Name:	Crespen Ndlovu
Contact information:	+27810999439 | ncrespen@gmail.com
University:	University of the Free State, South Africa
School:	Economic and Management Sciences
Area of interest:	Social Entrepreneurship, Project Management
First Year of PhD program:	2023, March
Expected year of completion:	2025, December
Recommending member	Professor S Bhebhe

Curriculum Vitae

Crespen Ndlovu | ncrespen@gmail.com
LinkedIn: Crespen Ndlovu

I am an emerging intellectual, pracademic, social entrepreneur, and lifelong learner. With over eight years of experience, I have excelled in business development, student entrepreneurship programmes, leading community projects, implementing monitoring systems, and managing risks in various regional and international organisations.

EDUCATION

2023 – 2025. **Ph.D. Development Studies,** University of the Free State, South Africa.

2019 – 2020. **Certificate in Project Management, Monitoring, & Evaluation,** Catholic University in Zimbabwe.

2020 – 2020. **Executive Certificate in Risk Management,** Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe.

2015 – 2017. **Masters in Rural Development**, [Rural Electrification] University of Venda, South Africa.

2014 – 2014. **Honours in Public & Development Administration**, University of Venda, South Africa.

2011 – 2013. **Bachelor of Admin, Public & Development Administration**, University of Venda, South Africa.

2009 – 2009. **National Certificate in Marketing Management**, Joshua M Nkomo Polytechnic-Zimbabwe.

CERTIFICATIONS AND AWARDS

July 2024. **Alumnus of the Year (Over 30 Years**), Entrepreneurial Action Us (Enactus) South Africa.

Oct 2023. **Right to Development Advanced Certificate,** Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Nov 2017. **Entrepreneurship**, Young African Leaders Initiative, USAID & UNISA, South Africa.

July 2013. **Student Leader of the Year,** Enactus South Africa.

PUBLICATION

1. The Contributions of Enactus to South Africa's Social and Solidarity Economy" *(2024). Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship. DOI Link*
2. Student Perceptions of Enactus in Advancing Human Development *(2024). EGRN Compendium. Enactus UK*

CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

23 October 2024. **Poster Presenter:** Enhancing Human Development Through Enactus, Faculty of Economic and Management Science, University of the Free State, South Africa

04 October 2024. **Presenter:** Integrating urban agriculture into resilient urban planning: a case study of guerrilla agro urbanism and food security in Harare, Zimbabwe, Resilient Urban Communities conference, Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya.

1 October 2024. **Presenter:** Student perceptions on the role of Enactus in enhancing human development in higher education institutions. Enactus Global Research Network, Astana, Kazakhstan.

21 August 2024. **Moderator:** Successfully moderated the Africa Education Hub webinar supported by Catalyst 2030, ANSES and ACCOSSE with up to 45 participants.

09-12 July 2024. **Article:** Enhancing Social Entrepreneurship for Sustainable, Inclusive Growth and Equity: Leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area Framework to Transform Africa's Wildlife Economy, Africa Liberty Forum, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

06-08 March 2024. **Presenter,** 3-minute thesis presenter (third place). Resilient Urban Communities Conference. Topic: How Social Entrepreneurship through Enactus enhances student capabilities. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

22-26 Jan 2024. **Participant, Presenter** Winter School. Fostering Societal Innovation for Sustainable Development, Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland.

10-12 Oct 2023. **Presenter,** Resilient Urban Communities Conference. Topic: Enhancing Human Development through Social Entrepreneurship: The Case of Enactus in South African Higher Education Institutions. American University in Cairo, Egypt.

17-18 Aug 2023. **Presenter**, The 4th International Conference on Entrepreneurship Development 2023. Topic: The Impact of Enactus on South Africa's Social and Solidarity Economy: Case Study of a University of Technology. Central University of Technology, South Africa.

5-8 Dec 2022. **Presenter,** Resilient Urban Communities (RUC) Seminar, Topic: Sustainability of Urban Agriculture as a Food Insecurity Coping Strategy: A Case of Off-Plot Agriculture in Harare, Zimbabwe. Strathmore University, Kenya.

27 Nov 2021. **Regional Conference Coordinator**, Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), Theme: Harnessing Ideas for Impact, YALI Alumni, Students, Academics, & Business Leaders, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

15-16 Oct 2016. **Presenter,** Walter Sisulu-Univen International Conference, Theme: Galvanising Development through Research & Innovation, Topic: Developmental Local Government in South Africa, an Elusive Moving Target: What are the real issues? Polokwane, South Africa.

13-15 Nov 2013. **Presenter,** Ashoka U Indaba, University of Venda Student Representative on Social Entrepreneurship, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Jan 2024 to date **Development Officer- (Part-time)** Africa Wildlife Economy Institute (AWEI), Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

- Leading comprehensive fundraising, monitoring, and evaluation initiatives, applying data-driven metrics to assess progress.
- Successfully submitted funding proposal to Atlas Network Grant; Safari International, and Darwin Initiative 2024
- Developed an M&E Guide with defined impact metrics, enabling more accurate program outcomes and performance tracking.

June 2023 to date **Co-Faculty Advisor**, Entrepreneurial Action Us (Enactus) University of the Free State Bloemfontein Campus, South Africa.

- Leading and advising students on developing social enterprises addressing poverty, climate change, and community development.
- Three student enterprises received funding from Harmony Gold Mine, MTN Foundation and Ford Foundation under my guidance.
- One student was selected as the Enterprise Leader of the Year in 24 participating South African universities.

April 2024 to date **Critical Reader/Reviewer:** University of South Africa, Curriculum Development and Transformation (DCDT).

- Reviewing Venture Creation and Business Development 1st year Module.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES

- **Mar 2014–Nov 2016** **Tutor,** Public & Development Administration, Department of Public & Development Administration, University of Venda, South Africa.

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

Jun 2017 – Mar 2023. **Business Development Manager-** Commonwealth Handling Equipment Pool (CHEP) Sub Sahara Africa-Zimbabwe.

- Responsible for business development and customer relationship management.
- Reduced Daily Sales Outstanding from 190 days to 45 days in 2019-2020, meeting company targets.
- Managed customers through Salesforce, Seibel and Portfolio Plus.
- Conducted physical and virtual customer training on equipment management to reduce losses.
- Won PepsiCo and Inscor customers in Zimbabwe between 2020 and 2022.
- Increased profit margins by 45% between 2018-2022 for SADC countries, excluding South Africa.

Aug 2020 – July 2022. **Sustainability Coordinator**. Young African Leaders Initiative-Southern Africa (YALI-RLC SA) Zimbabwe Chapter.

- Responsible for partnership and relationship-building.
- Successfully coordinated the YALI Regional Conference, receiving more than 300 delegates in Bulawayo and Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Coordinated climate change workshops between Harare and Bulawayo urban.

May 2020 –May 2022. **Virtual Regional Judge,** Enactus South Africa.

- Responsible for judging student enterprises using the Enactus Judging Criterion.

Jan 2016 – May 2017. **Research Assistant-** Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), Community-Based Monitoring Systems (CBMS), Poverty Monitoring Research- Tzaneen, Limpopo, South Africa.

- Presented research findings that led to the construction of a 12km road linking rural communities separated by mountains.
- Findings led Standard Bank South Africa to fund a R5 million housing project for the elderly.

Aug 2014 – Jul 2015. **Enactus President.** University of Venda, South Africa.

- Leading the Enactus team to implement sustainable community projects.
- Led the team to win the Harmony Gold Local Economic Development Challenge in 2014

Aug 2013 – Jul 2014. **Enactus Entrepreneurship Project Leader**, University of Venda, South Africa.

Current and Future Research Interests and Motivation to Attend the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp

I am currently registered for PhD in Development Studies at the University of the Free State in South Africa. My study focuses on understanding the role of social entrepreneurship (SE) in advancing human development within higher education institutions. Using Entrepreneurial Action Us (Enactus), a worldwide student-led social enterprise network, I seek to understand how Enactus nurtures critical competencies in students, promoting innovation, leadership, and social impact. This study's focus is motivated by the UN 2023 resolution on the adoption of SE as a potential approach to accelerating the achievement of SGDs. Also, I realised that the research focus on such student organisations has been on how they impact the beneficiaries, neglecting to understand how the involved students' skills and competencies are enhanced beyond curricular-based learning.

Throughout the last ten years, I have amassed a significant breadth of experience in student entrepreneurship, community engagement, and business development. As a Co-Faculty Advisor for Enactus UFS, I have guided student enterprises that tackle socio-economic issues, including poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and youth unemployment. In my experience as a research assistant for the Partnership for Economic Policy, Community Based Monitoring Systems research project, I realised that promoting youth entrepreneurship can address various challenges, such as unemployment and poverty. Hence, more research on it to inform developmental economic policies is essential. These positions, among other conference presentations, have enhanced my interest in the confluence of entrepreneurship, governance, and socio-economic development.

In the future, I intend to advance my research on entrepreneurship ecosystems in Africa, understanding how they contribute to global citizenship. Also, investigating the scalability and sustainability of student-led enterprises beyond the confines of academic institutions. I aim to investigate the ways in which policy frameworks, mentorship, and funding mechanisms can improve the success of enterprises within marginalised communities. This long-term goal has been oriented by my two publications on the contributions of Enactus to social and solidarity economy and student perceptions of Enactus in promoting human development.

Participating in the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp will offer a significant chance to engage with prominent scholars, foster the exchange of insights regarding social enterprise governance, and provide exposure to innovative methodologies in entrepreneurship research. Moreover, the Boot Camp will augment my ability to engage in thorough, policy-oriented research that connects theoretical frameworks with practical applications in social enterprise development. The insights and connections acquired at the Boot Camp will significantly enhance my doctoral research and bolster my role as a scholar-practitioner dedicated to promoting sustainable development in Africa.

University of Eswatini

Private Bag 4, Kwaluseni, M201 Kwaluseni, Eswatini +268 25170437, +26876945839

January 11, 2025

To The organisers

Dear Sir/Madam

Recommending Crespen Ndlovu's Application to NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2025

With great confidence, I endorse Crespen Ndlovu's application to the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp 2025. As PhD candidate in Development Studies at the University of the Free State, Crespen exemplifies the blend of intellectual rigour and practical impact that the Boot Camp seeks to cultivate.

Crespen is an emerging researcher in entrepreneurship. He can potentially revolutionise the contribution to scholarly debates from the global south perspective. Over the past decade, he has spearheaded numerous initiatives to foster student entrepreneurship and improve livelihoods across South Africa and Zimbabwe. He has assumed various roles in supporting students and youth in entrepreneurship, notably as a student leader and Co-Faculty Advisor for Enactus at the University of Venda and the University of the Free State.

Academically, Crespen has consistently committed to advancing knowledge in entrepreneurship and sustainable development. I first saw his potential in 2009 when I taught English and Communication Skills at Joshua M Nkomo, where he pursued a Business Studies Certificate. Between 2012 and 2015, I tutored him at the University of Venda. His ongoing PhD research focuses on how student-led social enterprises advance human development and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As his mentor, his research is anchored on his practical experience and supported by his extensive engagement in regional and international conferences, where he has presented on topics ranging from urban agriculture to social enterprise ecosystems.

Crespen's vision of leveraging entrepreneurship to foster sustainable development in marginalised communities resonates with your boot camp focus. As an emerging scholar, he has published one peer-

reviewed paper on entrepreneurship and one conference paper on student entrepreneurship. These publications attest to his scholarly acumen and dedication to this cause.

Attending the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp would be a transformative experience for Crespen, enabling him to deepen his understanding of cutting-edge methodologies in entrepreneurship research. It will also allow him to engage with leading scholars and refine his approach to policy-oriented research. Given his proven track record of translating theoretical insights into practical outcomes, Crespen's participation in the Boot Camp would enhance his research and contribute to the broader discourse on entrepreneurship for sustainable development for Africa and beyond.

Crespen Ndlovu is an outstanding candidate for the NBER Entrepreneurship Research Boot Camp. His unique academic excellence, practical experience, and unwavering commitment to social impact make him deserve this opportunity. Undoubtedly, he will be a valuable participant and a future leader in entrepreneurship research.

Do not hesitate to reach out for further clarity on this recommendation letter.

Sincerely,



Prof. Sithulisiwe Bhebhe