

New Energy Leadership Centre to address energy shortages in Africa

A first for South Africa and the continent, the African Energy Leadership Centre (ELC) at Wits Business School will be a hub of teaching and research aimed at addressing the issues of energy shortages in Africa as well as the skills deficit in an industry which of vital importance to economic growth on the continent.



Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, Deputy Vice Chancellor at Wits University, sits together with Raakshani Sing, Executive Manager at CHIETA during the signing ceremony of Africa's first Energy Leadership Centre (ELC), officially launched at the Wits Business School. They are flanked by Dr Rod Crompton, newly-appointed Director of the ELC (on the left) and Maurice Radebe, Deputy Vice President: Energy and Sustainability at Sasol (on the right).

Picture credit: Debbie Yazbek

“Africa has vast untapped energy potential and will be one of the fastest growing regions for power demand in the next decade. And yet the region’s development is hampered by energy shortages,” said Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, deputy vice chancellor at Wits University.

“There is a scarce skills crisis in the energy sector which must be addressed. The energy workforce is aging, and fewer young skilled workers are entering the industry as access to energy training and education is limited. In fact, many have to go overseas to receive training which is very costly,” said Dr Rod Crompton, newly-appointed director of the ELC. “Energy in Africa is increasingly being provided by the private sector and we need to equip future leaders to manage the challenges of this burgeoning sector, an environment which is becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent.”

The centre will offer both a postgraduate diploma and a master's degree in energy leadership, as well as executive education short courses and seminars, and will interact with historically disadvantaged research universities across Africa.

"I am honoured to be the first director of the first African Energy Leadership Centre and thank all those who have worked hard to get to this day, including the Wits Business School for having the vision, and to our funding partners, the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA) who have generously given R5-million towards the centre."

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