



## SEFAKO MAKGATHO HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

### OFFICE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU) is a comprehensive university located in Ga-Rankuwa, north of Pretoria. The institution holds a distinctive and exciting mandate to shape the education and training of medical practitioners, health professionals, and scientists across various disciplines.

In 2024 SMU proudly marked a decade of excellence in higher education. Since its establishment, SMU has devoted itself to the mission of developing a dynamic learning environment, prioritizing both student success and academic innovation. The university's commitment to building, optimizing, and stabilizing a supportive campus has resulted in a thriving institution known for its academic quality, groundbreaking research, and dedicated community service.

This relentless pursuit of excellence culminated in an outstanding achievement: SMU earned a top spot in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, securing 10th place among South Africa's universities. This recognition highlights SMU's transformation into one of the nation's foremost institutions in health sciences education, underpinned by a commitment to social relevance, cutting-edge research, and impactful community engagement.

The University wishes to invite applications for the following **five-year fixed-term contract** position:

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: SPECIAL PROJECTS AND STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT (1 post)  
(5-year fixed-term contract)**

Ref no: 25/2026/MMM/P3

The Executive Director: Special Projects and Stakeholder Management will provide strategic leadership and coordination of high-impact institutional initiatives on behalf of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, ensuring alignment between institutional priorities, strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and institutional reputation management as well as leading and overseeing the university's special strategic projects, stakeholder engagement, communication and marketing, institutional planning, the Project Management Office (PMO), and the development of third-stream income and new business models. However, the Vice-Chancellor reserves the right to add functions to or remove functions from this portfolio.

The incumbent reports to the Vice Chancellor and will be responsible for the key performance areas listed below:

Sunday Times, 3 May 2026

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

- A Master's Degree in one of the following fields: Business Administration, Public Administration, Strategic Management, Communication or Marketing, Higher Education Management, Development Studies or related discipline
- A Doctoral degree in related field will be preferred or an advantage
- At least ten (10) years of relevant experience, which at least five (5) years at a senior leadership (Director) level
- Demonstrated experience in:
  - o Strategic project leadership
  - o Stakeholder engagement and partnership development
  - o Institutional communication and marketing
  - o Institutional planning and performance monitoring
- Experience working in higher education, government, or large complex organizations
- Proven ability to run and/or oversee litigation and disciplinary processes
- Proven experience in leading cross-functional teams and complex strategic initiatives
- Experience in developing partnerships and revenue-generating initiatives will be an advantage
- Strong understanding of the South African higher education policy and regulatory environment (DHET, SAQA, NQF)
- Excellent strategic thinking and analytical ability
- Strong communication, negotiation, and stakeholder management skills
- Knowledge of project management methodologies and governance frameworks
- Ability to manage complex institutional environments and competing priorities

## **COMPETENCIES**

- Strategic and visionary leadership
- Stakeholder relationship management
- Executive decision-making
- Institutional coordination and influence
- High emotional intelligence
- Ability to manage multiple complex projects simultaneously
- Strong organisational and project management capability
- Ability to translate strategy into implementable institutional initiatives
- Client service orientation
- Communication and presentation skills
- Conflict management skills
- Confidentiality, tact and discretion when dealing with people
- Building strategic alliances and partnerships
- Management of transformation and change
- Personal impact, stature and credibility
- Emotional intelligence and political sensitivity
- Management of complexity and ambiguity

## KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS (KPAs)

- Provide strategic leadership for the Special Projects and Stakeholder Management allocated to this portfolio by the Vice-Chancellor
- Implement a leadership philosophy and culture that will support the implementation of SMU vision, values and strategic objectives
- Strategy development, planning and execution in the achievement of the Special Projects and Stakeholder Management department's strategic objectives
- Lead and oversee the development and implementation of strategic institutional projects assigned by the Vice-Chancellor
- Provide executive oversight of the institutional planning function, ensuring alignment between strategic priorities, operational plans, and institutional performance indicators
- Establish and lead the institutional Project Management Office (PMO) to strengthen project governance and execution across the university
- Develop and implement a comprehensive institutional stakeholder engagement strategy
- Provide executive leadership for the university's communication, marketing, and brand management functions
- Lead the development and implementation of strategies to diversify institutional revenue streams beyond government subsidies and tuition income
- Provide strategic coordination for priority initiatives within the Office of the Vice-Chancellor
- Lead and manage the directorate responsible for institutional planning, communication and marketing, stakeholder engagement, and the PMO
- Contribute to the overall development of SMU and actively improve institutional culture

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**Closing date: 22 May 2026**

**Applications from Employment Agencies will not be considered.**

**Application procedure:**

**Application procedure:** Candidates should submit their applications to the Acting Executive Director: Human Resources, for the attention of Ms. Lebo Molefe at [hr.recruitment1@smu.ac.za](mailto:hr.recruitment1@smu.ac.za) by **no later than 12:00** on the closing date stated in this advertisement.

**Applications should be accompanied by:**

- **A full curriculum vitae; as well as an abbreviated (no more than two pages) curriculum vitae;**
- **Certified copies of the Identity document**
- **Certified copies of qualifications**
- **The candidate's declaration of intent**
- **A self-evaluation by the applicant of his/her suitability for appointment;**
- **The applicant's vision for the portfolio;**
- **The names and contact details of at least three referees (provided that the University reserves the right to appoint and consult its own referees); and**
- **An indication in writing by the candidate that he/she accepts the applicable Appointment Regulation and Procedure of the University.**

**All candidates shortlisted will be required to submit themselves to competency assessment.**

It is the applicant's responsibility to have foreign qualifications evaluated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). Failure to submit the requested documents/information will result in your application not being considered.

*Telephonic enquiries regarding conditions of service: (012) 521-4707/4393*

**The Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer.**

***Correspondence will be limited to short-listed candidates only.***

*The University reserves the right not to make an appointment.*