

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

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW SPECIALISED IN TRANSFORMATIVE 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 **Transformative Innovation Policy** to support policy experimentation in transformative innovation in South Africa. The role involves working closely with science, technology, and innovation (STI) policy stakeholders to conduct policy reviews and test various modalities of policy programs. The objective is to ensure that South Africa's innovation efforts are aligned with achieving transformative change and addressing key societal challenges.

The ideal candidate should have experience in policy experimentation and/or leading policy engagement with senior government officials, preferably within South Africa. Familiarity with monitoring, evaluation, and learning methodologies and practices would be a distinct advantage. A strong track record in researching and publishing on African science, technology, and innovation policy is essential. Applicants must hold a PhD in a relevant discipline (details provided below) and be recognised as research leaders in their field. A demonstrated ability to secure and manage externally funded research projects, along with a robust publication record, is also required.

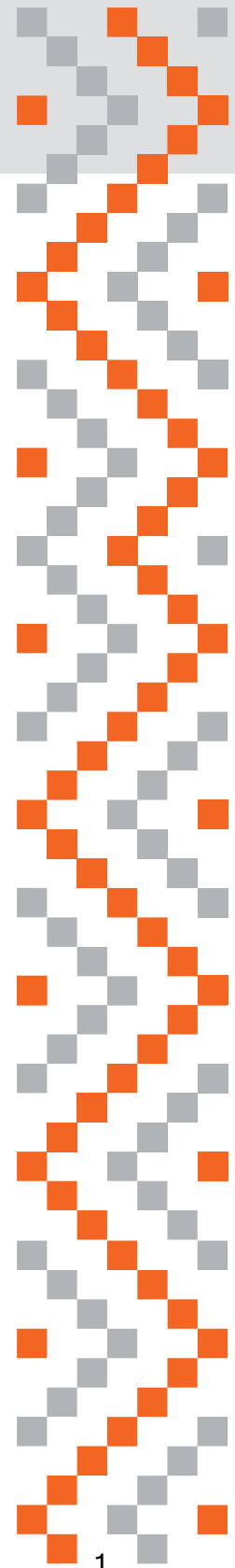
The Chair's work explores the intersection of innovation and development processes, examining how innovation activities in private firms, the informal sector, the public sector, and at the community or household level can drive transformative change. Transformative innovation in this context refers to 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.



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 position 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 is provided and includes contributions towards medical aid and pension cover. The specific salary offer will be based on UJ rates, 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, workshop facilitation and policy engagement/experimentation with senior government officials
- 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 **Friday, 28th February 2025**, at **23:59** South African time.

Project Description

Building a South African Community of Practice in Transformative Innovation Policy

The Trilateral Chair in Transformative Innovation plays a crucial role in fostering a community of practice around Transformative Innovation Policy (TIP) in South Africa, aimed at addressing societal challenges such as poverty, inequality, and sustainability. It serves as a hub for research, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, creating a platform for collaboration among academics, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society. Through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, the Chair generates actionable knowledge on how innovation ecosystems can be leveraged to drive systemic change. It also supports experimental approaches to innovation policy programmes and initiatives that catalyse sustainable development, ensuring that local and global TIP practices inform and enrich one another.

In addition to research, the Chair emphasises capacity building and multi-stakeholder engagement to facilitate the processes of co-creation of policy solutions. By facilitating workshops, training programs, and peer learning opportunities, the Chair strengthens the capability of South African innovation actors to foster systemic transformation. It also supports policy experimentation, monitoring, and evaluation, helping identify and scale up niche innovations with high potential for impact. Through these activities, the Chair cultivates a dynamic and inclusive network that bridges the gap between theory and practice, empowering South Africa to address pressing challenges while contributing to global discussions on transformative innovation.

More information in:

- <https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/college-of-business-and-economics/projects/community-of-practice-in-south-africa-in-transformative-innovation-policy/>
- <https://hsrc.ac.za/news/latest-news/spanning-the-boundaries-between-policymakers-and-researchers-a-transformative-innovation-policy-approach/>