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UCT VC appointed to esteemed international academy

Reddy's appointment to Pontifical Academy of Sciences among recent milestones by academics

The University of Cape Town (UCT) staff members have recently reached various milestones, including the appointment of Vice-Chancellor (interim) Emeritus Professor Daya Reddy by Pope Francis to the esteemed [Pontifical Academy of Sciences](#).

In the same period, three exceptional UCT academics – Professors Elelwani Ramugondo, Kelly Chibale, and Mpiko Ntsekhe - have been recognised among [Africa's 12 remarkable life scientists](#) in an inspirational book for young people; while Professor Ntobeko Ntusi has been appointed as the President and chief executive officer of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC).

Reddy appointed to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences

Emeritus Professor Reddy has been appointed to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences by Pope Francis. Article 2 of the academy indicates its purpose as being "... to promote the progress of the mathematical, physical and natural sciences and the study of epistemological problems related thereto". The academy membership comprises a maximum of 80 scientists, and includes in its current and former composition a number of Nobel laureates.

Established in 1603, the academy underwent a significant transformation under the reformative vision of Pope Pius XI in 1936. Its selection process for membership is anchored in the recognition of exceptional contributions to science and a sterling moral character, free from any bias based on ethnicity or religion. Inductees into the academy are appointed for life through the authoritative decree of the Pope.

This appointment reflects UCT's ongoing contribution to global dialogue and collaboration in the pursuit of knowledge. With this recognition, UCT continues to foster connections between academia and the broader community, furthering the mission of both the university and the Pontifical Academy.

Pope Francis will bestow on Professor Reddy the insignia of his appointment during a Solemn Pontifical Audience in September 2024.

- [Read the full announcement by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences.](#)

Three UCT academics named among 12 Remarkable Life Scientists

Three exceptional UCT academics have been recognised among [Africa's 12 remarkable life scientists](#) in an inspirational book for young people. The academics are Professors [Ramugondo](#), [Chibale](#), and [Ntsekhe](#).

Over the past 10 years, the [KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Schools Engagement Programme](#) (KWTSEP) has been engaging local schools with the aim of raising students' awareness of leading African science; to stimulate students' interest in pursuing careers in science. This aims at promoting an interest in science through interactions between researchers, students, and teachers.

A former KWTSEP scientist now working in the United Kingdom Dr Tabitha Mwangi has written an inspirational book targeted at high school children but which may also be useful in shaping career journeys of students already in university. The book, *12 Remarkable African Life Scientists*, draws stories from 12 African researchers who have broken the proverbial glass ceiling in their field of research despite their humble backgrounds.

This not only highlights the outstanding calibre of UCT's academic community but also reinforces the university's position as a leader in research and innovation. UCT continues to foster an environment of excellence, where scholars are empowered to pursue cutting-edge research that addresses some of the most pressing challenges facing our world today.

- [Read more about the 12 Remarkable Africa Life Scientists.](#)

UCT academic appointed SAMRC President and CEO

Professor Ntusi, a distinguished academic and esteemed cardiologist at UCT, has been appointed as the President and chief executive officer of SAMRC. Currently serving as the head of the Department of Medicine and the clinical lead for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance and cardiovascular computed tomography at Groote Schuur Hospital, Professor Ntusi has a wealth of expertise and experience. Additionally, as the professorial chair of the Department of Medicine in UCT's Faculty of Health Sciences and the director of the SAMRC/UCT Extramural Unit on the Intersection of Non-communicable Diseases and Infectious Diseases, his leadership has already had a profound impact on medical research and healthcare in South Africa.

- [Read the full announcement by the Dean of Health Sciences.](#)
- [Read the full announcement by SAMRC.](#)

ENDS

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