

# Global Conversations on Postgraduate Education: *Exploring Pan-African Connections*

**June 29, 2022**

*Webinar co-led with*



# Webinar Logistics

- Please submit questions at any time through the Q&A feature in your Zoom toolbar.
- The recording and presentation slides will be emailed to registrants as well as posted to the CGS website after the live event.
- The chat is available to all attendees. Conversation in the chat among attendees is encouraged.

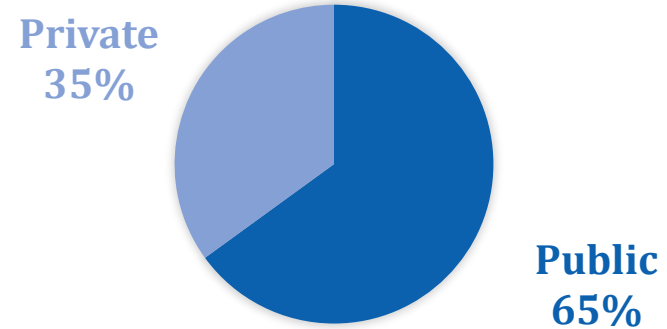
# Agenda

- Welcome
  - Suzanne Ortega**, Council of Graduate Schools
  - Shireen Motala**, University of Johannesburg
  - Stephanie Burton**, Community of Practice in Postgraduate Education and Scholarship, Universities South Africa
- Introduction of Speakers
  - Janet Rutledge**, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- *Postgraduate Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects*
  - Charles Ambler**, University of Texas El Paso
- Roundtable Discussion
  - Robert Darko Osei**, University of Ghana, Dean, School of Graduate Studies
  - Fulufhelo Godfrey Netswera**, Executive Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences,  
Durban University of Technology
  - Adham Ramadan**, Associate Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, The  
American University in Cairo
- Moderated Questions

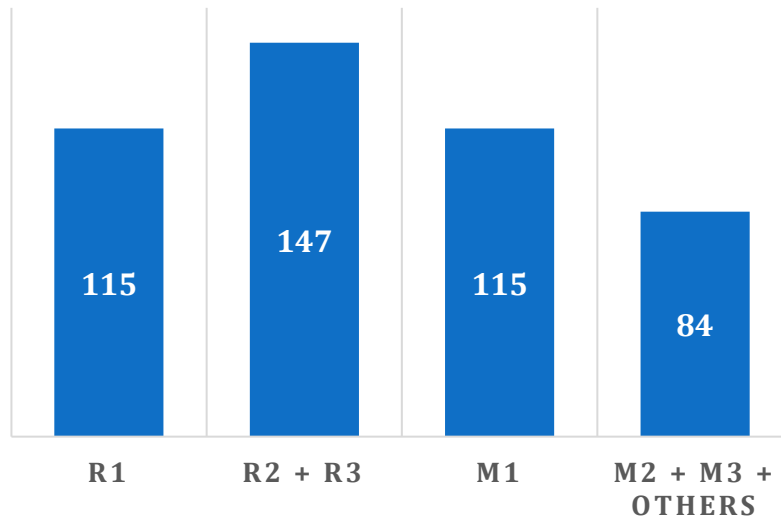
# About CGS

**~500** U.S. and Canadian  
Member Universities

**30** International Members



## CGS Members by Carnegie Classification



**1,849,606** Aggregate Enrollment  
(master's & doctoral students)

## CGS Members in the U.S. Award

**476,616**  
*master's degrees*  
*annually*

**60,823**  
*doctoral degrees*  
*annually*

*Sources: Council of Graduate Schools and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS. All CGS statistics, excluding the total numbers of institutional members, are as of August 2018.*

**Pan African Global Conversations  
Council of Graduate Schools ( CGS)**

**SARChI Chair in Teaching & Learning  
University of Johannesburg South Africa**

**Prof Shireen Motala  
29 June 2022**



Chair  
Awarded  
July 2020,  
Began 1  
October  
2020  
Tier 1

- The focus of the research programme expands on the priority areas of academic teaching, academic learning and the academic curriculum within the following themes:

Theme 1: Teaching Excellence : Undergraduate Education

Theme 2: Equity, Access and Success: Undergraduate Education

**Theme 3: Access and Success: Supervision for Quality Postgraduate education**

**Theme 4: Socially Just Pedagogy and the Decolonisation of the Curriculum**

- Conceptual starting points, social justice, cognitive justice, epistemic access, equity, humanizing pedagogies
- Chair expectations – student and research outputs, national and global partnerships, knowledge contribution

#### Key Partners:

- AMCHES, CITE - SARChi Chair ITE, PGS, U21 network, USAF Council of Graduate Schools , local and international partners
- New partners, those present here today, and ongoing consultations with DVCs Research and T&L, CHE, NRF

# Key Issues in current Research in PG SoTL and contextual issues

## KEY ISSUES

- Does focus on scale compromise quality in postgraduate studies?
- Mismatch between resource allocation and ambition institutionally and nationally (NDP)
- Address disciplinary differences and equitable access in postgraduate pathways
- Modelling researcher capacity development in postgraduate education
- Pedagogical issues and the scholarship of postgraduate T&L
- Critical look at postgraduate ADS, does “deficit” model guide interventions
- The role and purpose of the doctorate and doctorateness
- The pedagogy of supervision, decolonized approaches
- During COVID-19, focus on technology and different modalities to deliver postgraduate teaching and learning and impact on research process

# Aim and Impact



On **policy making**, institutional and system-wide regulations and practices in Southern Africa. Contributing to **discourses, debates, and research** on teaching and learning Nationally, the Global South and Internationally



Sharpen **philosophical and theoretical stances** that inform the curriculum and pedagogical practices Africa-wide/internationally



**Strategize around the levels of visible contribution, content, and actions**, based on demands/response analysis of audiences of the Chair, and its advisory group through the Chair leadership, and research teams contribution



Measure impact of the contribution to scholarship, **in a Pan African and global south context through enhanced partnerships**



# Developing Research Areas

- Supervision models, and its relationship to the postgraduate life cycle, retention and completion
- Decolonization of research and supervision
- Models of support, what works, mentorship, peer support, and the 'third space', develop a SA vitae framework ( UK model)
- Tracking the postgraduate journey, what contributes to success, dropout, stop in and out
- Academic literacies and the role of writing support
- Transformative and humanizing pedagogies and social justice within doctoral studies
- Best practice and innovation in postgraduate education
- Knowledge construction, a decolonized postgraduate curriculum and assessment

# Unresolved problematic in PG Education

#RhodesMustFall  
Nibbling at Resilient  
Colonialism in South Africa



- Francis B. Nyamnjoh -



Photo graph: <https://alchetron.com/Rhodes-Must-Fall>



# Theme 3: SARChI Chair - Postgraduate teaching and learning

## Summary of Research Activities

**Activities:** PG T&L workshops from November 2020 led to the establishment of a reference group, national & international partnerships

**Differentiation in SA HE & Profile of postgraduate studies, size and shape** CHE supported

**Supervision models** and their relationship to postgraduate completion. Analyse CHE/NRF doctoral review

**Decolonization of supervision**

Decolonial knowledge building, decolonisation within African universities related to PG T&L, gender

**Rethinking the doctoral process**

Conceptual, creative learning journeys for resilient academic identities, critical discourses on the 'knowledge economy'

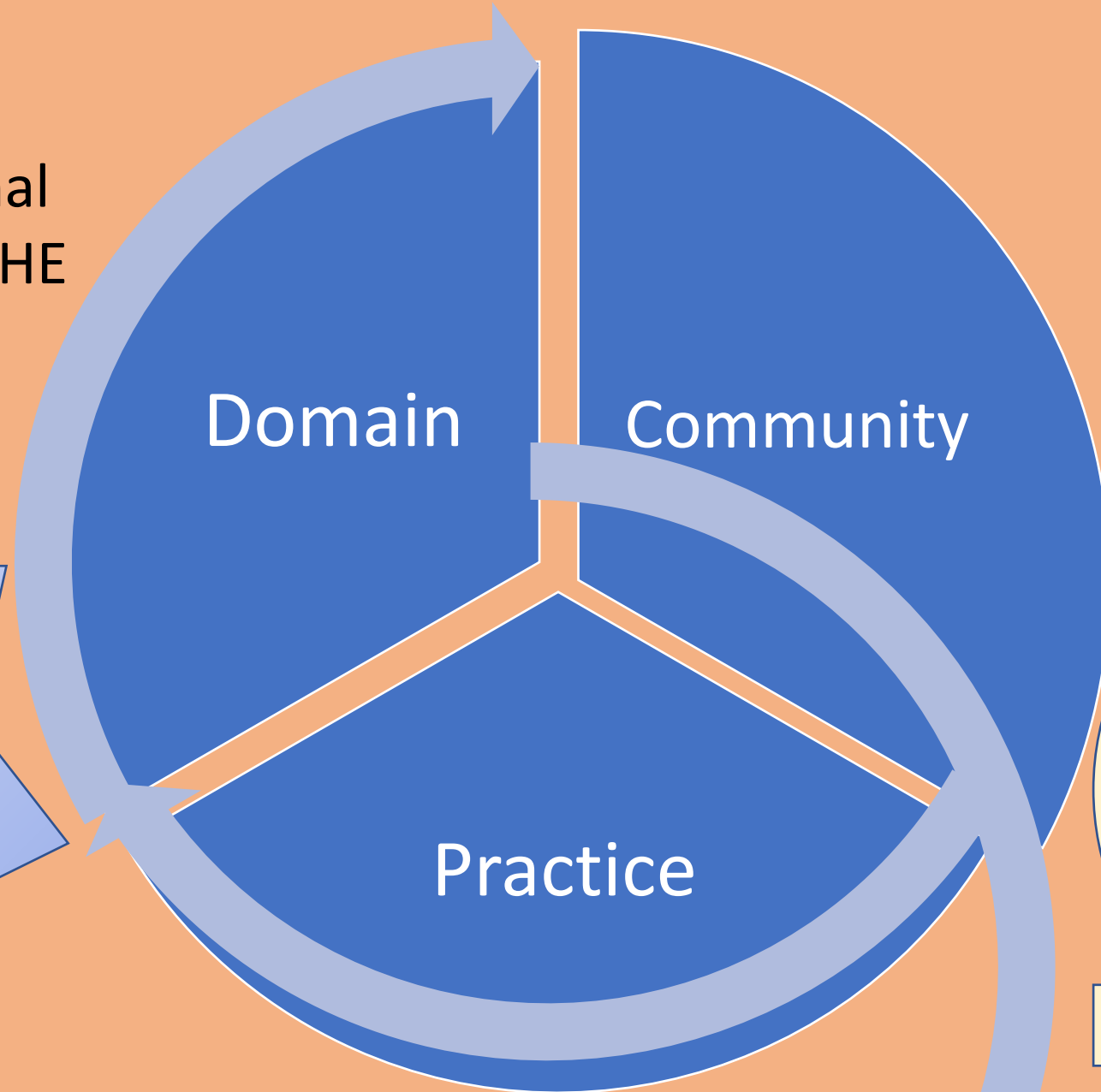
**IKS and doctoral education** Joint project with the Prof C Manathunga Australia ( ARC funded)

Establishing a pan African graduate network with Prof Suzanne Ortega, president CGS

Book project on postgraduate T&L in the Global South with U21 partners ( University of Chile, Hong Kong & India)

Educational  
Research HE

Supervisors, PG  
Students,  
Collaborators



Collaboration Themes

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP (CoP PGES) JUNE 2022



UNIVERSITIES  
SOUTH AFRICA

**Professor Stephanie Burton**  
**June 2022**

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# IMPLEMENTING THE OUTCOMES OF A STUDY ON BUILDING A CADRE OF EMERGING SCHOLARS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

UPDATE – MAY 2021



by Professor Stephanie Burton  
May 2021

**One of the key recommendations of the study was for the establishment of a sector-wide community of practice focusing on postgraduate education and supervision, and the development of early career researchers and academics.**



science & innovation

Department:  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National  
Research  
Foundation

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**A national strategy group focusing on postgraduate education -**

**A national Community of Practice on postgraduate education and training was proposed.**

- A forum for sharing of best practice
- A strategic think tank
- A lobby to advocate for matters relating to postgraduate education
- Coordination of national activities focussing on postgraduate training and capacity development
- A national platform for discussion, interaction and recommendations
- Collation of information from participating universities
- Facilitation of cooperation and collaboration.



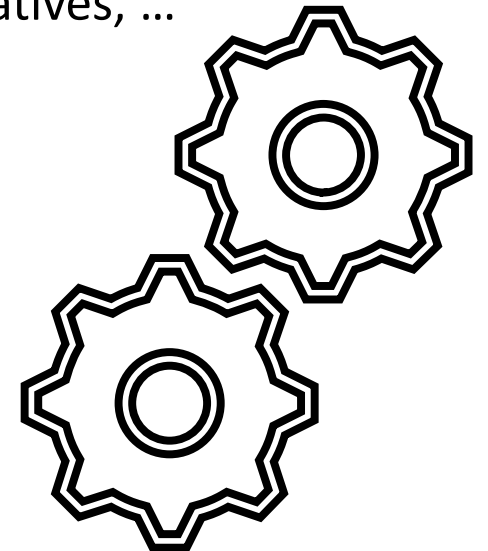
# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

## A community of practice (CoP)

- is a “group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.” (Wenger, 2002)
- facilitates/enhances learning around a particular topic and can help/enable people in their work
- is an acknowledged part of organisational development

## Key components

- **A core group** | Coordinator(s) and managers of the COP, probably from partner institutions
- **Inner circle** | Steering group - engaged experts – academics, agency representatives, ...
- **Outer circle** | Any interested members ranging from:
  - Novices wanting to learn
  - Practitioners wanting to share/learn
  - Collaborating sector-specific focus groups
- **Knowledge repository**





# GAPS AND NEEDS IDENTIFIED

Areas of concern: **Training and supervision | Networking | Monitoring and evaluation**

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## Supervision

Identified needs included **improved supervisor training and mentorship for young academics**.

Several universities noted that they had insufficient **capacity for training of supervisors**, and **limited internal capacity** to supervise postgraduate research-based programmes.

Concerns were expressed about the **quality of the supervision**, and about **stress** experienced by supervisors and postgraduate students.

## Mentorship

It has been noted widely that ECAs tend to be lacking in supervisory skills, and there is need for mentors to advise them, in addition to training programmes.

There is **a need for experienced mentors** (who can be from outside of the institution) with expertise in specific fields as well as for general guidance. It has been noted that there may be issues regarding institutional culture and power dynamics, in internal mentorship programmes. A shortage of black South African mentors was also noted.

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# PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR CoP IN 2022

## Further consultation and information gathering

- Compilation of more detailed information on current capacity and programmes at universities – discussions with representatives of all universities.
- The identified gaps and needs will form the first focus areas for the CoP.

## Activities of the CoP

- Support for training of supervisors
  - **quality, dynamics,**
- Development of postgraduate supervision models and (online) modules
  - Structure and collaboration, Transformative models**
- Focus on teaching and learning at higher degree levels
  - Doctorateness, Theoretical approaches, Social justice and equity**
- Advocacy in matters relating to postgraduate education
  - Funding / resourcing, accountability and responsibility**
- Coordination of national activities such as conferences, colloquia, workshops, and seminars.
  - including student colloquia, SARChI seminars, DD Review**

# THANK YOU



UNIVERSITIES  
SOUTH AFRICA



PROF STEPHANIE G BURTON  
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**Council of Graduate School Webinar**  
**June 29, 2022**

## **Postgraduate Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects**

**Charles Ambler**

**Formerly Dean-in-Residence**

**Council of Graduate Schools**

**Professor Emeritus of History and former Dean of the Graduate School**

**University of Texas at El Paso**

**[cambler@utep.edu](mailto:cambler@utep.edu)**

# Background: Higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa

- **The CGS Africa/Global South Project**
- **Independence in West, East and Central Africa: colonial heritage vs universities for national development**
  - **S.O. Biobaku, later Vice Chancellor of Univ of Nigeria, Lagos: universities “really are the most urgent need in Africa.... African universities must enter the lists in the adventure of nation building.” (1963)**
- **1970s oil crisis and economic recession and political upheaval**
- **1980s IMF/World Bank neo-liberal structural adjustment program**
- **1990s change: higher education and the “knowledge economy”**

# Postgraduate Education Trends

- **Historical legacy**
  - **AFGRAD/ATLAS and similar international programs**
  - **Growth in higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa:**
    - 1970s: approximately 200,000 univ students**
    - 2015: 6 million+**
    - Large increase in the numbers of institutions**
    - 1990s shift—World Bank**
    - Knowledge economy and global competitiveness**
  - **Higher education in South Africa**

# **Building Postgraduate Education “Africa Rising”**

**Carnegie Foundation 2013:**

**“Broad agreement that Africa needs tens of thousands more PhDs in order to renew an aging professoriate, staff the rapidly expanding higher education field, boost research and generate the high-level skills growing economies need”**

**How will that need be met? Nigeria: 250,000 postgrad students at more than 75 institutions**

**What roles do global partnerships have to play?**

## What do we Know?

**British Council/DAAD study (2018):** *Building PhD Capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Report sponsored by the British Council and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), June 2018. This report includes links to the detailed reports for six countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Sénégal, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa.

[https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/h233\\_07\\_synthesis\\_report\\_final\\_web.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/h233_07_synthesis_report_final_web.pdf)

Mouton, Johan et al. *The State of the South African Research Enterprise*. DST-NRF Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and Science, Technology and Innovation Policy. Stellenbosch University, 2019.



## Issues in the Development of Postgraduate Education

- **Should postgraduate education be a priority for African universities? Where will the resources come from?**
- **Should PhD and other postgrad programs be concentrated in relatively elite universities (AARUs) or dispersed?**
- **How to align PhD programming, research investment and economic development? What place is there for social science and humanities?**
- **How to resolve the tension between equity and “quality”?**
- **Are traditional models of PhD training sustainable?**
- **What about master’s education, and in particular professional master’s programs?**

## Key Initiatives

- World Bank African Centers of Excellence (ACE), 2014-
- Pan Africa University (PAU) [ <https://pau-au.Africa/> ], 2010-
- African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), 1988-
- RUFORUM (Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture) [ <https://www.ruforum.org/about-us> ], 2004
- Carnegie Corporation/American Council of Learned Societies, Fellowships for Africa-based PhD students and post docs in the humanities

[ <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deals/African-Humanities-Program> ]