

2 X Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (1-year contract)

The Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape is seeking for Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

The Institute of Poverty Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) is leading an international partnership with Wageningen University and the University of Cape Town, aimed at transforming conservation ideas and practices in Southern Africa in biodiverse rural, urban, land and ocean spaces. The Living Landscapes project will explore and operationalize the potential of 'convivial conservation': a new paradigm that can bring grassroots, government, academic and other actors together to co-design and co-create inclusive and sustainable approaches to preserving ecosystems, promoting livelihoods, ensuring justice and protecting biodiversity. The project aims to set up a campaign that seeks to transform policy and practice while rooted in and drawing evidence from three unique living landscapes: Mapungubwe, iSimangaliso and Cape Town.

This is a call for doctoral graduates to apply for two Postdoctoral Research Fellowships at PLAAS, UWC. The fellowships are part of the Oak Foundation Funded Living Landscapes project, which seeks to transform the South(ern) African conservation sector towards the vision of convivial conservation. The project is led and implemented by PLAAS, together with the Sociology of Development and Change group of Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

The core objective of the Living Landscapes project is to set up and develop an effective convivial conservation evidence campaign and coalition that builds the basis for a systemic redesign of the conservation sector in Southern Africa. Rooted in grassroots organisations and local realities of three unique living landscapes - Mapungubwe, iSimangaliso and Cape Town - the project will co-create, disseminate, and communicate evidence that supports learning across growing networks seeking sectoral transformation. By documenting this change process, the project will inspire these networks to democratize conservation organizations, redirect conservation finance flows and help regenerate integrated socioecological landscapes.

We are looking for

Candidates with a background in relevant social sciences (anthropology, geography, sociology, political science, etc.) will be considered, especially candidates who have recently completed a PhD in the broad areas of environment and development, political ecology, fisheries and conservation with a focus on spatial justice, landscape design and/or spatial planning. Each candidates' responsibilities will be to develop and carry out their own research project within the broad remit of the Living Landscape project in two study areas: iSimangaliso or Cape Town. Furthermore, the candidates will be expected to publish articles based on their previous work and to contribute to the project and its objectives in a broad sense.

Requirements:

- A PhD in anthropology, sociology, geography, or a related field, with an interest in conservation
- Proven or demonstrable ability to publish in high-quality academic journals and with top academic publishers
- Ability to work in interdisciplinary and international research teams
- Excellent communication and writing skills
- Ability to speak isiZulu, especially when applying for the iSimangaliso living landscape site, postdoctoral fellow
- Good didactic qualities and enthusiasm for teaching and working with students
- A willingness to contribute to the intellectual life of PLAAS
- A willingness to do (ethnographic) fieldwork, live and work in the field-study site for several weeks to months

We offer

We offer a postdoctoral fellowship contract for 40 hours per week and a monthly allowance. You will be given the opportunity to develop your own research line. The postdoctoral fellowship includes additional funds for research, conferences, etc. The project is conducted in collaboration with the Sociology of Development and Change Group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands, Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Lerato Thakholi. Exchange possibilities with Wageningen University are part of the project.

To apply

To apply for this position, please submit an application letter, indicating your suitability for the position in relation to one study area, and some first ideas about the direction you would want to take in the postdoctoral position, and how this would contribute to the goals and themes of the project. In addition to the application letter, please include your Curriculum Vitae and one writing sample (a published paper or a chapter of your dissertation).

Contact info

Additional information about the vacancy can be obtained from Prof. Moenieba Isaacs (misaacs@plaas.org.za).

Shortlisted candidates will be expected to do short assignment.

To apply:

1. Please e-mail your cover letter and CV to Bahihah Mohamed at postdoc.vacancy@plaas.org.za.
2. Please complete the [application form](#).

Closing date: 15 October 2021

