




The Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Cape Higher Education Consortium

WESTERN CAPE ECONOMY INNOVATION AWARDS NOMINATION FORM 2026

Please complete this nomination form accurately, completely but succinctly.

1. Contact details

Nominator (Person)	Nominating Organisation	Signature	Date	e-mail address
Dr Audrey Verhaeghe	South Africa Wine		27 February 2026	audrey@anza.holdings

Nominated Person	Nominated Organisation	Sub-sector one of the following: Private Sector or Academia or Public Sector or Non-Profit	Cell phone number	e-mail address
Gerard Martin	South Africa Wine Research Development & Innovation department	Non-Profit	0828146657	gerard@sawine.co.za

2. Short description

+100 word description of what the innovation / solution is and who needs to be recognised for which parts of the solution.

(e.g. new service /product /solution /regulation /infrastructure /institutional capacity)

South Africa Wine’s Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) department is nominated for its bold strategic shift that transformed research investment into measurable industry impact. Over eight years, RDI deliberately reversed its funding model from 80% fundamental research to 80% applied innovation, accelerating the commercialisation of research outputs. This shift has delivered tangible results, most notably TerraClim, which converts climate science into practical decision-support tools for producers. TerraClim anchors a growing innovation pipeline, including applied data analytics and blockchain initiatives with spill-over potential across agriculture. This transformation reflects exceptional vision, disciplined change management, and sustained industry leadership.

3. Detailed description

Please answer all the questions (a) to (j) below, and place answers in the prescribed place as indicated in the table below (to construct a results chain):

- a. What is the target business group/s that this innovation serves and improves?
- b. How many of these target businesses have already utilised this new solution?
- c. How did these businesses access and receive the new solution?
- d. What did this new solution help these businesses become better at?
- e. How did this help to improve their business performance? *Increased sales, lower costs, increased investment, increased employment, increased exports?*
- f. What exactly is this new innovative solution?
- g. What makes it new, compared what existed before? (Novelty in the WC economy)
- h. What makes it better than what existed before?
- i. How is/was the new solution made available to the target market / business group?
- j. What will ensure that the financial viability / sustainability of providing the innovative solution and the beneficial consequences remain intact over this period? *E.g. profitable business with enduring competitive advantage in the market. What is the expected longevity of this this solution? E.g. 5yrs, 10 yrs, 10+ years*

Output: A new catalytic innovation established, serves the WC economy	Outcome: Improved business environment (for the target business group)	Impact: Which target group of businesses benefitted & what improved for them	Longevity: Duration of benefits
<p>f. The innovation is a strategic shift in the research and innovation model of the South African wine industry, designed to ensure that scientific research outputs translate into commercially viable products, services, and technologies.</p> <p>Rather than research ending in a dissertation or journal publication, the model enables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial spin-outs (e.g., TerraClim) 	<p>i. In the case of TerraClim, the solution is made available through a web-based climate decision-support platform designed specifically for agricultural producers.</p> <p>The offering includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An interactive web application • User-friendly climate and terrain dashboards • Seasonal and long-range climate reports 	<p>a. The innovation primarily serves the South African wine industry, including producers, cellars, producing wholesalers, viticulture consultants, researchers, and postgraduate students.</p> <p>It also delivers value to adjacent agricultural sectors such as fruit (Hortgro Science), potatoes (Potatoes SA), and raisins, as well as national government</p>	<p>The long-term sustainability of this innovation rests on three structural pillars:</p> <p>1. Industry–Research Alignment Stronger collaboration between the research community and industry ensures that research remains demand-driven and commercially relevant. This alignment guarantees continued adoption and measurable value creation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry-ready decision-support tools • Market-driven research alignment • Entrepreneurial pathways for researchers <p>It transforms science into measurable economic value.</p> <p>g. Historically, research projects in the wine industry concluded with academic publications or postgraduate qualifications.</p> <p>The new model introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured pathways from research to commercialisation • Entrepreneurial development within the research ecosystem • Venture capital attraction into industry-derived innovations • Direct industry co-ownership of commercial spin-offs <p>This represents a systemic innovation in how agricultural research contributes to economic development within the Western Cape.</p> <p>h. The new approach is superior because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns the research portfolio directly with producer needs • Delivers practical, implementable solutions • Creates measurable financial returns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop and site suitability tools • Ongoing data updates and technical support <p>The web-based delivery model ensures accessibility across regions, allowing producers, consultants, researchers, and industry stakeholders to access real-time, science-based insights from any location.</p> <p>Adoption is supported through onboarding sessions, industry workshops, demonstrations, and continuous engagement with producer groups. This ensures that the technology is not only accessible, but effectively applied in operational decision-making.</p> <p>The platform model allows for scalable subscription access across commodities, making it adaptable beyond wine into fruit, potatoes, raisins, and other agricultural sectors.</p> <p>c. Adoption was driven through a structured industry engagement strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct personal engagements with producers and stakeholders • Regional information days and study group sessions • Industry media publications and articles • Social media campaigns 	<p>stakeholders including DSTI and TIA.</p> <p>The initiative strengthens the entire value chain — from primary production to research commercialisation — enhancing both industry competitiveness and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>b. The strategic shift toward commercially relevant research outcomes has resulted in the establishment of TerraClim, a commercial entity emerging from the research ecosystem.</p> <p>Current utilisation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,500+ web application subscribers • 150 active users • Major industry players such as KWV and Heineken Beverages actively using the decision-support tool • 10 administrative users • Academic access for MSc and PhD students • Application in additional agricultural commodities including fruit, potatoes, and raisins <p>This demonstrates both cross-sector scalability and strong market validation.</p>	<p>2. Commercialisation and Revenue Model Platforms such as TerraClim operate on a subscription-based model and have demonstrated the ability to attract venture capital investment. This creates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent revenue streams • Reduced reliance on grant funding alone • Reinvestment into further research and innovation • Shared financial returns for industry stakeholders <p>3. Cross-Commodity and Government Collaboration Increased collaboration between agricultural commodities and government entities strengthens resource mobilisation for research and innovation. This diversified support base enhances resilience and scalability.</p> <p>Because the solution addresses structural challenges — climate risk, resource efficiency, long-term crop planning, and competitiveness — its relevance is expected to extend well beyond short-term cycles.</p> <p>Expected longevity: 10+ years</p> <p>The integration of climate science, digital tools, and</p>
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<p>for industry stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances competitiveness in a climate-constrained future • Converts scientific outcomes into tangible economic value <p>It moves the industry from knowledge generation alone to knowledge commercialisation and competitive advantage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations at industry events, conferences, webinars, and podcasts • Live demonstrations and round-table discussions <p>This multi-channel engagement ensured strong industry awareness, trust, and uptake.</p>	<p>d. The initiative shifted research outputs from purely academic outcomes to practical, commercially applicable tools.</p> <p>Key improvements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger alignment between research priorities and producer needs • Improved risk management through advanced climate and terrain modelling • Strategic crop suitability planning (“what to plant where”) for long-term sustainability • Better understanding of climate change impacts on viticultural practices • More proactive seasonal planning through data-driven reporting. <p>In the case of TerraClim, complex scientific insights were translated into practical decision-support tools that are usable by a grower standing in a vineyard or orchard, balancing risk, cost, and timing.</p> <p>This has significantly narrowed the gap between science and practice.</p>	<p>commercialisation pathways positions this innovation as a long-term strategic asset to the agricultural economy, rather than a short-lived intervention. It establishes an enduring competitive advantage through continuous data-driven improvement and industry co-investment.</p>
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		<p>e. The impact has been both direct and systemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Return on Investment (ROI) from research funding through commercially viable outputs • Attraction of venture capital investment into TerraClim, strengthening the industry's financial ecosystem • Industry shareholding ensures reinvestment into future research initiatives • Improved production efficiency (e.g., achieving the same yields with reduced water usage) • Lower operational costs through data-driven decision-making • Improved profitability margins for producers and cellars <p>Overall, the Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) portfolio is now demonstrably contributing to business efficiency, competitiveness, and financial sustainability.</p>	
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After completing the table, read from left to right. Check for coherence and improve if needed.

4. Declaration of Evidence to verify results chain

What supporting evidence can you provide to verify the results stated above are as stated?

	Output: A new catalytic innovation established, serves the WC economy	Outcome: Improved business environment (for the target business group)	Impact: Which target group of businesses benefitted & what improved for them	Longevity: Duration of benefits
What evidence can be provided? e.g. Records, reports, peer reviews, and so forth	<p>Revolutionising Climate-Smart Agriculture in Africa - Wineland Media</p> <p>https://www.wineland.co.za/revolutionising-climate-smart-agriculture-in-africa/</p> <p>SU Researcher is Pioneering Sustainable Agriculture through Climate Mitigation - Innovus Making Stellenbosch University Innovation Matter</p> <p>https://innovus.co.za/su-researcher-is-pioneering-sustainable-agriculture-in-africa-through-climate-mitigation-company-terraclim/</p>	<p>https://sawine.co.za/innovation/</p> <p>SA Developed Climate Tool to Drive Agri Insight</p> <p>https://enterprise-africa.net/terraclim-sa-developed-climate-tool-to-drive-agri-insight/?utm_source=chatgpt.com</p> <p>Cape Chamber Celebrates Innovation: Meet the Winners of the Inaugural Academic Innovation Awards Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry</p> <p>https://capechamber.co.za/latest-news/cape-chamber-celebrates-innovation-meet-winners-inaugural-academic-</p>	<p>Terraclim: an online spatial decision support system for the wine industry. - infowine.com</p> <p>https://www.infowine.com/en/terraclim-an-online-spatial-decision-support-system-for-the-wine-industry/</p> <p>Terraclim 2022: Climate database and TerraClim Tool development - South Africa Wine Research Library</p> <p>https://winetechlibrary.co.za/terraclim-2022-climate-database-and-terraclim-tool-development/</p> <p>A tool to decode climate data – Fresh Quarterly</p> <p>https://www.freshquarterly.co.za/a-tool-to-decode-climate-data/</p>	<p>Climate Smart Agri Weather Stations provide localised data to improve farm efficiency</p> <p>https://www.polity.org.za/article/climate-smart-agri-weather-stations-provide-localised-data-to-improve-farm-efficiency-2023-06-23</p>

		innovation-awards When in drought, innovate - Hortgro https://www.hortgro.co.za/news-room/industry-news/when-in-drought-innovate/		
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5. Select the best category of award for this innovation

Sector	Award	Mark with "X"
Public Sector	6 x Catalytic innovations that contribute to growth.	
Public Sector	1 x Provincial- or National-government systemic innovation most impactful on economic growth	
Public Sector	1 x Municipal (LM+DM) innovation that is impactful on growth of their local economy	
Public Sector	1 x Public-sector innovation, enhancing good governance.	
Safety & Security	1 x Innovation enhancing precinct safety & security.	
Labour Market	1 x Labour market efficacy award Reducing impediments to increased employment.	
Academia	1 x Research most impactful on competitiveness of Industry	
Academia	1 x Tertiary education best aligned to Industry / market needs	
Academia	1 x Most successful start-up / spin out	
Academia	1 x Entrepreneurship development in higher education	
Industry Sector Bodies	1 x Institution/s strengthening stakeholder cooperation to enhance competitiveness of their Industry.	X
Organised Business	1 x Institution/s strengthening stakeholder cooperation to enhance competitiveness of their business precincts.	

6. Check that you completed all that is necessary.

7. Submit this documented and/or video recorded to innovation@capechamber.co.za.

Thank you for helping us discover and celebrate the champions shaping a better WC economy!