

DST/NRF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE DIRECTORS' FORUM 2012

Prepared from documents supplied by the NRF

The National Research Foundation (NRF) in conjunction with the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) hosted the annual Centres of Excellence (CoE) Symposium on Tuesday 13 November 2012 at the Sanlam Conference Centre, University of Pretoria. The theme of the 2012 forum was "CoEs Closing the Gap: Research and Impact". The aim of the event was to provide a platform for the CoEs to showcase their work, share ideas, experiences and raise pertinent issues. The event also offered an opportunity to reflect on impact emanating from research conducted in the CoEs. Furthermore, ASSAf could reflect on how best to collaborate and utilize research for evidence-based policy development. The ASSAf Advisory Panel engaged with presenters during discussions and, at a later stage, was tasked with providing a written report on the best ways for and how scientists can and are contributing to evidence-based practices.

Each CoE was responsible for setting up an exhibition stand, which could be viewed all day by delegates, promoting the research and achievements of the CoE. The CTHB exhibit was eye catching and drew much attention. We want to thank Osmond Mlonyeni, Kershney Naidoo and Mmatshepho Phasha for their hard work and enthusiasm in preparing, setting up and manning the exhibit.

At 09:00 the new NRF CoE Website was launched and all attendees had the opportunity to interact with the Director General of the DST, Dr Phil Mjwara. Proceedings officially started at 09:45 when Prof Cheryl de la Rey, Rector of the University of Pretoria, welcomed everyone to the Annual Forum. Dr Mjwara gave the keynote address and Prof Dave Woods of ASSAf mentioned ASSAf's role at the Forum. Each of the nine CoE Directors together with one student from each CoE had half an hour to showcase the achievements of their CoE and to share experiences of the CoE influence. After a discussion on the way forward for CoEs post 2013, Dr Andrew Kaniki of the NRF concluded the meeting.

After the meeting the CoE Directors, NRF top Executive represented by Dr Kaniki and Dr Nthabiseng Taole and DST represented by Mr Bheki Hadebe continued discussions relating to the CoEs and the way forward for the next five year period. This was done during a closed management meeting at FABI. Finally, all enjoyed cheese and wine refreshments in the

FABI courtyard together with core team members of the CTHB research team as well at the CTHB supported students at FABI.



A. Andrew Kaniki (NRF). **B.** Albert van Jaarsveld, (CEO, NRF) **C.** From left to right: Kershney Naidoo, Brenda Wingfield, Mmatshepho Phasha, Osmond Mlonyeni and Mike Edwards at the CTHB exhibit. **D.** Cheryl de la Rey (Rector, UP) with Phil Mjwara (DG, DST). **E.** Left to right: Frank Mazibuko (NRF), Emma Steenkamp, Tuan Duong and Ayanda Zondi (NRF) at FABI function **F.** Bheki Hadebe (DST) his son, and Mike Wingfield, also at the FABI function.