



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

9 September 2025

UCT study gives a voice to Black migrant women workers



Eleana Velentza

Photo: Supplied

Black migrant women working in South Africa – though highly skilled and contributing a lot to the economy – often face discrimination, xenophobia and exclusion at work and in society, a University of Cape Town (UCT) study has found.

Titled: “Inclusion challenges at the intersection of marginalized identities: A study of black migrant women in South Africa”, Eleana Velentza’s PhD thesis in [Business Administration](#) at UCT’s [Graduate School of Business](#) also found that these migrant women show great resilience using education, faith and community support to create spaces of belonging and success.

Inspired by her own observations and stories she encountered of professional Black migrant women “who contribute so much to South African society” but whose voices are often unheard. “I wanted to give them visibility and highlight their struggles and strengths,” she said.

Velentza will graduate for her PhD in Business Administration at Sarah Baartman Hall on Wednesday, 10 September 2025.

She hopes her work influences policies and organisational practices so that Black migrant women are treated fairly and included as equals.

“My goal is to provide a framework that can guide governments, organisations and civil society to create more inclusive environments. I also want this research to add to global discussions on migration, race and gender,” she said.

“By showing the real-life experiences of Black migrant women, my research helps society understand how discrimination works and what can be done to dismantle it. More inclusive workplaces and communities mean that everyone’s talents are recognised, which benefits the economy, strengthens social cohesion and moves South Africa closer to equality,” she explained.

She added: “Despite the challenges, these women are not just passive victims, they are active agents of change, strong, resilient and creative in finding ways to adapt, challenge stereotypes, belong and succeed. Their voices and stories deserve to be heard because they show us both the problems and the possibilities for building a more equal and inclusive South Africa”.

Ends

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Thami Nkwanyane

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5672
Cell: (072) 563 9500
Email: thami.nkwanyane@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za