

NUST still hunting for VC

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Observer



Andrew Kathindi

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) is yet to appoint a substantive Vice-Chancellor over a year after long-serving Vice-Chancellor, Tjama Tjivikua stepped down.

The University Council, which is chaired by Florette Nakusera and appointed by Higher Education Minister Itah Kandji-Murangi in November last year to serve until 2022, is yet to find a suitable candidate.

In May this year, Dr Andrew Niikondo was appointed as Acting Vice-Chancellor for a period of six months or until a substantial Vice Chancellor is appointed by council. He replaced Morné du Toit, after his term lapsed. Du Toit serves on the NUST council as Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the Administration and Finance Department.

Kandji-Murangi confirmed to *Windhoek Observer* that there were delays caused by the procurement process, “but that has been cleared since. They are busy now working towards actually making sure that they will soon call in people for [interviews]. Once they have the agency for Human resources.”

NUST Acting Communications Director, Jordaania Andima said that the delay was caused by an internal administration process, which has now been resolved and that the rest of the process that involves interviews and presentations will follow “soonest.”

“Council has and is devoting substantial time to ensure the appointment of a substantive Vice- Chancellor for the institution. Early this year, an advert was placed in the media to ensure that the position is filled. To this end, the appointment process is in progress. We envision the process will be finalised soonest.”

She stated that the announcement will be made immediately upon completion of the appointment process.

“Please note, in addition, that Council will engage the entire NUST community and key stakeholders once the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor has been finalised.”

She further confirmed that Council will only be considering qualified Namibians for the position, while denying that requirements for the post had been lowered.

“No requirements were lowered for the post of Vice-Chancellor. NUST will require potential candidates for the position of a Vice-Chancellor to do a public presentation as well to demonstrate amongst others whether they have the right aptitude and qualities mix to lead NUST to continue being a credible and competitive global 21st Century University,” said Andima.

This comes as NUST has faced a multitude of allegations, including the appointment of Du Toit as Acting Vice-Chancellor despite not having PhD.

“I would like to assure the nation that Council has the interest of NUST and the Namibian nation in mind and we will do our best to make sure a suitable visionary person is appointed.”