

10 SA universities get R1.55bn philanthropic funding

Local and international philanthropists donated R1.55bn to 10 South African universities in 2019 - and when income from Sector Education and Training Authorities (Setas) is added, total giving increased to more than R1.94bn.



Nazeemah Mbamed, executive director of Inyathelo. | Source: Supplied

This funding represents a R30m increase on the previous combined total of R1.91bn received in 2018, and can be largely attributed to some universities investing in professional fundraising, alumni relations and support staff.

The 10 South African universities that took part in the survey were the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), University of Cape Town (UCT), Durban University of Technology (DUT), University of the Free State (UFS), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), University of Pretoria (UP), University of Stellenbosch, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits).

The research was undertaken on behalf of Inyathelo by Professor Beverley Thaver, Professor of Higher Education at the University of the Western Cape.



These findings are according to the latest Annual Survey of Philanthropy in Higher Education (Aspihe), just released by Inyathelo, The South African Institute for Advancement.

More Aspihe findings include:

- 1. Donor numbers:** The total number of donors grew from 10,856 in 2018 to 12,554 in 2019, an increase of 1,698 donors. This compares to 4,355 donors in 2013 when the first survey was conducted.
- 2. South African sources:** Local donors were responsible for over two-thirds of income. This is unchanged from the previous year, at 69%, but is 16% higher than in 2013.
- 3. International sources:** Foreign donors were responsible for nearly a third of income (31%) although they numbered only 10% of total donors.
- 4. Mean gift sizes:** Donation sizes were significantly higher among international donors, because the majority of them are organisations. The majority of South African givers are individual donors.
- 5. Growth in the size of grants and donations:** Growth by local trusts and foundations outstripped that of foreign trusts and foundations in 2019.
- 6. Fund distribution:** Nearly half (49%) of donations were intended for student funding, 17% for teaching and learning, 9% for community engagement, 3% for infrastructure and 7% other initiatives.
- 7. Traditional versus non-traditional universities:** Traditional universities (generally long-established and known for their research) comprised 70% of the sample. These attracted 96% of international philanthropic resources, or R1.48bn. Non-traditional institutions attracted only 4% of total international resources.

“Aspihe continues to provide a rigorous and in-depth overview of philanthropic support to universities in South Africa,” says Nazeema Mohamed, executive director of Inyathelo. “This research reveals the commitment of global and South African philanthropy to the South African university sector, and also showcases the important role of Advancement offices in managing philanthropic support.”



SA philanthropist Carolyn Steyn receives French knighthood

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Seta support

The report notes that Seta funding increases income for non-traditional universities, relative to traditional universities. While this boosts the total income, it obscures the fact that non-traditional universities are less favoured in philanthropy and giving, both domestically and internationally.

“We need to investigate the reasons for preferential support of the research universities, and whether there are specific concerns or risks associated with funding the non-traditional universities.

“The continuation of a skewed funding regime will continue to impact inequality in South Africa and limit the growth of the whole system. Universities of Technology and comprehensive universities are important contributors to skills development and research in South Africa, and we need to optimise their potential,” Mohamed said.