DSI/NRF TRILATERAL CHAIR INTRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION, THE 4IR AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW
SPECIALISED IN AFRICAN INNOVATION SYSTEMS & INNOVATION POLICY

The **Trilateral Research Chair in Transformative Innovation** at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa (UJ-TRCTI) is looking for Senior Research Fellows to join our expanding team.

The position is for a **Senior Research Fellow** specialising in **African Innovation Systems and Innovation Policy**, to lead a project focused on African innovation agencies (see project description below). The project aims to strengthen these agencies' access to relevant evidence, enabling them to enhance national and regional innovation ecosystems, promote cross-border collaborations, and increase their capacity to champion transformative innovation policies.

The ideal candidate must have an in-depth understanding of African innovation ecosystems and demonstrated experience working with senior government officials on policy issues. A proven track record in researching and publishing on African science, technology, and innovation policy is essential. Applicants should hold a PhD in a relevant discipline (specific details provided below) and be recognised research leaders in their field. They must also have a strong publication record and evidence of successfully securing and managing externally funded research projects.

The Chair's work explores the intersection of innovation and development processes, examining how innovation activities in private firms, the informal sector, the public sector, and at the community or household level can drive transformative change. Transformative innovation in this context refers to innovation that reduces poverty and social exclusion while fostering sustainable livelihoods. Using interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, the Chair works to understand the actors driving innovation and collaborates with policymakers and practitioners to promote and implement innovation strategies that address local, national, continental, and global challenges.

The Senior Research Fellow will be expected to:

1. **Contribute to and lead research projects**: expected to manage one or more projects that fit within their area of research interest. This includes all aspects of project planning, implementation, reporting, evaluation, results dissemination and stakeholder engagement. SRFs will be responsible for some or all of the project outputs and outcomes being delivered, and an agreed set of deliverables, including published journal articles, will be agreed on during performance contracting. This is expected to take about 40% of an SRF's time.

2. **Contribute to develop the Chair's research profile while also expanding their own research portfolio.** We actively encourage Chair members to grow their career profiles and expect all staff members to submit funding applications regularly either on their own or as part of a team. The SRF will also contribute to the Chair's strategic planning sessions and ensuring that the research being undertaken fits with and strengthens the Chair's research impact. We expect our SRFs to be hands-on and lead by example providing mentorship to early career researchers (especially postdoctoral fellows). It may also include taking on leadership roles within the Chair e.g. as a challenge area lead. This is expected to take about 20% of an SRF's time.

About the Chair
The Trilateral Chair is a research programme co-funded by the South African Department of Science, Technology and Innovation and administered by the National Research Foundation. The Research Chair is a partnership between the University of Johannesburg, the University of Sussex (UK), and the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in Kenya.

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The Future Reimagined
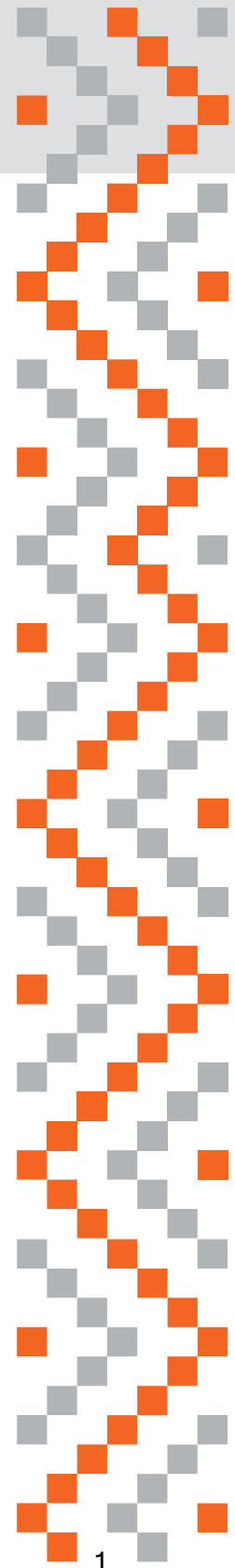
3. **Support the Chair's teaching and learning activities.** This could be through mentoring and supervision support to students, leading the development of new teaching programmes (short course, undergraduate or postgraduate) or teaching on the Chair's programmes. It may also include taking on leadership roles such as the role of the Chair's Teaching and Learning Coordinator. This is expected to take around 20% of an SRF's time.

4. **Build the Chair's internal and external networks and conduct outreach activities.** The Chair's work is impact-focused, and therefore, a key part of our work involves interactions with different stakeholder groups. Our SRFs will be required to often lead and actively engage in different types of stakeholder engagement and be equally able to work with academic networks as well as with the community or senior levels in government or industry.

Exact percentages and divisions across work areas will be agreed upon and revised during regular performance contracting.

Appointment details

- 24-month/ 2-year position with a possible extension for an additional year, funding and performance permitting.
- The position is full-time and in-person, based in the Chair's office in Johannesburg. The Chair's normal operating hours are 08:00 – 16:30hrs, Monday to Friday. This is not a remote working or home working position, and attendance at the office every day is expected. However, the position will require some work-related, national and international travel.
- A competitive yearly remuneration for the position is available and includes contributions towards medical aid and pension cover. The specific salary offer will be based on UJ rates at the time, as well as funding availability and rubrics.

Required Qualifications, Experience and Competences:

In addition to the specific skills and experience outlined above, all applicants must clearly highlight in their application evidence of:

- A PhD in a relevant field (e.g., innovation economics, innovation studies, science and technology studies, sustainability studies, development studies, public policy).
- Proven experience in conducting stakeholder engagement and workshop facilitation
- A strong track record of publications and securing funded research projects (including details of those successful)
- Experience in teaching and learning, with a focus on mentoring early-career researchers and students.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively in multinational research teams and manage people in dynamic, fast-paced environments.
- Proficiency in English (spoken, written, and reading). Fluency in French and/or Portuguese would be an added advantage.

Application Process: Please submit the following in a single PDF document:

- Cover letter detailing your motivation to apply and how you meet the position's requirements
- Curriculum Vitae (CV), including contact details for three referees
- A list of publications and a publication sample where you are the sole or lead author
- Academic transcripts/certificates
- Evidence of required experience

Submit your application to **UJTRCTISubmissions@uj.ac.za** by <mark>**Friday, 28th February 2025**</mark>, at **23:59** South African time.

Project Description

<u>**Network of Innovation Agencies in Africa**</u>
This project will establish a network of innovation agencies across Africa, aimed at strengthening national and regional innovation ecosystems, promoting cross-border collaborations and increasing the capability of agencies to champion transformative innovation policies. The project covers an initial 3-year pilot phase, while embedding considerations for the longer-term sustainability of such a network. The network's primary objective is to enhance the operational capacity of innovation agencies, enabling them to act as catalysts in their respective national and regional contexts. By providing targeted training programs, facilitating access to seed funding for collaborative projects, and supporting policy experimentation, the network seeks to empower these agencies to influence and reform policy frameworks conducive to innovation. The planned activities and governance structure are designed to establish a solid foundation for the network's ambitions, setting a clear course for its development over the initial three-year pilot phase and beyond.

UJ-TRCI leads a work package that focuses on leveraging the University of Johannesburg's (UJ) expertise to support and enhance the Project's Management Office and leading organisations of the network. The core aim is to foster an environment of continuous learning, capacity building and informed decision-making within the network. This will be achieved through the production and dissemination of critical knowledge outputs, supporting the capacity-building activities oriented to innovation agencies' staff and facilitating dynamic exchanges between innovation agencies and subject matter experts.

More information in this link: https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/news/innovation-agencies-africa-network-aiming-transform-continents-innovation-landscape