



**UNIVERSITIES
SOUTH AFRICA**

**CONCEPT NOTE: A COLLOQUIUM ON THE NEW LANGUAGE POLICY FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION**

VICE-CHANCELLORS CONSULTATION SERIES

**MOVING THE CONVERSATION FORWARD · MULTILINGUALISM IN HIGHER
EDUCATION · HARNESSING THE RESOURCES**

1. Background

In September 2021, Universities South Africa (USAf), through the Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages (CoPAL), organised the first in a three-part series of the Vice-Chancellors Colloquia. This was to discuss the new Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions, with a theme to transform the academy and improve student access and success through the decolonisation of the curriculum in our higher education institutions.

Following robust engagements with key stakeholders (public higher education institutions (HEIs), language experts, members of the judiciary, representatives from DHET, DSI, DBE, DSAC and PanSALB) on the import and the main assumptions of the new language policy framework and its implications on HEIs, it soon emerged that various resources need to be harnessed and deployed for the successful implementation of the new language policy framework.

This year's colloquium seeks to move the conversation further by asking difficult questions that will ultimately unlock the required resources to achieve the full implementation of multilingualism in higher education, which is the desired goal of the new language policy framework. The colloquium will articulate and define a whole gamut of resources required ranging from the enabling instruments such as institutional language policies, institutional language implementation frameworks, institutional language directorates, institutional language budgets, institutional language infrastructures, and DHET dedicated (capacity) grant to a shared national resource infrastructure network.

The USAf-CoPAL, with the support of the USAf Board, is committed to working with the sector to extend the conversation on language policy and multilingualism in higher education beyond mere advocacy and rhetoric to strategies of implementation to transform the academy. In view of the aforementioned, it was agreed that the second USAf-CoPAL VC Colloquium would be held in partnership with the University of Pretoria. The colloquium will be held in person on 1-2 December 2022.

2. Objectives

This second colloquium aims to:

- a) Provide a platform for robust intellectual engagement on multilingualism in higher education.
- b) Provide a platform to define, identify, and assess the critical resources required to give effect to the implementation of multilingualism in the academy.
- c) Critically engage on the challenges public higher education institutions face in implementing the new language policy framework.
- d) Further, engage with the Department of Higher Education and Training on the available commitments in implementing the language policy framework.
- e) Bring HEIs leaders together to reflect on their progress in implementing the new language policy for higher education as outlined by the framework.

3. Programme

The programme and contributors will be determined in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Steering Committee.

The following suggested stakeholders have been identified to participate in the colloquium:

- Language experts from the Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages (CoPAL);
- Senior University representatives;
- Department of Higher Education & Training;
- Department of Science and Innovation;
- Department of Basic Education;
- The National Language Service in the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture;
- PAN South African Language Board on Language Development (PANSALB); and
- The South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR).

4. Outcomes

- a) Participants will appreciate the advances that institutions are making towards implementing the new language policy framework.
- b) Collectively develop a model that will enable the sharing of resources to implement the new language policy framework effectively.

5. Host Institutions

The second VC colloquium is taking place on 1 - 2 December 2022. The University of Pretoria will be the host. The colloquium will be held in person at the Senate Hall. However, participants who cannot travel can participate virtually.

Other institutions will be given the opportunity to host the subsequent colloquia at a mutually agreed date.

6. Audience

A targeted audience comprising high-level participants with decision-making powers within their institution will be invited.

7. Funding

The event will be funded jointly by UP and USAf.

8. Steering Committee

A steering committee comprising various stakeholder groupings has been appointed to guide the planning and is indicated below.

Name	Institution
Prof Langa Khumalo (Chair)	North-West University & Chairperson: CoPAL
Prof Nokhanyo Mdzanga	Nelson Mandela University & Deputy Chairperson: CoPAL
Dr Rikus Delpont	University of Pretoria
Ms Ragni Chethram	University of Pretoria
Mr Sithembinkosi Tlale	University of Pretoria
Ms Primarashni Gower	University of Pretoria
Ms Petronella Khwane	University of Pretoria
Dr Linda Meyer	USAf
Ms Ntswalo Ngobeni	USAf
Ms Janet van Rhyn	USAf
Ms M. Green	USAf

END

Updated 5 October 2022