

## 2015 SOCIAL RESPONSIVENESS AWARDS

### Citation for Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship is the first academic centre in Africa dedicated to advancing social innovation and entrepreneurship. It was established in late 2011 as a specialised unit at the UCT Graduate School of Business, in partnership with the Bertha Foundation – a family foundation that works with inspiring leaders who are catalysts for social and economic change.

The Bertha Centre, comprising its staff and Bertha Scholars, was nominated for this award. Rather than highlighting the efforts of a specific individual or project, the organisation as a whole was chosen for its research and response to social challenges across several sectors. Central to their work is the creation of engaged and sustainable relationships between the university and social change actors in civil society, business and government.

Social innovation is an emerging academic, transdisciplinary field that is rooted in practice. Social innovation seeks to apply innovative thinking and business models towards accelerating social outcomes. It is a complex human-centred process involving new ways of relating, doing, organizing, and knowing. The principal approach of the Bertha Centre is to uncover, connect and pioneer social innovations and social entrepreneurs that work to generate inclusive opportunities and advance social justice in our country and continent.

Since inception, the team has uncovered **over 300 innovative models and solutions** in education, health and other social impact fields; convened **over 5 000 citizens and practitioners** across sectors; tested the feasibility of **innovative social solutions**; and produced over **12 formal knowledge outputs** from this work in publicly available reports and journal articles, in addition to numerous student theses and media articles. Four examples of this work include:

- Longstanding partnerships of support and engagement with two leading social enterprises in the Western Cape: R-Labs in Bridgetown, Athlone and Silulo Ulutho Technologies in Khayelitsha both of whom promote social innovation and entrepreneurship emerging from local communities. These partnerships have generated numerous projects and created mutual learning opportunities for both UCT students and the organisations.
- The Social Franchise Accelerator was the first of its kind in the world, where the Bertha Centre partnered with an international NGO and a local social franchise consultancy to deliver workshops to 40 organisations, and an intensive one year programme to assist four social change organisations to scale their impact through replication. These organisations included Ikamva Youth, Philani, and U-turn Homeless Ministries.
- Building an ecosystem for outcomes-based financing: the Bertha Centre has created a collaborative platform to bring government departments, NGOs and social investors together to explore more effective ways of achieving outcomes in priority areas. The Centre worked across three government departments, a cohort of foundations and investors and over 70 NGOs to co-design a social impact bond as an innovative financial instrument to improve outcomes of early childhood development programmes. The work has also been the subject of several student theses and was presented at local and international conferences.
- Groote Schuur Hospital Health Innovation Hub: building on its work of designing social innovation hubs (such as the MTN Solution Space at the GSB), the Bertha Centre established a partnership together with Groote Schuur Hospital and the UCT Faculty of Health Sciences to promote service innovation in the public health sector. Over the last 18 months the Centre has worked with the hospital management, the Facilities Board trust and the province to support 17 staff projects to improve public health care delivery, and invest in 10 of them. A replicable innovation curriculum has been developed for public hospitals, and two books have been published, profiling health care innovators at GSH and in South Africa at large.

At the Graduate School of Business, the Bertha Centre team has played a leading role in integrating civil society, social entrepreneurs, business and government involved in social innovation into the campus. Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship is now one of the GSB's three key thematic areas and in 2016, and the business school will offer the first MBA in the world to have Social Innovation in its core curriculum, making it the first business school globally to put social impact and innovation at the heart of its work.

These are but a few examples to demonstrate how the Bertha Centre with its Faculty, PASS staff, and scholars, has taken an integrated approach to engaged scholarship and social responsiveness. This has been enabled by a network of relationships with partners who work collaboratively to achieve greater social impact and advance social justice. For more information, please visit: [www.gsb.uct.ac.za/berthacentre](http://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/berthacentre)