

The Faculty of the Built Environment and Design at the Cape Technikon is the home of the largest number of design disciplines in Higher Education in the province, ranging from Fashion and Textiles Design, Jewellery Design, Visual Communication Design through to Interior Design and Product Design. The Faculty has been at the forefront for many years, on both a provincial and a national level, in developing an awareness of the contribution that Design makes to economic development.

A key factor in the Faculty's mission was the need to address issues around design, product development and sustainability, not only in the well-developed manufacturing sector, but also in the subsistence economy of South Africa. In effect, this meant engaging with those areas where design is manifest in the craft and hand-manufacturing activities of communities and individuals.

Key goals leading to the formation of the CCDI

In particular, the following goals translated into key elements which informed the Faculty's involvement in the establishment of the Cape Craft and Design Institute:

- To increase the volume and quality of problem-based research
- To establish and nurture community partnerships, leading to national, regional and personal growth
- To promote and foster a culture of lifelong learning
- To broaden and increase student access
- To adjust curricula to develop young designers and entrepreneurs capable of operating across the entire spectrum of economic activity in the region and in South Africa

In 2000, the Faculty of the Built Environment and Design of the Cape Technikon participated in the development of a proposal for the establishment of a Product Development Centre within the Faculty to provide a service to the craft sector. A study commissioned by the then Department of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Tourism of the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape (PAWC) identified the need to develop some form of Business Development Centre to support the Craft Sector in the province. These two proposals were integrated and a Business Plan was put forward at the beginning of 2002, which predicated the establishment of the Cape Craft and Design Institute, to be housed at the Cape Technikon.

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First Year of Operation

The Institute formally opened its doors at the beginning of November 2001, with financial support from the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape and the then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and with infra-structural support from the Cape Technikon. The first year of operation of the CCDI involved a confirmation of the scope of the needs identified in the province's research, together with the development of an infrastructure to support strategies that emerged to deal with key issues. (See CCDI fact sheets for detailed activities).

The Technikon's role in this period involved:

- The provision of administrative and logistical support
- The provision of a physical home for the Institute's operations
- Engaging with other stakeholders in the institution, in particular the Faculty of Management to elicit their future involvement
- Some participation by staff and students in activities of the Institute.

Plans for 2003/2004

- Further development of linkages and involvement across the Institution in the activities of the CCDI
- The development of an integrated research programme, which will underpin the activities of the Institute and provide a broader analysis of needs and strategies for the craft sector as a whole to support the development of appropriate long-term policies. It is anticipated that a National Research Foundation focus area for design, craft and hand-manufacturing is to be developed at the Cape Technikon, providing for interdisciplinary research
- Greater integration of staff and students into the functioning of the CCDI's programmes
- Consolidation of relationships across the Higher Education sector in the Western Cape, involving all five tertiary institutions in the activities of the Institute
- Integration of appropriate programmes within the existing curricula to develop young designers capable of operating across the entire spectrum of economic activities in South Africa involving design and craft
- The development of qualifications that integrate design into development strategies for the craft sector, in particular the development of parallel learnership/formal qualifications providing for multiple access.

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The Mission of the Cape Technikon

The Cape Technikon, an accessible centre of excellence in Higher Education, provides and facilitates high-level career and technology education and training in partnership with all its stakeholders. Its aim is to encourage the development of individual creativity, the acquisition of skills and the expansion of knowledge for national, regional and personal growth.