



POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

The University of the Free State (UFS) invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Plant Sciences (Divisions Botany/Plant Pathology). Candidates interested in pursuing an academic or professional career in Bioinformatics, with a focus on the pathogens (*Puccinia* spp.) that cause rust diseases in wheat, and a particular research interest in population genetic analyses, are encouraged to apply.

The fellowship will enable an outstanding doctoral graduate to obtain experience in research and innovation at a higher education institution under the mentorship of established researchers.

The fellowship is awarded on a competitive basis, considering the applicants' academic achievements, publication outputs and research potential, as well as the relevance of prior experience and expertise. The fellowship is available for a period of one year, renewable for up to three years, subject to satisfactory performance.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- ✓ Open to all South African and foreign nationals for full-time research at the University of the Free State.
- ✓ Graduated with a PhD degree in a relevant discipline within the last five years
- ✓ Successful applicants may not hold full-time salaried employment during the fellowship
- ✓ Successful applicants must be able to relocate to the UFS for the duration of the fellowship. This is a residential fellowship: the successful applicant is required to spend 80% of her/his postdoctoral period at the UFS.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE WILL BE REQUIRED TO:

- ✓ Conduct innovative research in the following area: Bioinformatics analysis of the rust pathogens of wheat, with special emphasis on:
 - The phylogenetic analysis of the *Puccinia triticina* population in South Africa using Genotyping-by-sequencing (GBS);
 - Identification and characterisation of putative effector genes from South African *Puccinia triticina* race isolates;
 - Analysis of the genomic evolution of selected effector genes in South African *Puccinia triticina* races.
- ✓ Author/co-author of at least two (2) publication outputs per year in the form of DHET-accredited scholarly journal articles or books/chapters in books. Renewal of the fellowship beyond the first year depends on satisfactory performance and submission of an annual progress report.
- ✓ Initiate projects and seek funding for them
- ✓ Register and reside as a postdoctoral research fellow at the UFS and participate in relevant activities of the Centre for Graduate Support and the Directorate of Research

VALUE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

- ✓ R 270 000 annual fellowship
- ✓ R 30 000 additional research expenses fund

To apply, please **email** the following documentation by 30 September 2026 to: boshoffwhp@ufs.ac.za.

- ✓ Motivation letter, including a 1-2 page outline of relevant expertise and experience
- ✓ Full CV including a list of research publications, conference papers and other scholarly output
- ✓ Full transcripts of academic record and a copy of the doctoral degree certificate
- ✓ Copy of ID document (or copy of passport in the case of foreign applicants)
- ✓ Contact details of two academic referees who have taught/supervised the candidate.

Closing date: 30 September 2026

Commencement of fellowship: 2 January 2027

For enquiries, please contact please add contact details from the relevant department for enquiries