Examples of UCT Knowledge Co-op projects

Identify good practice for screening and training of foster mothers for 'cluster foster care'.

UCT department: Social Development

Understand the special needs of sex workers around pregnancy in order to design a support programme.

UCT department: African Gender Institute

Finding out to what extent landowners in the Agulhas Plain support alien clearing programmes in the area.

UCT department: Geography

A programme trains teachers and parents in a way of reading with toddlers. The study assesses the impact on child literacy.

UCT department: Psychology

Design and source a bio-digester to fit the requirements of a site in the Cape Flats.

UCT department: Engineers without Borders

Students set up websites for community groups and teach computer skills.

UCT department: Information Systems HOCIP programme

Working across the boundary between academia and community can be really exciting and rewarding.

If you need any support along the way, do contact us!

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UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

Putting knowledge to work for communities

www.knowledgeco-op.uct.ac.za

November 2014

Pictures depict the work of some of the partners the Knowledge Co-Op works with. Photographer: Michael Hammond

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UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

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STUDENT AND STAFF INFO

The UCT Knowledge Co-op acts as a gateway for external constituencies to access the resources and expertise within the University to address challenges they face.

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The UCT Knowledge Co-op encourages collaborative research projects. Where possible, it brings together a community partner with suitable disciplines and facilitates the development and successful completion of projects. Students, supervised by academic staff – or staff members themselves – may take on projects.In each project, the work they do will benefit the community partners and also contribute to their academic requirements.

The process

- Community groups submit ideas to the UCT Knowledge Co-op.

- The Co-op matches these to relevant academics and/or students.

Depending on the topic it may:
- become the topic for a thesis at honours or masters level;
- develop into a research theme for staff;
- give rise to a number of research projects involving different researchers and disciplines;
- offer a service learning or community service opportunity.

Mutual Benefits

This process is a developmental experience for all parties. The Co-op aims to ensure that the collaborations benefit everyone involved in the projects we facilitate.

- **Community partners** receive research or practical support for their work.
- Participating **students:**
  - gain experience working with a community   group;
  - receive preparation for and support in this experience;
  - have easy access to informants and community expertise on the issue;
  - will be able to show that they have carried out research for a real client.
- **Academics** may expand their network of partners for socially responsive research and/or teaching.

Growing vegetables in Gugulethu.

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How to get involved

Visit our website for more information about projects that are currently underway or available for uptake.

If you would like to get involved with any of our projects check the available projects page for a thesis or research topic that suits your interest. You can submit this online via the *Student Form* or email us.

You can also register your discipline and any specific skills for future projects.

Or join our volunteer *Rapid Research* team as an intern.

Some FAQs

Will the project form all – or only part of – my thesis?
The project ideas – or part of them – will become your thesis topic. The scope of the topic will be clarified in consultation with your academic supervisor and the community partner.

How long does it take to complete a project?
This depends on the type of project and research that you are conducting. As a rule you will produce your dissertation within the normal time frame.

How are students' chosen to get involved in projects?
Students choose topics they are interested in. Both their supervisor and the community partner need to agree that their proposal is fitting.