

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED
RESEARCH MEDAL**

Mr Chancellor, I have the honour of presenting to you

Dion Nkomo,

Associate Professor

in the School of Languages – African Languages Studies Section,

for the award of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Research Medal.

“An exceptional young researcher”, “a true scholar”, and “an asset to the field of metalexigraphy”. These are the phrases that peer reviewers have chosen to describe Professor Nkomo.

His research career was arguably launched in 2007 when he chose to use his experience [as a working lexicographer of compiling an isiNdebele music dictionary](#) to make metalexigraphy the topic of his Master of Arts research at the University of Stellenbosch, for which he received deserved acknowledgement in a cum laude award. He followed this with a PhD thesis in which he made a further valuable contribution to the field of lexicography [by challenging the Eurocentric bias in English dictionaries used in Africa](#). This work set a young Dion Nkomo on a steep scholarly trajectory, which has seen him migrate in a short space of time from an emerging researcher to an established and prolific researcher, as evidenced by his recent NRF (National Research Foundation) C2 rating and his promotion to Associate Professor.

Professor Nkomo's current research is focused on Lexicography and the related fields of terminology, translation, and language policy and planning. Drawing on his rich knowledge of the field, he has developed a lexicography framework for the development of glossaries, and has published widely in the fields of lexicography and language planning, making theoretical and practical contributions to the lexicon of African Languages.

In addition to his impressive publishing output as a researcher, well above the norm for his discipline, referees have consistently pointed to the quality of his research and writing, noting that his articles have been published in high impact journals, and that citations by others have recognised him as a specialist in the field.

Professor Nkomo's published monographs and book chapters have provided new insights in Lexicography for African Languages. He has for example shown that a prescriptive approach to lexicography and terminology which focuses only on language, is not appropriate for developing African languages, [encouraging rather a functional and social approach](#).

Professor Nkomo is a member of the Editorial Committee of the *South African Journal of African Languages*, [the Editorial Board of *Lexikos*, a specialist journal of lexicography](#),

and has served as an editor or peer reviewer for a wide range of conference proceedings, publishing houses, and journals.

A noted mentor of postgraduate students, he has supervised or co-supervised ~~11~~12 Masters and ~~4~~5 PhD students to successful graduation.

In between all of this, Mr Chancellor, he has found the time to write poetry, and contribute to a number of published poetry anthologies.

Mr Chancellor, I request you to award the **2016 Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Research Medal** to Professor Dion Nkomo.