

Transformation Indaba 2021

Strengthening our transformation structures

Welcoming remarks (Prof Nico Koopman)

Focus of the day (Dr Zethu Mkhize)

Keynote address (Prof Rozena Maart)

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List of abbreviations

AAC	Academic Advisory Council
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
FTC	Faculty Transformation Committee
FVZS Institute	Frederik van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development
ITC	Institutional Transformation Committee
MASC	Military Academy Student Council
PASS	Professional and administrative support staff
RC	Responsibility Centre
SITC	Student Institutional Transformation Committee
SITP	Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel
SRC	Student Representative Council
SU	Stellenbosch University
TO	Transformation Office
TP	Transformation Plan
TSR	Tygerberg Student Representative Council
VC	Vice-Chancellor



Welcome to the Transformation Indaba

Prof Nico Koopman, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel (DVC: SITP), in his welcoming remarks highlighted that the Transformation Indaba is an event that reminds the Stellenbosch University (SU) community about the transformation journey of the institution. He foregrounded the progress made by SU in developing a working definition of transformation that is based on the Bill of Rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. He accentuated how the university had adopted the principles of the Constitution as both the ends and means of transformation at SU. He underscored transformation of the university and through the university as the university tries to impact all spheres of society transformatively. He reminded the participants that transformation was the responsibility of and mandate for all and should be embedded in all functionaries and divisions at the institution.

Prof Koopman acknowledged the challenge that the university was facing concerning the cementing of prejudices in the policies and decisions, practices and actions, structures and systems, and processes and procedures of the university. He mentioned the ambivalence of SU's progress with transformation and the need for continuous diagnosis. The mandate for SU is to ensure that transformation is accelerated by enhancing implementation, explicitly articulating transformation, promoting reporting by all environments and ensuring that stronger accountability mechanisms are in place. Deepening of transformation by building transformation competencies for all and making transformation an explicit part of agendas is a necessity for SU. He encouraged the SU community to do transformation together despite the differences within the community.

Prof Koopman stated that the event was about structuring and reporting transformation for the SU community to determine how to report on transformation more effectively.

Focus of the day

The Transformation Indaba is the annual event of the SU community where an opportunity is created for the university to engage collectively on matters of transformation. It is aimed at assessing the progress made and identifying gaps in the quest for embedded transformation.

The 2021 Transformation Indaba was a closed session in which only the transformation structures at SU participated. There was a shift in the structure of the event from the traditional format of framing the conversations around 'flashpoints' for SU to a dialogue focusing on specific themes. The shift was necessitated by the intended outcome, which was strengthening the transformation structures at SU. The reasons for the shift were 1) the seemingly ineffective role of the Institutional Transformation Committee (ITC); 2) the Student Institutional Transformation Committee (SITC) and its involvement in transformation; and 3) the draft guiding framework for the transformation committees that must be finalised to incorporate the responsibility centres (RCs).



The Transformation Indaba is usually preceded by a Student Transformation Indaba that is planned and organised by the SITC under the auspices of the ITC. In 2021, the Student Transformation Indaba was planned and organised by the Transformation Councillor of the Student Representative Council (SRC) as an SRC event. The rationale was that the constituting of an SITC was fraught with challenges. In the absence of the SITC, the SRC Transformation Councillor took it upon themselves to host the Student Transformation Indaba to keep the momentum going. While this alternative approach was successful, it cannot be repeated as the SRC and the SITC are two independent structures with clearly defined roles.

The following three themes were the focus of the discussion:

- Theme 1: Reflections on and proposals for a more effective ITC.
- Theme 2: Viable ways of establishing and sustaining the SITC.
- Theme 3: The role of faculties and RCs in advancing transformation.

The activity plan for the day was divided into three parts. Part 1 was a plenary session to set the stage for the event. The features of the session were a welcoming address, a keynote address and a reflection on the functioning and challenges of the ITC. Part 2 comprised breakaway sessions that focused on the specific themes. Part 3 was a feedback session on the breakaway discussions.

Part 1 Plenary session

Keynote address

The keynote address was presented by Prof Rozane Maart, an internationally esteemed decolonial scholar, writer and activist who is an associate professor in the School of Social Science at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The title of her presentation was “What does inclusivity mean in the context of decolonization?” Her preliminary remarks were on the insurmountable amount of policy documents that were being developed to guide higher education in particular ways on a path of effective and efficient transformation. Her view was that while we could legislate for and against almost anything in the world, we could not legislate attitude.

In framing her presentation, Prof Maart provided the historical context of decolonisation, highlighted the features of decolonisation that made it difficult to address decolonisation within the context of transformation and provided key points regarding the imagined future of SU. While the SU Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024 and its six core strategic themes are contributions for the benefit of future SU generations, SU must consider the National Development Plans, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and African Union Plans.

Prof Maart cautioned against developing sound policy documents that still reproduce colonisation. South Africa has a history of intense coloniser-colonised relations. Decolonisation is not only a political project but also a continuous process of consciousness at personal level and a willingness to have one’s body and mind aligned. She emphasised that decolonisation is an ongoing process of body and mind and that it demands a great deal from the colonised and the coloniser. It demands constant examination of all of who we are.

She dismantled the concept of ‘decolonisation’ and the idea that South Africa is decolonising from culture, environment and the history that has kept the masses of South Africa hostage, oppressed, and exploited. She underscored the importance of decolonising from a broader structure that interconnects and intersects with all of how the people came to be colonised.

Culture and identity are crucial when we talk about inclusivity. Any form of transformation and decolonisation involves a loss for the colonised. Embracing transformation and the programme of decolonisation means that we are working in the context where the historical structures of apartheid and coloniality are still present. It means working in a space where there is contradiction; in other words, we are talking inclusivity while ignoring students yet wanting them to be part of the process of transformation. Prof Maart emphasised that identity is crucial. The critical question is, “What are we retaining as we decolonise?”.

She quoted Albert Memmi on the two options for the coloniser, namely to accept or refuse. She challenged the colonisers to recognise their socialisation of racism and the history that gave them superiority and supremacy.

The features that make it difficult to address decolonisation within the context of transformation are as follows:

- Ignoring the black consciousness subject in the quest for transformation.
- Politics of refusal.
- The use of inclusivity as a currency for transformation without acknowledging its contradiction in the South African context.

The following are key points for the future:

- We must inject policies with our bodies, blood, beliefs, culture, and identity.
- We must recognise that inclusivity is a contradiction and must be addressed by being honest in action and speech, recognising that any form of transformation and any decolonisation project will demand that we let go of certain things (e.g., readiness to let go of white entitlement).

- We must embrace the process of working together as the ethical requirement of every transformation project.
- We must examine the ethical process with which we proceed.
- We must examine relations that perpetuate, maintain, and reproduce colonisation.
- We must commit ourselves physically, intellectually, psychologically, and mentally in speech, in writing and in imagination for a better future.



Reflection on the functioning and challenges of the Institutional Transformation Committee

Ms Ellen Tise, a member of the ITC, provided the historical background of the ITC, explained its functioning, and described the challenges that the structure has experienced in the fulfilment of its role.

The ITC was established on 17 September 2015 in response to a memorandum from the Vice-Chancellor (VC) who invited the various RCs, the Deans Forum, the Institutional Forum and the SRC to each nominate a representative to serve on the ITC.

The objective of the ITC would be to advance the mandate and the institutional authority of its members as well as to enhance its representation and credibility. The main task of the ITC was to develop a Transformation Implementation Plan. The RC heads and the deans were then referred to the Business Plan of the DVC: SITP that stated the three areas that the DVC was responsible for, all of which had to do with transformation:

- The transformation of SU involves teaching and learning, research and innovation, social impact, cocurricular activities, academic support services, the compilation and transformation competence of staff, the compilation and transformation competence of students, and the institutional culture, in other words the institutional personality and character of SU.

- To advance the process of systemic transformation, it is crucial that transformation be integrated simultaneously into all the activities of the university and be focused upon in an intentional and particularistic way.
- Establishment of an office for transformation is important and should fulfil the research-based function of information and consultation, stimulation and motivation, facilitation and mediation, coordination, monitoring and especially of building a dignifying and humanising institutional culture.

The Bill of Rights and the Draft Barometer of Transformation (Department of Higher Education and Training document) were the two resource documents that the ITC used in developing the Transformation Plan (TP). The TP, which is guided by the SU values, was developed in 2017.

The terms of reference were developed, constantly revised, and finally approved by the Rectorate in 2019. The powers and functions of the ITC are as follows:

- Fulfilling a supportive role to the faculties and RC committees in ensuring that the TP is an accessible and illuminating instrument that envisions, guides, directs, coordinates, advances, facilitates and empowers transformation processes at SU.
- Fulfilling a supportive role to the Transformation Office (TO) in developing key performance areas and strategic management indicators for transformation.
- Monitoring and reporting internally on progress with regard to the transformation targets.
- Fulfilling an advocacy and advisory role with regard to transformation matters in relation to the Rectorate, the TO, the Senior Director: SITP and the DVC: SITP.

SU has articulated transformation as a key value and strategic priority (Vision 2040 and strategic priorities). The ITC is a committee mandated by and reporting to the Rector's Management Team on matters relating to transformation at SU. The ITC is committed to an embedded model of transformation whereby all actors within the university must integrate transformation into their core business.

In 2018, there used to be reports from faculties and environments and this practice was abandoned as the agenda changed. Representatives were frustrated as there was no way that they could influence transformation within their environments, hence a need for the assessment of the ITC. Based on the ITC assessment, there was broad consensus that this was not taking place effectively. Additionally, there was a lack of consultation with members in key transformation advisory bodies at SU and this has resulted in poor decision making and leadership (e.g., handling of the article on the cognitive development of coloured women).

Functioning and challenges

- The ITC is an advisory body to the Rectorate, but there is no feedback loop regarding issues raised and recommendations made.
- As an advisory body, no person/body is compelled to make use of the knowledge and expertise of the ITC. The capacity restraint with regard to matters relating to transformation is very little within the spaces where decisions are made.
- The ITC inputs when requested seem to be mostly on a reactive basis.
- The transformation agenda at SU through its current structures is juniorised and disjointed.
- The Directors of Transformation and Employment Equity are not part of senior decision-making structures. This is not considered to be best practice if the transformation agenda is to be integrated into the operation of SU.
- The Equality Unit and the Disability Unit report to another DVC.

Various task teams have been established over the past few years to determine how the challenges could be addressed. The outcome was that the ITC should be repositioned to guide strategy development and operational efficiency on a more proactive basis.

Steps being taken

- The Rectorate decided that SU must have a Transformation Policy (strategic) for compliance.
- A TP (operational) will follow from the policy.
- Proposals for the reconfiguration of the ITC have been made.
- The current ITC has worked on the Implementation Guide that will be implemented by the reconfigured structure.
- Other transformation structures such as the SITC must be restructured.

Her concluding statement was that all the considered efforts would be futile if SU does not raise the level of transformation and the Transformation Portfolio.



The presentations were interluded by Sibongile Fisher's poetry performance. Sibongile is an award-winning multidisciplinary writer who teaches creative writing to professionals and youth. She has worked with various organisations by using drama as a vessel for discourse on social issues and community building among teenagers. Her work as a writer/performer is an inquiry into memory and personal identity and how these impact society.



Part 2: Breakout rooms/breakaway group discussions

Theme 1: Reflections on and proposals for a more effective Institutional Transformation Committee

An overview of the ITC was given with reference to the role, the positioning and the effectiveness of the ITC. The discussion was based on the four different scenarios that had been proposed by the ITC after benchmarking suggested were explained:

Scenario 1

Disbanding the current ITC and working towards establishing a transformation strategy group that will be a think tank of members of the transformation function.

Scenario 2

Retaining the ITC in its current form as a structure of the Rectorate with no advisory role.

Scenario 3

Ensuring that transformation becomes a standing item and is implemented in different forums.

Scenario 4

Establishing a new structure with specific representation of staff members and the VC assuming the role of chair. Individuals of the broader staff will be invited annually.

Questions

The discussion was based on three main questions: 1) How do we bring in ex officio structures within the ITC?; 2) How do we ensure that we do not lose the voices?; and 3) How do we develop an operational structure that can be effective?

Discussion

- Scenario 4 was the preferred scenario. The VC must be the chair of the ITC; however, a link between the transformation committees and RCs in relation to this committee needs to be defined.
- The opportunities for platforms for more voices to be heard must be increased.
- Separation between faculty boards and transformation committees may lead to transformation not being tabled on the board agenda; hence, there is a need for more integration between the transformation committees and faculty boards.
- The concerns of Scenario 4 are that there are very senior roles that will change the power dynamic; hence, there is a need for buy-in as the senior roles are not demographically represented.
- There is a need to properly define the focus of the structure; for instance, would the focus be on policy making, monitoring, and implementing? We need a committee that focuses on transformation and representation in other committees. Socialisation should be on the agenda for transformation.
- The terms of reference identifying ITC links with other structures must be defined, that is, how the ITC links with other structures and what the body and mind sensemaking of the committee is. The duties of the TO need to be as separate as possible from those of the ITC as the TO is not the custodian of the structure.
- Representation of different faculties and environments must be clearly defined in terms of who is represented, how the representatives are chosen, what their roles are and how they are linked in the structure. It is crucial to define the links of the structure to the different environments (i.e., faculty and professional and administrative staff [PASS] environments).
- The TO needs to ensure sustainable socialisation projects for staff and students to assist in advancing the agenda of the ITC.
- Feedback needs to be given to the Deans Forum, faculty boards and then back to the ITC.
- The dynamic between the policy-making structure and the operational structures must be defined in terms of implementation of transformation and reporting and monitoring thereof.
- There is a concern of information being missed or lost due to the movement among structures; hence, an organogram should be drawn up to show the links among the structures and to clearly define the various roles and responsibilities.



Theme 2: Viable ways of establishing and sustaining the Student Institutional Transformation Committee

The discussion was based on four main questions: 1) How is the SITC currently constituted?; 2) What is the degree of communication among societies and how can this be improved?; 3) What support is needed for students to sustain the SITC?; and 4) Should the SITC report to the ICT?

Discussion

- The SITC is a subcommittee of the ITC, and thus it is important to have it separate from the Student Parliament so that it does not become embroiled in student politics. The various student structures from which the SITC members can be recruited were identified to ensure broad representation of student structures across all the campuses. In restructuring the SITC, one representative will be chosen from each faculty (the Academic Advisory Council [AAC]), the SRC, the Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSR), the Military Academy Student Council (MASC), the Prim Committee, the Senior Prim Committee, the Tygerberg Postgraduate Student Council, the Societies Council and the SRC Transformation Portfolio, and three seats will be reserved for various interest groups, making the SITC a 21-member student structure. In restructuring the ITC, it is important to strike a balance by ensuring that both nonpositional students and positional leaders are represented.
- Every two years, the ITC should look at the critical issues in the environment and choose the interest seats based on these. The interest seats must be reflected in the report at the end of each member's term.
- The SITC must appoint a chairperson who would have to serve a two-year term for the purpose of continuity.
- Meetings must be held four times a year with a minimum of 10 members forming the quorum. The quorum would be formed when all three campuses and one interest group are represented at a meeting. In the event that a quorum is not reached, the meeting would have to be reconvened within five days to ensure that students have a voice and that the work of the SITC is made easier.
- The SITC would convene quarterly sessions with the general student population and report to the Student Parliament.
- The Societies Council is well structured and highly organised. It is envisaged that once there is a well-established SITC whose existence is communicated to the students, there will be a better response to the call to be part of the SITC. The relaunch of the SITC must draw the Societies Council's interest considering that societies have their own agendas and transformation is not necessarily a priority.
- Balancing the prioritisation of academics and the commitment to improving the campuses through student transformation is a constant challenge for student leaders. It would thus be significant to consider giving students recognition or credit for serving on these structures. This recognition should reflect on their academic transcripts for consideration when it comes to applying for financial aid for honours and master's degrees.
- For this work to be recognised on students' academic transcripts, the work that they do will need to be identified and formalised as per the requirements of the Co-curriculum Office. The outcome would be on the level of an NQF Level 6 and will also amount to a weighting of six official NQF credits. The TO will be facilitating engagements with the Co-curriculum Office in this regard.

- Students should take part in the accredited short course on Facilitative Leadership by the Frederik van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development (FVZS Institute). Students' work and efforts with regard to transformation should be celebrated and acknowledged through an official recognition ceremony. This ceremony will be hosted by the FVZS Institute in collaboration with the TO upon successful completion of a leadership term on the committee.
- The concept of mentoring is supposed to respond to student leaders' need for support as and when they face challenging situations. It was suggested that the TO compile a list of university officers who might be willing to be mentors so that students could choose whom to approach for mentoring.
- The SITC must report to the ITC twice a year. There will be an opportunity to submit a report to the ITC between the two scheduled meetings if there is a pressing issue. It does not need to be an extensive report and would contribute to continuity.



Theme 3: The role of faculties and responsibility centres in advancing transformation

The discussion was based on three main questions: 1) What is your understanding of the role of faculties and RCs in driving transformation?; 2) What in your understanding of the role of transformation committees in supporting the transformation of faculties and RCs? and 3) How can the guiding framework for the establishment and functioning of faculty transformation committees (FTCs) assist in the advancement of transformation?

The duty of RCs is to execute the administrative aims of SU. The guiding framework for transformation committees within the faculties is in reference to the work done at the University of Cape Town,

highlighting the recommendations regarding how committees work and the relationships among them.

Transformation is the responsibility not only of the TO but of the faculties as well, so the question is how faculties should understand their role with regard to transformation.

Discussion

- Faculty representatives highlighted that there is a different knowledge base within the faculties. For example, Social Sciences and Law have this information readily available and therefore are more likely to engage with issues of equity and access to resources for students than AgriSciences and Engineering.
- Faculty committees deal with the day-to-day issues, for example food access, programmes, first-year demographics and quotas, and will not necessarily look at the big picture in terms of transformation. The focus is often on incoming newcomers or faculty plans.
- Faculties will often focus on what they specialise in. A representative from the Genetics Department recognised that the department is more focused on the basic issues than on philosophical ideas of transformation as these are not familiar. It is difficult to engage with social issues.
- As a result of this gap in knowledge, it is suggested that it should not be up to faculties to come up with solutions for transformation as they do not have the capabilities to identify the problems, especially when dealing with issues regarding representation and race.
- Furthermore, because these issues affect the entire university, the transformation committees should rather take up this responsibility. Unfortunately, although there is a great deal of movement at the bottom, for example within FTCs, they do not have enough power to make any effective change.
- Decisions with regard to transformation must be considered centrally and not on a faculty basis so that transformation can happen within the entire university and not just within specific faculties.
- The decision-making body also has vast power in making decisions for students who also have their own vision for transformation. Students are ignored if they come up with their own suggestions as decisions have already been made for them. There is a gap between student issues and faculty decisions, which must be addressed by the transformation committees. An example is appointments based on language. A person is more likely to be appointed if she/he speaks Afrikaans because that is the language of the community; therefore, many are excluded.
- The role of the transformation committees should be to fill the gap between the faculty decisions and the students.
- There is a tension between the institutional goals and the power of the dean with regard to who should decide on transformation goals: is it management or the FTC? The reality is that the management committee has a great deal of power, and these are the people who need to be convinced. There is no challenging of the goals or quotas since there is passive acceptance of decisions by the faculty management committee.
- There is a lack of leadership and standardisation within faculties. Each faculty seems to be doing its own thing, and the feedback process between the faculties and central management reflects that nobody is challenging the decisions that are supposed to enhance transformation. There is no coherence among faculties, resulting in a bureaucratic mess that keeps on growing. This is reflected by the fact that a faculty might have its own referencing preferences or a different approach to online learning.

- For transformation to happen, there must be radical change at the root for more streamlined structures.
- Transformation must be centralised within a structure as these roles cannot be given to lecturers who are employed to be chemists, engineers and so on. They are not experts on or familiar with the transformation process and may find themselves disengaged and not willing to put in much effort to that end.
- Faculty representatives also highlighted the discomfort with demographic quotas whereby there is an active seeking of students from less privileged communities. Once they are enrolled at the university, they are essentially left to fend for themselves and no one attends to their needs. Quota filling is unethical and not transformative because inequality continues as the consequences are not thought through, for example the fact that the students do not have adequate resources to engage with their studies.
- It is the transformation committees' job to bring to the foreground issues of transformation and to drive the transformation agenda.
- The way that decisions should be made is that FTCs should only interact with the deans when there is a problem. Interaction must largely be between the FTCs and the students in relation to the university framework. If the problem is institutional, the committees must pass it on to the ITC.
- The leaders of the university, the Rector and the deans must be seen to drive the transformation process. They must be the ones to close the gap because they have power that the transformation committees do not have. The transformation committees are the feet on the ground and the ears on the ground, but for people to feel included, the power lies with the leaders. If this is not seen, nobody is going to take the initiative in transformation.
- The status quo is the repeating of slogans, which comes across as insincere and offensive if no concrete positions are taken. It is impossible to please everyone, and the only solution is to take a clear stance for transformation despite the opposition faced.
- The speed of transformation at SU is inhibited by the power of the alumni, and at some point, a position must be taken by the leadership structures.



PART 3: Plenary session: Feedback on breakaway sessions (rapporteurs)

Theme 1: Feedback

The conversation centred on Scenario 4 as a preferred structure of the ITC and the links between the SITC at institutional level and FTCs defined in Theme 2 and Theme 3.

- *Membership:* Representation and proposed members and who is involved need to be defined in this scenario. The two representatives from staff need to be determined. There was a strong view that the VC should serve as chair given the intended purpose of the ITC. The two representatives from the ranks of the Senate, excluding members of the Executive Committee, should not be from the same environment as faculty or PASS (refer to bullets 3 and 6 of Scenario 4). This would ensure that the tentacles of the ITC reach far and wide and are on the ground, as far as possible.
- *Selection of membership:* Selection of members must be dealt with wisely with the roles and responsibilities of members discussed in detail. Members must be allowed to confront the ITC and relay information back to the structures that they represent.
- *Terms of reference:* The nature of this committee and the link between this proposed scenario and the other structures of the university must be defined. Prof Aslaam Fatar will assist with the conceptualisation around this discussion.
- *Infused conversation:* The ITC is not the only point of contact for transformation on an institutional level and must allow the broader infusion of transformation on noncommittee and nonformal platforms. This structure should allow the TO to play an open and informative role specifically to influence minds and hearts.

Theme 2: Feedback

The conversation centred on the reconstituting of the SITC, monitoring of the SITC and recognising the role of students.

- *Reconstitution of the SITC:* The SITC needs to be reconstituted to a body of 21 members with representatives from each faculty (the Academic Advisory Council [AAC], the SRC, the Tygerberg Student Representative Council (TSR), the Military Academy Student Council (MASC), the Prim Committee, the Senior Prim Committee, the Tygerberg Postgraduate Student Council, the Societies Council and the SRC Transformation Portfolio, with three seats reserved for interest groups (e.g. disability, international students and LGBTQIA+). The chair of the SITC should be elected at the constituting meeting of the SITC. Suggestions were made that the chair and the executive structure of the SITC should serve for two years to ensure continuity.
- *Meetings:* The frequency of the meetings of the SITC would be as set out in the founding document. Quarterly meetings of the SITC with the student population are needed to allow student voices to feed into the SITC.
- *Student recognition:* There is a need to recognise student work by identifying and formalising it as per the requirements of the Co-curriculum Office. Students should take part in the FVZS Institute's accredited short course on Facilitative Leadership. Students' work and efforts with regard to transformation should be celebrated and acknowledged through an official recognition ceremony. This ceremony will be hosted by the FVZS Institute in collaboration with the TO upon successful completion of a leadership term on the committee.

- *Monitoring and guidance:* The SITC must report to the ITC twice a year for monitoring and guidance. It may bring to the attention of the ITC any pressing matter between the reporting cycles.
- *Role of student governance:* The Division of Student Affairs will give support to the TO to constitute the new structure that will involve all campuses and all student societies.

Theme 3: Feedback

The guiding framework has been developed to define the minimum standards to assist with the danger of flexibility, keeping in mind contextualisation. It provides guiding principles for the formation of the transformation committees that would enable their translation role.

- *Importance of transformation committees:* Transformation committees in faculties and in some RCs work well. It is imperative that transformation committees be present in all environments considering their central role in advancing transformation.
- *Tangible transformation:* There is a need for tangible transformation in the environments by moving towards practice- and action-based outcomes that can be measured. This would best enable SU to assess progress made and identify areas of growth.
- *Accountability and leadership:* Transformation must be decentralised, that is, driven through a top-down approach. The group recognised challenges in terms of accountability and cited incidents and practices to support this view. Firstly, a commitment to decolonisation was made in 2016; however, there was no follow-up on how that played into faculties' daily operations. Secondly, the FTCs are not being utilised properly, thus casting aspersions on the legitimacy of transformation committees in transformation matters. Thirdly, the way that the article on the cognitive development of coloured women was dealt with disregarded the vast and rich array of colleagues who have experience in this context in the transformation committees. The Institutional Forum must transform and advise Council accordingly. The ITC advises the Rectorate and the Institutional Forum advises Council, so Council is advised on transformation through the ITC and the Institutional Forum. Council should hold all SU officers accountable so that SU would not be found wanting when the Minister of Higher Education and Training intervenes.
- *Lack of transformation logic:* The consequences of the lack of leadership include a lack of transformation logic that infiltrates decisions around targets. This results in counterproductive exercises rather than meaningful engagements with the difference in the way in which learning, teaching and research must be undertaken.
- *Decision making:* There must be central and collective decision making about certain issues; for instance, faculties must discuss the demographic representation of students and collectively decide on targets.
- *Translation role:* Transformation committees play a conscientising role regarding the development of the TP and the work of the ITC. They also translate the experiences of staff and students to the leadership of the faculty. The question is whether this should be the role of the transformation committees or of the deans.

The challenge of balancing a complex set of conceptualisations that one engages in with the operationalisation of targets and alternative ways to deal with this challenge were presented. Firstly, conversations about capacitation to effectuate a transformational orientation, which is deeply complicated, should be considered. Secondly, SU's pockets of excellence should be highlighted and celebrated, and the possibilities should be built on.

Concluding remarks (Dr Leslie van Rooi)

Dr van Rooi's concluding remarks highlighted the uniqueness of the 2021 Indaba and confirmed that the objective had been achieved. The objective concerned the proposals for the reconfiguration of the ITC, the reconstituting of the SITC and the conversation on the functions of the transformation committees in the faculties and in the RCs. He acknowledged the recommendations made for the ITC and the Transformation Portfolio and reassured the participants that the proposals and the suggestions would be finalised for implementation.

He recognised the commitment of the participants as they are always holding conversation around transformation and that the Indaba created a space for them to reflect. He acknowledged Prof Nico Koopman for his dedication in leading transformation and acknowledged the burden placed on him. He reaffirmed the colleagues' commitment to sharing this burden.



Vote of thanks (Dr Shaun Peters)

Dr Peters framed the vote of thanks around his personal and academic journey and highlighted how SU would be a good stop for his journey. He contextualised his gratitude by showing appreciation for the impact of the speakers and the role of the TO team in executing its duties and in providing focus



for the strong voice of the ITC. He commended the ITC for its selfless commitment to a journey that is sometimes emotionally charged. He thanked Prof Nico Koopman, the chair of the ITC and the head of the Transformation Portfolio, for his leadership. He recognised the contribution of the participants and how their contribution shaped the conversations.

Dr Peters acknowledged the steadfast decision taken by SU to create a unique identity for its future by embracing multiculturalism and multilingualism and “whatever that may be in the future, it is the journey”. He quoted Robert Frost’s poem “The Road not Taken”:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.