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**CALL FOR POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RESEARCH ON NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS OR COLLECTION DATA IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**DECEMBER 2017**

The Natural Science Collections Facility, which is funded by the Department of Science & Technology as part of the South African Research Infrastructure Roadmap (SARIR), is offering two-year postdoctoral scholarships for research on South African collections or specimen data.

The objective of the postdoctoral grants is to enhance capacity for natural science collections-related research.

The following requirements must be met in order to qualify:

* Applicants must have been awarded their PhD in the last five years (ie. after 2012).
* Applicants must have completed a PhD in i. taxonomy or systematics that involved the study of natural science collections (botanical, zoological, palaeontological, macrofungal), or ii. biodiversity informatics or iii. innovative applications of natural science collections data, or iv. where the research involved innovative use of natural science collections.
* Applicants may not be employed on a full-time basis.

Expectations from the Natural Science Collections Facility:

* Recipients will be required to be based in a collection institution (museum, science council or university herbarium) which is recognised by the National Research Foundation (NRF).
* For recipients working on collection specimens, they will be expected to spend most of their time at the collection institution, but they may work at another institution such as a university when they need to use equipment / facilities not available at the collection institution.
* Recipients will be expected to sign a tripartite agreement with the NSCF through SANBI, and the host institution.
* Recipients will be expected to use the address of their host institution for any publications generated while carrying out the postdoctoral research.
* Recipients will be expected to contribute to capacity development through assisting with supervision of postgraduate students and interns if possible and through passing on skills to host institution staff.
* Should the agreement signed not be complied with, the NSCF / SANBI reserves the right to withdraw the scholarship.

Details of the postdoctoral scholarships:

* The scholarships are offered for two years, at a value of R255,000 per annum. Payment will be made directly to the postdoctoral fellow in two payments per annum.
* Operating costs (up to a maximum of R50,000 per annum) are available and these will be paid to the host institution on provision of a budget. .
* A travel grant for the fellows will be paid to the host institution on submission and approval of a budget. Travel costs may not exceed R30,000 in total.
* Recipients may not hold other personal scholarships or grants that exceed R50,000 at the same time as the NSCF postdoctoral ( total combined value of the scholarship paid to the individual postdoctoral fellow permissible = R305,000 per annum).

Applications:

Please submit the following information:

* Full CV, including record of studies and marks achieved, publications, conference presentations, mentoring and teaching, posts held
* Copy of PhD certificate and academic record
* A proposal for the research that will be carried out, its relevance to the objectives of the NSCF, details of potential supervisor, and anticipated start and end dates
* Letter of support from the intended supervisor and / or host institution
* 3 contactable references.

 The following criteria will be used to assess applications:

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| 1. Relevance of PhD study to the NSCF objectives / strategy
 | 30 |
| 1. Previous performance of applicant (publications, conference presentations, teaching, mentoring)
 | 20 |
| 1. Quality of proposal (presentation, clear aim, objectives, activities and timeframes)
 | 20 |
| 1. Proposed institution where postdoctoral fellow would be hosted – potential to contribute to capacity development, transformation, collections management
 | 30 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** |

Note that preference will be given to applicants whose proposals meet the required standard in terms of quality and strategic importance, and who are from designated groups (viz. black (African, Indian, Coloured), female and persons with disabilities.

**Applications:**

**Applications must be submitted to Michelle Hamer at** **M.Hamer@sanbi.org.za** **before 31 January 2018. Successful applicants will be informed of the outcome before the end of February 2018, and they may take up the award any time before July 2018.**

**Information about the NSCF can be found at** [**www.nscf.co.za**](http://www.nscf.co.za)**.**