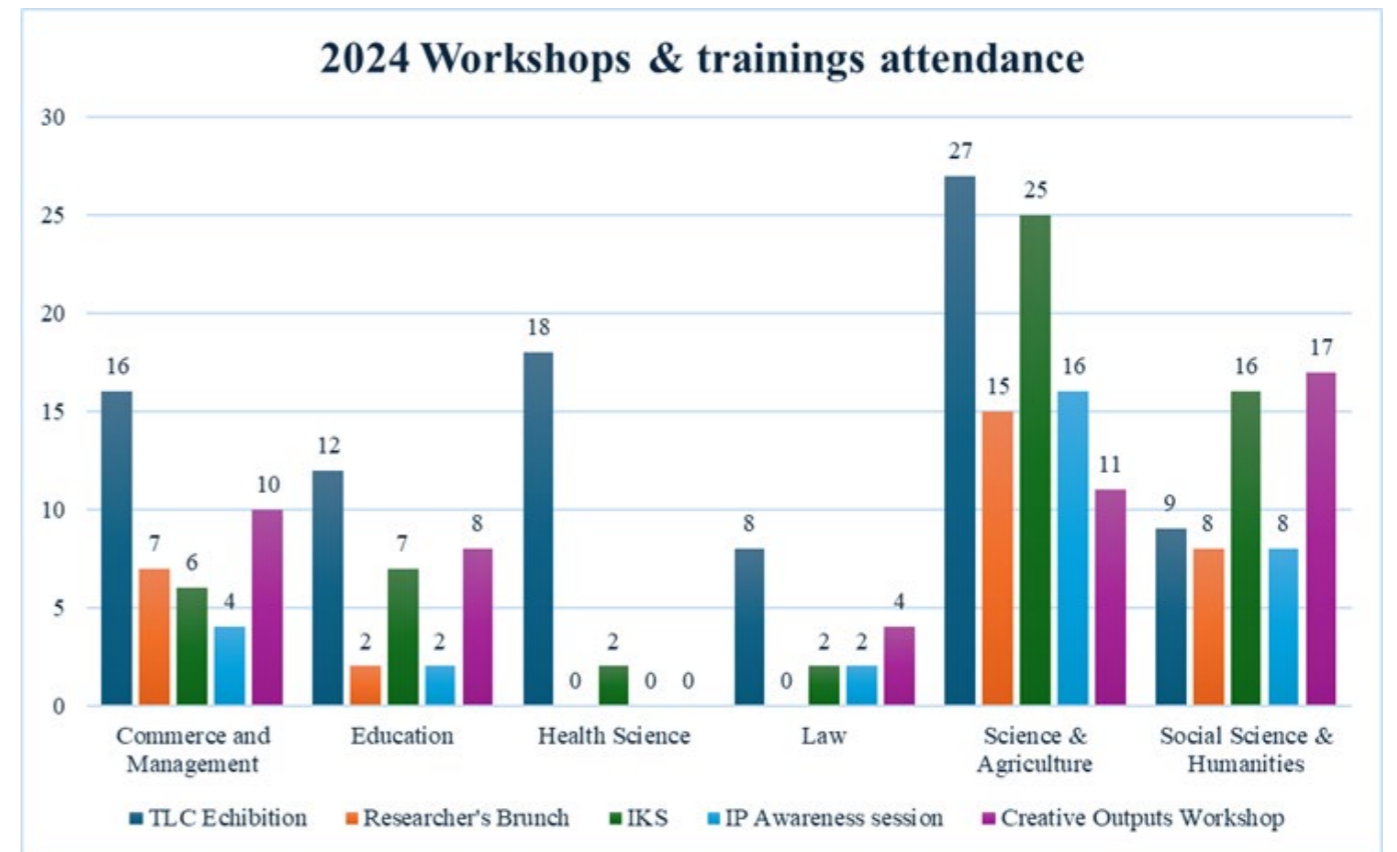


In 2024, we successfully hosted a series of events aimed at fostering research excellence, innovation, and collaboration. These events provided valuable insights, strengthened stakeholder engagement, and supported the growth of research within our institution.

The year began with our annual TLC Exhibition/IP Tech-Pop UP, a platform that highlighted transformative learning and research-driven innovation through interactive displays and discussions. The office hosted the IP Awareness Session, which educated researchers on intellectual property rights, protection strategies, and commercialization opportunities. The Creative Outputs Workshop, where participants explored innovative ways to present their research beyond traditional academic publications. The Researcher's Brunch created a relaxed yet engaging space for networking, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange.

In celebration of World IP Day, we hosted an event highlighting the role of intellectual property in driving innovation, featuring expert discussions on patents, copyrights, and industry applications. Another key event was RWE: Innovation Day, which showcased cutting-edge research projects and technological advancements, fostering dialogue between researchers and industry leaders. The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) session brought attention to the significance of traditional knowledge in modern research, emphasizing the need for preservation and ethical integration.

Each of these events contributed to the broader goal of promoting research impact and collaboration. As we reflect on a successful year, we look forward to building on this momentum, further strengthening our research community, and driving innovation that benefits society.



Success Story

The Fort Hare Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubator: Empowering Youth and Innovating for the Future

The Fort Hare Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubator (FH-CFERI), established in June 2024 and funded by the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), represents a major initiative aimed at nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship within South Africa's rural communities. Located on the University of Fort Hare's Bhisho campus, this centre is dedicated to advancing the growth of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), while providing valuable support to students. With a clear focus on research and practical application, the FH-CFERI seeks to foster a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem and contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

A Hub for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

The FH-CFERI offers a comprehensive incubation programme designed to support a wide range of entrepreneurs. Its key focus areas include:

1. University of Fort Hare students: The Centre provides guidance and support to registered students with innovative business ideas, irrespective of their stage of study. This ensures that students can access vital resources and mentorship to turn their entrepreneurial aspirations into viable businesses.
2. Youth from Raymond Mhlaba and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality: The Centre extends its reach to local youth in these municipalities, offering support to those aspiring to become entrepreneurs. Through this initiative, the Centre encourages young people to explore business opportunities and develop their entrepreneurial skills.
3. Struggling businesses: The Centre also assists students and local youth who already have a business plan or a registered small business but are facing challenges in scaling and growth. By providing targeted support, the FH-CFERI helps entrepreneurs overcome obstacles and expand their ventures.

Comprehensive Support for Entrepreneurs

The FH-CFERI's incubation programme offers a robust range of benefits designed to help entrepreneurs succeed. These include:

- Business development support: The Centre provides expert guidance on business planning, strategy, and management, ensuring entrepreneurs have the tools they need to succeed.
- Technical assistance: Entrepreneurs gain access to technical expertise in various fields, enabling them to tackle industry-specific challenges.
- Access to markets and funding: The Centre connects entrepreneurs with key markets and funding opportunities, increasing their chances of growth and success.
- Networking opportunities: The Centre fosters networking with other entrepreneurs, industry leaders, and potential investors, creating an environment conducive to collaboration and growth.
- Mentoring and coaching: Experienced mentors and coaches guide entrepreneurs, offering personalised advice to help them refine their business models and strategies.
- Intellectual Property (IP) support: In collaboration with the Intellectual Property and Innovation Office, the Centre assists entrepreneurs in registering and protecting their intellectual property, an essential step in safeguarding their innovations.

Vision, Mission, and Core Objectives

The FH-CFERI is guided by a clear vision and mission, which drive its activities and objectives:

- **Vision:** To become a leading, innovative, and sustainable centre for students and SMMEs in rural and marginalised communities.
- **Mission:** To promote the entrepreneurial and innovation development of students and youth through the provision of quality business support services and interventions that will transform rural communities.

The Centre's goals and objectives are aligned with its mission to foster sustainable economic development in rural areas. These include:

1. Catalysing entrepreneurial development within rural communities.
2. Advancing innovations that address the unique challenges faced by rural and marginalised populations.

3. Driving the localisation of Intellectual Property (IP) commercialisation, enabling local entrepreneurs to protect and profit from their innovations.
4. Scaling new technologies that offer practical solutions to the challenges of rural communities.

Key Themes for Focused Innovation

The FH-CFERI's activities are structured around eight thematic areas, which are directly linked to its core objectives:

1. Agriculture
2. Smart Technologies
3. Renewable Energy
4. Food Security
5. Health
6. Sustainable Development
7. Local Economic Development
8. Development Assistance Management

These themes represent sectors that are crucial for rural development, and the Centre's work is focused on developing practical, innovative solutions within these fields.

Core Values

The FH-CFERI operates with a strong set of values that underpin all its activities and interactions. These values include:

- Transformation
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Teamwork
- Professionalism
- Respect

These principles guide the Centre's approach to business support, ensuring that all stakeholders work together towards common goals in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration.

Looking Ahead: Research and Future Growth

The FH-CFERI is not only focused on providing support for entrepreneurship but also on conducting high-impact research that can shape the future of entrepreneurship in South Africa. The Centre plans to publish articles in accredited journals on topics such as the sustainability of business incubators, the effectiveness of incubation programmes, and the challenges faced by emerging entrepreneurs.

Postdoctoral fellows and emerging researchers will play an integral role in advancing this research, while also enhancing their academic profiles. The Centre encourages transdisciplinary research, which fosters collaboration across various fields of study to address complex challenges in entrepreneurship.

In the coming years, the Centre will actively apply for postdoctoral funding from institutions such as the Govan Mbeki Research Development Centre (GMRDC) and the National Research Foundation (NRF) to support this research agenda. By contributing to the academic discourse on entrepreneurship, the FH-CFERI aims to influence policy and practice, ensuring that South Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystem is dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive.

Conclusion

The Fort Hare Centre for Entrepreneurship and Rapid Incubator (FH-CFERI) is a transformative initiative that is set to make a significant impact on the entrepreneurial landscape of South Africa, particularly in rural and marginalised communities. By offering comprehensive support to students, youth, and local entrepreneurs, the Centre not only fosters innovation but also contributes to the economic development of the region. With its focus on research, business development, and community engagement, the FH-CFERI is laying the groundwork for a sustainable entrepreneurial future in South Africa.

Revolutionizing Child Protection: The Development of the Integrated Child Protection Management App (ICPMA)

In today's rapidly changing landscape of social work, integrating technology has become essential for enhancing service delivery. Recognising the urgent need to streamline child protection services and reduce the administrative burdens on social workers, we embarked on a groundbreaking journey to develop the Integrated Child Protection Management App (ICPMA). This initiative represents a transformative leap from traditional social science research into social innovation, bridging the gap between academia and real-world application.

This project is a collaboration between Professor Ulene Schiller from the University of Fort Hare and Professor Marianne Strydom from Stellenbosch University. We are also grateful for the funding we received from the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) to finalise the first phase of the development.

Addressing the Urgent Need in Child Protection

Child protection social workers play a critical role in safeguarding vulnerable children, yet they face significant challenges. High caseloads, extensive documentation, and fragmented communication often hinder their ability to provide timely interventions. Research consistently highlights the administrative overload in child protection services, which leaves social workers stretched thin and limits their capacity for direct engagement with children and families.

Our research into these challenges laid the groundwork for the ICPMA, an innovative solution to enhance efficiency, improve case management, and ultimately ensure better outcomes for children. By leveraging technology, we aimed to create a platform that reduces paperwork, facilitates seamless communication, and provides real-time data access for social workers in the field.

From Research to Innovation: Closing the Gap

Traditionally, social science research has been critical in understanding societal issues, but it has often fallen short in delivering practical, technology-driven solutions. With the ICPMA, we have taken research a step further by transforming insights into tangible innovation. Our development process involved close collaboration with child protection organisations, social workers, and government departments across South Africa. This user-centred approach ensured that the app was tailored to meet the specific needs of the professionals who will use it daily.

The prototype phase of the ICPMA has been intensive yet rewarding. Through iterative testing and feedback from frontline social workers, we have created an intuitive, user-friendly interface that streamlines reporting, case tracking, and information sharing. By integrating best practices from social work with digital technology, we have developed a tool that not only simplifies workflows but also enhances accountability and service coordination.

A Call to Action: The Future of Social Work Innovation

The development of the ICPMA is just the beginning. As we refine the prototype and move toward full-scale implementation, we invite stakeholders in the child protection sector to join us in this revolutionary shift. The success of social work in the digital era hinges on collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and technology developers. By embracing innovation, we can redefine child protection services and ensure that no child falls through the cracks due to systemic inefficiencies.

The ICPMA is more than just an app; it is a testament to the power of research-driven social innovation. It serves

as a beacon of progress, demonstrating how academia can extend beyond theoretical contributions to create solutions that change lives. We are not merely studying social challenges; we are actively solving them.

Join us in shaping the future of child protection, where technology empowers social workers, strengthens interventions, and, most importantly, safeguards the well-being of our children. In the ever-evolving landscape of social work, the integration of technology has become a crucial step toward enhancing service delivery. Recognising the urgent need to streamline child protection services and alleviate administrative burdens on social workers, we embarked on a groundbreaking journey—developing the Integrated Child Protection Management App (ICPMA). This initiative marks a transformative leap from conventional social science research into the realm of social innovation, bridging the gap between academia and real-world application.



Prof Marianne Strydom
Stellenbosch University



Prof Ulene Schiller
University of Fort Hare

MEET THE NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Nozibele Ntshatsha - Research and Innovation Marketing Intern

Ms. Nozibele Ntshatsha holds a Baccalaureus Technologies (BTech) in Marketing from the Central University of Technology. She joined the Intellectual Property and Innovation Office as a marketing intern in November 2024. As an emerging marketing professional, she aims to gain creative insight into developing innovative campaigns and building impactful brand strategies.



Elihle Mayekiso - Intellectual Property Intern

Mr. Elihle Mayekiso is a dedicated and ambitious young professional who holds an LLB degree and a Bachelor of Commerce in Law. In 2024, he joined the Intellectual Property and Innovation Office as an intern, bringing with him a strong academic foundation in legal principles. Mr. Mayekiso is passionate about contributing meaningfully to the development, protection, and commercialization of innovative ideas within the organization.



Ms. Qhama Kalimashe - Intellectual Property Intern

Qhama Kalimashe is a committed young professional who holds a Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Geology, as well as a Bachelor of Science undergraduate degree majoring in Chemistry and Geology. Her Honours thesis focused on the spatial modeling of heavy metals in wetland groundwater, utilizing extensive data analysis of groundwater and soil samples to assess contamination levels and develop strategies for sustainable water resource management. She is skilled in data interpretation, groundwater assessment, and the application of sustainable practices. Qhama is highly driven, adaptable under pressure, and passionate about contributing to innovative, forward-thinking teams.



Looking Ahead

As we conclude an eventful 2024, the Innovation Office remains committed to advancing intellectual property management, supporting researchers, and driving commercialization efforts. We encourage all researchers to continue engaging with our office for guidance on protecting and leveraging their innovations for societal impact.

For inquiries, please contact the **UFH Intellectual Property & Innovation Office.**

Together, we transform research into impact!





University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Acknowledgements

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