



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **UCT Genesis Project drives entrepreneurial spirit with six start-up ventures**

**Product Launch and Expo: 11 October 2017**

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*The UCT Genesis Project will launch another six dynamic student start-up businesses from its Honours-level Postgraduate qualification in Entrepreneurship. These innovative student entrepreneurs will be launching and selling their new products at the annual UCT Genesis Product Launch and Expo on Wednesday, 11 October 2017. The event, sponsored and supported by Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB), will showcase some of South Africa's most exciting new entrepreneurs who are learning how to set up and run their own businesses. Products range from laptop desks, athleisure wear, artisanal food products, earphone organisers, and a state-of-the-art power bank system.*

Top business leaders, angel investors and venture capitalists annually scout the UCT Genesis Project Expo for new talent and this year will be no exception. The launch and expo will be held at the Leslie Social Sciences Building on Upper Campus from 9am to 3pm on 11 October 2017 with renowned local comedian Carl Weber acting as Master of Ceremonies. The theme for this year's class is 'leveraging new technology for a green student market', and is particularly relevant in today's progressive business climate.

Each year hundreds of hopeful local and international students apply to join the prestigious Genesis Project programme, which is run by the Faculty of Commerce at UCT. With only 50 spots open, the selected students form start-up teams where they ideate a new business concept, raise their own start-up capital and then take their innovative product to market. Student teams may import key components from overseas, but manufacturing has to happen locally in order to maximise local job creation. The student teams develop their businesses under the keen supervision of UCT academics, who are themselves serial entrepreneurs like Course Convenor and lecturer, Stuart Hendry and Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship, Dr David Priilaid. The teams are also mentored by high-profile business leaders like Dr Anthony Hill and legal professional Advocate, Lihle Sidake.

Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB) has partnered with the UCT Genesis students this year. "As an established regional business, we see great value in supporting and enabling our future business leaders. The partnership with UCT follows on from a very successful 'Pitch Off' competition held in June this year, and we look forward to seeing these concepts leading to fully established businesses," says Priscilla Urquhart, Public Affairs and Communications Manager at CCPB.

Expo day on Upper Campus is by far the best-selling day of the year for the teams, with between 4 000 and 5 000 students visiting the event. The student start-up teams are required to raise their own start-

up capital. This is typically done through a series of fundraising events such as Cake Sale Days on UCT's Jammie Plaza. On average, the students raise between R20 000 and R40 000 start-up capital.

"Our student entrepreneurs are not only required to set up and run their own business, they also need to graduate with an Honours-level degree from UCT," says Stuart Hendry, Lecturer and Course Convenor for The Genesis Project. "The course subjects deal with all the aspects of setting up and running a business in South Africa, including finance, marketing, sales, design-thinking, lean start-up methodology and agile engineering," says Hendry.

"Having been a UCT Genesis Director and Mentor for more than 15 years now, I find the entrepreneurial spirit and energy amongst the students quite inspiring," says Dr Anthony Hill, who is himself a very successful serial entrepreneur and author of the best seller "Grow Your Own Timber."

Community leader and high profile legal professional Advocate Lihle Sidake explains: "The expo gives us a unique opportunity to showcase the qualities that are so desperately needed for the success of our society: creativity, discipline, confidence, open mindedness, critical thinking, industry, self-reliance, ability to function well in a group, healthy competition, determination, and ethical behaviour."

The Expo is also open to the public. It runs from 9am to 3pm on Wednesday 11 October 2017 on the mezzanine level in the Leslie Social Science Building on Upper Campus.

For more information about Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (CCPB), visit <http://www.peninsulabeverage.co.za/> or contact 021 936 5500.

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