



The US Witsie



Wits Fund Newsletter February 2024

witsfund.org

Wits turned 100 in 2022. Learn more [here](#).

THEY CALL FEBRUARY THE MONTH OF LOVE, but shouldn't every day be a Valentine's Day? Showing love to our family and friends in our words and actions.... and spreading peace and kindness to all in our path.

WITS WELCOMES 6,300 FIRST YEARS



Wits University officially welcomed 6,300 first-year students to its campus during the annual Welcome Day event at the end of January.

Wits received over 140,000 applications from eager learners across the country. Those who excelled, secured their spots among the country's intellectual elite at one of the best institutions in Africa.

The new Witsies were accompanied by their families to start a new chapter in their academic journey. This [annual introductory celebration](#) showcased the vibrant Wits culture of spirited singing and dancing passed down through the decades.

Welcome Day traditionally serves to communicate the vision and ethos of the University as well as offer advice to new students as they embark on their academic journey.

Read more [here](#).



WATCH: Welcome Day | Wits welcomes over 6000 first-years for the 2024 academic year

As we feel gratitude for the blessings in our lives, one way to pay it forward is through making an impact in a person's life that will uplift them, and their family, for generations to come.

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HELLO & GOODBYE: CHANGES TO THE WITS FUND BOARD



Wits Fund welcomes new board member, [Dr Anthony Wilson-Prangley](#) (Wits PhD 2020), who writes the following short introductory biography:

Until I relocated to Seattle my professional base was the Gordon Institute of Business Science (University of Pretoria), in Johannesburg, where I taught (and consulted) in change management, strategy implementation, social impact and inclusive leadership. In that role I led study visits to Microsoft, Amazon, Google, Facebook, Starbucks and Boeing. I also taught visiting leaders from Foster School of Business (University of Washington), Haas (UC-Berkeley) and Kelley School of Business (Indiana University). I was awarded the Aspen Institute 'Faculty Pioneer Award' and in 2023/24 I published two cases under the Harvard Business Review brand in addition to being featured in the Harvard Educators special collection on African Leadership.

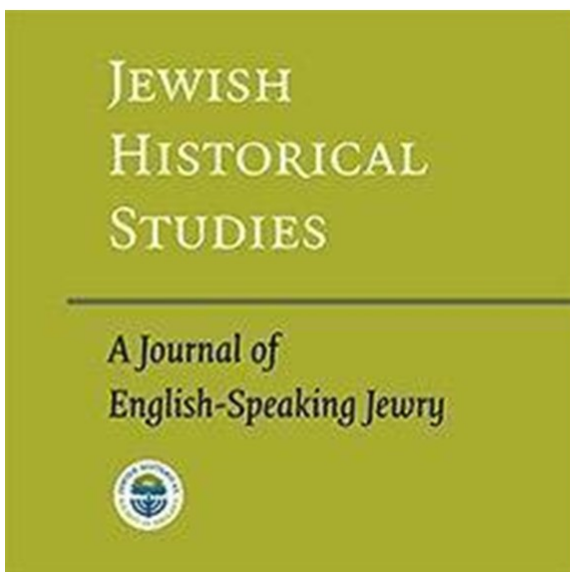
In addition to my GIBS MBA, I hold a Ph.D. in Sociology (from Wits University), where my dissertation focused on the identities of a new generation of leaders in a complex African society. I am starting a new chapter in Organizational Learning and Development in the US, drawing on work with 40+ corporate clients, hundreds of Executive MBA students, and multiple government and non-profit partners. I hope to continue to support positive change makers globally and in South Africa.



And we say goodbye to [Professor George Konidaris](#), who has served with distinction for some years on the Wits Fund board, and who now steps down to concentrate on professional and personal commitments. In its letter of farewell, the Wits Fund board wrote, in part,

"we will miss your enthusiasm and insight on our Board. You have played a pivotal role in helping the board grow its footprint and reach... What you have begun will continue to improve our support to Wits University, an institution you clearly love. We thank you for your dedicated and selfless service, and assure you of our sincere warm wishes..."

WITSIE'S GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH ON SA JEWISH HISTORY



Recently, [Dr Riva Krut](#) shared the following update with us. With her kind permission, we reproduce the post below:

"Over my career in corporate sustainability, I never spoke of my personal background or academic work, but without doubt it was these experiences that gave me the attributes I needed for professional and executive success.

And so I am sharing a wonderfully gratifying personal story. I wrote my PhD thesis on South African Jewish History >40 years ago. To my amazement, I recently learned that present-day historians consider it to be a groundbreaking contribution for its time.

It is profiled in the current edition of Jewish Historical Studies: A Journal of English-Speaking Jewry. I contributed "Writing history about the ties that bind: Reflections" on how I had developed my out-of-the-box thinking."

Read more [here](#).



WATCH: WITS LATEST NEWS IN SIXTY SECONDS - In this episode, Witsies take up leadership positions – Professor Imraan Valodia is the new Chair of the National Minimum Wage Commission, former Wits Law Clinic Director Daven Dass has been elected as the President of the South African University Law Clinics Association, and researchers from the Wits Advanced Drug Delivery take their novel work globally. We catch up with Wits Dentistry alumni who reunite after 40 years and Prof. Sharon Fonn who writes that university rankings are unscientific and bad for education. Read the full stories [here](#).

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Vision

To ensure that Wits University remains one of Africa's – and the world's – pre-eminent research-intensive educational institutions, with top academic standards, committed faculty, and supportive alumni.

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