

# Professor Sakkie Pretorius

## DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH)

Professor Sakkie Pretorius is internationally recognised as a pioneer in molecular microbiology, biotechnology and translating research outcomes into innovative industry applications. He joined Macquarie University in 2013 and in 2014 his passion for academic excellence and research drove the creation of the University's strategic research framework, *World-leading research; World-changing impact*. The framework will shape Macquarie's research priorities over the next decade and build upon the *Our University: A Framing of Futures* project.

Originally from South Africa, Professor Pretorius studied agriculture at the University of the Free State from 1977 until 1986, when he was awarded a PhD for his work on physical, genetic and biochemical characteristics of yeast. He was appointed Professor of Microbiology at Stellenbosch University in 1993, where he later became the founding director of South Africa's Institute for Wine Biotechnology.

By identifying some of the unique characteristics of South African wine production during his ten-year tenure he was part of the team involved in the refooting of the technology of wine production in South Africa. Professor Pretorius' role in this team enabled the burgeoning South African wine industry to grow its production and market presence significantly and attract global recognition for the quality of wines from the region.

Passionate about authentic leadership, prior to taking up his role at Macquarie, Professor Pretorius held the role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President: Research and Innovation at the University of South Australia. Prior to this he was the Managing Director and CEO of the Australian Wine Research Institute.

In 2014 Professor Pretorius was able to leverage his extensive expertise in wine yeast genetics to help bring the Yeast 2.0 project to Macquarie University. The ground breaking project involves creating the world's first-ever synthetic complex organism and will open the door to both more robust synthetic biology research at Macquarie as well as applications including more eco-friendly biofuel production and better targeted medication.

Professor Pretorius' reputation for excellence extends to the US and Europe, where he has held a series of prestigious part-time and honorary positions. He conducted molecular yeast genetics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Gottingen, Germany and the Katholieke Universiteit in Belgium.

He has published on a range of subjects in more than 200 peer-reviewed research papers (current *h*-index of 45: Scopus), and in addition to being regularly invited to present at conferences, many as keynote speaker, Professor Pretorius has won more than \$90 million in funding and filed six patents. He is ranked in the top 1 percent of researchers for Agricultural Sciences and Plant & Animal Science, and is ranked 328th in the world for citations per paper in Agricultural Sciences (Source: Essential Science Indicators: 28 January 2016).

Almost 30 of his papers are in the top 10 percent of the most cited research in Biotechnology & Applied Microbiology, Microbiology, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Food & Science Technology, Genetics & Heredity and Mycology (Source: InCites 2016)



Professor Sakkie Pretorius

#### FIND OUT MORE

Macquarie University NSW 2109 Australia  
T: +61 (2) 9850 8645  
sakkie.pretorius@mq.edu.au