

Thuli Madonsela to head up Stellenbosch University's Centre for Social Justice

Thuli Madonsela has been appointed the inaugural director of the new Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) at Stellenbosch University (SU). The launch of the CSJ was made public at the third International Social Justice Conference on 11 October.



Thuli Madonsela, director of Stellenbosch University's new Centre for Social Justice

Previously the Chair in Social Justice in the Faculty of Law at SU, the initiative has transitioned into the CSJ.

In announcing Madonsela's appointment, the dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Nicola Smit, said the mission of the CSJ would be to promote "social justice scholarship and consciousness as well as public policy design skills and collaboration, in both academia and society".

Madonsela thanked all stakeholders who were journeying with her and her team in their quest to accelerate the pace of responding to the constitutional call to establish a peaceful society based on social justice and where every citizen's life is improved and everyone's potential freed.

According to Madonsela, the CSJ's flagship project would be the Musa Plan for Social Justice, which aims to mobilise societal, corporate and international support and resources towards the accelerated reduction of poverty and inequality.



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The four key result areas of the Musa Plan are:

1. attuning law reform and policy/programme design to social justice outcomes by leveraging data science and adequately disaggregated data to avoid laws, policies and programmes that exacerbate inequality and poverty;
2. fostering social accountability and cohesion, primarily through legal and constitutional literacy as well as bridge-building dialogue platforms;
3. contributing to the state's capacity for constitutionally attuned and ethical governance and leadership; and
4. leveraging civil-society resources to fund initiatives that aim to accelerate the ending of poverty and break the back of structural inequality by 2030.

"The centre will house all academic programmes and social impact projects currently undertaken by the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice. It will also be the entity through which all future academic scholarship and social impact projects of the Law Trust Chair are undertaken," said Madonsela.

Collaborative entity

At its core, the CSJ will be a collaborative entity, both in its academic and social impact initiatives, said Smit. "The centre is an academic and research entity that resides in the Faculty of Law, but its constitution explicitly acknowledges the importance of working with the different faculties of the university, other higher education institutions, and public and private as well as local and international enterprises and stakeholders.

"The law is but one building block towards realising social justice," she added, "and the CSJ is a vehicle to help coordinate the efforts of lawyers, academics, activists and community organisations towards realising this goal."

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