



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Politics and Cultural Studies

Type: Postdoctoral research fellowship within the research niche area of Politics and cultural studies. The fellowships is a two-year fixed contract subject to satisfactory annual performance. The tax-free stipend is R300 000 per annum.

Introduction

The University of Limpopo invites applications for one (1) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in the niche area of Politics and Cultural Studies, under the academic leadership of Prof Sejabaledi Rankoana.

The Fellowship sits at the intersection of Prof Rankoana's work in Politics and Cultural Studies, with a specific focus on culture, including indigenous health care, politics, food and water security, climate change perceptions and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, intangible cultural heritage, and indigenous and local knowledge systems.

The Fellowship aims to strengthen the University's research and intellectual environment while supporting a recent doctoral graduate in developing an independent postdoctoral research programme, publishing in accredited and international journals, contributing to community-engaged scholarship, supporting postgraduate mentorship, and participating in national and international research collaborations.

The successful Fellow will be expected to develop research that speaks to rural and climate-affected communities in Limpopo, South Africa, and/or comparable Southern African contexts, with attention to how indigenous knowledge, intangible cultural heritage, cultural resources, food systems, water resources, health practices, biodiversity, social justice and governance shape local adaptation and resilience.

Professor Rankoana's niche area aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, and 15, and seeks to generate evidence to inform policy, develop prototypes, advance community-based natural resource management, enhance biodiversity literacy, support climate-health adaptation, and promote the sustainable use of indigenous resources for holistic well-being.

Minimum requirements

Applicants must have:

- A PhD (NQF Level 10) in Anthropology, Sociology, Development Studies, Human Ecology, African Studies, Governance and Development, or a closely related field, preferably completed within the past five (5) years.

- Evidence of research productivity, including peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, edited scholarly outputs, and/or manuscripts under review in areas related to the Fellowship.
- Demonstrated research interest in at least two of the following aspects of culture, indigenous health care, politics, food and water security, climate change perceptions and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, intangible cultural heritage and indigenous and local knowledge systems.
- Competence in qualitative, participatory, ethnographic, interdisciplinary, and/or community-engaged research methods.
- Strong written and oral communication skills, good computer and data management skills, and the ability to work both independently and in interdisciplinary research teams.
- Ability to produce publishable research outputs and to contribute to postgraduate mentorship, seminars, workshops, and research culture activities.

Added advantage

- Experience conducting fieldwork with rural communities, indigenous knowledge holders, farmers, traditional health practitioners, local authorities, civil society actors, climate-affected communities, or biodiversity and natural-resource stakeholders.
- A publication record or active manuscripts on aspects of culture, including indigenous health care, politics, food and water security, climate change perceptions and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, intangible cultural heritage and indigenous and local knowledge systems.
- Experience in Limpopo Province, South Africa, and/or comparable Southern African field sites.
- Experience in grant proposal writing, externally funded research projects, academic editing, special issues, edited books, conference organisation, or international collaboration.
- Experience supporting postgraduate students in research topic development, academic writing, publication planning, qualitative methods training, teaching, supervision or co-supervision.
- Ability to contribute to policy briefs, community reports, biodiversity literacy materials, field guides, atlases, public-facing research outputs and stakeholder workshops.

Duties and Responsibilities

The successful Fellow will:

- Develop and implement an independent postdoctoral research plan aligned with Prof Rankoana's niche area and the University's research priorities.
- Conduct high-quality, interdisciplinary research on aspects of culture, including indigenous health care, politics, food and water security, climate change perceptions and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, intangible cultural heritage and indigenous and local knowledge systems.
- Produce peer-reviewed publications in DHET-accredited and reputable international journals, as well as scholarly books and/or edited collections.
- Participate in empirical fieldwork and community-engaged research in Limpopo Province, South Africa, and/or comparable Southern African settings.

- Document and analyse indigenous and local knowledge, intangible cultural heritage, medicinal plant use, cultural resources, local conservation practices, climate change perceptions, politics, food and water security concerns, health vulnerabilities and community adaptation strategies.
- Contribute to research ethics applications, data collection and management, qualitative analysis, reporting and responsible knowledge sharing.
- Support grant proposal development, research fundraising and national, regional and international collaborations.
- Assist with postgraduate supervision, mentorship, writing retreats, methods workshops, publication planning and seminars that promote a strong research culture.
- Contribute to knowledge translation outputs, including policy briefs, community reports, biodiversity literacy materials, field guides, atlases, public lectures and conference presentations.
- Represent the research niche area at academic forums, conferences and stakeholder engagements, where appropriate.

Expected outputs:

During the fellowship, the successful candidate will be expected to produce:

- At least 4 accredited journal publications over the two-year fellowship.
- Several conference presentations at national and international scientific meetings.
- At least one competitive external research grant application.
- Research reports for stakeholders.
- Contributions to postgraduate student supervision and capacity development.
- Collaborative publications with the host supervisor and research team.
- Participation in multidisciplinary research projects within the Faculty and University.

CLOSING DATE: 23RD OCTOBER 2026

Please submit motivation letter clearly outlining your suitability and proposed research agenda, a detailed CV with all your names, addresses, contact details and e-mail address and include contact numbers of three (3) referees, certified copies of all qualifications including Matric / Grade 12 Certificate, academic transcripts, copies of selected recent peer-reviewed publications and a South African ID/Passport should be forwarded to Human Resources Officer, e-mail applications recruitment15@ul.ac.za

Telephonic enquiries regarding conditions of service: **Ms NA Mbatsane (Tel 015 268 2800)**

It is the applicant's responsibility to have foreign obtained qualifications evaluated by the South African qualifications Authority. Please note that failure to submit the requested documents/information will result in your application not being considered.

The University of Limpopo is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All appointments will be made in accordance with University's Employment Equity Policy. Preference:

Postdoctoral Fellowship, will be given to Males (African & Indian) and Female (African)

Correspondence will be limited to short-listed candidates only. Applicants who have not been contacted within 30 days of the closing date must consider their applicants as unsuccessful.

The University reserves the right not to make an appointment.

