

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

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS

The DSI/NRF Trilateral Research Chair in Transformative Innovation, the 4th Industrial Revolution, and Sustainable Development at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa (UJ-TRCTI) is looking for post-doctoral research fellows.

The [Trilateral Research Chair in Transformative Innovation](#) works at the intersection of innovation and development processes. It is concerned with understanding how innovation activities in private firms, the informal sector, the public sector, and the community or household level can be more transformative. Transformative innovation in this context refers to innovation that reduces poverty and exclusion with more sustainable livelihoods. Using interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches, the Chair studies those who 'do innovation' and works with those in the policy and practice space to promote and implement innovation to address local, national, continental or global challenges.

Fellowships carry a monthly stipend, with some funding for travel, training, research costs, etc. Fellows are provided with shared office space, equipment, and administrative support. The fellowship cannot be held concurrently with supplementary funding or salary.

Applicants must hold a PhD in a relevant subject (see below for specific details) and have received their PhD within the last five years (in or after 2019).

Post-doctoral research fellows (PDRFs) will be expected to:

1. **Contribute to research projects.** This will involve conducting desk research, primary and secondary data collection and analysis, writing papers and reports, and organising meetings, workshops and other events.
2. **Develop their own research and publications portfolio.** We actively encourage our PDRFs to grow their career profiles and expect all PDRFs to submit funding applications regularly, either on their own or as part of a team. In addition, all PDRFs are expected to produce at least two research output units (equivalent to 2 single-authored publications) annually.
3. **Contribute in broader ways to the work of the Chair and its networks.** This could be through mentoring and supervision support to students, taking responsibility for certain Chair activities or outreach work with our broader academic or policy networks.

We are currently looking for PDRFs in all of the Chair's challenge areas:

Alternative Innovation Practices

Considerations about innovation in Africa remain primarily uncoupled from the continent's predominant loci of social and economic activity. Research in this challenge area explores modalities of innovation and innovation activities that are out of the mainstream. This includes innovation in "unseen" spaces, such as the informal economy and marginalised communities. This area of work investigates how to adapt existing definitions, conceptual frameworks and theoretical approaches to accommodate the realities of African innovation practices, what measurements and indicators are needed and how we can transform policy narratives to support better innovative solutions emerging from marginalised communities.

Innovation For A Green And Just Transition

The global green transition has been dominated by achieving economic growth while avoiding environmental damage, e.g., by promoting technologies and industries that mitigate climate change. The importance of achieving social justice in the transition is being discussed, with the recognition that ignoring social justice will result in continued unsustainability. This research area investigates how transformative green and just innovation discourses are playing out across Africa, whose interests and power are served, and the role transformative innovation can



play (and what are its limitations) in restructuring interests and power in favour of marginalised groups while helping to achieve economic and environmental sustainability.

Transformative Innovation and Well-Being

Significant research interest is given to R&D and pharmaceuticals when focusing on health innovation. Pharmaceutical R&D is, however, only one part of the answer to improved health and well-being in the Global South. A focus is needed on technological product and process innovations, new organisational mixes, and social innovation. This research area focuses on the policy changes required for a broader set of transformative, innovative activities to address well-being (not just health) in the Global South.

Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Systems and Governance

The practice of science, technology and innovation (STI) policy has become more complex over time – from an initial focus on policy support to STI activities that lead to economic development and growth, to an understanding that STI must also be directed to address the complex social and environmental challenges facing the African continent and the globe. This area of research focuses on the directionality of STI policy, the role of policymakers and the importance of governance beyond regulation.

All PDRF positions are for 12 months, with the possibility of renewal for up to three years. Renewal is dependent on performance and funding availability.

Required Qualifications & Experience

All applicants must highlight in their application evidence of:

- A PhD in the last five years in innovation studies, science and technology studies, development studies, economics, or related disciplines.
- Previous work in one of the challenge areas is expected and must be demonstrated in your application.
- Evidence of strong methodological skills – either qualitative or quantitative. We are particularly interested in increasing the number of econometricians who work with us in this round of post-doc applications.
- Post-doctoral applications should have evidence of publications.
- Experience in research proposal writing and working with policy stakeholders is preferred.
- Experience in mentoring or supervising junior scholars would be an advantage.
- The ability to work independently and as part of a dynamic research team that is internationally engaged through interdisciplinary research collaborations will be essential.
- Proficiency in English (speaking, reading and writing). Working knowledge of another official African language would be an advantage.

Application process

Please submit your application through our application portal. To access the portal, please [click here](#).

You will be asked to submit a single PDF document containing a cover letter identifying how you meet the requirements, your CV and transcripts/ certificates together with a five-page overview of your proposed research project. Your CV should include a list of publications. Please also include a publications sample where you are the sole or lead author. All applicants should include a list of three referees.

The closing date for applications is Friday, 4 April 2025, at 17:00 hours South African time.