

In Pics: Made in Africa - Introducing Dr Thebe Ikalafeng

With his deep-rooted belief in the richness of Africa's diverse cultures, histories, and talents, Dr Thebe Ikalafeng has tirelessly championed initiatives aimed at showcasing the continent's true essence on a global stage.



Ikalafeng is robed by Prof Betty van Vuuren. Source: UJ.

Influential

These were the words echoed by the University of Johannesburg (UJ)'s vice-chancellor and principal Professor Lethokwa Mpedi as he conferred the brand and marketing icon with an Honorary Doctoral degree in Philosophy.

Prof Mpedi continued: "Whether through his influential talks, writings, or projects, Dr Ikalafeng consistently emphasises the importance of authenticity, urging individuals and organisations to embrace and promote Africa's unique narratives."

Dr Ikalafeng addressed the gathered audience and graduates with a keynote address highlighting the importance of the African brand.

"Our job is to produce and consume 'Made in Africa'. If Africa is truly going to become independent, free, integrated and prosperous, 'Made in Africa' must become our most serious agenda. Only Africa can serve Africa."



Through his work, he endeavours to dispel stereotypes and misconceptions, instead celebrating Africa's vibrancy, innovation, and resilience.

"I am singularly honoured to receive this Honorary Doctorate from this incredible University. I receive and accept with incredible humility and I am grateful to everyone who has been part of my journey."

Numerous accolades

With a career spanning over 30 years, Dr Ikalafeng's leadership in brand and marketing communications has garnered

numerous accolades and awards, including being named one of the '100 Most Influential Africans' by New African Magazine, and receiving the Financial Mail AdFocus Lifetime Achievement Award.



UJ to confer Honorary Doctorate on influential African marketer Thebe Ikalafeng

18 Mar 2024



Dr Ikalafeng has been a prominent voice in thought leadership within the industry, solidifying his reputation as a purpose-driven authority on cultivating sustainable brands in Africa.



He holds a BSc (Marketing) cum laude and a Master of Business Administration (Strategy and Marketing) degree from Marquette University in the US. Additionally, he holds an LLM (Intellectual Property Law) degree from the University of Turin, Italy, in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Switzerland.

“With his thought leadership, innovative initiatives, and dedication to advancing African narratives, Ikalafeng embodies the values of excellence, leadership, and service that define UJ’s honorary doctorate recipients,” concluded Prof Mpedi.

The UJ’s Honorary Doctoral degree is reserved for individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and contributions in their respective fields, showcasing contributions that extend beyond conventional norms.

During this graduation season, the university will bestow honorary doctoral degrees upon exceptional individuals who represent diverse realms of expertise and embody UJ's commitment to excellence, innovation, and societal impact.

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