

6 UCT scholars secure Oxford University opportunity with Rhodes Scholarships

Six University of Cape Town (UCT) scholars have been awarded Rhodes Scholarships to study at Oxford University in 2024. The chosen scholars are Justine Crook-Mansour, Daniel Erasmus, Sagel Kundieko, Mothibi Mathivha, Leago Sebesho and Savannah Verhage.



Source: [Rxabay](#)

The Rhodes Scholarship is the world's preeminent and oldest graduate fellowship, based at the University of Oxford since 1903. Over the last 120 years, nearly 1000 graduates from Southern Africa have been awarded Rhodes scholarships. Ten scholarships are awarded annually in the constituency, comprising South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Eswatini.

The annual Rhodes selection process seeks young people with a proven record of academic excellence who also display exceptional moral character, evidence of leadership skills, the energy to use their talents to the full, and a commitment to solving humanity's challenges.

UCT deputy vice-chancellor: transformation, student affairs and social responsiveness, professor Elelwani Ramugondo congratulated the scholars and said she was confident that they would acquire knowledge that would advance UCT's mission of producing graduates who contribute towards addressing complex and critical challenges facing South Africa, Africa, and the world at large.

"UCT is internationally recognised for its efforts and strides in continuously contributing to the global discourse. We pride ourselves on producing young people who have an insatiable appetite for knowledge, and we know that the six scholars will use this opportunity to broaden their knowledge," she said.

National Secretary of the Rhodes Scholarships in Southern Africa, Ndumiso Luthuli, noted that 2023 was a landmark year

as they celebrate 120 years of the Rhodes Scholarship.

“This year, following wide-ranging outreach to universities across the region, we recorded the highest number of applications ever for the Southern African Rhodes Scholarships, with applications up by 5% on last year, the previous record.

“Our selection committees were spoilt for choice and had exceptionally strong pools from which to shortlist for the regional interviews. The finalists interviewed by the national selection committee were all quite outstanding and some tough choices had to be made by the South Africa-at-Large selectors.

“The scholars selected have studied diverse academic disciplines, ranging from astrophysics to applied mathematics, commerce to computer science, from law to medicine, from international relations and leadership, to neuroscience and biomedical engineering. All are academically gifted, socially committed, well-rounded and exceptional young leaders,” said Luthuli.

CEO of the Rhodes Trust, Dr Elizabeth Kiss, added:

“We are excited to see the tremendous talents of this year’s Rhodes scholars-elect, who come from countries all around the world. We know from 120 years of bringing exceptional people to Oxford to study and build a dynamic global community that when unlike-minded but like-hearted people come together, we can forge brighter futures for individuals and the world. For 120 years, the global Rhodes Scholar community has been a force for good.

“Scholars form a lifelong community, diverse, multicultural and multidisciplinary in nature, but united by a common commitment to having a positive impact on the world.”

The Southern African cohort will head to Oxford University in October 2024 to join more than 100 Rhodes scholars from around the world to undertake fully funded postgraduate studies and become part of a strong international network and supportive community of young leaders determined to make a positive difference in the world.

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