



## From the desk of the Editor-in-Chief, Mbali Mkhize

### Our people, our best assets.

The past few months have seen Dr Enoch Duma Malaza, our Vice-Chancellor, engaging with students, staff, alumni, government, business and the media about building the future of MUT. The essence of his message? "We need to put our people first as the major asset of the University. Our people and stakeholders should emerge as winners against the backdrop of the evolving technologies embodied in the 4th Industrial Revolution - a revolution that has the potential to bring about both serious winners and serious losers. There could be inequality in societies, resulting in the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor," he says. Is the University heeding the call to create winners?

There are numerous initiatives responding to this imperative, one of them being the first summit on Teaching & Learning, held by the Teaching & Learning Development Centre. Another is the National Science Week hosted by the Faculty of Natural Sciences, which focused on taking science to the people through this year's theme of "Deepening democracy through science". This objective also underpins the Vice-Chancellor's anchor strategy of making MUT an enabler to students and the communities they come from.

Our Marketing & Communications Department (MarComms) held its 7th Empowered Administrators Conference, themed "Embracing the 4th Industrial Revolution", in September 2018. This is the only conference in South Africa that focuses exclusively on office professionals and is organised by a University; and the only one addressing the 4th Industrial Revolution. For a University set in the middle of a township (again, the only one in South Africa), this illustrates that one's location does not define one. There are great ideas coming from MUT and even greater plans are in the pipeline.

Soon, we will be known for new initiatives, augmenting the VC's strategy of harnessing thought leadership and ensuring that MUT achieves national and international eminence. Soon, MUT will be known as a conference destination, using our coastal location as a draw card; and our people's expertise will be cited and requested both nationally and internationally. The awards received by professors Haupt and Dlamini are testimony to the fact that MUT has what it takes to make an impact both near and far.



# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S TAKE

## New Vice-Chancellor set on advancing MUT towards the 4th Industrial Revolution and beyond



Dr Malaza, MUT Vice-Chancellor & Principal

Inspired by the resilience of MUT, which has never lost sight of the goal of academic excellence or forgotten the dream of its founder, Dr Enoch Duma Malaza sums up his approach to the University in this message to stakeholders: "We dare not forget today that we are heirs of the pioneering spirit and vision of our founding fathers. We stand to excel in educating and empowering the disadvantaged communities they sought to serve".

Understanding the complexity of leading a township-based university, Dr Malaza's first task has been to engage various stakeholders internally, as well as business, alumni, government and the non-profit sector. At the heart of his approach is the belief that "the imperative for MUT is self-reliance, self-belief and building sustainable futures; this should drive our 2020-2025 Strategy to Shape and Own the Future".

After extensive consultations with staff, Dr Malaza formulated his strategic intent thus (excerpted from the original):

The purpose of our Strategy to Shape and Own the Future constitutes a response to the global trends shaping higher education, national policy imperatives and the challenges of this 4th Industrial Revolution.

We have to start where we are to build the future of MUT. Our primary strategic advantage lies in being a public residential university serving previously disadvantaged communities, with the hub of our academic activities within a metropole that has a vibrant, multicultural population and a dynamic, growing economy. We stand to be a leader in educating and empowering our communities and matching the needs of our region. We should be resolute in facing the challenge of being a young and previously disadvantaged university that still needs to develop the infrastructure and expertise necessary to achieve status at the level of a mature research university.

We are committing to change at a time when the growth and fusion of technologies is blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres of our lives. Change is evolving at an exponential rather than linear speed and space, disrupting almost every industry in every country. It is resulting in positive benefits of long-term gains in efficiency, productivity and an increase in safe and rewarding jobs, on the one hand, and undesirable consequences such as greater inequality in society and the displacement of workers by technology, on the other hand. This 4th Industrial Revolution has serious winners and losers. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening fast globally.

It is our duty to ameliorate the undesirable consequences of this revolution for our communities. Our staff, students and stakeholders must reap the benefits of this change by participating in it and being protected from the long-term adverse effects of exclusion. This people-centric ambition is the foundation of our strategy. We aim to shape and own a future that works for all, that puts people first and empowers them to cope with the evolving world.

To achieve this, we will offer every member of the University community the following key foundational skills and perspectives to provide a foundation for the MUT experience:

- Firstly, a transformative leadership skill so that we are guided by critical thinking, analytical and reflective evaluation, and the ability to effect positive change. We have to cultivate this perspective in the endeavours of our staff as well as in the educational experience of all our graduates through their learning and their university experiences.
- Secondly, the ability to embrace diversity: As individuals and social or cultural groups within the University, we aim to understand and value the differences among us as members of the University. This perspective will shape how we view the world, express ourselves, relate to each other, and fulfil our intellectual and moral obligations.
- Thirdly, the attributes of global citizenship: We aim to equip our university community members with the technological, communicative, social and cultural knowledge and skills, as well as the practical experience, that will enable them to lead and succeed in an ever more intensively connected global world.

Dr Malaza's short, medium and long-term goals have created a new discourse for MUT. Engagements with staff have resulted in a consensus on a new mission, a new vision for MUT, new values and foundational themes for MUT. We have a long road ahead to build a future with requisite academic capabilities. We aim to achieve a revitalised academic value for the 4th Industrial Revolution by providing knowledge and learning that:

- advances the professions, business, industry, government and our communities;
- is aligned to emerging fields of knowledge and scholarship;
- advances knowledge and understanding among our communities; and
- offers a decolonised curriculum that inspires a truly African identity.

Winds of change are blowing! The 'solutionist approach' is the buzz word; greater team work and collaborations are visible; the strengthening of governance processes is underway; and there are many more initiatives springing up.



Dr Malaza and Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, MUT Founder