

IIE launches first ever brand leadership Doctorate in South Africa

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The Independent Institute of Education, SA's largest and most accredited private higher education provider, has launched the first of its kind Doctor of Philosophy in Brand Leadership qualification, which will provide brand leadership professionals with the opportunity to make groundbreaking contributions to the development of the profession on the continent and globally.



"The IIE Doctor of Philosophy in Brand Leadership is the first brand-specific doctoral qualification focused on the niche field of Brand Leadership in South Africa. It breaks new ground, both locally and internationally," says Dr Carla Enslin, Head of Strategy at The IIE's Vega, where the programme will be offered from 2021 via full-time, part-time and distance learning.

Enslin says the unique focus on Brand Leadership addresses a particular social and economic imperative – the need for innovation by brands with shared stakeholder value and values-based leadership to create developmental opportunities for communities, organisations and the environment.

"Our future graduates will extend the forefront of this academic discipline and through their research will aim to achieve an immediate impact on professional and academic practice through the inclusion of unique African perspectives and locally resourced knowledge," she says.

Enslin says the qualification will equip students with advanced research and highly specialised knowledge within the field of Brand Leadership, add depth to the ever-evolving field by producing new knowledge within an African context, and encourage trans-disciplinary research.

"We will be welcoming those industry leaders and graduates who are passionate about this field, to help develop it by contributing new theories, innovative models and creative insights while producing scholarly research that is purposeful, challenge-led and responsive, thereby increasing the uptake of such research in industry practices and society," she says

"Ultimately, the aim is for our graduates to become the global pioneers who will develop and define the structures and forces that shape brands on the African continent and in a developing digital economy," she says.

Enslin says that D Phil qualifications are often much broader in scope, focused on Business, Economics or Management Sciences, for instance.

"So this really is a game-changer qualification. IIE Vega is wholly focused on strategic brand building and brand leadership, which makes the IIE Doctor of Philosophy in Brand Leadership unique not only in South Africa, but on the continent. And the launch of this qualification could not be more timeous, as we start the hard work of rebuilding brands and economies in the wake of the devastating strict Covid lockdowns. There is now a real need to rebuild, revitalise, and restore faith in brands," she says.

Dr Felicity Coughlan, Director of The Independent Institute of Education and Academic Director of ADvTECH, says the new qualification is a welcome addition to the institute's growing portfolio of post-graduate qualifications, which translates to increasing options and access to post-degree study for a greater number of students.

“With prospective students increasingly opting for respected private higher education institutions with a strong work-focus as their first choice, it is exciting that we are now able to offer this new option that will allow them to continue their educational journey in this exciting space right to the highest level.

“It is no longer business as usual, and we look forward to seeing the fruits of this new seed we are planting in the industry. In line with our values, this qualification’s focus is firmly on shared value creation and leadership at a time when our country and the world is in dire need of responsible and visionary leadership. Compared to other disciplines, Brand Leadership is a relatively young discipline, and we are delighted that our future graduates will be the pioneers who will make a defining contribution to its legacy.”

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