

Post-doctoral Research Associate opportunity:

UKRI-GCRF Water and Fire: Enhancing Capacity and Reducing Risk through '15 Best Bets' for Transformative Adaptation with Vulnerable Residents on the Cape Flats

The Department of Political Studies in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) seek a motivated and dynamic Global South or Global South experienced post-doctoral research Associate (PDRA) to support an interdisciplinary research consortium engaged in a UKRI-GCRF-funded collaborative international project exploring socio-environmental disaster risks in South Africa. The research consortium is led by the University of Stirling, and includes the University of Cape Town, the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF) NPC in Cape Town and the University of the Western Cape.

The successful PDRA will support the research activities of a diverse, multi-disciplinary team focused on a project entitled "UKRI GCRF Water and Fire: Enhancing capacity and reducing risk through 15 'Best Bets' for transformative adaptation with vulnerable residents on the Cape Flats" (<https://gcrfwaterandfire.com/>). This project is a collaborative, interdisciplinary international project and partnership between residents of the Cape Flats of South Africa, and researchers at the named research institutions, in an effort to co-mobilise existing local knowledges and practices with disaster-affected residents, and co-produce new approaches to disaster management in the face of protracted, social, political and often climate change induced environmental crises. The research aims to directly address the disaster risk challenges of 3 escalating environmental hazards: drought-related water shortages and poor water quality; frequent flooding; and large-scale recurrent outbreaks of fire. The research aims to test new methods of complementary, democratic and creative public engagement to advocate community-driven solutions, policy and resilience actions to reduce the effects of disasters on vulnerable residents.

This post-doctoral opportunity provides capacity-building in new transdisciplinary territory as it examines the complex interconnections between environmental hazards and social stressors of urban density, poverty, as well as crime and violence.

Role

Responsibilities of the successful candidate will include project management activities; literature scoping; data collection, qualitative and quantitative data analysis; co-writing of policy briefs and peer-reviewed publications; liaison and coordination with two other PDRA's (one in South Africa and one in the UK) and any other related activities required in support of the project. The PDRA may have the opportunity to travel to the UK during the project, and/or be hosted for a short period at another one of the collaborating institutions for capacity-building purposes and to foster the transdisciplinary links of the project.

The successful PDRA will be co-supervised by co-I Laurence Piper (UWC). The PDRA at UWC will have a dotted reporting line to the project lead at the University of Stirling.

Required

Suitable candidates will:

- be Global South or Global South experienced scholars;
- have graduated within the past five years, or shortly expect to graduate, with a PhD in an appropriate discipline (e.g. social sciences, environmental science, sustainable development, disaster risk management);
- have a keen interest and proven ability in interdisciplinary qualitative/quantitative research;
- be willing to work in townships and informal settlements in Cape Town, with supervision;
- be collaborative and able to work well as part of a team and independently;
- possess excellent organisational skills;
- have (or be in the process of generating) a record of peer-reviewed publications;
- be flexible and adaptable;
- be able to prioritise multiple tasks and meet deadlines;
- have strong written academic and verbal skills in English;
- be able to undertake other duties as assigned;
- have the ability to work in interdisciplinary ways;
- have a background in one or more of the following: disaster risk management; ethnography; environmental science; hydro / environmental engineering; green criminology; environmental humanities and anthropology / geography or connections between environment and violence / crime; transformation agendas; political science; democratic politics and governance; community engagement and self-governance; arts-based / participatory research methods in contexts of disenfranchisement; other related, (trans)disciplinary areas.

The successful candidate will be required to register as a postdoctoral research associate (PDRA) at the University of the Western Cape and to comply with the University's policies and practices.

Preferred

- proven interest in addressing the challenges of resilience building in the context of informal settlements;
- demonstrable record of academic publishing;
- South African who can work in Cape Town;
- fluency in isiXhosa and/or Afrikaans as well as English

The project will provide the successful candidate with excellent mentorship opportunities and significant capacity development through exposure to innovative research and stakeholder engagement practices in local communities in Cape Town.

Timeframe

The postdoctoral opportunity is renewable from October 2021 annually subject to satisfactory performance, until 31st of October 2023, with the possibility of a short extension.

Remuneration

Remuneration will be commensurate with the successful candidate's qualifications and experience. In compliance with SARS Policy, the PDRA position is likely to be exempt from taxation.

To apply, candidates are invited to send a cover letter outlining their interest in the position, a research publication such as a journal article of up to 8 500 words, a CV that includes research experience, a list of research outputs and the contact details of two appropriate referees, by e-mail to **Professor Piper** at lpiper@uwc.ac.za by no later than **25th July 2021**. Selection of eligible candidates will be made by a committee of representatives from the research team. More information about the project is available at <https://gcrfwaterandfire.com/>

The project consortium reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, to change the conditions of award and to make no awards at all.