

SU bestows honorary doctorate on renowned agricultural economist

Agricultural economist Dr Uma Lele has been awarded an honorary doctorate by Stellenbosch University (SU) at its March graduation. She received the degree Doctor of Science in Agriculture (DScAgric), honoris causa, on Tuesday, 28 March at the graduation ceremony for the Faculty of AgriSciences.



Source: Supplied | Dr Uma Lele at the graduation ceremony. Photographer: Stefan Els

Lele, who hails from India, was honoured for her visionary leadership in the theory and practice of rural development globally and her pursuit to influence public policy through rigorous empirical research.

She is a leader in the field of economic development. Over five decades, this independent scholar and development economist has accumulated a wealth of experience in research, operations, policy analysis and evaluation at the World Bank, universities and international organisations.

Lele has consistently been at the forefront of new departures in the theory and best practices of rural development, continuously challenging the status quo and pushing the boundaries in her search for a more meaningful path to development. Her body of work is characterised by the constant endeavour to influence public policy through rigorous empirical research.

During her tenure at the World Bank, Lele led evaluations of the World Bank's Forest Strategy, its Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, and its approach to global programmes.

She has served on numerous advisory and expert panels for international organisations, including for the Sasakawa Global 2000 programme and the World Food Prize. In addition, she co-chaired a task force on global research on the environment-agriculture nexus and established and directed the Global Development Initiative of the Carter Centre and Carnegie Corporation.

Lele is the first woman to be awarded a PhD in agricultural economics by Cornell University.

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