

GIBS hosts the fourth International Conference on Responsible Leadership

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Responsible and effective leadership is under the spotlight at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) in Illovo, Johannesburg this week.

The timing of the conference, which runs from 15-16 March 2017, comes during a global and local watershed moment for leadership, as those in positions of corporate and government power are increasingly being held to account by civil society. Understanding the importance of responsible leadership in this context is crucial to ensuring the longevity of any organisation or, indeed, country.

Speaking ahead of the conference, GIBS Dean, Prof Nicola Kleyn, noted: "The world is shifting before our eyes, and not just at home. We are part of a broader system that is increasingly turbulent. The systems that have served us so well need to shift and the assumptions about the role of business should be deeply questioned. We cannot forget that business is part of society and, therefore, we need to reflect on how business contributes to solving problems that really matter."

The two-day International Conference on Responsible Leadership features a number of break-away sessions discussing specific papers and research as well as keynote addresses by Barloworld Chairman Isaac Shongwe and Mary Uhl-Bien, BNSF Railway Endowed Professor of Leadership from Neeley School of Business, Texas Christian University on day one. And, on day two, addresses by Minister in the Presidency, Jeff Radebe, and former Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, Tito Mboweni, now Africa Advisor at Goldman Sachs South Africa. [Download the programme here.](#)

Over the course of the conference, interaction and debate will be facilitated through panel discussions and opportunities to interact. Sustainability is firmly in the spotlight, with two sessions planned over the two days, and attention is being focused on topics such as fiduciary responsibility; leadership and diversity; the complexity of leadership in the South African context; youth leadership; ethical and spiritual leadership; and a special focus on African leaders. Given the impact of the ongoing higher education crisis and #feesmustfall campaign in South Africa, the sessions dealing with leadership against this backdrop are expected to be particularly relevant and well attended.

The conference is a collaborative affair between GIBS, the Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership at the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, the Leadership Collaboratory in the Public Private Platform at the Copenhagen Business School and the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative. Experts and participants on the line-up include GIBS' Marius Oosthuizen; Robyn Remke and Steve Kempster from Lancaster University Management School; Sylvia Graham from the Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible leadership; the University of Pretoria's Lorenzo Fioramonti; Last Mazambani and Emmanuel Mutambara from the University of KwaZulu-Natal; and the University of South Africa's Dumisani Hlope. Expert panellists from Copenhagen Business School and Harvard Business School will also be in attendance, alongside South African leaders from business, government and civil society.

Director of the Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership and Faculty at UP, Prof Derick de Jongh notes, "2017 is about responsive and responsible leadership, as emphasised by the World Economic Forum. On local ground, this global theme and imperative cannot be more important today. We need responsible leaders that understand the complexities of local, regional and global challenges. Leaders who engage with issues of moral, ethical, economic, environmental and social significance that affect diverse groups of stakeholders. The conference brings together local, regional and global voices who will engage on leadership challenges that matter".

Says Kleyn: "The world is evolving and there are fundamental shifts in assumptions taking place around what makes strong

economies, what makes strong societies and what makes strong political systems. Opportunities to engage across sectors, like that presented by the International Conference on Responsible Leadership, should be grabbed with both hands. We look forward to an instructive engagement across sectors and one which not only outlines our challenges but enables us to adapt to today's changing world.”

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