



**Prof Ben Bladergroen**  
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Prof Bladergroen, a former student at the University of Twente in the Netherlands joined the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in 1998 as a PhD student and was appointed as research manager for industrial contract research in 2005, followed by a senior lecturer appointment in 2006. From 2007 Prof Bladergroen accepted his role as the deputy director of the South African Institute for Advanced Materials Chemistry (SAIAMC) at UWC.

Prof Bladergroen is currently heading the Energy Storage Innovation Laboratory (ESIL) which was launch in 2015, focused on electrochemical energy storage systems, which includes the development of Li-ion, NaFeCl<sub>2</sub> and NiFe batteries. ESIL was created as a platform to commercialize emerging technologies in partnership with local businesses.