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Siyaphumelela's journey towards equity in South African Universities: moving from access to success

Jenny Glennie and Alan Amory

OPENING TO ALL SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Saide
Enabling successful open learning for all

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

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Introduction

Rip Rapson, President and CEO,
The Kresge Foundation

Overview

Befor e2014

Our Challenge

2014 2019

Siya 1 Design and Outcomes

2020 2023

Siya 2 Design and Outcomes

2022

Progress

2024

Siya 3 Design

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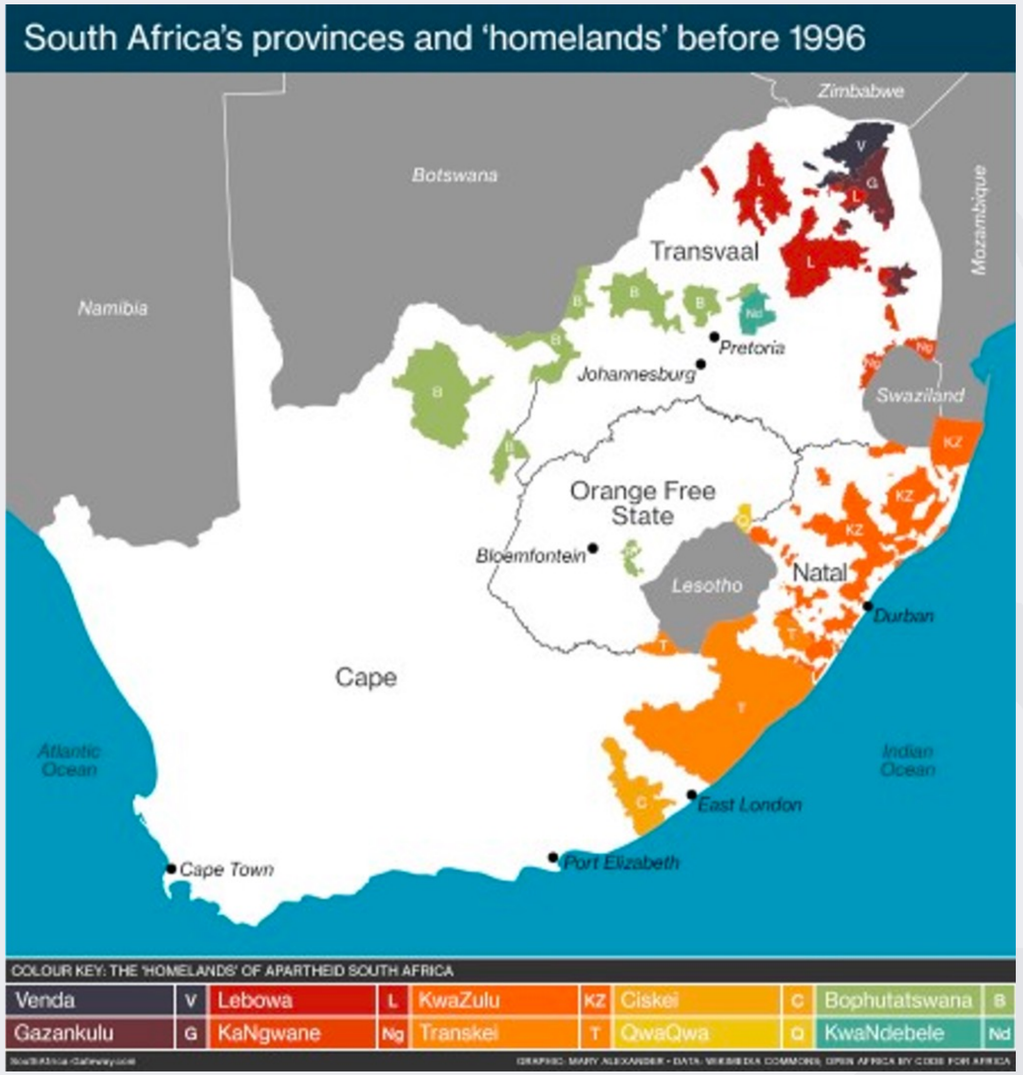
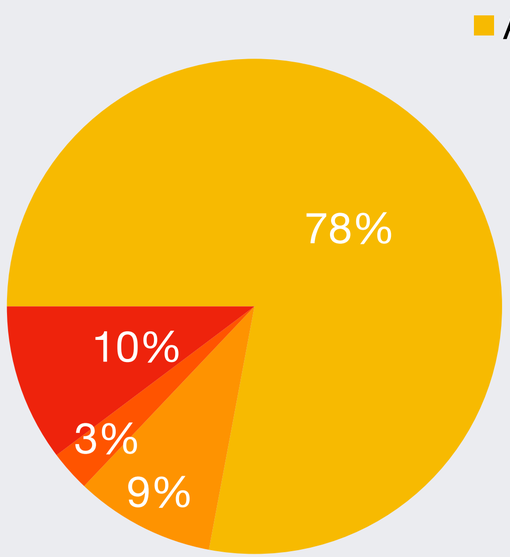
Before 2014
Our Higher Education Challenge

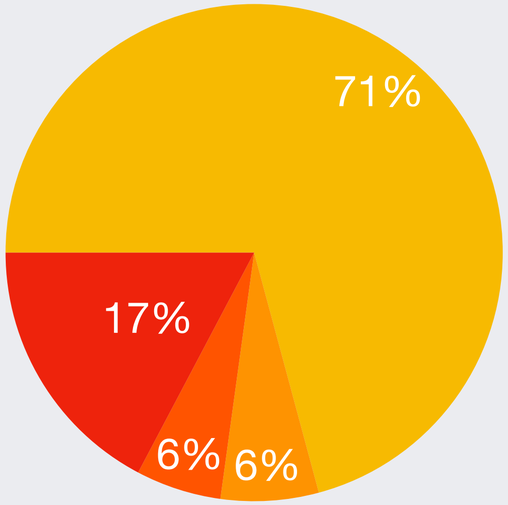
Architects of Separate Development and Apartheid envisioned



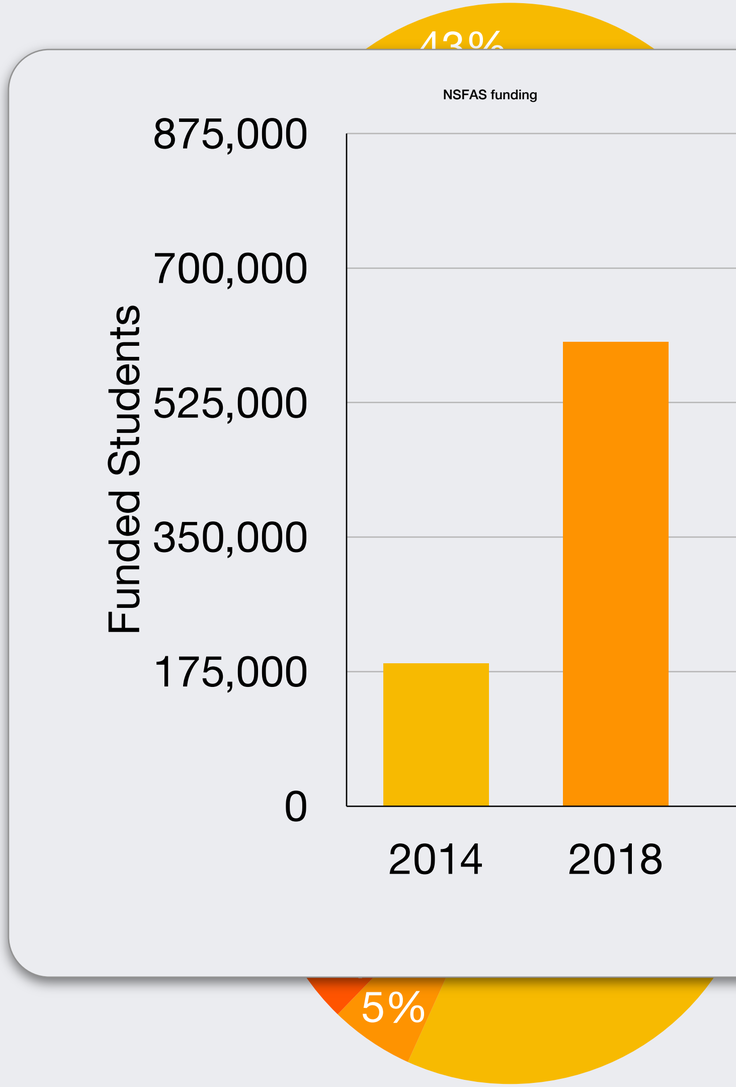
Enrolments - By Population Group



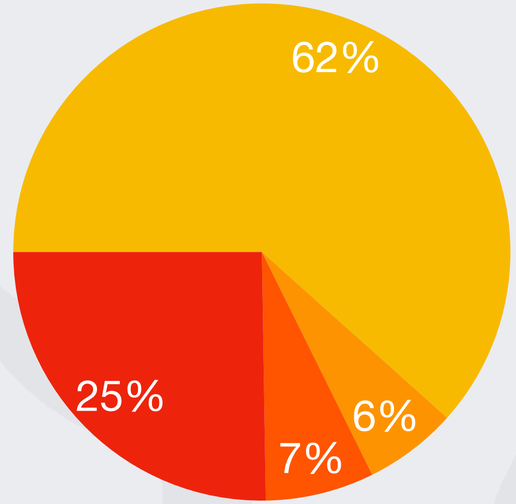
Census 1996



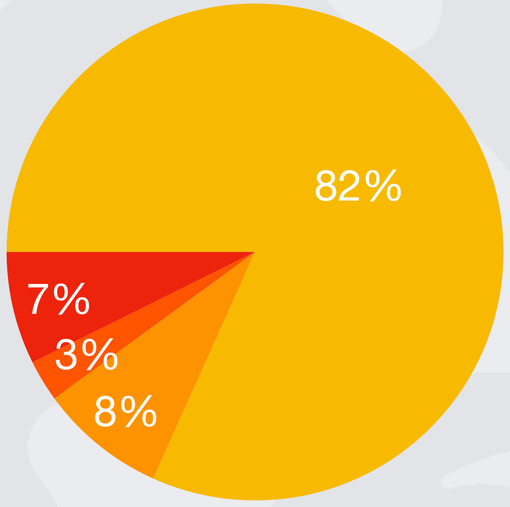
2014



2022

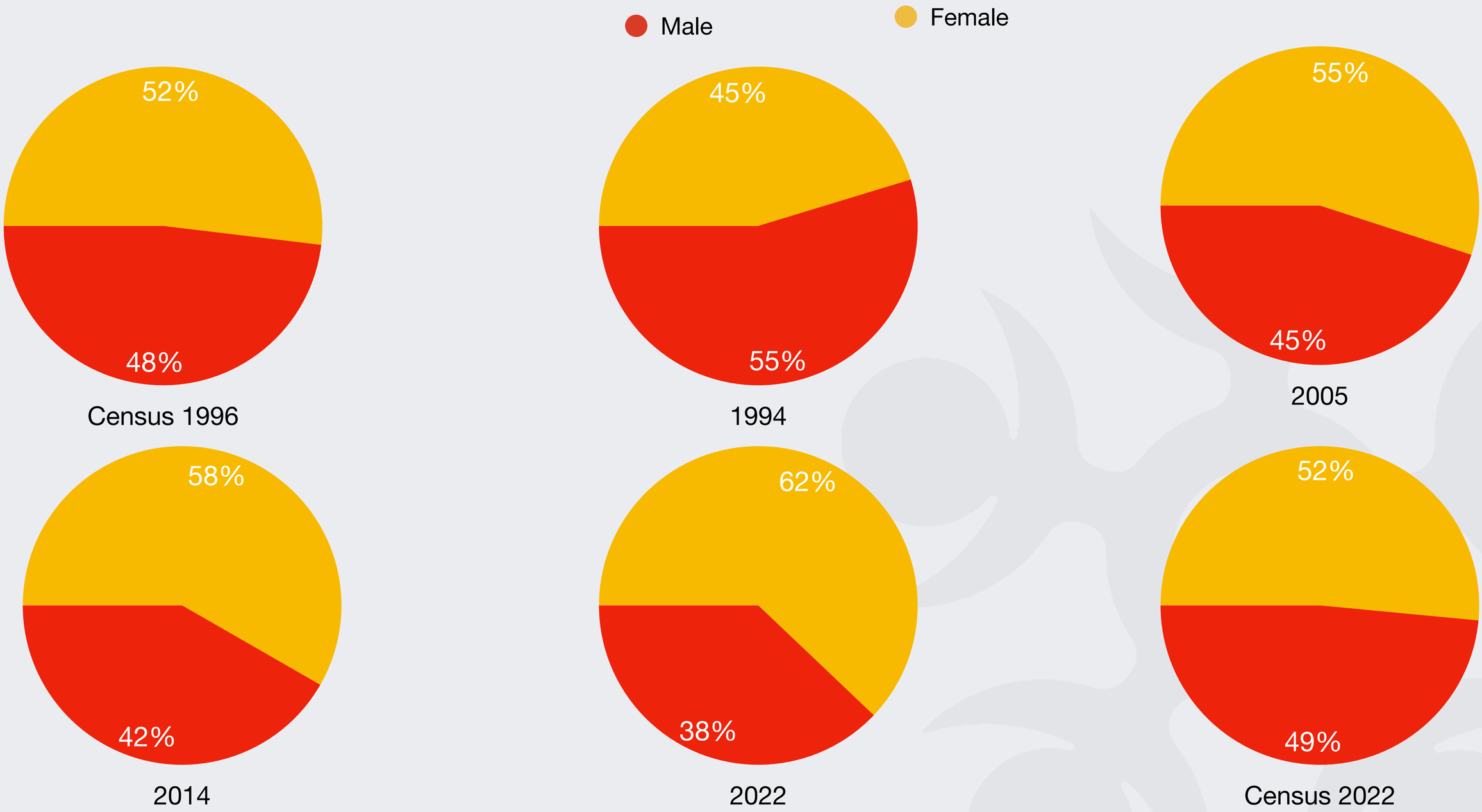


2005



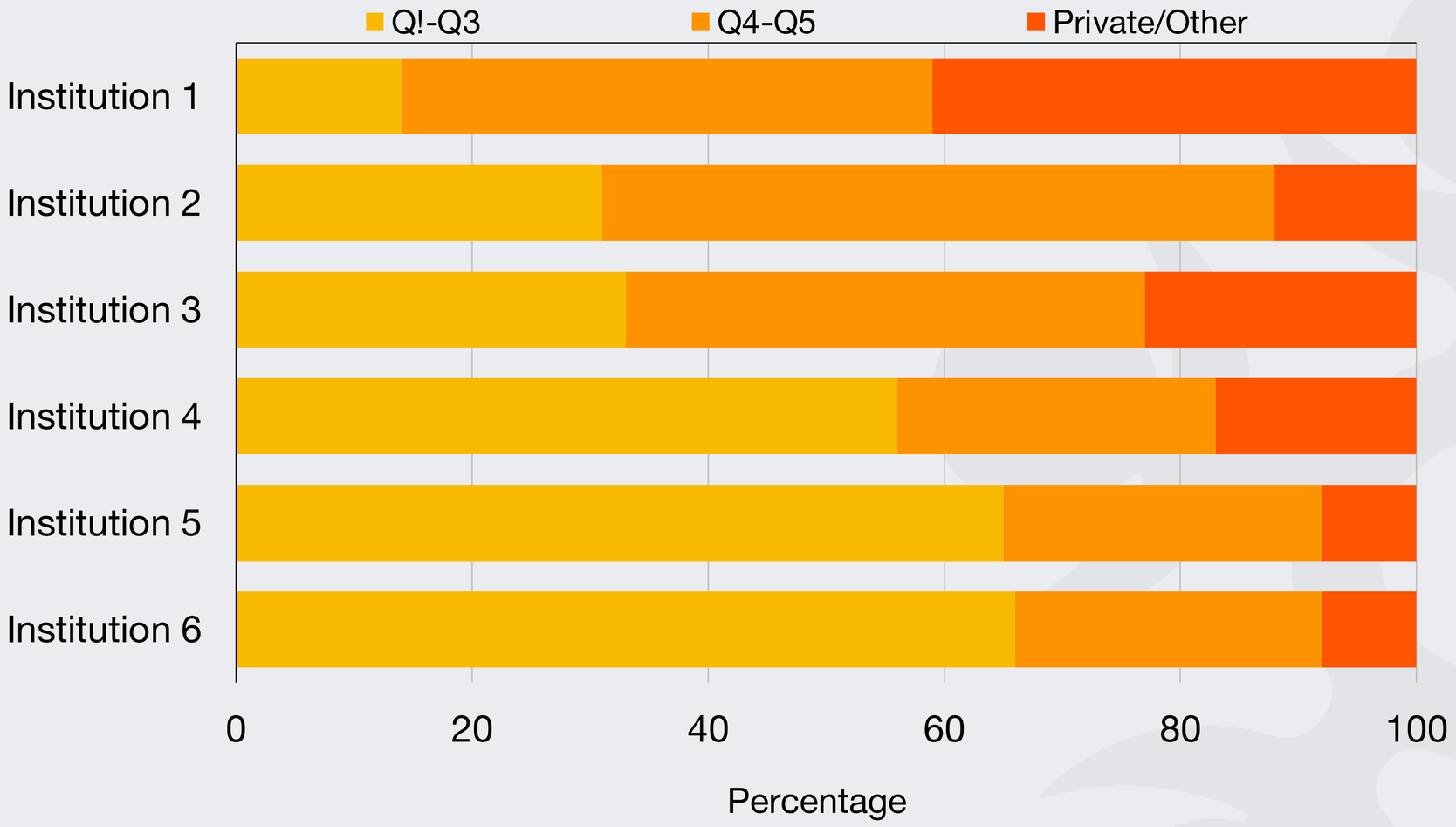
Census 2022

Enrolments - By Gender

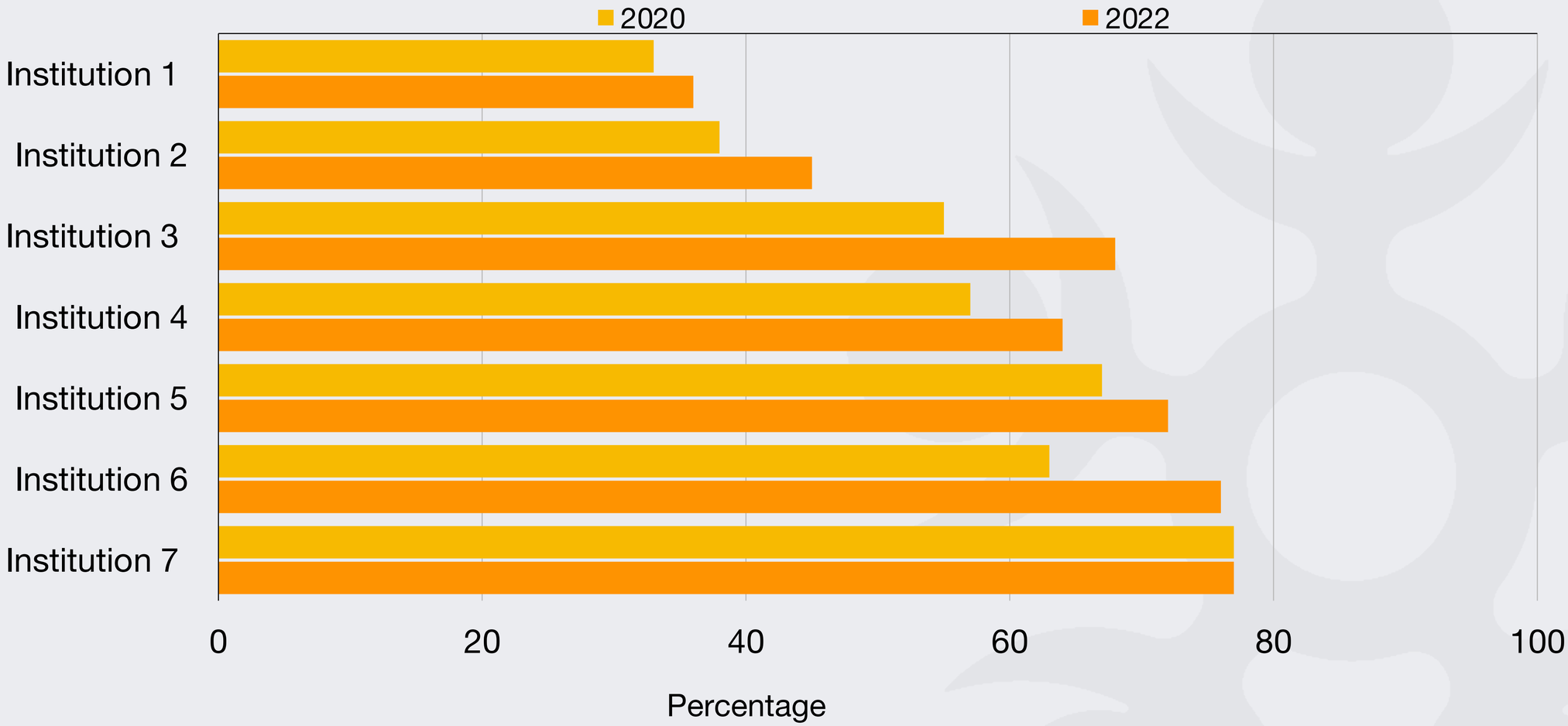


Enrolment by Quintiles

Percentage first-time entering undergraduate enrolments by quintile, 2023



Percentage of first-time entering under-graduate students sponsored by NSFAS



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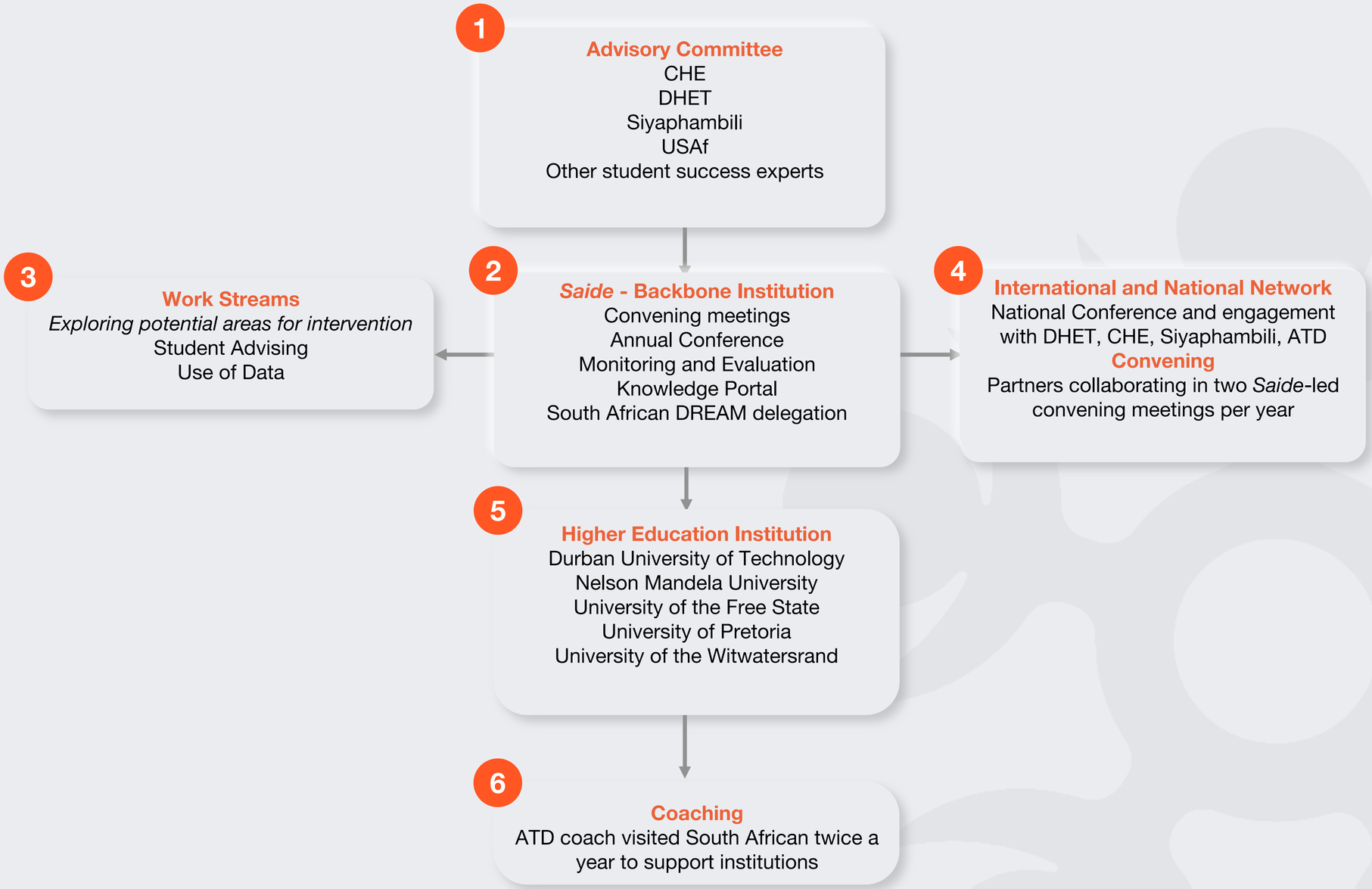
2014 - 2018
Aims, Design and Outcomes

Aims

- Improve capacity to collect student data and integrate it with Institutional Research, Information Communication Technology, academic development, student services, planning and academic divisions.
- Create South African models of universities using successful data analytics to improve student outcomes.
- Create greater awareness and support for evidence to improve student success in South Africa
- Create and highlight a shared vocabulary and consensus on especially effective practices to improve student success.
- Enlarge the cadre of experienced institutional researchers versed in data analytics to support student success.

Design


1
Advisory Committee
CHE
DHET
Siyaphambili
USAf
Other student success experts
2
Saide - Backbone Institution
Convening meetings
Annual Conference
Monitoring and Evaluation
Knowledge Portal
South African DREAM delegation
3
Work Streams
Exploring potential areas for intervention
Student Advising
Use of Data
4
International and National Network
National Conference and engagement with DHET, CHE, Siyaphambili, ATD
Convening
Partners collaborating in two Saide-led convening meetings per year
5
Higher Education Institution
Durban University of Technology
Nelson Mandela University
University of the Free State
University of Pretoria
University of the Witwatersrand
6
Coaching
ATD coach visited South African twice a year to support institutions

Ecosystem

International expertise
Achieving the Dream, GSU, Universities Innovation Alliance, JISC
Research and capacity development
SASSE, BER, SALDRU, SAAIR, some universities
National policy and strategic bodies
CHE, DHET, USAf
Wider South African Community
Advisory committee, other universities, working groups, conference participation, knowledge portal
Five universities with *Saide* co-ordinating

Outcomes

Policy and Practices

A **systematic approach to integrate data** to support management and

Attending Achieving the Dream and Student Success conferences supported Capacity development of institutional policies development to support success strategies the development of such as a strategic objective) and successfully completed a student conference were integrated into).

Creation of several instruments to support the development of student indicators) and international approaches were adapted to the South African environment.

Coaching supported the capacity development of members from the five participating institutions.

Advising students, Building student profiles,Tracking student progress,Using data ethically.

institutional student success goals.

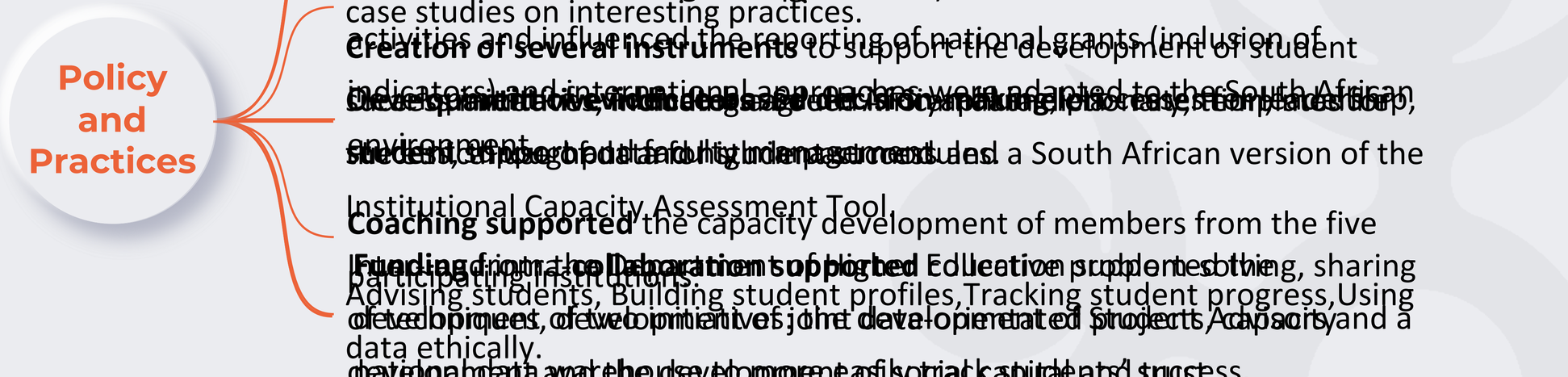
case studies on interesting practices.

activities and influenced the reporting of national grants (inclusion of

student management, student teaching systems and tools, and publication of

Development of a South African version of the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool.

Funding from the Carnegie Foundation supported Education supplemented the development of two initiatives: the development of Student Advisory development and the development of a data management tool.



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2018 - 2022
Aim, Design and Outcomes

Aims

Establish a more student-centred culture in South Africa’s higher education system to improve student completion rates and reduce race and gender equity differences.

Improve institutional capacity to collect and use student data to improve student success across the higher education system.

Expand evidence-based student success efforts on a national scale, using a networked approach that builds on existing strengths, shares capacity throughout the system, and serves institutions based on their current needs and abilities.

Design

1

Advisory Committee
CHE
DHET
NSFA
Siyaphambili
USAf
Other student success experts

2

***Saide* - Backbone Institution**
Convening meetings
Annual Conference
Monitoring and Evaluation
Knowledge Portal
South African DREAM delegation

3

Workshops
Offered by Siyaphumelela Partners, Associates and *Saide*
Work Streams
Exploring potential areas for intervention
Student Advising
Use of Data

4

Networks - National
National Conference and engagement with DHET, CHE, Siyaphambili, ATD
Regional
Open to all Universities in the region organised by lead university
Convening
Partners collaborating in two *Saide*-led convening meetings per year

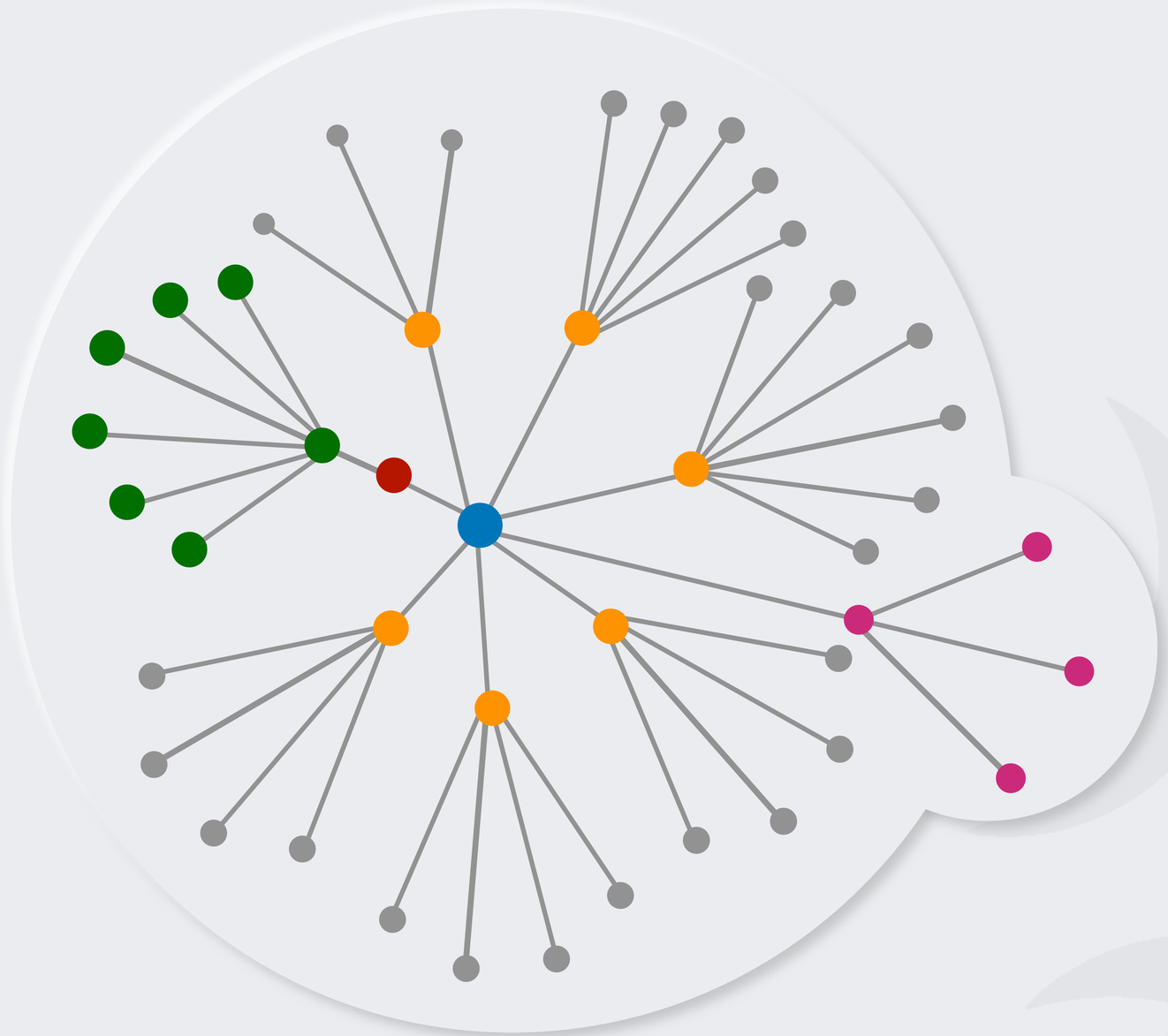
5

Partner (7), Associates (1) and Participant (9) Members

6

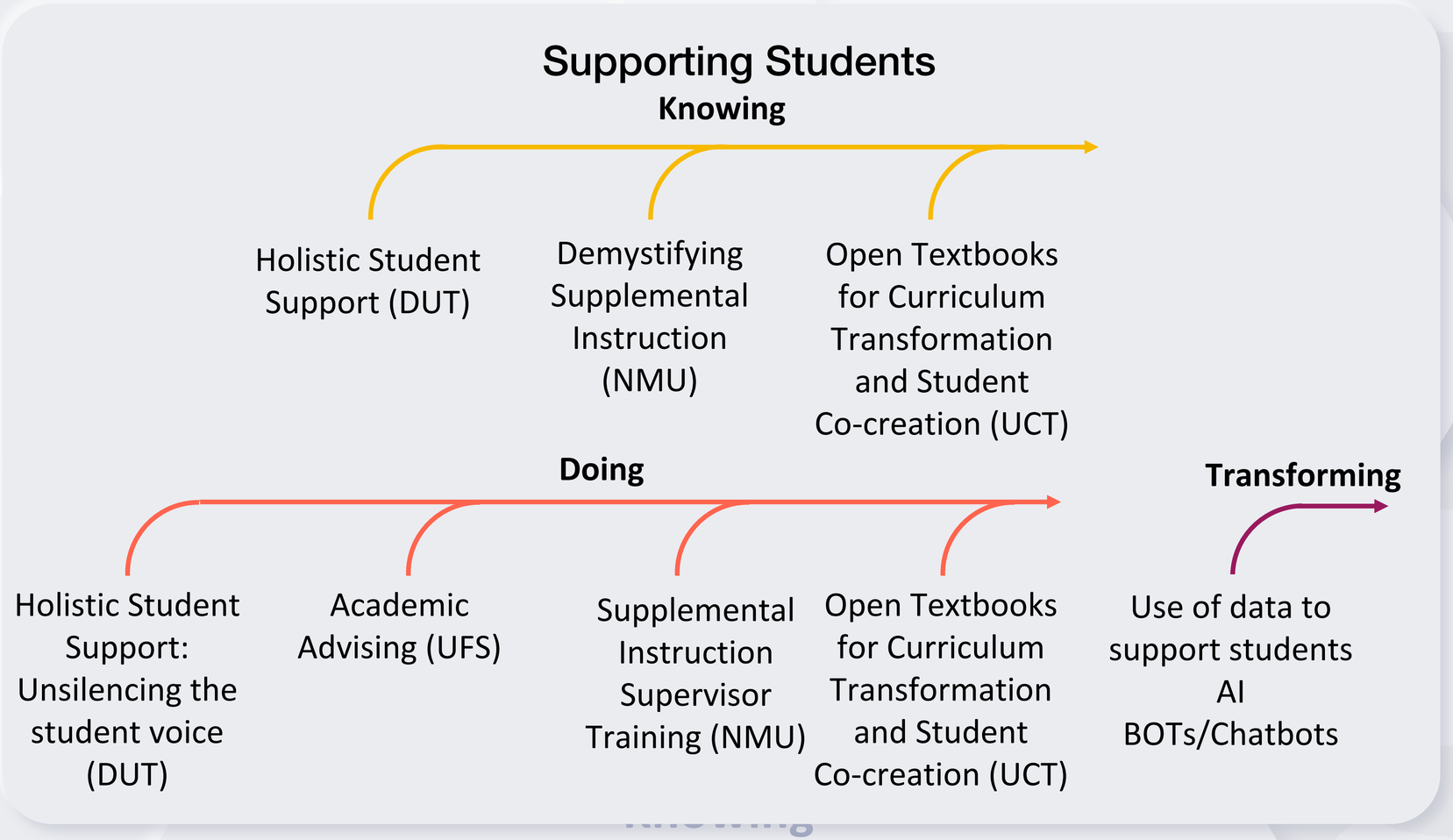
Coaching
Six coaches supported new Partners and all Participant members

Design



- Network co-ordination
- Advisory board
- National bodies
- National network components
- Sub-network co-ordinator
- Institutions

Services


Supporting Students
Knowing
Holistic Student Support (DUT)
Demystifying Supplemental Instruction (NMU)
Open Textbooks for Curriculum Transformation and Student Co-creation (UCT)
Doing
Transforming
Holistic Student Support: Unsilencing the student voice (DUT)
Academic Advising (UFS)
Supplemental Instruction Supervisor Training (NMU)
Open Textbooks for Curriculum Transformation and Student Co-creation (UCT)
Use of data to support students
AI BOTs/Chatbots

Outcomes

Culture

Mode of **workshops** moved to virtually supported allowing far larger participation.

Greater recognition of the **importance of student success** within the

Over **66 workshops** offered to Partners and Participants with Student Advising and

Siyaphumelela institutions with students' success as a stated objective.

Student voice increasingly integrated into university structures.

Data used to identify at-risk support students organised to explore

National inclusion of student indicators in government university

common institutional concerns and development responses.

development grants.

Data used to i**dentify gateway** (large class, high failures) modules - solutions

still to be explored.

ATD and *Saide* organised special **virtual** DREAM and Siyaphumelela

Integration at **Partner universities** of student success and support policies

conferences for Siyaphumelela members (2021, 2022) - attended in record

and practices across their institution.

increasing use of **evidence-based decision-making** processes.

Service **workshops** offered included predictive analytics, biography

questionnaire, SASSE and PowerBI.

Vibrant Participant, Partner communities, and regional communities formed

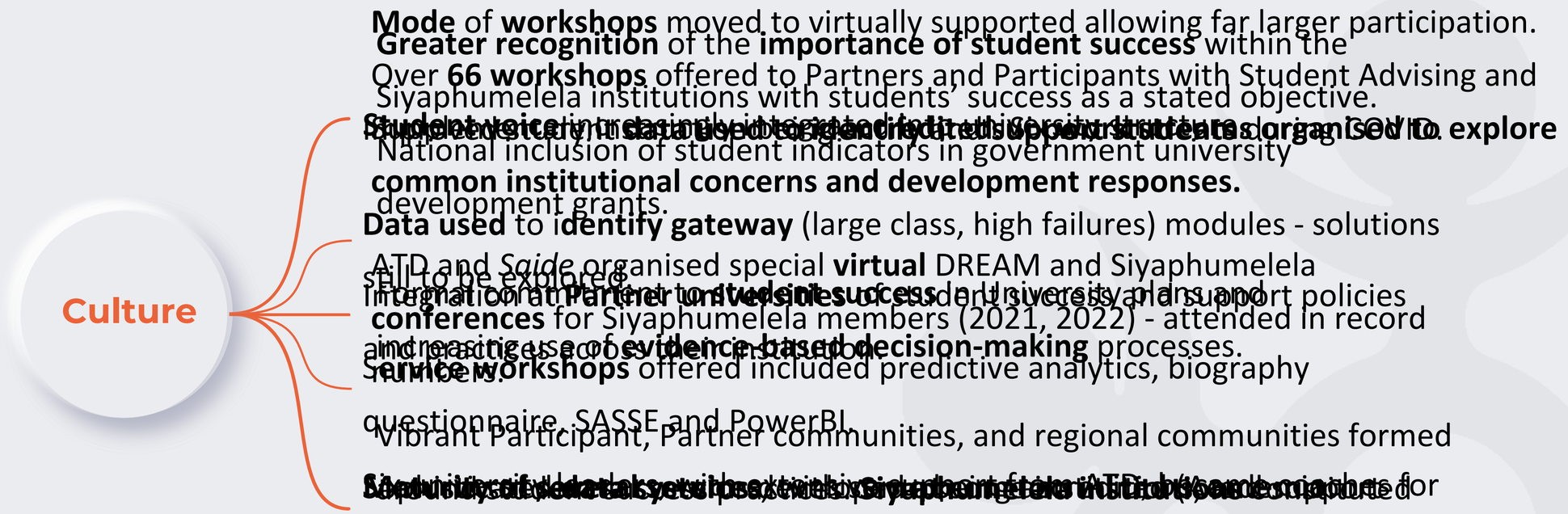
Sixteen universities with extensive support from ATD, by some coaches for

Sixteen universities with extensive support from ATD, by some coaches for

12 universities. A human-centric transformative design process developed.

Pro-ingrids of the university sector, with student success becoming an

increasingly **dominant discourse.**



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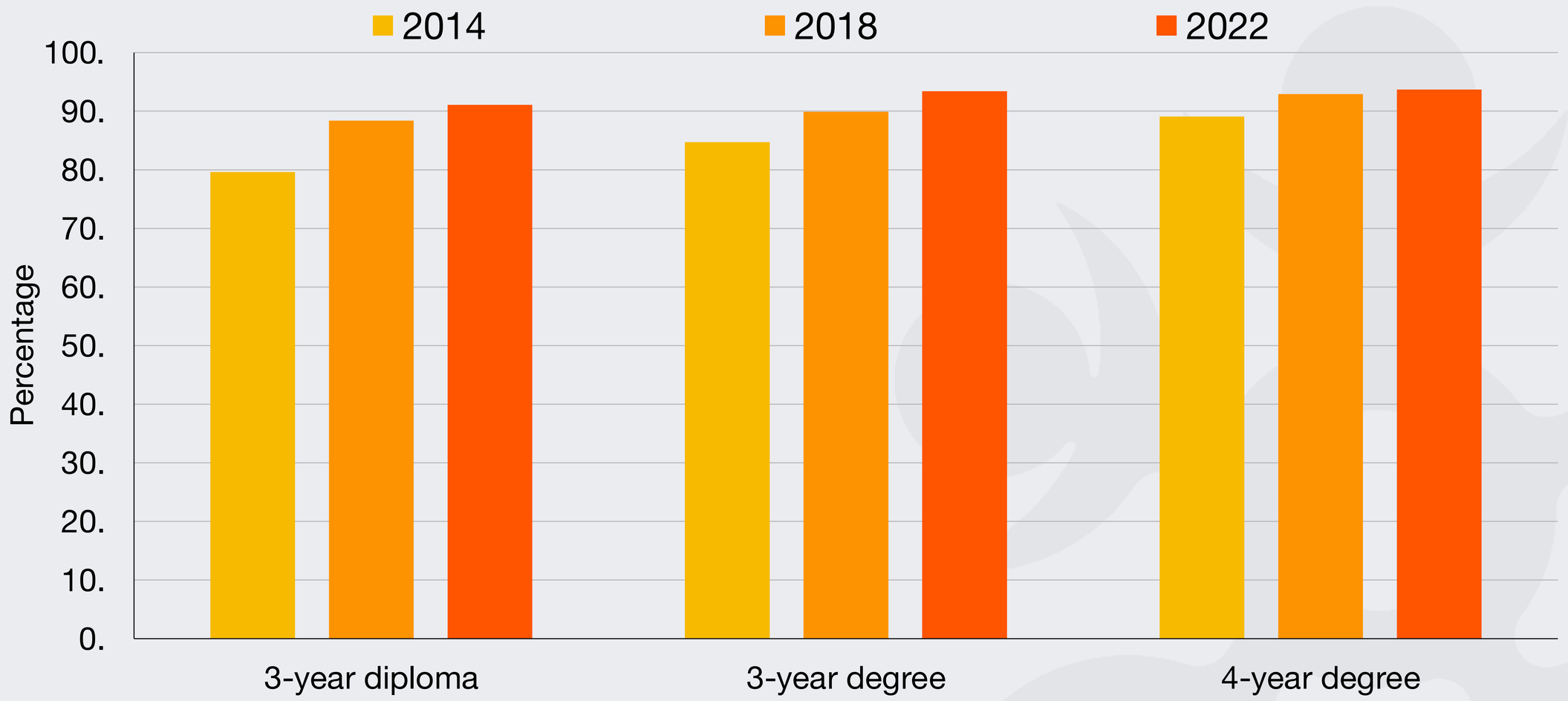
2022
PROGRESS ON PATH TO SUCCESS

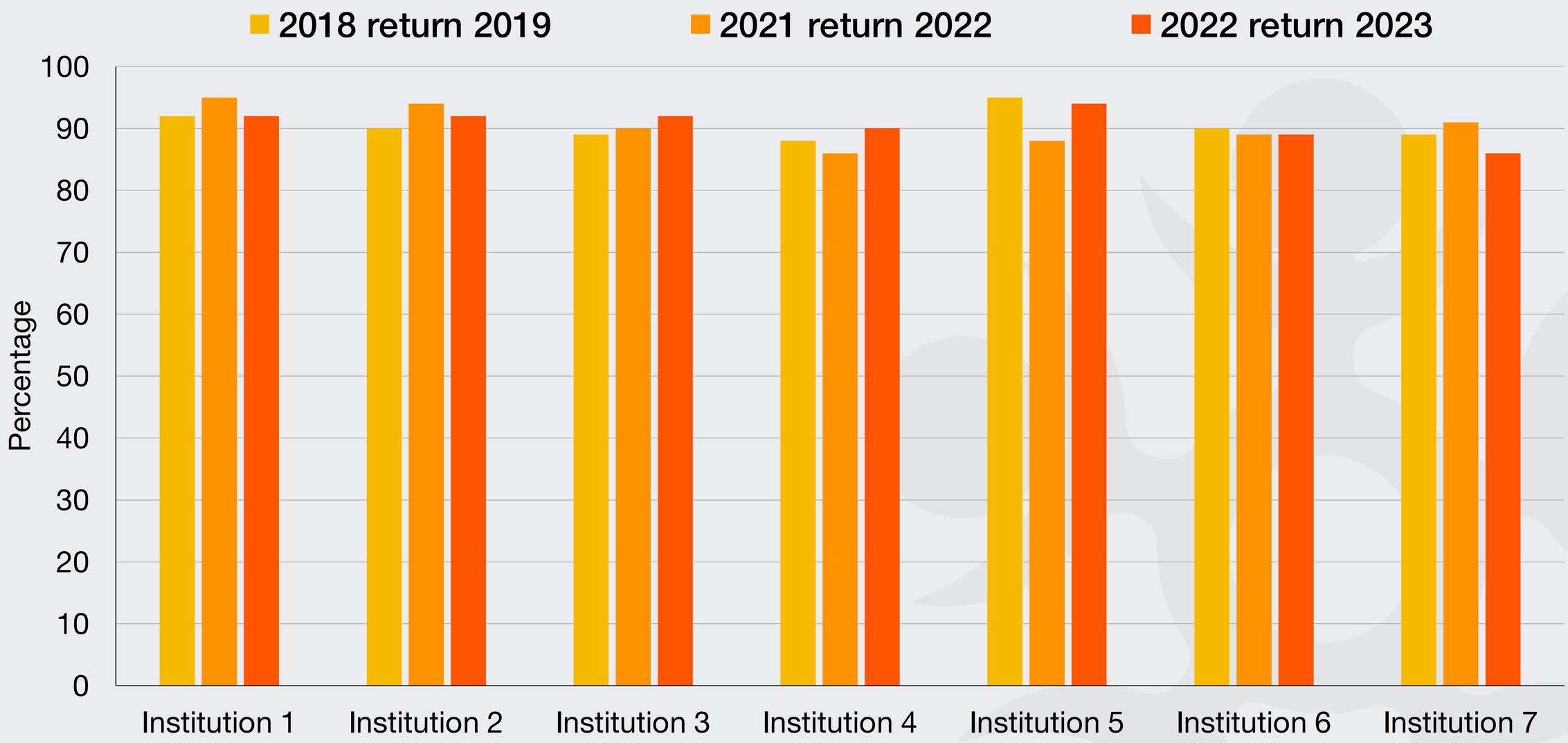
National Retention Rate

Undergraduates of 3-year diploma, 3-year degree and 4-year degree programmes



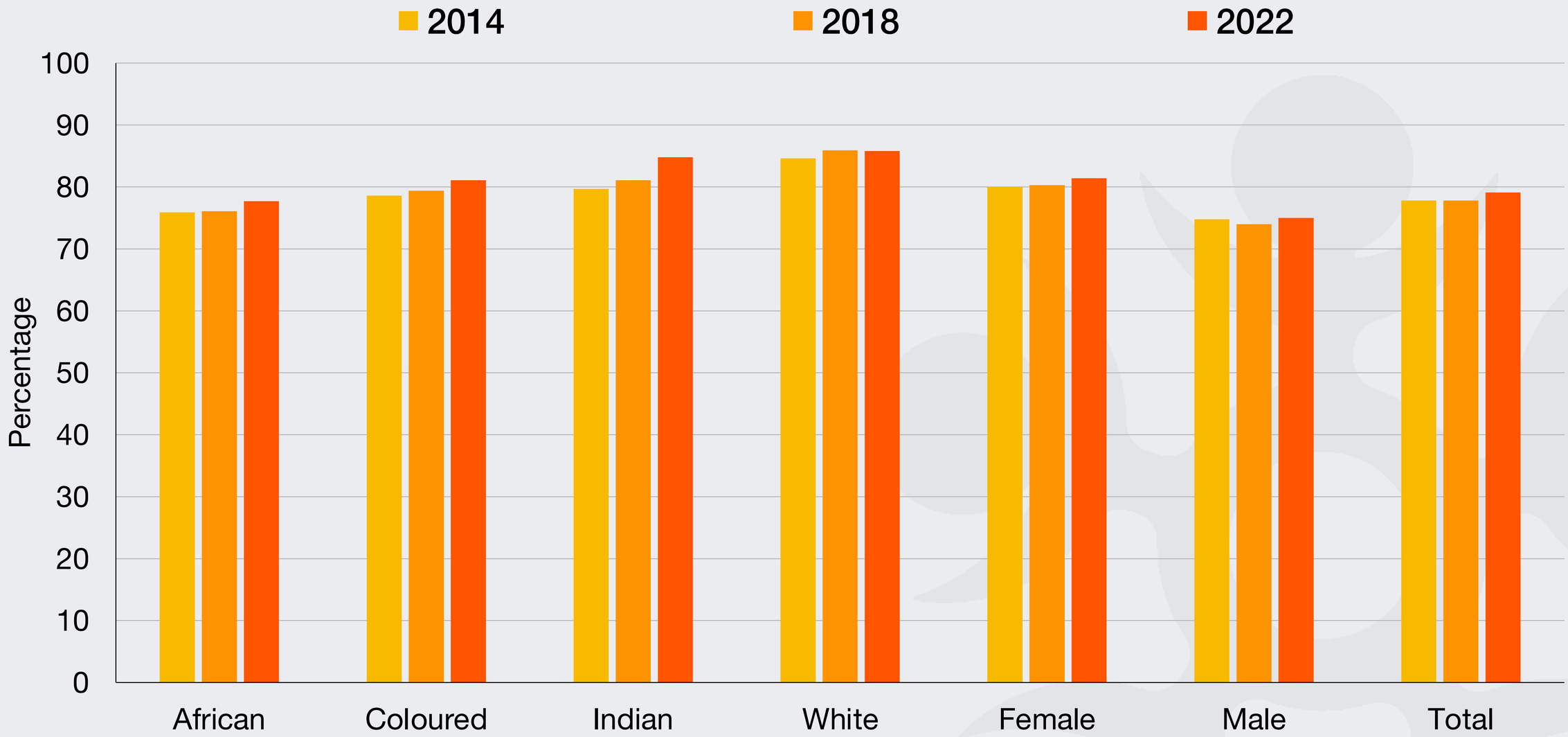
Siyaphumelela Retention Rate:

First Time Entering Students



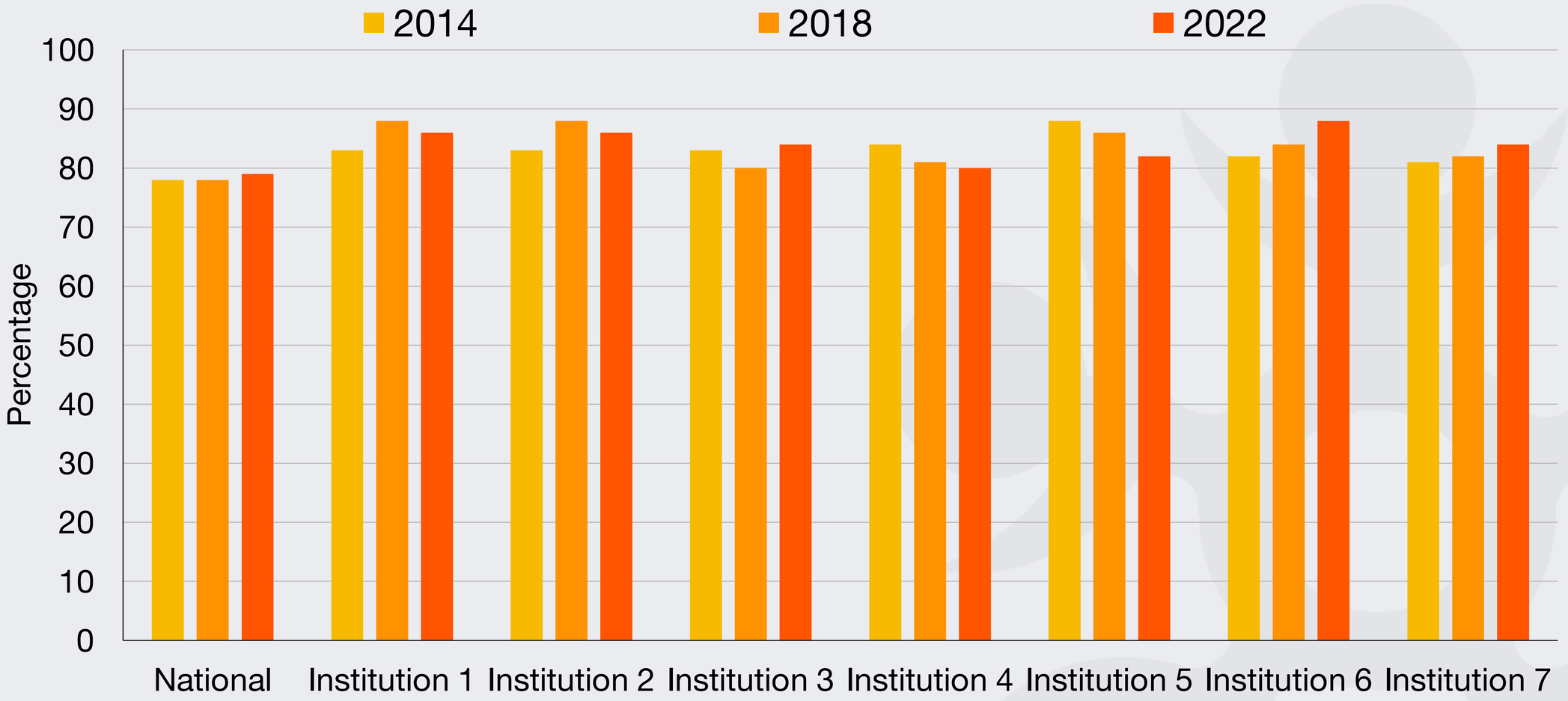
Siyaphumelela Success Rate:

National success rate in 3-year undergraduate diplomas 3-year B-degrees and 4-year B-degrees



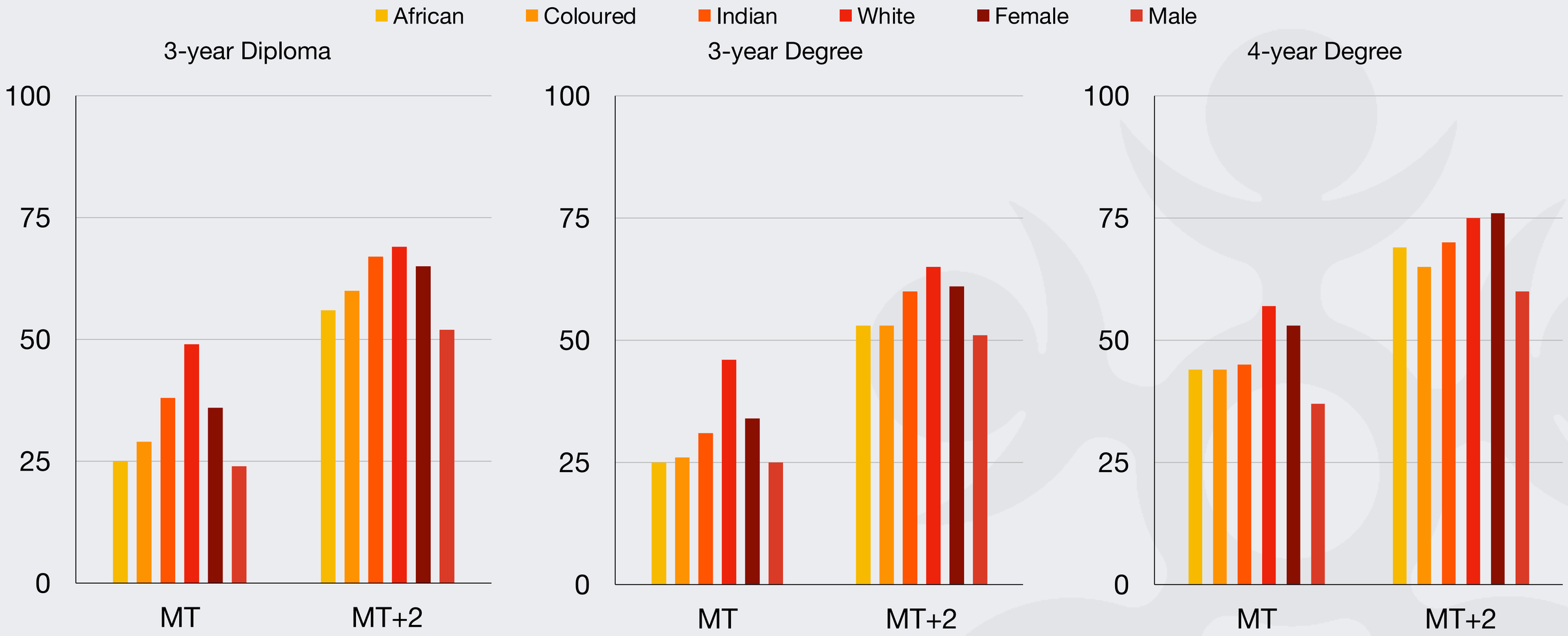
National & Siyaphumelela Success Rates

Average of UG 3-year diploma, 3-year degree and 4-year degree programmes

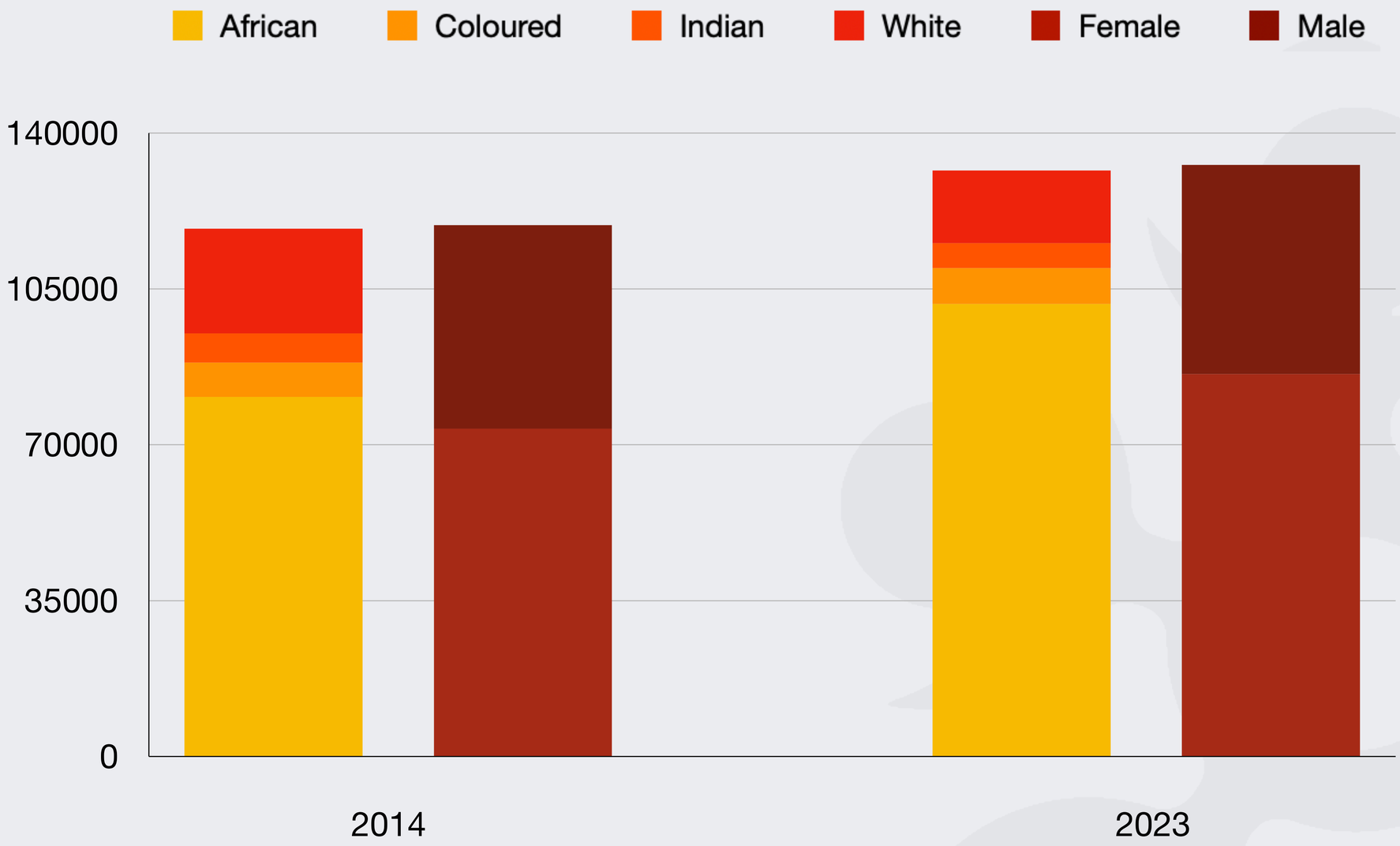


Throughput Rates - 2017 Cohort

Undergraduates of 3-year diploma, 3-year degree and 4-year degree programmes



National graduates



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2024
Design

Design

1

Advisory Committee
CHE
DHET
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Siyaphambili
USAf
Other student success experts

2

***Saide* - Backbone Institution**
Convening meetings
Services and network co-ordination
Annual Conference
Monitoring and Evaluation
Knowledge Portal
South African DREAM delegation
Managing Coaches

3

Work Streams
Exploring potential areas for intervention
Gender Equity
First Year Experience
Mental Health
Student Tracking
National Student Data Warehouse

4

Networks - National
National Conference and engagement with DHET, CHE, Siyaphambili, ATD
Regional
Open to all Universities in the region organised by lead university
Convening
Partners collaborating in two *Saide*-led convening meetings per year

5

Evidence-Based Practices for Student Success

Student Support | Present, Report and Analyse Data | Institutional Change | Teaching and Learning

6

Partners
(maximum of 20)

7

Coaches

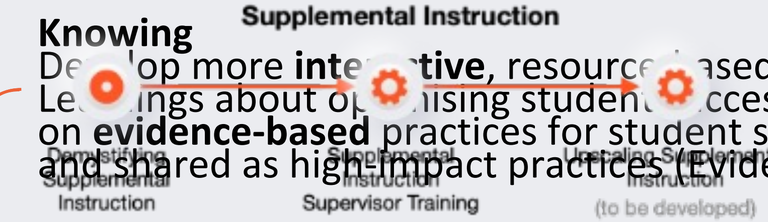
Aims

- Establishing a more student-centred culture in South Africa's higher education system to improve student success;
- Achieving institutional targets to improve retention, course success and throughput rates for degrees and diplomas, and eliminate differences based on race, gender and socio-economic status;
- Improving institutional capacity to collect and use student data for evidence-based decision making to improve student success across the higher education system;
- Consolidating and sharing evidence-based student success efforts on a national scale: supporting students, use of data, teaching and learning and transforming institutions; and
- Embedding the student voice in student success initiatives.

Evidence-Based Practices

Examples

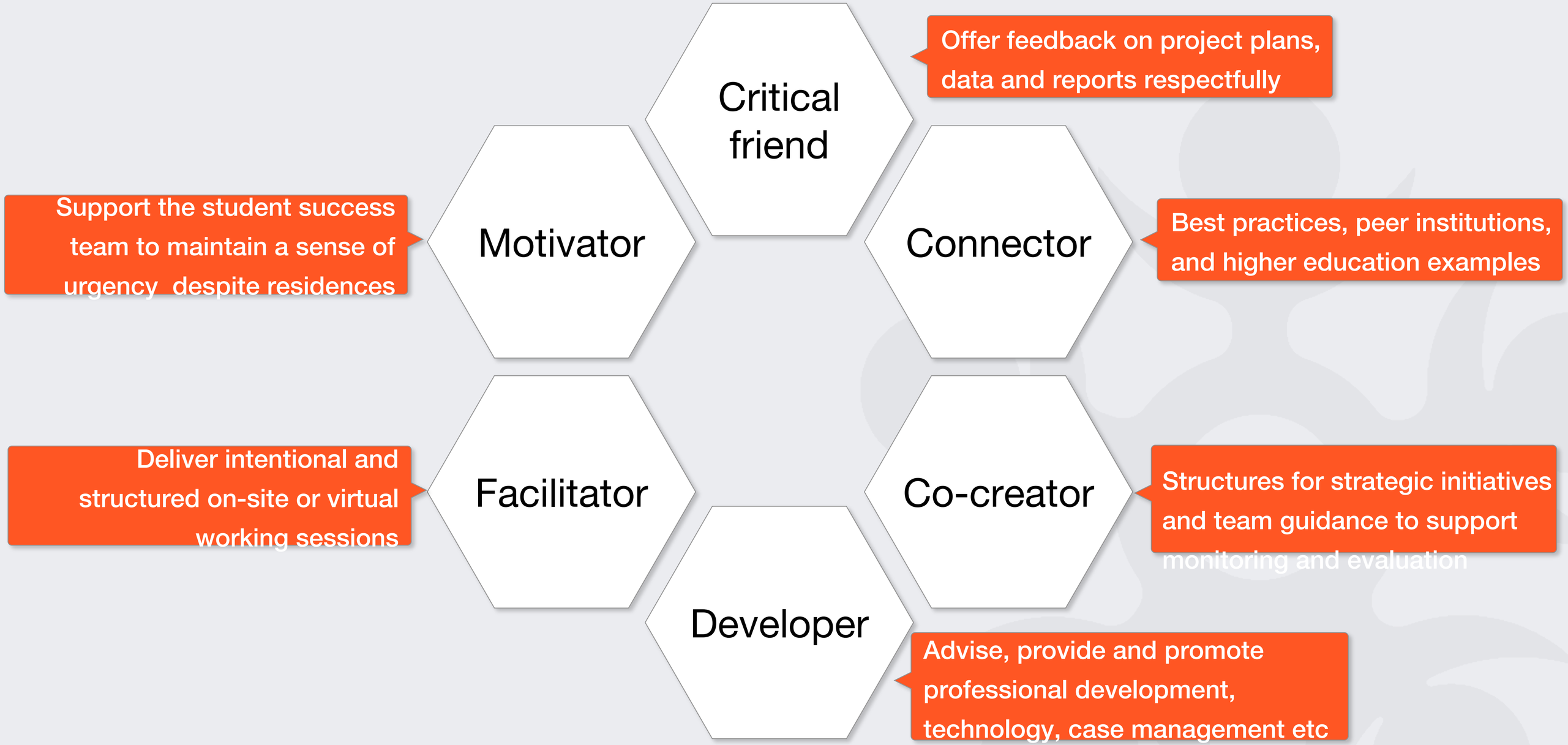
Knowing
Develop more **interactive**, resource-based 'short learning courses' drawing
Learnings about optimising student success in the SA contexts are identified
on **evidence-based** practices for student success.
and shared as high-impact practices (Evidence, Case Studies).



Doing
Organise short learning courses into **structured learning pathway**.
Sustained capacity is developed to implement and manage a data chain.

Transforming
Develop online activity-based **engagements** that include **shareable**
A positive culture of evidence-based enquiry and analysis geared towards
resources.
student success is created and sustained.

7 Coaches


Critical friend
Offer feedback on project plans, data and reports respectfully
Motivator
Support the student success team to maintain a sense of urgency despite residences
Connector
Best practices, peer institutions, and higher education examples
Facilitator
Deliver intentional and structured on-site or virtual working sessions
Co-creator
Structures for strategic initiatives and team guidance to support monitoring and evaluation
Developer
Advise, provide and promote professional development, technology, case management etc

7 Coaches

New Partners

- Support the use of data in the **Student Success Committee**.
- Participate in **Know Your Data** and **Ethics** short-learning courses.
- **Support UCDG** student success plans and goal
- Manage **ICAT**.
- Encourage leadership engagement for student success.

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Thank you

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