



### **Citation for Professor Sharon Prince – College of Fellows, University of Cape Town**

Sharon Prince is a Professor in Cell Biology and head of the Department of Human Biology at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She obtained a BSc degree, a BSc (Hons) degree with distinction and a PhD in Cell Biology, all from UCT. Following her PhD, Prince's research was initiated through a prestigious Wellcome Trust Postdoctoral fellowship, which enabled her to spend time at the Marie Curie Research Institute in the United Kingdom. On her return to South Africa, she established an independent research programme in cancer biology at UCT in 2002, was appointed as lecturer in 2005 and was promoted ad hominem to Senior Lecturer in 2008, Associate Professor in 2012 and full Professor in 2016. Prof Prince is an internationally renowned researcher in the field of cancer biology where she has made significant contributions to the understanding of the role and regulation of the developmentally crucial T-box transcription factors, TBX2 and TBX3, in cancer. Indeed, she is well recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in the field of T-box transcription factors and their role in cancer aetiology. Her international reputation rests on her pioneering work in identifying the potential of T-box factors as novel targets in the development of effective anticancer therapeutics in addition to the use of organometallic compounds as cancer drugs, and the repurposing of existing non-cancer drugs for cancer therapies. Much of her research has focused on the homologous T-box transcription factors, TBX2 and TBX3, which are overexpressed in a range of cancers. She has published several seminal papers on their different but critical oncogenic roles and their contributions to key oncogenic signalling pathways in among other cancers breast cancer, melanoma, and a wide range of sarcoma subtypes. Her laboratory was one of the first to identify TBX2 as a powerful antisense and pro-proliferative factor with a role in anticancer drug resistance and TBX3 as a key factor in tumour formation and invasion. Notably, her paper in one of the leading cancer journals *Cancer Research* was one of the first to describe a role for TBX2 in the cell cycle and to elucidate the mechanism by which it contributes to cancer progression. This paper has been cited over 120 times. Prince's work has been published in

more than 75 high-impact international journals and has garnered over 4 969 citations (Scopus). Moreover, she has co-authored two book chapters and has one patent. She is regularly invited to give lectures at national and international meetings; and is a regular reviewer for journals and funding bodies. She has successfully attracted both local and international funds for her research (over R22 million) in highly competitive focus areas. Integral to Prince's research is her highly effective training of postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows from previously disadvantaged groups; this includes 15 postdoctoral fellows (11 females, 6 black); 19 PhD (14 females, 11 black); 18 MSc (11 females, 11 black) and 28 honours (23 females, 15 black). Her group currently consists of two postdoctoral fellows (two black females); Nine PhDs (3 females, 7 black); One MSc (1 female) and one honours black male. Her commitment to education and training is highlighted by her students and postdoctoral researchers frequently winning awards at national and international research meetings. Prof Prince is regularly invited to give public talks on cancer and actively contributes to advocacy and highlights the burden of cancer in our society. Her laboratory also regularly hosts learners from disadvantaged schools and organises and hosts a CANSA Shavathon annually, which helps to increase awareness around this debilitating disease. Prince has received several awards and recognitions for her academic scholarship. She received the NRF Hamilton Naki award in 2021, was elected a member of The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) in 2017 and was recognised by UCT as one of its leading women innovators in 2018. In 2019, she was appointed a visiting Professor at the University of São Paulo, Brazil; and a visiting researcher at the University Côte d'Azur, Nice, France; and was invited as a Visiting Fellow at the SRM University, Chennai, India. She received the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Fellowship in 2019 and 2011, the Harry Crossley Senior Clinical Fellowship in 2010, was appointed the Director of a breast cancer consortium funded by the Department of Science and Technology and Cancer Research Initiative of SA and is an Associate Editor for Molecular and Cellular Oncology (specialty section of Frontiers in Oncology and Frontiers in Cell and Developmental Biology).