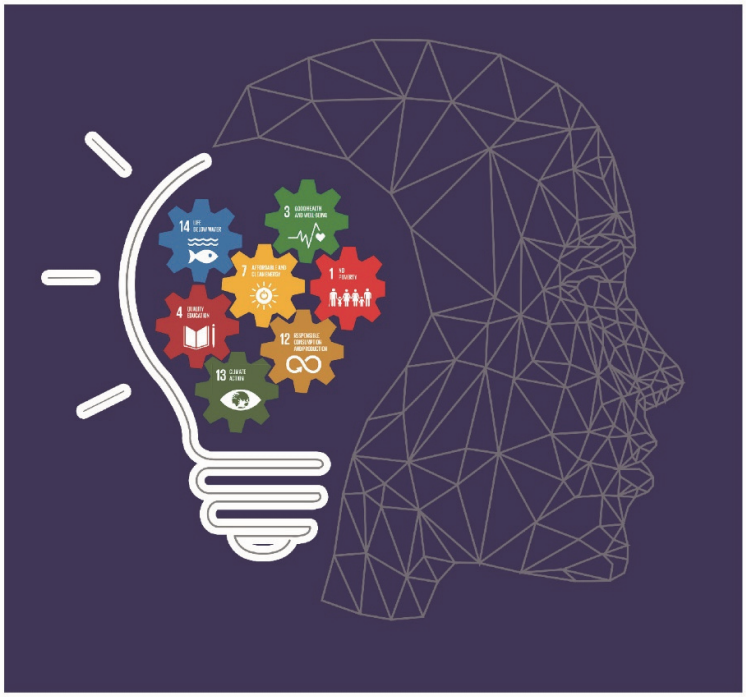
UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

UoM INNOVATION WEEK 2021

Second Edition



"Sustainable Innovation in the Making"

18 to 22 October 2021

REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview

The University of Mauritius organised and hosted the second edition of the UoM Innovation Week 2021 (UoM IW2021) from 18 October to 22 October 2021. The theme for this second edition was **"*Sustainable Innovation in the Making*".**

UoM IW2021 showcased UoM's achievements in developing innovation capacity (for both staff and students) as well as the institutional support put in place for innovation to thrive - such as the establishment of UoM-Industry Research and Innovation Clusters.

Similar to last year, this year's event provided a common meeting ground for our close collaborators from the public and private sectors, research funding agencies and local HEIs as well as the civil society, to come together and brainstorm on the way forward post-COVID. Importantly, this year's edition focused on the need for a holistic approach towards innovation, engaging all the local stakeholders. UoM IW2021 focused on the need for sustainable innovation, using the SDGs as a guiding framework, in shaping capacity and impact for the future.

Days 1 and 2 were devoted to showcasing innovative students and staff projects, with winners under different categories rewarded for their innovative ideas and hard work. On Days 3 and 4, representatives from the public and private sectors met to brainstorm on how to build stronger and more effective partnerships amongst all the local stakeholders around a common goal – to promote cohesive sustainable innovation and inclusive economic and social development.

The fifth and last day of the UoM IW2021 was dedicated to an Industry 5.0 Masterclass, organised and led by Team SYNThesis. In line with the theme of the event, the focus of the Masterclass was reimagining and rethinking innovative sustainable development. One session of the Masterclass 'Merging Might with Right' was jointly organised by Team SYNThesis and the UoM.

OPENING CEREMONY

UoM IW2021 started with an official ceremony, presided by the Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius.

In his welcome address the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dhanjay Jhurry highlighted that innovation has been at the core of the new vision of UoM endorsed in 2017. He recalled that the first edition of the UoM Innovation Week was dedicated towards enhancing academia, public sector and industry linkages to foster innovation in the country.

The Vice-Chancellor further iterated that this year's theme *"Sustainable Innovation in the Making"* was chosen to lay emphasis on the innovation capacity of UoM while working closely with the public and private sectors and with the civil society, enumerating the various innovative projects conducted at UoM to effectively contribute to sustainable innovation. Prof Jhurry referred to the publication of the 6th Edition of the UoM SDGs eNewsletter dedicated specifically to the 2021 Innovation Week.

The Pro-Chancellor & Chairman of the UoM Council, Mr P Chitamun, on his part advocated that sustainable technology and innovation are crucial to Mauritius, emerging from the COVID-19 crisis. He highlighted the common aspects of all kinds of innovation; creation of knowledge, diffusion of knowledge and adoption of knowledge.

Addressing the audience, the Chancellor, Dr J C Autrey, defined innovation as 'adding value to knowledge' and emphasised the key role played by UoM in driving innovation through its various research works. He also highlighted the importance of collaborative actions to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In her address, the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, The Honorable Mrs Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun, stressed the need to drive systemic innovation at all levels, highlighting the importance to instill creativity and foster an innovation culture in our workforce. The Minister stressed on the requirement to empower and value human resources as well as adopt an education system that places a premium on creative thinking, problem-solving and flexibility, among others, adding that universities need to be the place where opportunities are provided for the blooming of the creative potential in its diverse manifestations. She concluded by commending UoM in sustaining the innovation momentum.

The Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius

The Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius was the Chief Guest at the function. Addressing the audience, he referred to the various measures adopted by the Government to stimulate innovations that can benefit society in general and stressed on the need for inclusive innovation, driven by concern for resources and the environment as well as our responsibility towards future generations. The Hon Prime Minister recognised that the collaborative approach taken by the University of Mauritius to help solve problems has delivered concrete results and cited some of the major national projects led by UoM in collaboration with public and private sectors. He urged Higher Education Institutions to collaborate with industry to support the offer of new programmes in emerging technologies, spur creativity and innovation in our learners and generate solutions to pressing problems of national interest.

The Chief Guest reiterated the need for a holistic approach to innovation that includes investing in alternative energy sources, reducing the carbon footprint, preserving biodiversity, ensuring food and nutrition security, reducing the supply chain, adopting alternative business models and, especially, moving towards a circular economy model. He concluded by stating that innovative practices and new behavioural patterns are important for the shift towards sustainability and resilience to happen.

The Hon Prime Minister then declared the UoM Innovation Week 2021 officially open and wished the University and its Partners interesting and fruitful deliberations.

Tour of Exhibition showcasing UoM's Partnerships with Government, Industry and the Civil Society to foster innovation

As part of the Opening Ceremony, The Hon Prime Minister, the Hon Vice-Prime Minister and Guests had the opportunity to visit the various innovative projects showcased by UoM Staff and Students, as outlined hereunder.

PROJECT WITH INDUSTRY:

The Nano Face Mask, icw RT Knits

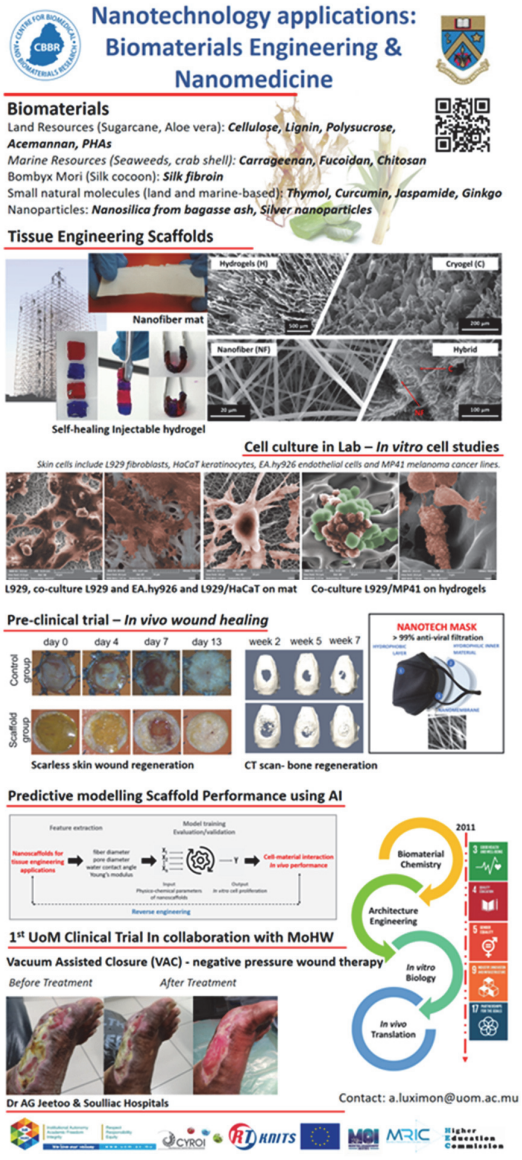
CBBR and RT Knits Ltd

Since 2011, the Center for Biomedical and Biomaterials Research (CBBR) has been engineering nanoscaffolds from biomaterials for regenerative medicine and nanomedicine applications. These scaffolds have shown accelerated scarless wound healing for skin and bone in small animal models.

In 2020, using this biomaterials engineering & nanomedicine expertise, CBBR partnered with RT Knits Ltd to engineer the Nanotech Mask using nanomembrane filtration technology certified with a 99.9% anti-viral filtration efficiency before and after washing.

The Nanotech Mask marked the beginning of visionary innovation-driven product development between the University and RT Knits Ltd, the two teams are now working on textile-based tissue engineering scaffold and on intelligent high performance sportswear in collaboration with High Performance Center Cote D'Or and Mauritius Athletics Association.

The exhibit showcased CBBR's pioneering tissue engineering scaffolds, the nanotech Mask, the nanofiltration membrane and high performance sportswear.



Passionate & Innovate Beyond Boundaries

Prosthetic Hand –"La Main de L'Espoir" Project in collaboration with The Flacq Rotary Club

Presentation of the Prosthetic Hand project by Dr Mahendra Gooroochurn to The Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth.

The "La Main de L'Espoir" initiative, an ongoing project in collaboration with The Rotary Club of Flacq, was showcased using a range of media, including photographs of past beneficiaries of the LN4 hand prosthesis distributed by The Rotary Club of Flacq. The physical LN4 prototype itself, videos showing various hand prototypes in use in different contexts and applications, 3D printed parts from the e-Nable open source library, generously fabricated by the NCB for the Innovation Week and instruction sheets for assembling the hand prosthesis were on display. The project was very much appreciated by Visitors for its humanitarian and life-changing attributes, as well as for the care-giving dimension and attentiveness to recipients' specific needs as well as the scope for further refining of the technology using modelling and 3D printing techniques.

Dr Mahendra Gooroochurn, Senior Lecturer, UoM collaborates with Dr Sundaresan Maiyalagan, Project Director, Flacq Rotary Club on this project.

Long Term Holistic Accompaniment of Families living in Poverty – A case study of the Lovebridge Model

Presentation of the Lovebridge Project by
Project Team Members: Mr N Ragodoo, Ms D Gokulsing,
Mr A Gopaul & Ms F Ramsamy

Ms Deepa Gokulsing, Head of Social Studies Department of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, presented this project. It is a collaborative research conducted by UoM in collaboration with Lovebridge and with the support of the MRIC.

Findings of the research have highlighted the role of the psycho-social accompaniment and following the recommendations of this project, as from July 2021, Lovebridge is working in collaboration with the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF) and other stakeholders on the 'Family Support Programme' in secondary schools – as explained by Mrs Priscille Noel from Lovebridge to the visitors.

A video highlighting the aims, objectives and findings of the project was also played during the exhibition and a summary of the report and pamphlets by Lovebridge were also distributed to visitors on that day.

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS MRIC LOVE BRIDGE Ansam nou kapav

Research on long-term holistic accompaniment of families living in poverty in the Republic of Mauritius: An Innovative research collaboration between the UoM, the MRIC and Lovebridge

N. Ragodoo, D. Gokulsing, A. Gopaul, F. Ramsamy
Department of Social Studies,
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Mauritius
Email: n.ragodoo@uom.ac.mu

Background

The fight against Poverty is a global and national cause and has been identified as the goal number 1 under the Sustainable Development Goals. Even though Mauritius is considered as a middle-income economy, increasing economic vulnerability remains a worrisome trend. In spite of the numerous existing programmes (both public and private) targeting poverty alleviation, the number of households living in poverty remains a national challenge.

Aim & Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to analyse the long-term holistic accompaniment approach adopted by Lovebridge as a socially innovative project, and its impact on the empowerment of people living in situations of poverty. In order to reach same, this study takes a deep insight into the accompaniment model developed and implemented by Lovebridge, evaluating the role played by Motivation, Positive Attitude, Skills and Courage (MASCO) and by the other fundamental, interconnected pillars of the programme (Figure 1) in the move towards empowerment. It examines the inter connected vertical and horizontal intervention approach applied by Lovebridge (Figure 2) and its impact on empowerment. It also critically analyses the overall effectiveness of the long-term holistic accompaniment approach as a tool to empower people living in situations of poverty.

Socially Innovative Research Project

This socially innovative research collaboration contributes to the fight against poverty as well as to research in the poverty field by evaluating the long-term holistic accompaniment approach being applied by Lovebridge since Year 2012. Whilst the majority of projects working with people living in poverty focus on assistance and material support, the Lovebridge project aims at working with the beneficiaries to improve their psychological pillar (MASCO) so that they can ultimately be empowered and become autonomous. By interviewing the beneficiaries, the field staff, as well as the 'accompagnateurs bénévoles', this study contributes towards a better understanding of the reality on the ground and the extent to which accompaniment is an effective tool in fighting against poverty. This project is also socially innovative as it currently has a direct impact on the lives of approximately 1500 persons living in poverty in Mauritius. Policy decisions taken in the light of this report on accompaniment (case management) are likely to have a positive impact on all those living in poverty across Mauritius.

Methodology

The study was carried out in 5 districts of the island and completed in four different phases. *Phase I* consisted of a review of the long term holistic accompaniment model adopted by Lovebridge, examining the pillars through which it intervenes. This included a review of existing Lovebridge documentation. In *Phase II*, an observation of the yearly evaluation exercise carried out by Lovebridge was done. For *Phase III*, a primary data-collection exercise was executed to obtain the views of the beneficiaries, of the field staff accompanying the families, as well as of the volunteers. For this phase, the qualitative method has been privileged, as it provides in-depth information pertaining to the effectiveness of the long-term accompaniment approach adopted by Lovebridge. In *Phase IV*, a quantitative exercise was carried out so as to evaluate the effectiveness of the long-term accompaniment approach as a tool for the empowerment of people living in situations of poverty.

Ongoing Project with a SME: The SmartBite™ Journey: From Lab to Fork

The SmartBite Maniodix Breakfast Mix was showcased as one of the projects of the Faculty of Agriculture that has moved from proof-of-concept to close to commercialisation. The SmartBite team, composed of Dr Brinda Ramasawmy, Dr Hudaa Neetoo and Mrs Zaynab Toorabally, wanted from the start of the project to come up with a healthy food product that has a positive impact on the local population by providing an alternative to currently imported energy dense food with empty calories. The SmartBite Maniodix Breakfast Mix arises from a collaboration between UoM and a women-led SME, DCF Roots Ltd represented by Mrs Christiane Chowree. A contract to formalise the collaboration and bring the SmartBite Maniodix Breakfast Mix on local retail shelves is underway and the product is expected to be commercialised early 2022.

Presentation of the SmartBite Health Products

The Honourable Prime Minister visited the SmartBite stand and was impressed with the product especially when he was told that it is 100% natural, gluten free, no sugar added, without additives and vegetarian. He said that especially the part on no sugar added was interesting given the high prevalence of diabetes in Mauritius. Mrs Chowree, small entrepreneur from DCF Roots Co. Ltd, told the Prime Minister that she was delighted to partner with the UoM to develop a new food product stating that this ongoing collaboration will be helpful to her product to gain visibility, recognition and more importantly trustworthiness on the local market.

The journey of the SmartBite Health Products does not stop here as the research team is looking for additional funding to develop new product lines of healthy food products using the Food Innovation Laboratory (FIL) that has been set up by the SmartBite research team in the agro processing incubator of the UoM AgriTECH Park. The FIL will indeed be a springboard for innovative “lab-to-fork” projects, providing opportunities to students and academic staff as well as to local entrepreneurs.

The AgriTECH Park

Projects with Government:

The AgriTECH Park Model designed by Mr S Hardowar and Ms Nishi Poran.

The UoM AgriTECH PARK

The Dean, Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), Associate Professor Daneshwar Puchooa, Mr Shane Hardowar, Head of Department (APS), Mr Sawan Busgopal, Acting Farm Manager, UoM Farm and Ms Nishi Poran (Intern) presented the AgriTECH Park Project.

An overview was given on the AgriTECH Park, launched in February 2020, by the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and his Team. The vision, aim and objectives of the AgriTECH Park are articulated to capture its focus on Sustainable Development and Food and Nutrition Security. The first three projects hosted under the Park are:

a) Small Commercial Dairy Farm for Sustainable Milk Production;
b) Setting-up of the Agro-processing Innovation Laboratory and Incubator; and
c) Setting up of AGRO-Artificial Intelligence Laboratory for Smart Agriculture.

The AgriTECH Park offers a distinctive structure by providing a platform for collaboration between Academia, the Industry, Corporate sector/SMEs, Start-ups and Incubators, and supportive of entrepreneurs in the development of innovative products and services for the Agri-Food sector in the Republic of Mauritius and in the region.

The Open Source Farming Machine, the FarmBot Genesis, the World's first at-home automated farming robot, was also showcased. The FarmBot technology is an open source precision agriculture farming project consisting of a robot farming machine and software. Mr Rory Aronson at the California Polytechnic State University started it in 2011. It uses an online crop database namely the OpenFarm, and can plant over 30 different crops in an area of 2.9 metres x 1.4 metres. It can be operated indoors as well as outdoors. This technology adopts the essence of the SDGs, especially SDG 2 (ending hunger) as it can help people to grow food in limited space and SDG 13 (climate action) as it emits 25% fewer carbon dioxide compared to conventional methods of food production

With its inbuilt camera, soil sensors, internet, electricity and water supply connection the FarmBot performs sowing, mechanical weed control and precision watering as per plant needs. The FarmBot can be augmented with a weather meteorological station to collect environmental data. The visual interface helps one to plan one's garden like a video game. An entrepreneur can thus design his garden plot and the FarmBot does the rest.

Presentation of the Farmbot

A mini model of aquaponics mounted by Mr Shane Hardowar, Ms Nishi Poran from the Faculty of Agriculture and Mr Nitish Rambaruth, former student of the University of Mauritius and Director, Maugreen Aquaponics Ltd was also presented.

The mini model of aquaponics system

This mini model showcased a simple aquaponics system/low cost kit system besides roof gardening, tube-o-ponics, container gardening which represent a solution to increase our local food production. It consists of a fish tank linked to a media bed (biological filtration) and deep water culture for food crops production. It is aligned with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development comprising Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 3 (Good health and well-being), 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and 13 (Climate Action).

This integrated system therefore relies on the principle of circular economy since any waste from the fish is being used by plants. Water is reused in the re-circulating system. No chemical pesticides or herbicides are used.

Aquaponics farms can be established as non-profit, community or neighbourhood-based farms. It can also be developed into for-profit businesses and as an income source for alleviating poverty. There is an increased interest in the agribusiness, aquaponics business given the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruptions in the food supply chain, providing new opportunities for local entrepreneurship. Over and above partly addressing the issue of food insecurity and providing employment opportunities, aquaponics provide bio- and safe products.

Visit to the Space refurbished by the University of Arizona

The guided tour concluded with a visit to the space refurbished by the University of Arizona for the offer of dual degree programmes. Based on the collaboration between the two parties, a UA Microcampus has been set up at UoM Ebène Branch located at The CORE Building

Visit to the UoM-Ceridian Innovation Lab

The delegation was welcomed by Associate Professor Khedo. Dean FoICDT and Mr Vidia Mooneegan, CEO of Ceridian (Mauritius) Ltd. The Dean gave a brief overview of projects in the pipeline with industry and Mr Mooneegan stressed on the importance that Ceridian gives to developing human capital in the field of ICT and emerging technologies. Thereafter, the different student team/students presented their innovative projects:

- A mobile app that can assist users to take care of their health. Users can set doctor appointments, reminders to take medication, go through tutorials about how to react in case of medical emergencies –Project of Student Team: Dhanveer Sharma Emrith, Krishna Humath, Maadhav Koonjul and Sanjana Ramchurun – BSc (Hons) Software Engineering Programme
- An application on the use of smart face marks equipped with QR codes to inform users that they may have been in contact with a COVID-19 infected person. The app users' mobile network is used in different areas to trace the proximity of users.
  Project of Student: Mr Yuvraj Seegolam, BSc (Hons) Applied Computing Programme
- A decentralised secure online voting system using blockchain –
  Project of Student Damien Gerard, of BSc (Hons) Computer Science Programme
- A mobile app that uses Augmented Reality for virtual tours of the Aapravasi Ghat. Users can visit historical buildings that no longer exist and view and interact with artefacts from the relevant period via the app –
  Project of Student Ghuzailah Widaad, BSc (Hons) Applied Computing Programme

Can Mauritius cut out the use of fossil fuels and reduce its energy costs at the same time?

Mr Kent Thoresen,
Chief Innovation Officer and Head of RebelX, As, Norway

As the title suggests, the key element of this keynote address was based on the argument that Mauritius can end reliance on fossil fuels for electricity production by shifting to solar energy and battery storage. According to the Chief Innovation Officer and Head of RebelX at the Norwegian battery scale-up, Hagal AS, innovation always involves risk and never happens in a vacuum, can be incremental or revolutionary, spanning over various fields, namely social, political, financial, technical and corporate/media dimensions. He highlighted that 80% of the global primary energy consumption comes from non-renewable sources, notably oil, gas and coal. The presenter further stressed on the need for developing technological solutions to tackle the energy challenges relating to limited storage capacity for energy produced from sunshine. He referred to the novel diagnostic technology developed by his company to monitor and control the health classification of each battery and proceeded to demonstrate how this innovative application enables the reuse of old and B-quality cells, thereby significantly reducing the total energy costs. According to the Keynote Speaker, the location of Mauritius and its climatic conditions amplifies the usage of solar energy. Mr Thoresen mentioned that used EV batteries and B cells can cut cell cost by 75-80 %, while also extending its lifespan by 30 % through integration of AI technologies. He concluded that the current energy costs of Mauritius are sufficient to cover the investment costs for the purchase and installation of solar panels, which can be recouped over approximately 30 years.

The presentation was well received by academics who attended the keynote session with several of them showing interest to work together with Mr Thoresen to reflect on opportunities of designing a system to replace fossil-fuel related energy dependency with greener alternatives, mainly solar energy for Mauritius. Mr Thoresen signified his enthusiasm to join the UoM team in this endeavor.

Recommended Actionable Solutions:

To constitute a team at UoM to work together with Mr Thoresen and his firm to prepare a white paper/concept paper on the shift to solar energy for the electricity production for Mauritius.

STUDENTS' BEST INNOVATIVE PROJECTS COMPETITION

The Students' Best Innovative Projects Competition held to recognise the efforts of students at Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral levels in their innovative research endeavours as part of the 2nd Edition of the UoM Innovation Week, was launched in September 2021. More than 35 submissions were received, of which 25 were short-listed for the final round. The submissions covered a broad spectrum of areas, from novel foods, through new pedagogical approaches to new diagnostic tools, new approaches in cancer diagnosis to block chain technology in the banking sector. The Independent Selection Panel comprised of Associate Professor M Santally, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning & Resources), Dr A Peedoly, Research Officer from the *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council* and Mr A Kaidoo, Head of Product & Technology from *Ceridian*.

Mr Damien Gerard, BSc (Hons) Computer Science
Winner – Undergraduate Category

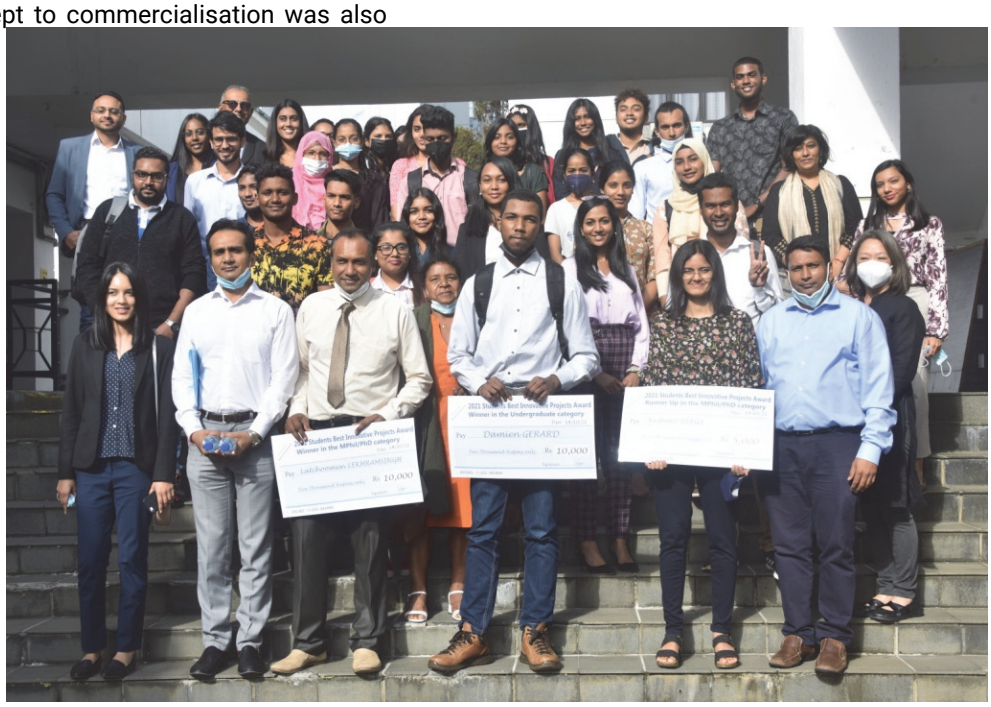
Mr Damien Gerard from the *Faculty of Information, Communication & Digital Technologies*, won the First Prize at Undergraduate Level for his work on a new decentralised online voting system. The work is deemed to be highly relevant as this prototype relies on a far more secure system (the *Shamir's Secret Sharing* (SSS) algorithm) although it remains to be put to the test.

Mr Nandan Ramburrun from the *Faculty of Law and Management* won the First Prize at Postgraduate Level for his work on knowledge sharing among the sugarcane planters of Mauritius. Findings from his study point to the need for a truly collaborative culture, organisational support and openness in communication among the planters.

Mr Nandan Ramburrun, MBA
(Specialisation: Human Resource Management)
Winner – Postgraduate Category

Doctoral Level, Dr Latchoomun Lekhramsingh was awarded the First Prize for his work on "The Harmonic Oscillator Tank". This prototype has been developed for leaking networks when only a short or medium-term solution is required since infrastructure renewal requires a massive investment. Although promising, the need to mobilise more funds from Industry to scale up the technology was highlighted.

The Runners-Up for each level were Mr Yusuf Kadell from BEng (Hons) Mechanical Engineering (UG), Ms. Yasoda Chedumbaram from MSc Microbiology (Postgraduate) and Miss Keshnee Reega (MPhil/PhD). Mr Kadell, student of the Faculty of Engineering was commended for his work on the development of fully biodegradable algae-based bioplastic bags as an alternative to petro-plastics. The role of University-Industry partnership to allow this research to move from proof-of-concept to commercialisation was also reiterated. Miss Chedumbaram's research was commended as a SME-led research work that was carried out between UoM and the local honey manufacturer, Miel d'Or. Finally, Miss Reega, Doctoral Student at the Faculty of Agriculture was also recognised for her work on the use of mathematical models to predict the growth of food borne disease-causing and spoilage bacteria in cooked tuna as an *in-silico* tool to ensure its safety and quality. Her research is being conducted under close supervision of Princes Tuna (Mauritius). These research projects are clear testimony to the fact that public universities can do translational research that seek to bring theory to practice, some with entrepreneurial outcomes. It is hoped that this competition will now set the pace for more student-driven innovative research local marketplace.ulminate in tangible products or solutions that can enter the



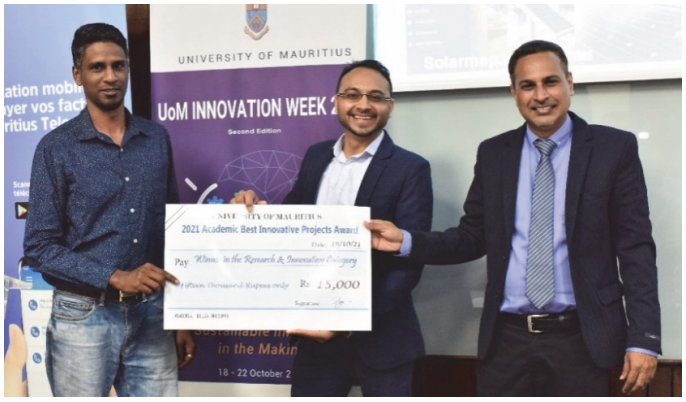
Participants in the Students' Best Innovative Projects Competition with their Supervisors

SHOWCASING ACADEMICS' BEST INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

In line with the theme of the UoM IW 2021 "***Sustainable Innovation in the Making"***, Day 2, organised by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia), provided an opportunity to UoM Academics to highlight their impactful and innovative projects in the areas of (i) **Research & Innovation** and (ii) **Teaching & Learning**.

11 submissions were received for consideration in the Research & Innovation category and 3 submissions in the Teaching and Learning category, of which 6 best Innovative projects were selected during the Evaluation Sub-Committee chaired by the Coordinators (Assoc Prof Abdel Khoodaruth and Dr Anwar Chutoo).

CATEGORY 1: RESEARCH & INNOVATION



Award of Prize to Winning Team in the Research & Innovation Category

The First Prize in the Research & Innovation category was awarded to Dr Y K Ramgolam, Mr A Chiniah and Dr N Sookia for their project on "Innovation in the First Axe of PESP: Phase I Online Solar Energy Mapping, Forecasting and PV Education Platform".

This project intends to lead the way for a 'Park of Excellence in Solar Photovoltaics' at the UoM. The aim of this phase of the project is to go beyond the state-of-the-art and integrate an innovative online platform for enhancing solar energy mapping, forecasting and PV Education in the project web page (solarmap.uom.ac.mu). The first runner-up team, comprising of Dr G K Bahadur, Dr A Jodheea-Jutton, Dr D Callychurn and Dr S Ramsamy-Iranah proposed the design and development of isolating pods to prevent the spread of coronavirus or other viruses to be used in hospital as well as for domestic uses.

The Team comprising Mr L Sanassee, Dr B Y R Surnam and Professor M Z Dauhoo was the 2nd runner-up for their project "Investigating the Mixing Parameters of a Pitched Blade to obtain a Homogeneous Mixture". Their prototype pitched-blade turbine stirred tank confirmed that the manufactured adhesive was homogenous and had a uniform viscosity at all levels of the tank.

CATEGORY 2: TEACHING & LEARNING

Award of Prize to Winning Team in the Teaching & Learning Category

The First Prize in the 2nd Category, Teaching & Learning, was awarded to the Team comprising Mr I Vencatachellum, Dr I Dussoye, Mrs P Seeam and Dr P Gunesh for the development of the module MGT 3051(5) People Management Skills. This module was introduced at UoM as an alternative to Work Placement for the academic year 2020-2021 on the BSc (Hons) Human Resource Management Level III programme, given restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic did not allow for students' internships in organisations.

The First Runner-up in this Category was the Team consisting of Dr P Appavoo & Dr A Meetoo-Appavoo for their project 'Automated Marking of Online Programming Assessments with Plagiarism Detection'. This integrated system allows for online submissions of computer programs for automated grading and identification of plagiarism cases. Instructors are offloaded from the tedious grading exercise and students are assessed in a manner that promotes integrity.

The Third Prize was awarded to Dr A V Soocheta for her module 'Online Delivery of Practical Modules Challenge'. This exemplary endeavour showcases the outcome and experience of developing and implementing a framework to rapidly shift practical-laboratory teaching of the module, 'Creativity and Innovation in Design' to the online mode. Students' projects, assignments and coursework submissions are a testimony that endorses the outcome.

Cash Prizes, sponsored by Mauritius Telecom, were awarded to the Winners in each category and a Certificate of Participation was given to all Participants.

Group Photo

All the six (6) selected projects presented are examples of impactful innovative projects conducted at UoM, be it in the field of Research & Innovation or Teaching & Learning. In particular, projects in the Research & Innovation category could be scaled up and have the potential for commercialisation. These have almost reached the proof-of-concept stage with only some further refinements required. Other Faculties can integrate the innovative modules presented in the Teaching & Learning Category to impart skills and competencies to their students. Moreover, the modules taught by Dr A Soocheta can be packaged and offered as commissioned short courses as training for SMEs.

Roundtable led by the UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY RESEARCH & INNOVATION CLUSTERS (UIRICs)

As part of its mandate to enhance the University-Industry collaboration, the University-Industry Consultative Committee (UICC) has initiated the creation of five University-Industry Research and Innovation Clusters (UIRICs) in 2021, to address Industry research, technology transfer and innovation challenges. Each UIRIC was called during Day 3 to present such challenges of immediate interest within their respective Industry.

Accordingly, Industry Leaders delivered six presentations, as follows:

1) Smart Manufacturing Research Cluster

Mr Kendall Tang, Chief Executive Officer of RT Knits, made a presentation as part of the Sustainable Manufacturing Cluster focusing on Sustainable Value Creation. He referred to the "Golden triangle" – a set of three interlinked triangles, the first one representing customers, the second one employees, and the third one the company. The essence of which is that value creation within a company cannot be created sustainably without addressing each individual factor within each triangle. Presently, RT Knits faces some challenges including: a niche market for its products that should be big enough to ensure economic viability; the ability to industrialise and scale up production; and the need for R&D to develop material and technical feasibility.

Way Forward:

- The following three (3) areas were identified for Research and Development collaborations:
  - Plant and enterprise level automation
  - Material / product innovation
  - Reaching net zero carbon emission

2) Agriculture and Food Security Research Cluster

i) **Mrs Yusufi Rahimbaccus**, Marketing Manager of Livestock Feeds LTD (LFL) gave a presentation on 'Filière de la vache laitière'. She made reference to the Agreement signed between UoM and LFL in 2019 to pilot study the practicalities of the UoM AgriTech Park.

This pilot farm, in collaboration with UoM, FAREI and LFL will help to overcome the technical and economic challenges and henceforth, be in a better position to replicate this model to the dairy cow breeders.

ii) **Mr Michael Raymond**, *Agrinnovation Manager of Médine Group* presented "The Potato French Fries Project". Potatoes being a strategic product consumed by the whole population, he elaborated on a proposal of making potato smart by providing a roadmap to making the perfect French Fries in terms of size, shape, color, taste, crispiness, healthy amongst others.

Way Forward:

The following were identified for future collaborations :

- Assistance from UoM in identifying the best potato variety produced locally for fries production
- Funding of research projects
- Commercialisation of the products and derivatives
- Training of entrepreneurs on the enhanced process and transformation

3) Financial Services Research Cluster

Mr Roshan Ramoly, Director of LinearArc Solutions & Member UICC, Industry Lead for the Financial Services Research Cluster, made a presentation on 'Financial Services: Unlocking Potentials'. According to him, there is a need for a new regulatory framework that can quickly adapt to the fast-changing financial services industry. He requested the assistance of UoM to conduct academic research on pertinent issues as listed in the table below and to identify potential solutions for the sustainability of the industry.

Way forward:

The following were identified as key questions to be addressed:

Research Areas	Issues of Pertinence
Human Resources	How do we bridge the skills and cultural gap to be more competitive? How to attract and retain talent from overseas to help grow the industry?
Legal	How is our current legal framework enhancing or inhibiting businesses? What is the current cost and benefit of compliance in Mauritius and how does it compare with others?
Technology/Innovation	Understanding new technologies and how Mauritius can leverage it? Which industry has innovated the most (NBFC, Banking, Insurance, Global Business) and why?
Economics	What is stopping Mauritius from launching products/services that are available in other jurisdictions? How does Mauritius compare with jurisdictions such as DIFC, Singapore, Rwanda and GIFT?

4) Tourism and Hospitality Research Cluster

Ms Geraldine Koening, Chief Officer, Operational Excellence of Beachcomber Resorts and Hotel, gave an overview on the key challenges in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector. According to her, the Tourism sector has witnessed numerous changes over the years and more so with the COVID-19 crisis. She claimed that Innovation is crucial to an organisation's long-term success.

Way Forward:

At the end of the session, it was agreed:

- To devise appropriate means for a holistic destination sustainable management approach and better market visibility
- To synchronise individual sustainable initiatives and efforts – set common industry targets
- To develop a methodology for measuring / evaluating / reporting – pooling all existing initiatives together on a dedicated destination portal

5) Health Care Research Cluster

Professor Jhurry gave a presentation on the urgency for a holistic approach to health issues in Mauritius. The status of NCDs (diabetes, hypertension and CVDs) in Mauritius is quite alarming and the incidence of these diseases has been constantly on the rise over more than a decade now. In 2019, type 2 diabetes prevalence among the 20-79 age group in Mauritius was on average 23% of the population, featuring Mauritius at the 5th place of countries with the highest diabetes prevalence. Taking into account all conditions, it is projected that this percentage will increase to 26% and 28% in 2030 and 2045 respectively, with Mauritius climbing to the 2nd position worldwide. This would be dramatic for Mauritius as nearly a third of our population will be suffering from diabetes, let alone other health problems.

The hypertension problem is linked closely to the consumption of salt per inhabitant in Mauritius which is higher than the 5 g daily consumption recommended by WHO. The CVDs on the other hand is a result of high sugar and salt consumption over and above the consumption of trans fatty acids. The impact of such diseases on emerging diseases such as COVID-19 is also of concern as studies clearly show that people suffering from comorbidities - diabetes, hypertension and CVDs - are the most deadly affected.

According to Professor Jhurry, this problem is being addressed in a very scattered manner instead of a holistic approach. The initiatives taken by the Ministry of Health and Wellness mostly relate to prevention through advertisement campaigns which is good but far from addressing the root causes of the problem. Some initiatives are championed by the private sector and NGOs but the impact at national level is not visible.

Way Forward:

Prof Jhurry proposes the setting-up of an Alliance of local stakeholders - govt, industry, academia, civil society (NGOs) - as well as international people to elaborate a plan of action to address the health problems plaguing our country. The goal is to reverse the increasing trend by 2030 in line with UN Agenda 2030. Such a plan would consist of actions along 7 distinct areas: protection, prevention, promotion, governance, information, advocacy and capacity.

Salient points discussed during Panel discussions and Way Forward:

Common observations made by the Industry Representatives are:

i. The need to open up the URICs to a larger group of Business Operators to enable deeper and more meaningful dialogue within the Industry and to enhance the collaboration between Industry and Academia.

ii. To sustain this endeavour, Industry Representatives felt it was imperative to work collaboratively with relevant authorities on funding mechanisms. A survey on available sources of funding for research was advisable.

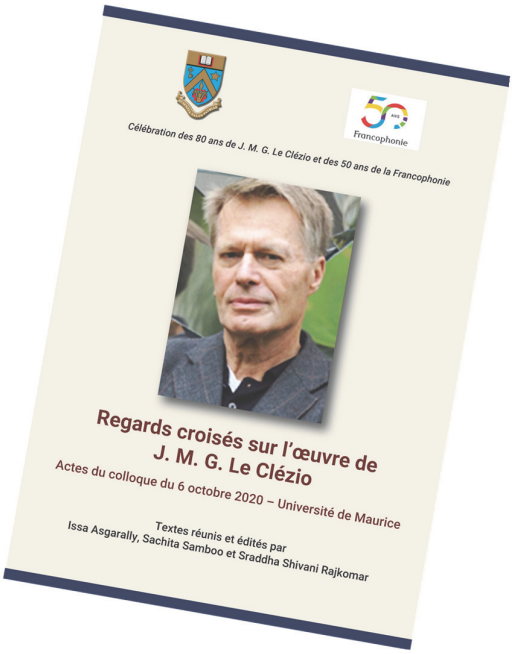
iii. It was also deemed appropriate to explore the identified challenges holistically, in view of ensuring that the enablers of change are optimised.

Discussions among UoM-Industry Leaders

Part 1 - Lancement des Actes du Colloque

Sachita Samboo, Sraddha Shivani Rajkomar, Professor Jhurry and Mr Issa Asgarally (From left to right)

The conference proceedings "regards croisés sur l'œuvre de J. M. G. Le Clézio" : Textes réunis et édités par Issa Asgarally, Sachita Samboo et Sraddha Shivani Rajkomar were launched by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Dhanjay Jhurry, on Wednesday 20th October 2021 as part of Innovation Week. The event took place one year after the one-day workshop held at the University of Mauritius celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Francophonie as well as the 80th birthday of J. M. G. Le Clézio, the Nobel Prize for Literature 2008



Objectives of the session

i) To showcase research generated in the Humanities at the University of Mauritius

ii) To highlight and renew the importance of UoM Press in the dissemination of scholarly research

iii) To inform writers and scholars of the commitment of UoM Press in editing and publishing books in both printed and digital formats, and across languages and disciplines

Part II Roundtable led by UoM - Clustering of local HEIs around SDGs

Session chaired by Professor S K Sobhee, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia) &
Proposal presented by Miss N Maherally & Miss K Kasi, Trainee Project Assistants

This session was dedicated to enhancing collaboration among Higher Education Institutions in Mauritius. Ms Kounshika Kasi and Ms Naila Maherally gave a presentation on UoM's proposal for the Development of an online course on 'Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education'.

The proposed module is the outcome of prior discussions held with the public universities. The Deans of different Faculties and Directors of Centres from UoM and the Representatives of MIE, MGI, and Polytechnics Mauritius expressed their strong interest in contributing towards the development of this programme, to be assessed based on a portfolio submission or project-based, rather than traditional formal written examination settings.

Discussions:

- Participants agreed that Universities cannot continue working in silos. HEIs need to join forces in order to meet the employability of the constantly changing needs of the job market, more and more geared towards sustainability considerations. The Private Sector must also embrace sustainability mindset/thinking.
- Mr E Konak, Country Manager at Nestlé, confirmed that the private sector has to abide by the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) regulations and sustainability reporting. He made a special request for the Cluster to focus on SDG 13- Climate Action.
- In general, consensus was noted for the offer of the proposed module by local Universities and MIE as a start. One member pointed out that a Certificate in Sustainable Development could be further developed.

Way Forward :

It was proposed to:

- Include the learning outcomes
- Circulate the proposed curriculum to all UoM Faculties and the participating HEIs for views and comments
- Appoint a Coordinator to ensure proper implementation of the proposal
- Discuss the modalities of offer more in depth

Day 4 – Thursday 21th October 2021

Morning session – Roundtable led by Business Mauritius

Group Photo - Mr Bruno Dubarry, Ms Rebecca Espitalier-Noël, Mr Mickael Apaya, Mrs Natacha Emilien and Associate Professor Vincent Florens (from left to right)

Led by Business Mauritius, the Morning Session of Day 4 was devoted to showcasing the sustainable and innovative capacities of the industry and strengthening the partnerships between academia and the private sector to address challenges related to biodiversity and food security.

In his opening address, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof D Jhurry stated the University of Mauritius has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which integrate all the constituents of the society: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership as a framework in its vision since 2017.

He briefly elaborated on the mapping exercise conducted at UoM using the SDG targets and indicators, laying much emphasis on a tripartite collaboration among higher education institutions, the industry and the public and civil societies.

The Vice-Chancellor referred to the five clusters formed by the University-Industry Consultative Committee to tackle sustainability issues faced by the main economic sectors. Thereafter, he enumerated some partnerships between UoM and the Industry that have led to concrete results.

In his presentation, Mr Mickael Apaya, the Head of Sustainability & Inclusive Growth of Business Mauritius, referred to the novel brand, SigneNatir (www.signenatir.mu) - a community initiative led by Business Mauritius, which is a sustainability pact for a Sustainable and Inclusive Mauritius. It encompasses 30 targets of the 17 SDGs, compressed into five concepts:

- Energy transition
- Circular Economy
- Biodiversity
- Vibrant Communities
- Inclusive Development

Morning session – Roundtable led by Business Mauritius (Cont'd)

Mr Apaya cited two projects by Business Mauritius and its partners to address the above-mentioned themes - "*Dialogue de Politique et Citoyen sur la Biodiversité"* (DPCC) and *"Moris Solider- Solidarité Alimentaire"*.

Associate Professor Vincent Florens, from the Department of Biosciences and Ocean Studies, Faculty of Science, UoM, delivered a presentation on the array of factors destroying biodiversity in Mauritius and how the ecosystem services can be improved through reduction of carbon emissions. He stressed on the fact that despite being among the last countries to be colonised, the island is one of the most destroyed indigenous habitats.

Mrs Natacha Emilien, Managing Director of Red Dot talked on the innovative aspect of the DPCC Project mentioned above. According to her, the major barrier to innovation in Mauritius is the mindset of people. She presented the concept of design thinking- a human-centered approach to solving problems. It is a non-linear process, encompassing multi-stakeholder collaborative actions which help deal with highly complex problems. Business Mauritius and its partners are designing, in collaboration with the Ministries, a platform for dialogue on biodiversity.

Mr Bruno Dubarry, Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Mauritian Manufacturers and Ms Rebecca Espitalier-Noël, Director of Foodwise spoke on the challenges linked to food security in Mauritius which could be addressed using design thinking. Referring to the vulnerabilities of our food supply chains revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic and to reduce food wastage, they stated that the Private Sector can act as a link between vulnerable sections of the population and businesses in the food/restaurant/hotel sector. Mr Dubarry stressed on the importance of linkages between the Public and Private Sectors and NGOs in this area. Additionally, Ms Espitalier-Noël highlighted the loopholes in our enactments, hindering the endeavours of the concerned parties to avoid food wastage/spillage. They requested assistance from the UoM to conduct studies in this field.

Day 4 – Thursday 21th October 2021

Afternoon Session- Innovation in the New Normal Led by MRIC

Roundtable 'Taking stock of Innovation in Mauritius and brainstorming in ways and means to enhance Innovation post pandemic'

Group Photo of Panelists

As the apex body responsible for advising the Government on matters concerning applied research, innovation and research and development issues, the MRIC was called upon to organise and lead this session. MRIC presented its innovation initiatives as well as its funding schemes. Following the stock-taking presentations, a multi-stakeholder panel discussion was held to brainstorm on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on national innovation policies. Recommendations of the panel will contribute towards the forthcoming strategic plan of the MRIC.

The first part of this session hosted four presentations as follows:

- **Professor T Bahorun,** Executive Director of MRIC made a presentation on 'Fostering Innovation for all Sectors of Economy'. He elaborated on the different schemes, initiatives, in-house programmes and projects launched by the Council to foster a research, innovation & entrepreneurship culture. He further highlighted the extended mandate of the Council.

- **Dr V Bissonauth,** Research Coordinator at MRIC demonstrated the National SME Incubator Scheme (NSIS) as a way to

consolidate the start-up ecosystem in Mauritius. He also drew attention to NSIS' accredited incubators: accreditation criteria and services provided.

- **Dr M. Madhou**, Research Coordinator at MRIC, then delivered an interesting presentation on 'Monitoring the innovation ecosystem-Facts and Figures'. Elaborating on the National Innovation Framework, she highlighted the performance of Mauritius in indicators of the Global Innovation Index (GII) using facts and figures, laying much emphasis on the R&D sub-indicator. She further pointed to the initiatives taken at the level of the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation and MRIC to sustain and improve the performance of Mauritius and finally, highlighted the issues to be addressed.
- **Dr V Puttur,** System Engineers of

Harel Mallac Technologies Ltd, made a presentation on AgriTECH as part of a Smart Solution for Agriculture, sponsored by the Council under the Special Call for Proposals - Fast-track innovative projects to counter the impacts of COVID-19. The company has developed a platform to empower farmers by supporting them with an Internet of Things (IOT) enabled system that would facilitate the work of farmers.

Panel Discussion

The Panel Discussion involved Academia, Public Sector, and Industry. Mr Avinash Meetoo, Head of Experimentation, Accelerator Lab, UNDP Mauritius and Seychelles, was the facilitator of this session. In the Roundtable session, discussions were held around the following theme: *Why Mauritius lacks behind in innovation despite having the proper regulations and instrumentations?*

Salient points of the Panel Discussion

1. ***Education***

- Culture of innovation, with education system as the starting point should be strengthened
- Inculcating the culture of innovation is a lengthy process
- There is a lack of synergy between R&D priorities of academia, government and private sectors
- Both skills and academic qualifications are important for an innovation culture
- Tertiary institutions do not have the required resources to compete with countries like Rwanda and South Africa
- Reluctance of youngsters to start their own enterprises due to lack of innovation culture

2. ***Strategies and Policies***

- The innovation status of a country is not limited to the performance in the GII
- Mauritius does not meet the performance level in its innovation outputs relative to its level of innovation investments as per the GII
- Despite having the regulations or tools (enablers) such as tax double-deduction, Regulatory Sandbox License (RSL), innovation vouchers funding mechanisms amongst others, these tools are not being widely adopted by stakeholders in the private sector
- Mauritius is the only country having an Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy in Africa and is ranked second behind Cameroon in Sub-Saharan Africa with

regards to number of publications in AI. Nevertheless, with regards to qualitative analysis, there is much to do in this field.

3. ***Private Sector Involvement***

- Low percentage of companies having a dedicated R&D department
- The lengthy administrative procedures with regards to funding mechanisms and support from concerned authorities are a hurdle for research in private sectors.
- Grants received from funding agencies are not sufficient for high quality and impactful research.
- Challenges faced by private sectors to obtain clearance, licenses and permits from concerned authorities.

Recommendations:

- Developing the required skills such as leadership skills with regards to empowering the future generation
- Change in mindset
- Introducing innovation at grass-root level
- Need to focus on existing resources rather than re-inventing the wheel
- More impact through investment and funding through high quality projects
- Attract foreign companies to invest on R&D
- Multi-sectoral collaboration to boost the innovation ecosystem
- Focus on incremental innovation rather than disruptive innovation
- MRIC to act as facilitator between Government and private sector

Session with Team SYNThesis on

'Merging Might with Right'

The session was organised jointly by Team SYNThesis and UoM as part of a one-day MasterClass devoted to sustainability issues and Industry 5.0.

As we move from Industry 4.0 to Industry 5.0, the focus is not on machines and robots but on how these can help humans work better, faster and smarter. It is about refining the collaborative interactions between human and machines, finding the optimal balance of efficiency and productivity.

How is that related to sustainability? Industry 5.0 is based on 3 pillars: human centric, resilience and sustainability, that is the power of industry to achieve societal goals and become a provider of Prosperity, respect for our Planet, promote the well-being of People, work in Partnerships through networks with all of this leading to Peaceful and harmonious societies. These are the 5Ps' of the SDGs.

The session featured 1 Keynote Talk by Professor Philip McGowan from the Univ of Newcastle on biodiversity followed by 2 Talks on climate change and social innovation by MarieLoe Halvorsen and Stephane Soyez from Norway and Université Catholique de Lille, France respectively. Then followed by a panel discussion, focusing on regeneration, the need for a clear SDG strategy and climate change actions at the level of Mauritius.The Panelists were Mr Thomas Bermann, Dr Honita Cahoolessur, Mr Shakti Teker and Mr Jogeeswar Seewoobaduth.

Concluding Note

Organised under the theme "Sustainable Innovation in the Making", this second edition of the UoM Innovation Week has been an eventful week. From displaying innovative research produced at UoM to dialogue between academia, industry leaders, local HEIs and roundtables led by Industry and by the MRIC, it provided the participants with an opportunity to brainstorm on a number of challenges facing the country.

The first two days focused on the innovation achievements of UoM students and academics working together with our stakeholders (Government, Industry and the Civil Society). In that respect, it was important to reward those who excelled in their projects and also to provide incentives for the whole UoM community to focus more on innovation and impact in the coming years.

To promote further interactions between UoM and Industry, it is imperative that UoM Academics and Industry Leaders join hands together and develop projects to find solutions to problems identified by each of the 5 University-Industry Research and Innovation Clusters. With the financial support provided by and commitment from the private sector, such research projects will respond in a more precise manner to Industries' specific innovation needs.

It is noteworthy that Business Mauritius is focusing on sustainable innovation, which is in line with UoM's strategy. Collaborative projects between Business Mauritius and UoM in the field of biodiversity and ecology are already under way. During the course of discussions in the session led by Business Mauritius, other projects for potential collaboration emerged in the areas of energy transition, circular economy, vibrant communities and inclusive development. UoM will also pursue discussions with Business Mauritius and the Association of Mauritian Manufacturers with regard to innovative projects to further develop the manufacturing sector.

Discussions with the UoM Academics and representatives of the local HEIs confirmed the importance of designing a common module *'Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education'* to be offered to students and also to members of the public. This will enhance the training of the students, better prepare them for the world of work and more importantly, to act as responsible citizens in a world - where sustainability is no longer a choice but a necessity.

As one of the major recommendations of the UoM Innovation Week 2020, IW 2021 has again reiterated the importance of working in partnership for innovation to thrive in the country. The setting up of a National Innovation System that brings together stakeholders towards a shared vision and strategy is therefore a must.

Mauritius is currently facing numerous challenges – in the energy sector, in the agricultural and food security sector, in the health and pharmaceuticals sector, in the ocean sector, in the terrestrial and marine biodiversity field, in the tourism and hospitality sector, in the manufacturing sector. UoM is poised to play a leading role in relating knowledge creation to wealth creation via sustainable innovation. The setting-up of a Centre for Sustainable Innovation at the UoM should help towards concrete achievements and tangible progress at national level. A proposal has been submitted to the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development through the Ministry of Education.

Acknowledgements

Our heartfelt thanks and acknowledgements go to:

(i) UoM Staff and Students who helped in the organisation of the UoM IW2021
(ii) All Speakers and Participants
(iii) All our Sponsors

Once again, we had an intense Innovation Week with most fruitful discussions with stakeholders from the public and private sectors on the theme ***"Sustainable Innovation in the Making".***

The success of the event is without doubt due to the full commitment of all the participants from within the University and from the private and public sectors to make it happen. I wish to express my thanks to all members of the Organising Team, Members of the Sub-Committees and also to all academics and students for their participation and contribution in making this event a success. My special thanks go to staff members of the Services Section and the UoM Press for all logistics support provided to ensure the success of the event.

We extend our thanks to the Hon Prime Minister and the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology for their presence at the Opening Ceremony, and for their support to the UoM in moving its sustainability and innovative agenda forward.

We are indebted to our sponsors whose generous support and contribution helped to make this second edition of the UoM Innovation Week a most successful event.

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

SDGs NEWSLETTER-UoM

Special Edition: Innovation Week 2021

6th Edition - October 2021

UoM's Focus on Partnership to Drive Innovation

Professor (Dr) D. Jhurry, CSK, GOSK, FAAS
Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius

Innovation has been the key focus of the new UoM vision since 2017. To succeed in this endeavour, it was important to develop key and strategic partnerships with the public and private sectors as well as with the community and with international partners. In 2020, we organized the University's 1st Innovation Week. The main theme was precisely on that tripartite relationship with stakeholders and on the ecosystem required for innovation to thrive. One of the main recommendations of that 1st Innovation Week was the urgency to set up a National Innovation System structured into 3 levels: macro, meso and micro, that is the Policy and Regulatory level, the Institutional and Programmatic support level, and the Innovation Capacity level.

For this 2nd Edition of the Innovation Week, we have chosen the theme 'Sustainable Innovation in the making; to lay emphasis on the Innovation Capacity of the UoM working closely with stakeholders. I will highlight here a few examples of how the UoM is effectively contributing to sustainable innovation. The term Sustainable is very important as we attach a lot of importance to UN Agenda 2030 and we view the SDGs as a remarkable framework for innovation.

To make of UoM a pole for Information and Digital Technologies, we have partnered with the Government to increase our annual student intake 3-fold, from 40 to 120 students in our flagship IT programmes. We have developed new programmes in Applied Software Technologies and Business Enterprise Resource Planning jointly with Accenture. We shall also offer a Master in Business Engineering, jointly with Ceridian (Mauritius) Ltd. We have set up an Innovation lab with the support of Ceridian to unleash the innovative and creative potential of our students.

To contribute to UN Agenda 2030 and to address the SDGs in an effective manner, we have joined hands with the Ministry of Land Transport and Light Rail and the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change to set up in 2020 the Road Safety Observatory and in 2021 the Environment Research Observatory. Road safety and road accidents, biodiversity, water and air pollution, ocean resources are key focus of these observatories which are already in operation.

By working closely with RT Knits Ltd, our researchers at the Centre for Biomedical and Biomaterials Research (CBBR) have designed and manufactured last year an Anti-viral mask, a first of its kind in Mauritius, all through indigenous knowledge. We are now working with Leal & Co Ltd to look into the recycling of batteries. Energy management will be a vital issue of this century.

IT, Health, Energy are all sectors where innovation is key. But we should not neglect Agriculture. The setting-up of the University's Agri-Tech Park with the support of government and Industry is also another vivid example of how partnership can drive innovation.

The Agri-Tech Park endeavours to promote modern and sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Agri-Processing. We are working with Livestock Feed Ltd and Eclosia Group to set up a model dairy farm and with Harel Mallac Technologies Ltd to develop digital agriculture.

Beyond public and private sectors, we also value our collaboration with the community. Recently, we partnered with the Rotary Club of Flacq to support their 'La Main de L'Espoir' Project through the improvement of a mechanical prosthetic arm, an arm that changes the lives of impaired people.

This is just a glimpse of UoM's contributions to innovation as an engaged university. Our contributions not only help in the openness of the University but also positions the UoM as a privileged partner for both Government and Industry at the national level, help the UoM play a leading stewardship role and respond to national priorities with a particular focus on Sustainability and the SDGs.

The Role of Academia in Sustaining Innovation

Professor (Dr.) S K Sobhee
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academia), UoM
Email: pvcacd@uom.ac.mu

Innovation lies at the heart of sustained economic progress. The more one innovates, the better will be the outcome or deliverable in terms of the quality, efficiency, durability and perenniality. However, there are two angles of innovation that require attention - its inputs and output. Among the inputs, and which is the one I am going to focus on, lies human capital while the output relates to the number of registered patents, digital technologies including scientific publications. Universities as temples of learning play a crucial role in fostering innovation by promoting human capital through the impartment of knowledge and research carried out.

Examples of countries which have invested massively in building human capital and that have progressed enormously over the past three decades are Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea, and Taiwan. These are countries that do not necessarily have natural resources such as sub-soil assets and minerals but have acquired today a large population of intellectuals who operate in multinationals which do come to tap into this rich and skilful labour force. The high value of exported products in the textile and apparel industries, electronic clusters and processed agricultural farms bear testimony to their innovative work force.

As such, universities have a major role to play in creating the necessary environment to promote research and to come up with well-designed curricula that will foster more innovation through the types of graduates produced. The combination of technical knowledge and skills remains the main recipe for economic progress. Acquired competencies would thus ensure a dynamic, creative, and adaptive pool of workforce ready to address the ever-changing characteristics and exigencies of the labour market.

On the other hand, the scientific publications churned out by academics and researchers in a university do not only contribute towards the creation of knowledge but adding value to advance institutions, the economy and society. To be more focused and in search of impactful research, universities around the globe are now focusing on the 17 SDGs where they would at least contribute to improve the wellbeing of each and every citizen.

Similarly, at the University of Mauritius, over the recent past, several actions have been taken to promote innovative teaching and learning. The curriculum framework has been revisited to emphasise a Learner Centred Credit System (LCCS) which is more outcome-based learning that encompasses self-learning methods, use of technologies, creative learning and thinking. On the research side, funds have been earmarked to promote knowledge creation and dissemination in addition to investment in high quality labs.

To ensure that the research carried out has a real societal impact, UoM researchers have been encouraged to work in close collaboration with the industry where their ideas could be better valued and traded. The University has also approved the Intellectual Property Right policy which would enable better terms and conditions to carry out research having a commercial value. Established Research Centres are working closely with the industry to address problems of national if not international interest.

In short, it is crucial that the academic world provides the necessary ecosystem to foster sustainable innovation.

Paving the way for electrification with reused batteries

Kent Thoresen
Hagal AS
Chief Innovation Officer and Head of RebelX
Email: kent@hagal.com

Norwegian entrepreneur, Kent Thoresen, says Mauritius easily could end dependency on fossil fuels for electricity production with solar energy and battery storage.

To succeed with electrification and transition to a zero-emission based society, we need renewable energy sources – on a large scale. Oil, energy and coal currently make up around 80 percent of the world's energy consumption. Electrification, with the phasing out of fossil fuels, will proceed at lightning speed in the next few years, but the current power grid is not dimensioned for the major system change. The calculation does not work, says Kent Thoresen, founder and Chief Innovation Officer at the Norwegian battery scale-up, Hagal.

Distributed energy storage solutions in networks are absolutely crucial for us to reach sustainability goals and then batteries are needed. It is the only technology that is flexible enough and that ensures more balanced energy and consumption, he explains.

The serial entrepreneur has a strong passion for developing technological solutions that can solve the world´s energy challenges. In 2018 he established the battery technology company Hagal, wanting to make sure used EV batteries are repurposed and applied in much-needed energy storage solutions for solar and wind, in charging stations and other critical infrastructure. His goal was to make electric power so easily accessible and easy to deal with that it becomes the first, second and third choice.

With more than 32 million electric cars on the roads, which have batteries that will be phased out when the capacity goes below 80 percent, means that we will get huge amounts of used batteries in the next few years. Hagal has developed a unique diagnostic technology used for the health classification of each battery cell. It monitors and controls each cell individually, thus removing the obstacle of uniform cell health. This enables the reuse of old cells and the use of B-quality cells, reducing total system costs drastically, says Thoresen.

The Norwegian innovator explains that technological innovation in energy can affect change on a large scale, using Mauritius as an example of a nation with huge potential for ending dependency on fossil fuels and becoming a net zero nation when it comes to emissions.

On October 18th, Mr. Thoresen is the keynote at UoM Innovation Week 2021. He will talk about the revolution in battery energy storage and inspire the audience to think big and become change agents for a cleaner tomorrow.

SDGs 7, 9, 13

Consumer Research on Food Safety, Food and Nutrition Security, Dietary Diversity and Physical Activity with Reference to the Covid-19 Experience

Prof. CA Wallace
School of Sport and Health Sciences, Faculty of Health and Wellbeing, University of Central Lancashire
Email: cawallace@uclan.ac.uk
Mrs B Aumjaud
Department of Agricultural and Food Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Mauritius
Email: eaumjaud@uom.ac.mu

The University of Mauritius in collaboration with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) (United Kingdom) investigated consumer self-reported practices/behaviour pertaining to food safety and dietary diversity aspects of food and nutrition security in Mauritius, with particular reference to experience relating to COVID-19 hygiene barriers and enforced lockdown measures, from October 2020 to July 2021. The research project was funded by UCLan Quality-Related Global Challenges Research Fund.

National measures implemented in Mauritius to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, included sustained and forceful communication strategies via mass media to sensitise and educate the population on effective hygiene barriers to break human-to-human transmission of coronavirus. These messages may also contribute to reduction of foodborne disease since consumer education is known to help reduce the incidence of microbial food poisoning by promoting good food safety behaviour.

Mauritius is a net food importer and national COVID-19 border closure measures disrupted food supply chains and threatened national food security. The national confinement period included one-week complete lockdown of all food outlets, without advance notice. Consumers were challenged to rely on household food stocks and backyard food crops, with potential nutritional impacts. Underutilised backyard crops may have contributed to dietary diversity and addressed nutritional gaps.

A national retrospective survey (adapted to meet requirements of the Mauritius national COVID-19 protocol) was administered online and by phone/video calls among a representative sample of adult consumers from different regions of the island, including both genders and different socioeconomic groups. The study generated data on consumer knowledge, attitudes and behaviour relating to COVID-19 hygiene barriers, food safety, physical activity and food and nutrition security.

This can inform national educational initiatives to reinforce preparedness and responsiveness to pandemics, food poisoning outbreaks and food insecurity, impacting policies and actions to strengthen national food systems and sustain consumers' resilience. Data also help elucidate consumer attitude and practices regarding backyard farming in response to the COVID-19 food security crisis and can inform discussions and planning on potential for use of traditional backyard food crops for future crisis preparedness. Engagement with stakeholders involved in policy, food supply, outreach, education and training will provide effective routes to consumers and food chain stakeholders and can impact policy, based on effectiveness of interventions (intended follow-up study).

The pathway towards impact under UN SDG 3 Global Health and Well-Bring is via dissemination, engagement and

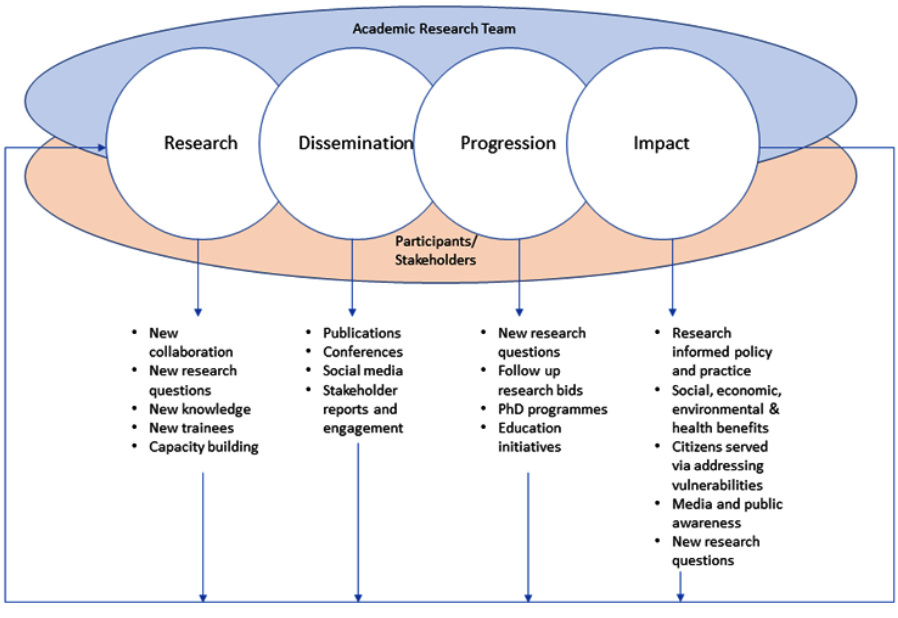


Figure 1 UCLan-UoM Pathway to Impact

progression to follow-up research and education initiatives (Figure 1).

The decision to use Trainee Project Assistants opened up project roles to bachelor's degree level graduates with degrees in food science, public health and related areas. TPAs received training in the research methodology, implementation of requirements of UoM and UCLan research ethics committees and data analysis methods. Supervision by local and international academic staff, including regular online meetings with the TPAs and the full academic team provided a model that can be used for future projects. This helped engender confidence such that the TPAs were able to work independently from home during the pandemic and led to interests in future research careers.

The research team was composed of Professor Carol Wallace (Project Lead); Mrs Badroonesha Aumjaud (Project Contact Person); Associate Professor Daya Goburdhun; Dr Deena Ramful-Baboolall; Dr Katherine Markwell; Dr Stephanie Dillon; Mrs Ijeoma Chinyere Ukonu; and trainee project assistants: Ms Yashika Pamma, Ms Luxmi Bhunju,; Ms Megnah Mohabir and Ms Aqeelah Paraouty

La Main de L'Espoir – Innovating Hand Prosthesis Technology: LN4 and Beyond

Dr Mahendra Gooroochurn
Senior Lecturer, Mechanical and Production Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering
Email: m.gooroochurn@uom.ac.mu

La Main de L'Espoir is an initiative of the Rotary Club of Flacq in collaboration with the University of Mauritius, Earwyn Global Ltd, the Global Rainbow Foundation, the Tangience Foundation, the Rotary Club of Bangalore Prime, the Rotary Club by Hosur Lake View and the Ellen Meadows Foundation, aiming to provide mechanical hand prosthesis to persons in need of them, either due to missing limb from birth or loss due to accident/injury. The base system is the LN4 hand (see Figure 1) developed by Ernie Meadows, Michael Mendonca, and Maurice LeBlanc to provide enhanced mobility to users. The phenomenal contribution of a prosthetic hand in the lives of these persons is the stand-out outcome, both from a functional and psychological perspective. Stories of how the prosthesis hand have changed livelihoods can be read at the link provided in the figure caption.

Thirteen people in Mauritius have received 14 prosthetic LN4 arms free of charge till now, and the plan is to extend this life-changing opportunity to as many recipients as possible in Mauritius and the region. Given that the LN4 system requires at least 14 cm of remaining limb below the elbow to provide enough grip for load bearing, the system can be further improved to suit the specific requirements of each person, for which 3D modelling and printing will be the key technology. Moreover, being an important change in the livelihood of the recipients, while not offering the same dexterity as a natural hand, a rehabilitation programme can be dispensed to facilitate the transition. It is along these two objectives that the University of Mauritius will provide its expertise through researchers with medical, engineering, biomaterials and social backgrounds.

Four phases have been identified for developing the project, namely:

(1) Improvement to the base LN-4 prosthesis and development of additional accessories to facilitate specific functions, e.g. writing, eating and typing. The first phase will also look at the rehabilitation program to ease the transition for recipients;
(2) Customising the hand prosthesis for persons with missing limb at lower elbow level who cannot be fitted with the base LN4 system due to not meeting the requirements described above or having more specialised requirements, e.g. the need to carry greater load or for performing more specialised tasks. This will be achieved using 3D modelling and printing in addition to 3D scanners for reproducing the geometry of the arm anatomy.
(3) Development of more advanced hand prosthesis designs for persons with above elbow needs.
(4) Extending the services over the Indian Ocean region through a centre of research and development in hand prosthesis.

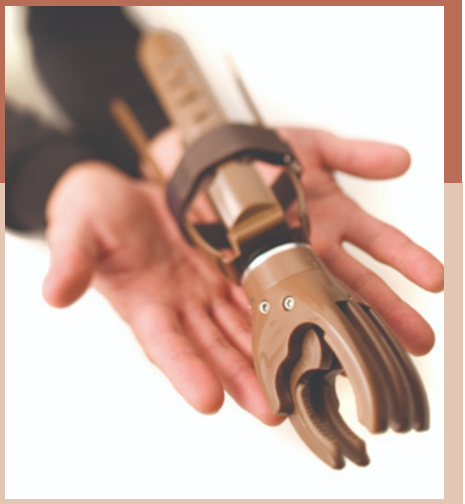


Figure 1: LN4 prosthetic hand [https://ln4handproject.org/]

More information on the project can be obtained from the exclusive interview given by Dr Sundaresan Maiyalagan, project director at Rotary Club of Flacq, on pages 10-11 in the 1st September 2021 edition of Le Mauricien newspaper.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

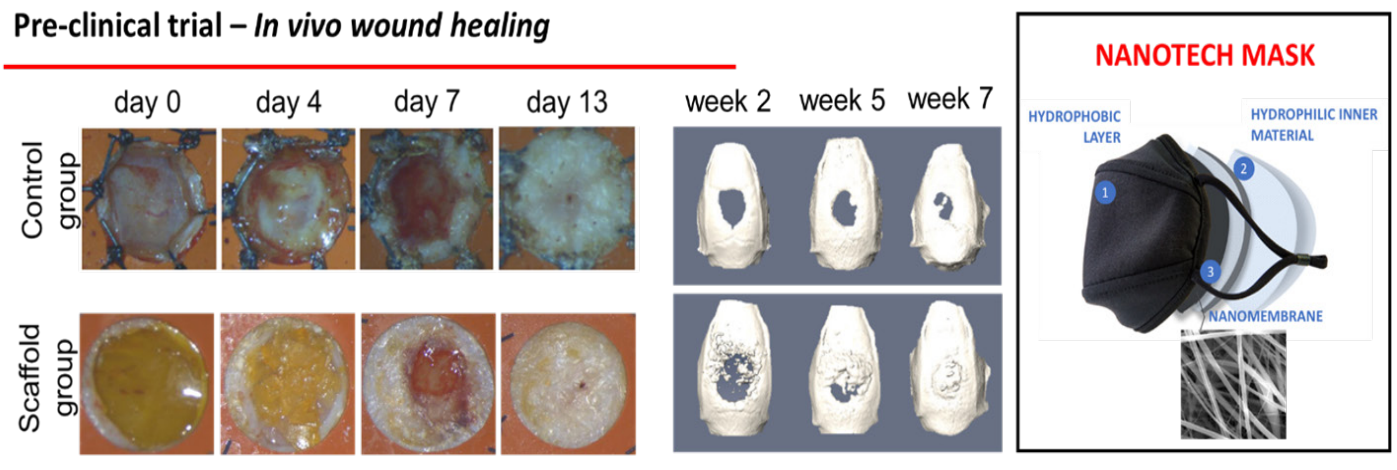
CENTRE FOR BIOMEDICAL AND BIOMATERIALS RESEARCH CBBR
Passionate & Innovate Beyond Boundaries

RT KNITS

Nanotech Mask and Nanoscaffolds – University & Industry teams addressing the challenges of modern medicine

Center for Biomedical and Biomaterials Research (CBBR) and RT Knits Ltd

Professor Archana Bhaw-Luximon
CBBR, University of Mauritius
Email: a.luximon@uom.ac.mu



Scarless skin wound regeneration ***CT Scan – bone regeneration***

In the 1870s wound care emerged from the groundbreaking invention by Prof Victor von Bruns a surgeon from Tübingen, Germany and his collaboration with Textile Industrialist Paul Hartmann: a cotton bandage that could absorb blood or pus if it had been previously degreased and bleached. Another collaboration with Dr Sir Lister allowed the factory production of carbolic acid impregnated cotton wool, dressing gauze and dressing jute with germicidal effect. In our modern times, wound care is now built around nano-based devices for accelerated and efficient healing.

Since 2011, the Biomaterials, Drug Delivery and Nanotechnology Unit (BDDN Unit) at CBBR has been engineering nano-based scaffolds for tissue regeneration after a wound for affordable, efficient and modern wound care. Our scaffolds act as supports for cells to grow, bridge wounds and form new tissues. These scaffolds are either made of biomaterials-based nanofibers or hydrogels and have been showing very promising results in the final pre-clinical trials on small animal models of skin and bone wounds.

In April 2020 in the wake of COVID 19, a first virtual meeting between CBBR and RT Knits led to the creation of the Nanotech Mask using the biomaterials engineering & nanomedicine expertise of the BDDN Unit, CBBR and 50-years of textile expertise of RT Knits Ltd. Unlike the classical medical mask or N95 masks, the anti-viral protection abilities of the mask relies on air filtration nanomembrane technology designed using electrospun nanofibers. This nanomembrane allows the masks to be washable and yet retain its viral filtration capabilities. The nanomembrane has been certified with a 99.9% anti-viral filtration efficiency before and after washing. The drive for the creation of the mask was to provide a modern and sustainable use of materials for protection.

The Nanotech Mask marked the beginning of not only innovation-driven product development but also a beautiful story between University and Industry built on the symbiosis between two young and talented research and innovation teams.

Strengthening Transfer Pricing Compliance for Sustainable Development in Mauritius

Dr. A. Beebeejaun and Professor (Dr.) R. P. Gunputh
Department of Law, Faculty of law and Management, University of Mauritius
Email: a.beebeejaun@uom.ac.mu, rpgunput@uom.ac.mu

Source: BKD: CPAs & Advisors

The pursuit of development objectives especially those related to social welfare is often hampered by funding constraints. Accordingly, domestic resource mobilisation is imperative to the sustenance of developmental measures endeavoured by the Mauritian authorities. In this regard, a key message of UN SDG 17 is that collaboration between authorities and the private sector is imperative to mobilise financial resources to deliver the other UN SDGs. The research undertaken reveals that Mauritius needs to enhance its legal and regulatory framework relating to transfer pricing so as ensure compliance by multinational entities (**MNEs**) in the county with the view of improving the country's capacity to collect tax more effectively from MNEs.

While there are numerous benefits associated with the establishment of an MNE in a host country, it is observed that MNEs often engage in activities that have the effect of reducing their taxable income with the view of paying less taxes to the host country. One example of such activities is the determination of prices in related-party transactions in a manner that shifts profits to low-tax jurisdictions and losses to high-tax jurisdictions, a practice termed as abusive transfer pricing. Hence, to regulate the determination of transfer prices, the OECD has promulgated the arm's length principle (**ALP**) back in the year 1970 which requires that the amount charged by one related party in a particular transaction needs to be the same as if the parties to that same transaction are not related. In this respect, several countries including Mauritius have adopted the ALP in their domestic legislation.

Apart from substantial tax losses to the host government, abusive transfer pricing gives rise to a wide spectrum of negative effects to the host country of the MNE in terms of low remuneration, poor balance of payment situation amongst others. In fact, most of the existing research has found that a lack of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework is the main reason for non-compliance with transfer pricing rules. As such, to overcome transfer pricing abuses and their associated adverse impact, existing literature has found that the most common method adopted by numerous countries is to establish sophisticated and stringent transfer pricing rules.

Consequently, the study has investigated the adequacy and robustness of the prevailing transfer pricing legal framework in Mauritius with the view of finding loopholes inherent in the current system and thereby recommending the necessary corrective measures. To attain this objective, a comparative study has been carried out on the transfer pricing rules of Mauritius against the laws of the UK, the US and South Africa each, followed by a critical analysis to gauge the extent to which these countries' related laws on transfer pricing may be implemented in Mauritius. Furthermore, a survey has been carried out by collecting primary data from some selected MNEs based in Mauritius to find out the factors that influence transfer pricing compliance.

From the research conducted, an understanding of transfer pricing rules index has been derived and the mean score obtained is 3.19 on a scale of 1–5. This score indicates that Mauritius-based MNEs are mostly neutral when measuring their awareness level on transfer pricing rules in the country. This neutral score is influenced by a lack of transparency regarding the differing aspects of transfer pricing which are not explicitly documented in either laws, regulations, practice notes, guidance notes, official communiqués, or circular letters. Also, the respondents have expressed uncertainty regarding the transfer pricing terminologies used in the Mauritius Income Tax Act, the circumstances in which the ALP is applicable, the transfer pricing methods to be used and the documents that are required to be kept and maintained. Moreover, the study reveals that the understanding of transfer pricing rules, the threat of double taxation and the loss of revenue each has a significant influence on transfer pricing compliance.

Lastly, this study provides for some recommendations to amend the transfer pricing rules of Mauritius to come up with a more suitable transfer pricing legal framework such as defining legal jargons included in Section 75 of the Income Tax Act, providing more clarity on acceptable transfer pricing methods, specifying the transfer pricing documentation needed to be kept by MNEs and providing guidance notes on the transfer pricing of intangibles.

SDG 17

Collaboration between UoM and Accenture in building capacity for the ICT Sector

Associate Professor Maleika Heenaye-Mamode Khan and Mrs Zahra Mungloo-Dilmohamud
Department of Software and Information Systems, Faculty of Information, Communication and Digital Technologies
Email: m.mamodekhan@uom.ac.mu

Accenture Tech Avenue Lab

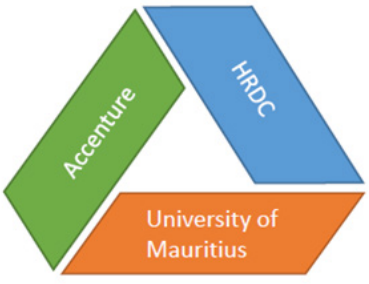
To fill in the gap between graduate skills and the IT job market requirements, the University of Mauritius (UoM) together with Accenture Services (Mauritius) Limited have mounted a master's programme, the MSc Applied Software Technologies. The MSc programme aims to provide non-computing graduates from Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), with the necessary skills to apply their knowledge to a wide range of areas in the ICT industry. Through this collaboration, UoM has been addressing the shortage of skilled IT graduates on the job market. Upon completion of the programme, graduates are working as software analysts, software developers, and network administrators.

The programme has been designed specifically with multiple streams in view of catering for the evolving needs of the IT industry. These different streams are offered depending on the specific industry requirements at any given time. The objectives of this programme are to (1) provide a thorough knowledge and understanding of the latest software development tools and techniques; (2) inculcate the required communication, analytical, critical and teamwork skills and (3) expose students to the professional environment through the 6-months internship, for a better integration in the job market. To ensure that the students work with the latest technologies, two state of the art labs, with a capacity of 35 students each, have been set-up on the UoM campus.

To date, 6 batches of the MSc programme have been completed. There is currently an ongoing 7th batch. More than 150 students have already been re-skilled. In addition, through the same collaboration, 2 batches of another programme, the Master in Business ERP, have also been completed and the graduates are now working in the ERP sector.

The programme is funded by the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) under the Graduate Training for Employment Scheme (GTES). GTES is a Government measure which aims at improving the employability of unemployed graduates / diploma holders, by equipping them with the right skills through training programmes tailored to the needs of participating enterprises (http://gtes.hrdc.mu/).

In line with the Government vision under the industrial policy and strategic plan for Mauritius 2020-2025 (UNCTAD, 2021), UoM has responded positively to contribute in capacity building as per the SDG Goal Target 17.9 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Following the identification of capacity gaps across the ICT sector, UoM, Accenture and the HRDC, have collaborated to develop appropriate programmes to implement the SDG goal 17 through the GTES.



Triangular Cooperation between UoM, Accenture and the HRDC

This collaboration is contributing in producing highly skilled employees through the foundations of emerging technologies, which are drivers of socioeconomic growth. The cross-cutting nature of the master's programme aims at re-skilling existing STEM graduates through the triangular development cooperation, that is, UoM, HRDC and Accenture. This initiative has been sustained by the 3 partners since 2018 and is an ongoing endeavour. In this way, UoM is being able to support capacity development under SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals.

SDGs 4, 9 and 17

References:

UNCTAD, 2021, https://unctad.org/webflyer/industrial-policy-and-strategic-plan-mauritius-2020-2025 [Last Accessed: 2021]

Research on long-term holistic accompaniment of families living in poverty in the Republic of Mauritius: An Innovative research collaboration between the UoM, the MRIC and Lovebridge

Nicolas Ragodoo
Department of Social Studies,
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Mauritius
Email: n.ragodoo@uom.ac.mu

The fight against Poverty is a global and national cause and has been identified as SDG 1. Although Mauritius is considered as a middle-income economy, increasing economic vulnerability remains a worrisome trend. In spite of the numerous existing programmes (both public and private) targeting poverty alleviation, the number of households living in poverty remains a national challenge.

This research focuses on the long-term holistic accompaniment approach adopted by Lovebridge as a socially innovative project, and its impact on the empowerment of people living in situations of poverty. To reach same, this study probes into the accompaniment model developed and implemented by Lovebridge, evaluating the role played by Motivation, Positive Attitude, Skills and Courage (MASCO) and by the other fundamental, interconnected pillars of the programme (Figure 1) in the move towards empowerment. It examines the inter-connected vertical and horizontal intervention approach applied by Lovebridge (Figure 2) and its impact on empowerment. It also critically analyses the overall effectiveness of the long-term holistic accompaniment approach as a tool to empower people living in situations of poverty.

This socially innovative research collaboration contributes to the fight against poverty as well as to research in the poverty field by evaluating the long-term holistic accompaniment approach being applied by Lovebridge since 2012. This project is socially innovative as it currently has a direct impact on the lives of approximately 1500 persons living in poverty in Mauritius. Policy decisions taken in the light of this report on accompaniment (case management) are likely to have a positive impact on all those living in poverty across Mauritius.

The study was carried out in 5 districts of the island and completed in four different phases as follows: a review of the long-term holistic accompaniment model adopted by Lovebridge; an observation of the yearly evaluation exercise carried out by Lovebridge was done; a primary data-collection exercise was executed to obtain the views of the beneficiaries, of the field staff accompanying the families, as well as of the volunteers; and finally, a quantitative exercise was carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the long-term accompaniment approach as a tool for the empowerment of people living in situations of poverty.

Recipients were found to be actively involved in the Lovebridge project and believed in the long-term accompaniment they were receiving. Women were found to be at the frontline of the poverty battle while men remained in the background. After having joined the programme, beneficiaries are clearly more willing and better equipped to stand on their own feet and face the daily struggles with a positive mindset.

They have the courage to face poverty, whilst being fully conscious that they will have to stand on their own feet in the long run. There is also a consensus that their lives were much worse before they integrated this accompaniment project. All indicators such as education, employability, housing, health, food, and motivation were positive. Tremendous progress was noted in the field in terms of MASCO.

The emotional and psycho-social support brought through accompaniment of the Lovebridge team is valued by beneficiaries more than material support they may

Figure 1: Lovebridge's six fundamental, interconnected pillars, with MASCO as driver

		Education Pillar 1.	Nutrition Pillar 2.	Housing Pillar 3.	Health Pillar 4.	Employment Pillar 5.	Attitude Pillar 6.
	Examples of specialised Mauritian NGOs	Sens, Anfen, Alphalec...	Food support by various sources...	Pont du Tamarinier...	LinktoLife, T1Diams, PILS, CUT...	Projet Employabilité Jeunes (Beachcomber Training Academy)...	Life Skills training by various sources...
	Government	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Social Security / Priority Education Areas (ZEP)	Ministry of Housing and Lands / NHDC	Ministry of Health & Quality of Life	Ministry of Labour	NEF Life Skills training
HORIZONTAL	Family living in poverty Family 1. Family 2. Family 3. Family 4. ...						

Figure 2: Complementarity between vertical and horizontal interventions in an integrated approach to the fight against poverty

receive. Participants were also asked about the effectiveness of the central pillar MASCO in moving towards empowerment (driver behind progress on the other five, more tangible pillars) and it is clear that MASCO does contribute significantly in that respect.

Some of the notable recommendations from the research are as follows:

There is the need for a simplified terminology which can be easily understood and internalized by the beneficiaries. There should be the reinforcement of coordination and synergy efforts with other service providers to be more efficient (public, parastatal, business, NGOs). It is recommended that Lovebridge acts as facilitator/coordinator, channeling and funneling requests on specific problematics. Lovebridge is recommended to work with business organisations to promote local level recruitment under the employment pillar. It is recommended to provide additional training to the staff on specific issues such as alcoholism, substance abuse, drug trafficking, gender-based violence, among others. The beneficiaries should report the need for more visits and follow ups from the psychologists. It is recommended to include family therapy in addition to the individual support provided. Family relations need be considered as an additional pillar. There should be a short-term accompaniment (case management) model for families who cannot be empowered to be developed, to provide urgent support to families who do not meet criteria for integration to the Lovebridge empowerment programme.

The research team constituted of the following: Mr. N. Ragodoo, Senior Lecturer Sociology Unit, University of Mauritius (Principal Investigator); investigators: Ms D Gokulsing, Mr. A Gopaul and F Ramsamy; Ms. S Ah-Choon and Mrs. P Noel, Communication and Development Coordinator and Chief Serving Officer respectively from Lovebridge; and Mr. A. Peedoly, MRIC facilitator.

Littérature et culture: Partenariats entre auteurs, éditeurs et universitaires

Dr Sachita Samboo
Senior Lecturer
Department of French Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Mauritius
s.samboo@uom.ac.mu

De gauche à droite : Yianna Amodine, Gillian Geneviève, Maansi Pitamber, Sachita Samboo, Dhanjay Jhurry et Belinda Ramnauth.

Festival du Livre de Trou d'Eau Douce : Première édition

Organisé par l'auteur et l'éditeur mauricien, Barlen Pyamootoo, le Festival du Livre de Trou d'Eau Douce a eu lieu du 1er au 3 octobre 2021 et a rassemblé auteurs, éditeurs, universitaires, lecteurs et passionnés du livre dans un cadre très convivial et dépaysant - pour plusieurs des participants -, en face de la mer, sur la plage publique. Ces trois jours ont été intenses en émotions, à travers non seulement la découverte de livres mais aussi des lancements d'ouvrages et des échanges. Lady Sarojini Jugnauth était l'invitée d'honneur à l'ouverture du Festival qui s'est clôturé avec la remise du prix de 100,000 roupies au grand gagnant du concours d'écriture de l'Atelier littéraire, François Vinson.

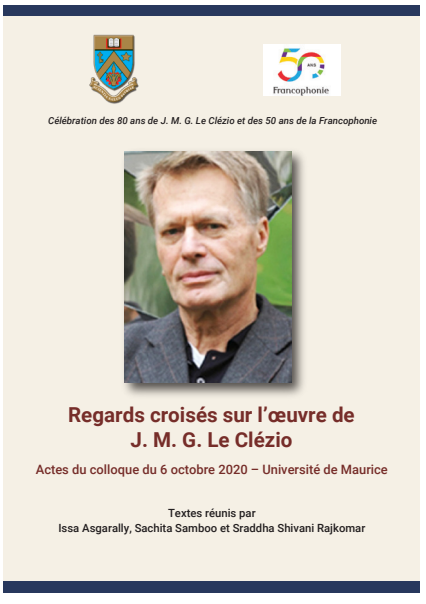
En tant que responsable de la coordination littéraire de cette première édition, j'étais en charge notamment de trois manifestations, à savoir : un débat autour du livre mauricien et deux dialogues avec des auteurs mauriciens, Alain Gordon-Gentil et Finlay Salesse, pour le premier; Lindsey Collen et Michel Ducasse, pour le second. Les échanges avec les écrivains ont permis de voir des points de convergence et de divergence au niveau de la conception de l'écriture des uns et des autres. Pour ce qui est du débat sur le livre mauricien, si les auteurs, Yianna Amodine (également diplômée en lettres et histoire de l'UoM) et Gillian Geneviève ont insisté sur la valorisation des écrits sur Maurice et des textes mauriciens dès un jeune âge, par le biais de l'école et des traditions orales, Belinda Ramnauth (Directrice de la Bibliothèque nationale) a mis l'accent sur le progrès accompli au fil des années pour la promotion de la lecture et de l'écriture.

Le Vice-chancelier de l'Université de Maurice, Pr Dhanjay Jhurry, a quant à lui proposé davantage de rencontres entre littéraires et acteurs d'autres disciplines, afin que le livre mauricien puisse s'entendre dans un sens très large : fiction, non-fiction, manuels scolaires, écrits académiques, scientifiques... Le débat et les dialogues étaient entrecoupés de lectures de textes par trois étudiantes de l'UoM qui se sont distinguées lors de concours littéraires et/ou d'éloquence : Maansi Pitamber, Luckshmee Jeawon et Eugénie Delort.

Cet événement est bien la preuve que les livres ouvrent de belles avenues vers des partenariats entre auteurs, éditeurs et universitaires, tout en assurant un lien intime avec la communauté. L'Université de Maurice était un partenaire officiel du Festival qui se veut pérenne et annuel.

Lancement des Actes du colloque – *Regards croisés sur l'œuvre de J. M. G. Le Clézio : Textes réunis par Issa Asgarally, Sachita Samboo et Shivani Rajkomar*

L'on se souviendra que l'Université de Maurice avait organisé, en collaboration avec Dr Issa Asgarally, un colloque en octobre 2020 pour célébrer le 80ème anniversaire du Prix Nobel de littérature 2008 et les cinquante ans de la Francophonie.



Une année plus tard, le lancement des Actes aura lieu pendant la Semaine de l'innovation. Publié par les Presses de l'Université de Maurice, l'ouvrage sera lancé le 20 octobre 2021 par Pr Dhanjay Jhurry, Vice-chancelier, en présence des auteurs, d'universitaires et d'amoureux de la littérature. J. M. G. Le Clézio, soulignons-le, s'exprime dans les médias comme dans ses romans, sur l'écologie et le développement durable.

Opportunities for using natural plant fibres for the development of green functional products

Ramasawmy H, Chummun J and Jeetah P
Mechanical & Production Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering.
Chemical Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering.
Email: haree@uom.ac.mu

A 55 cm polyester-Pandanus utilis composite blade for a 0.5 kW wind turbine. Courtesy: Mr. Barisoa Rafidison, PhD student (Supervisors: Assoc Prof H. Ramasawmy, Dr. J. Chummun and Assoc Prof V. Florens).

There are several research initiatives at the Faculty of Engineering that aim at identifying potential locally available biomass, particularly from agro-wastes, to be used as sustainable sources of raw materials for the development of green functional products. Several objectives are associated with the initiatives:

- To gradually replace polluting plastics and glass fibres materials.
- To be part of the new generation to address climate change and to create awareness among the local communities on this aspect and, at the same time, to minimise the resulting negative impact of common practices of burning or dumping agro wastes.
- To create opportunities for entrepreneurs, including young people and women's groups, into the conversion of agro wastes into natural fibres for the production of useful raw materials/semi-finished/finished products for various engineering, technical textile, and artisanal applications.
- To continuously contribute to the existing scientific knowledge on locally available fibrous plants.

Thus, fibres from several local plants such as red palm, blue latanier, hurricane palm, *Dracaena concinna* (bois de chandelle), *Dracaena floribunda*, *Pandanus utilis* (Vacoas), as well as fibres from agro-wastes such as from banana pseudostems, pineapple leaves, coconut husks (coir) and maize stems have been extracted and characterised in terms of their mechanical and physical properties as well as their chemical functional groups.

Recently investigated application: Using natural fibres, in lieu of fibreglass, in the manufacture of wind turbine blades for green energy production.

Interesting area of attention is to replace single use plastic cups/ polystyrene containers with recyclable materials derived from use of local lignocellulosic plants such as the Mauritian hemp, bamboo, Arundo Donax, elephant grass, pineapple leaf, and coconut husk. One possible route is to produce and cast a pulp for applications such as drinking cups, writing paper, paper envelope, and paper bags.

Recyclable paper cup made from Mauritian hemp and waste pineapple peels and coated with beeswax. Resulting thickness: 0.7 mm and capable of holding water.

(Research student: Ms Swabiiha Buxoo; PI: Dr P. Jeetah; Paper published: Feasibility of producing biodegradable disposable paper cup from pineapple peels, orange peels and Mauritian hemp leaves with beeswax coating).

Our Exclusive Economic Territory gives us the opportunity to use its resources for sustainable development and has triggered the interest of a research team to investigating the extraction of a bio-polymer from brown macro-algae for the development of packaging materials.

All the research initiatives also emphasise on the use of local green solutions: Local alkaline wastes and/ or pectinase enzymes (extracted from bacteria) are being favoured instead of caustic soda in the preparation of cellulosic pulp that yields comparable

Padina gymnospora seaweed

UoM Innovation Week 2021

Programme

About UoM Innovation Week 2

The University of Mauritius is pleased to announce the organisation of the 2nd Edition of its Innovation Week – the UoM-Innovation Week 2021 – scheduled from 18 to 22 October 2021.

The first edition of the UoM Innovation Week, held in 2020, focused on the urgent need for a holistic approach towards innovation, engaging all the local stakeholders. The main recommendation of UoM-IW2020, presented to Government, was the setting up of a National Innovation System (NIS), advocating a 3-pronged approach to foster innovation - Macro (policy and regulatory), Meso (institutional and programmatic) and Micro (innovation capacity).

This second edition is organised under the theme "***Sustainable Innovation in the Making***" and will include UoM's achievements in developing innovation capacity by showcasing innovative projects by Students and Staff as well as the institutional support put in place such as the establishment of UoM-Industry Research and Innovation Clusters and our new initiative for a clustering of local HEIs.

The UoM-IW2021 also provides a unique platform for our close collaborators from the public and private sectors, research funding institutions and HEIs to come together and brainstorm on the way forward post-COVID.

Importantly, this year's edition focuses on the need for sustainable innovation, using the SDGs as the guiding framework, in shaping capacity and impact for the future. This requires stronger and more effective partnerships between the higher education sector in Mauritius, the public sector, the private sector and the civil society.

UoM welcomes fruitful discussions and constructive suggestions to build a more resilient and sustainable future for our country.

DAY 1 – Monday 18 October 2021 Venue: The CORE Auditorium, UoM Ebène Branch, Ebène	
OPENING CEREMONY	
09.30 hrs	National Anthem
09.32 hrs	**Welcome and Address by** **Professor Dhanjay JHURRY, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
09.37 hrs	**Address by** **Mr Preeaduth CHITAMUN, *CSK*** Pro-Chancellor & Chairman of Council, University of Mauritius
09.42 hrs	**Address by** **Dr Louis Jean Claude AUTREY, *CSK*** Chancellor, University of Mauritius
09.45 hrs	**Address by** **The Hon (Mrs) Leela Devi DOOKUN-LUCHOOMUN, *GCSK*** Vice-Prime Minister Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology
09.50 hrs	**Address by The Hon Pravind Kumar JUGNAUTH** Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius
10.05 hrs	Tour of Exhibition showcasing UoM's Partnerships with Government, Industry and the Civil Society
10.20 hrs	Visit to the UoM-Ceridian Innovation Lab and the space refurbished by the University of Arizona
10.50 hrs	*Refreshments*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS	
11.30 – 11.35 hrs	**Introduction of the Keynote Speaker by** **Professor D Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
11.35 - 12.30 hrs ***(incl. 10 minutes discussions)***	**Keynote Address by** **Mr Kent Thoresen** Chief Innovation Officer and Head of RebelX, Hagal AS, Norway **Title: Can Mauritius cut out the use of fossil fuels and reduce its energy costs at the same time?**  After starting his first company at 18 in Norway, Kent has worked for 30 years in start-ups, consistently bringing innovations to market. He usually has a radically different approach to problem solving and up until a few years ago, he would typically be involved in 4-6 projects at a time. That changed in 2018 when he got rid of all other projects and founded Hagal AS. Focusing on renewable energy and sustainability since 2009, he wants to focus all his efforts on one of the biggest challenges we face today, global warming. Hagal is a company dedicated to drastically speed up electrification and end the world's dependence on fossil fuels. ***Abstract:*** Successful innovation is much more than just technology, and as so many things in life, having an idea or seeing a problem on paper is far removed from bringing an idea to life as a useful solution. Turning an idea into something real is hard, but in this speaker's opinion and experience, there is a trick to it. The presenter will talk about the thinking behind the innovation that can answer the title of this presentation with a resounding, yes! And how it's transferred from the drawing board to a product irl.

DAY 1 – Monday 18 October 2021 (Continued) *Venue: Lecture Theatre 2, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit*	
Afternoon Session	
SHOWCASING STUDENTS BEST INNOVATIVE PROJECTS	
13.00 – 13.05 hrs	**Welcome address by Associate Professor M I Santally** *Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning & Resources)*
13.05 – 13.15 hrs	Announcement of Winners for the 2021 Students Best Innovative Projects by Associate Professor M I Santally
13.15 – 13.30 hrs **13.30 – 13.45 hrs** **13.45 – 14.00 hrs**	Oral Presentations by Winners of: ➢ Undergraduate Category ➢ Postgraduate Category ➢ MPhil/PhD Category
14.00 – 14.15 hrs	Question & Answer Session
14.15 – 14.30 hrs	*Tea Break*
14.30 – 15.30 hrs	5-min Research Spotlight Presentations by Runners-Up (All 3 Categories)
15.30 – 15.45 hrs	Award of Prizes to Winners and Runners Up by Associate Professor M I Santally
15.45 – 16.00 hrs	Concluding Remarks & Photo Session
Facilitators: Mrs S Gunness & Dr H Neetoo **Rapporteurs: Miss D Jahajeeah & Miss S Takooree (UoM Students)**	

DAY 2 – Tuesday 19 October 2021 *Venue: Lecture Theatre 2, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit*	
Morning Session	
SHOWCASING ACADEMICS BEST INNOVATIVE PROJECTS	
9.30 – 9.35 hrs	Welcome by Master of Ceremonies
9.35 – 9.40 hrs	**Address by Professor Sanjeev Kumar Sobhee** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia)
9.40 – 9.45 hrs	Announcement of the 2021 Academics' Best Innovative Projects under the areas: Research & Innovation and Teaching & Learning by Professor Sanjeev K Sobhee
9.45 – 10.15 hrs	Presentation of the Best Innovative Projects in the area of Research & Innovation by Winners: ➢ First Prize
10.15 – 10.35 hrs	***Tea Break***
10.35 – 11.05 hrs **11.05 – 11.35 hrs**	Presentation of the Best Innovative Projects in the area of Research & Innovation by Winners (contd): ➢ Second Prize ➢ Third Prize
11.35 – 12.00 hrs	Question & Answer Session
Afternoon Session	
13.00 – 13.30 hrs **13.30 – 14.00 hrs** **14.00 – 14.30 hrs**	Presentation of the Best Innovative Projects in the area of Teaching & Learning by Winners: ➢ First Prize ➢ Second Prize ➢ Third Prize

14.30 – 14.45 hrs	Question & Answer Session
14.45 – 15.00 hrs	***Tea Break***
15.00 – 16.15 hrs	Spotlight Presentations of Innovative Projects by Academics
16.15 – 16.30 hrs	Award of Prizes to Winners and Runners Up by Professor Sanjeev K Sobhee
16.30 hrs	Concluding Remarks & Photo Session

DAY 3 – Wednesday 20 October 2021 *Venue: Lecture Theatre 2, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit*	
Morning Session	
ROUNDTABLE LED BY THE UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY RESEARCH & INNOVATION CLUSTERS	
9.00 – 9.05 hrs	**Welcome Address by** **Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*,** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
9.05 – 9.35 hrs	**Presentation by Mr Kendall Tang,** Chief Executive Officer, RT Knits, Member UICC, Industry Lead UIRIC-Smart Manufacturing ***Re-inventing the Manufacturing Sector through Industry-University Collaboration***
9.35 – 9.40 hrs **9.40 – 10.00 hrs** **10.00 – 10.15 hrs**	**Address by Mr Jean Noël Humbert,** Member UICC & Industry Lead UIRIC-Agriculture and Food Security **Presentation by Mrs Yusufi Rahimbaccus,** Marketing Manager, Livestock Feeds Ltd ***'La Filière de la Vache Laitière'*** **Presentation by Mr Michael Raymond** Agrinnovation Manager, Médine Group ***Making potato smart. A French fries project through Medine Experience.***
10.15 – 10.45 hrs	**Presentation by Mr Roshan Ramoly,** Director, LinearArc Solutions, Member UICC & Industry Lead UIRIC - Financial Services ***Financial Services : Unlocking Potentials***
10.45 – 11.05 hrs	***Tea Break***
11.05 – 11.35 hrs	**Presentation by Ms Geraldine Koenig,** Chief Officer Operational Excellence, Beachcomber Resorts and Hotel ***Key Challenges in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector***
11.35 – noon	**Presentation by Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*,** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius ***Urgency for a Holistic Approach to Health Issues in Mauritius***
END OF SESSION	

DAY 3 – Wednesday 20 October 2021 *Venue: Lecture Theatre 2, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit*	
Afternoon Session – Part I	
Lancement des Actes du Colloque ***Regards croisés sur l'œuvre de J. M. G. Le Clézio*** **Textes réunis par Issa Agarally, Sachita Samboo et Shivani Rajkomar**	
13.00 – 13.05 hrs	**Welcome Address by Dr Sachita Samboo**
13.05 – 13.15 hrs	**Book Presentation by Dr Issa Asgarally, *CSK***
13.15 – 13.30 hrs	**Address and Conference Proceedings Launch by** **Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius

13.30 – 14.00 hrs	Tea Break and Book Signing by the Authors

Afternoon Session – Part II

ROUNDTABLE LED BY UoM
CLUSTERING OF LOCAL HEIs AROUND SDGs
"Adopting a Target-and-Indicator based Approach to Achieve the SDGs"

A Consortium of Universities around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is considered to be the focal point to promote innovation in the country. In this respect, a proposal for the clustering of local universities around the SDGs was presented by the UoM Vice-Chancellor on 17 May 2021. The latter introduced a novel approach to assess the achievements of HEIs in relation to the SDGs; the target-and-indicator based approach whereby the 169 targets of the 17 global goals and the 232 indicators were analysed in relation to the contribution of specific lead stakeholders, namely HEIs, Industry and Government.

Following a positive response to the Clustering proposal, a half-day brainstorming workshop was hosted by UoM on 10 September 2021 to allow the participating HEIs to showcase their involvement in the SDGs. The findings of the mapping exercise conducted at UoM using the proposed target-and-indicator approach validated the model brought forward by the UoM Vice-Chancellor. Furthermore, a proposal to extend the approach to the other HEIs was made during that brainstorming session.

This Roundtable on the "Clustering of Local HEIs around SDGs" will cut across the possible areas for joint collaboration in the SDGs, thereby allowing participants to mobilise a practical way forward.

14.00 – 14.05 hrs	**Welcome Address by** **Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS,*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
14.05 –14.20 hrs	**Presentation by Ms Kounshika Kasi and Ms Naila Maherally, Trainee Project Assistants, UoM** on Proposal for the Development of an Online Course on "Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education"
14.20 – 15.00 hrs	Open Discussions Moderator: **Professor Sanjeev Kumar Sobhee,** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia), University of Mauritius
15.00-15.15 hrs	***Tea Break***
15.15- 15.30 hrs	Concluding remarks

DAY 4 – Thursday 21 October 2021
Venue: Lecture Theatre 1, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit

Morning session

ROUNDTABLE LED BY BUSINESS MAURITIUS

Facilitator
Mr Mickaël Apaya, *Head of Sustainability & Inclusive Growth, Business Mauritius*
Panel to address: *"How to engage with multi stakeholders to achieve the SDGs"*

At the level of the business community, Business Mauritius has established a Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission since 2015 which has culminated into an umbrella brand, SigneNatir (www.signenatir.mu). SigneNatir is a pact for a Sustainable and Inclusive Mauritius obilizing businesses across 5 themes, namely:

- Energy transition
- Circular economy
- Biodiversity
- Vibrant communities
- Inclusive development

While there is a possibility for businesses to create a positive impact, it is through a national impulse given by Government together with civil society that we can cohesively achieve sustainability and inclusive development goals. In this session, the innovation initiatives shared by our panelists will focus on how it is important to develop multi stakeholders approach in 2

concrete examples: a project on biodiversity and a project on food solidarity.	
9.00 – 9.05 hrs	**Welcome Address by** **Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS,*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
9.05 – 9.15 hrs	**Introduction by** **Mr Mickaël Apaya,** Head of SIG, Business Mauritius ***On Sustainability and Inclusive Growth in Business Community***

9.15 – 10.15 hrs	**Presentation by** **Associate Professor Vincent Florens** University of Mauritius and **Mrs Natacha Emilien,** Managing Director, Red Dot of the Project ***"Dialogue de Politique Publique et Citoyen sur la Biodiversité »*** & Interactions
10.15 - 10.30 hrs	***Tea Break***
10.30 – 11.30 hrs	**Presentation by** **Mr Bruno Dubarry**, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Mauritian Manufacturers **Ms Rebecca Espitalier-Noël,** Director, Foodwise of the Project ***"Moris Solider – solidarité alimentaire"*** & Interactions
11.30– 11.45 hrs	Conclusion & Vote of Thanks
END OF MORNING SESSION	

Afternoon Session

Venue: Lecture Theatre 1, New Academic Complex, University of Mauritius, Réduit

ROUNDTABLE LED BY MRIC

Session on Innovation in the New Normal

The MRC was strengthened into the MRIC on 1st September 2019. Furthermore, the MRIC has been further consolidated to both promote and conduct research and innovation at national level as per the Finance Act 2021. Innovation measures being implemented by the MRIC address several key aspects related to funding for innovation, incentives to facilitate partnerships between International partners, Industry and Government, promoting R&D in the emerging sectors as well as social innovations. Innovation measurements have been introduced to assess the innovation performance and to formulate evidence based analysis. In this session, the innovation initiatives of the MRIC will be presented. Following the stock-taking presentations, a multi-stakeholder panel discussion will be held to brainstorm on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on national innovation policies. The recommendations of the panel will contribute towards the forthcoming strategic plan of the MRIC.

13.30 – 13.35 hrs	**Welcome Address by** **Professor Dhanjay Jhurry, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS,*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius
13.35 – 13.50 hrs	**Presentation by**

	Professor Theesan Bahorun, *PhD, GOSK,* Executive Director, MRIC ***Showcasing Innovative Endeavours of the MRIC***
13.50 – 14.00 hrs	**Presentation by** **Dr V Bissonauth,** Research Coordinator, MRIC ***The National SME Incubator Scheme (NSIS)***
14.00 – 14.10 hrs	**Presentation by** **Mr A K Dreepaul & Mr V Puttur,** System Engineers, Harel Mallac Technologies Ltd ***AgriTec (Smart Solutions for Agriculture) – MRIC-Funded Project***
14.10 – 14.20 hrs	**Presentation by** **Dr M Madhou,** Research Coordinator, MRIC ***Monitoring the National Innovation Ecosystem, Facts and Figures***
14.20 – 15.20 hrs	Panel Discussions on '***Prioritising Research and Innovation in the New Normal***' <u>Panelists:</u> Prof Theesan Bahorun, *Executive Director, MRIC* Prof Dhanjay Jhurry, *Vice Chancellor, UoM* Mrs Subashini Rama, *Director (Economic and Finance), MoFEPD* Mr Rajnish Hawabhay, *Chief Technical Officer, MoITCI* Mr Jocelyn Kwok, *Chief Executive Officer, AHRIM* Mr Yamal Matabudul, *Chief Executive Officer, Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd* Mr Fabrice Boulle, *Partner, Compass Venture Capital* Mr Marc Israel, *Chief Executive Officer, AETHEIS* Dr Drishty Ramdenee, *Director, Emerging / Services, EDB* Mrs Vimi Goorah, *Lead Innovation, Advocacy and Entrepreneurship, NPCC* <u>Facilitator:</u> Mr Avinash Meetoo, *Head of Experimentation, Accelerator Lab, UNDP Mauritius and Seychelles* Panel to address: ***"The Way Forward to Chart Innovation in the New Normal"***
15.20 – 15.45 hrs	Interactions
15.45 hrs	Vote of thanks
15.45 – 16.00 hrs	***Refreshments***

DAY 5 – Friday 22 October 2021	
Industry 5.0 Masterclass **Organised by Team SYNthesis in collaboration with UoM**	
08.30 – 9.00 hrs	i50 Secretariat Chairman Opening 2021 i50 Emerging Trends & Success Stories
9.00 – 10.55 hrs	TECHNOLOGY, GROWTH Through CARE (SDGs8,9,17)
11.15 – 12.45 hrs	PROCESS, LIGHT is MIGHTS (SDGs 6,7,11,12,14,15)
13.30 – 15.00 hrs	PEOPLE, The Burden of PRIVILEGE (SDGs 5,10,16)
15.30 -17.00 hrs	MERGING MIGHT WITH RIGHT (Led by UoM)

Merging Might with Right (Session Led by UoM)	
15.30 – 15.55 hrs	**Keynote Speaker** **Professor Philip MCGOWAN,** Professor of Conservation Science & Policy, Newcastle University SDG 2030 and The Global Biodiversity Crises, Sustainable Development & Poverty Alleviation: *A New Clarion Call for Transformational Change Across Society*
15.55 – 16.10 hrs	**MarieLoe HALVORSEN**, Political Advisor, Oslo Kommune, Norway Combating CLIMATE Change Through Quality EDUCATION: *The SUSTAINABLE Climate-Resilience Next Lap*
16.10 – 16.25 hrs	**Stephane SOYEZ**, Director, Université Catholique de Lille, France Social Innovation: *Living Lab Concept*
16.25 – 17.00 hrs	Wrap-up by Session Chair **Professor Dhanjay JHURRY, *CSK, GOSK, FAAS*** Vice-Chancellor, University of Mauritius • **Thomas BERMAN**, Director, Regeneration Mauritius, Norway *Poverty/Hunger* • **Dr Honita COWALOOSUR,** Managing Partner, Afpertise Consulting *National SDG Strategy* • **Shakti TEKER** Managing Partner, Drop of Blue *Climate Action, Quality Education, Health & Well-being* • **Jogeeswar SEEWOOBADUTH** Acting Director, Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change *Climate Action* (MOE MRU COP26 Submission)

We Thank our Sponsors

mauritius telecom

CERIDIAN

OPTIQUE DE L'EST