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Finance Minister opens innovative Research Commons at Stellenbosch University

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The Minister of Finance, Mr Pravin Gordhan, officially opened the newly established Research Commons, a state of the art facility for masters and doctoral students, academics and researchers at Stellenbosch University, Monday (9 May). Prof Russel Botman, Rector and Vice-Chancellor welcomed invited guests to the Research Commons situated in the JS Gericke Library. (Full article to follow.)



One of the seminar rooms at the Research Commons (photo: Anton Jordaan)

“The Research Commons is comparable to some of the best in the world and creates an innovative and creative environment, offering high level research support, such as professional information services, consultation and collaboration opportunities, workshops and presentations and research discourse activities,” says Ms Ellen Tise, Senior Director of the SU’s Library and Information Service.

The purpose of the Research Commons is therefore to enhance the Library’s contribution to accelerating post-graduate through-put and increasing research output by providing an environment conducive for research exchange and production and scholastic debate, and offering services which directly support research endeavours of post-graduate students and researchers.

The facility boasts a well-designed lounge area for use, amongst others, as a facility for researchers to engage in discourse and collaborative research. This is complemented by state of the art seminar rooms, video conferencing facilities and carousel computer workstations.

The impetus for the creation of the Research Commons was partial funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York which forms part of its Research Libraries Consortium initiative in South Africa,

and, of which the Stellenbosch University Library and Information Service is a member.



Part of the lounge at the Research Commons
(photo: Anton Jordaan)

“This invigorating and contemporary research space will play a significant role in contributing to the University’s vision of a world-class research university,” Prof Botman added. “The Research Commons as well as the recently launched **Learning Commons**, a contemporary and high-tech learning space for undergraduate students, form part of SU’s **HOPE Project** – a campus-wide initiative through which the University is using its academic excellence and cutting-edge scientific research to find solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing South Africa, the rest of the continent and the world at large.”

Seminar

As part of the launch of the Research Commons, the Library and Information Service hosts a **seminar** on global trends in academic research and future scenarios of academic publishing. The seminar, themed “*The changing landscape of academic research and publishing*”, held on Tuesday 10 May 2011. The seminar includes speakers from Elsevier, the world’s leading publisher of scientific, technical and medical information as well as leading researchers from SU.

- Contact Ms Marié Roux (021 808 2623, mr@sun.ac.za) for more information on the Research Commons and Ms Renee Reagon (021 808 4877, rreagon@sun.ac.za) for more information on the seminar.

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