



CRITICAL ZONES AFRICA SOUTH AND EAST

Post-doctoral Research Fellowship (3 years)
in the
Social Science of Soil
at the University of Cape Town

[Environmental Humanities South](#) (EHS) is a research centre located in the Faculty of Humanities, at the University of Cape Town. EHS aims to facilitate inter/transdisciplinary collaboration between university-based researchers and different sectors of society, including government officials, activists, community members and artists.

With the financial support the **Carnegie Corporation of New York**, the office of the **DVC: Research and Internationalisation** (UCT), and the **Critical Zones Africa South and East (CzASE Studies)** programme funded by the **Science for Africa Foundation**, EHS seeks to appoint a suitably qualified post-doctoral research fellow to engage in transdisciplinary research in the field of the social science of soil.

The appointment is for one year renewable annually for three years, subject to performance and the availability of funds.

The fellow will have the opportunity to develop and supervise a team of Masters researchers within the Soil and Society Research Hub, as part of the [Critical Zones Africa South and East \(CzASE Studies\)](#) research project led by Prof Lesley Green. The Soil Social Science Hub is a partnership with the [SARChI Research Chair in Bioeconomy](#), Prof Rachel Wynberg. The appointee will be supervised jointly by Prof Green and Prof Wynberg.

Conditions of Award:

Eligible applicants must have completed their doctorate within the past 5 years and may not previously have held comprehensive full-time permanent professional or academic posts.

Requirements

The successful candidate will have:

- A PhD in environmental humanities, social sciences, or environmental and geographic sciences with a focus on soil, habitability and wellbeing;
- a track record of innovative writing and publishing in at least two of the following fields:
 - land, habitability and agro-ecology in the changing African climate

- soil and society in postcolonial and decolonial thought
 - African ecofeminism and small-scale farmers
 - Critical bioeconomy
- Field research experience of working with Southern and/or East African small-scale farmers;
 - Transdisciplinary research skills including qualitative research software such as Nvivo and geospatial information systems such as ArcGIS;
 - Ability to work in a team and independently;
 - Fluency in at least two African languages from the Southern and Eastern regions of the continent.

Advantageous skills/experience:

- Ability to communicate across different levels of society, i.e. communicate technical research and public facing communication
- Taught/convened courses or supervised students
- Experience in soil testing
- Experience in researching local farmers' knowledges of soil

Research Activities

The CzASE and BioEconomy projects are active networks and the successful candidate will be required to fully participate in the attainment of the project goals. Inter alia, the successful candidate will be required to:

- develop a field research project attached to the CzASE studies site in Cape Town in dialogue with the project supervisors
- provide practical and intellectual links between EHS, CzASE, and the Critical Bioeconomy research team under the leadership of Prof Wynberg;
- develop a bibliography and literature review on transdisciplinary research on soil and society with a particular emphasis on Southern and East Africa;
- engage in limited teaching and co-supervision and mentorship of graduate students in EHS/CzASE and the Bioeconomy project, within the time allowed for work by the post-doctoral rule (12 hours per week over the year);
- publish a minimum of one lead-authored article per year in a peer-reviewed journal;
- present their research in at least two national conferences and one international conference during their tenure;
- be an active member of a collaborative research network involving national and international partners, including co-supervising students working in this field;
- assist graduates working in this field to develop dissertation chapters including for peer-reviewed publication;
- organise workshops and seminars linking regional debates on soil and habitability across research sites in the CzASE project;
- attend a Carnegie-funded writing retreat and relevant workshops / seminars offered by the Office for Postgraduate Studies in order to develop a wide range of academic and professional skills;
- comply with all policies specified by UCT and Science for Africa including open-access publication and data archiving;
- apply for further research grants in this field.

Post-Doctoral Fellow Rules

Appointees:

- May not exceed a 5-year tenure, so current candidates should be in no more than their 3rd year as postdoc
- May not hold any other fellowships without the permission of their supervisor.
- May not undertake employment above 12 hours a week, averaged over a year; and
- Must comply with the University's approved policies, procedures, and practices for the post-doctoral sector.
- Must be present in EHS offices on campus during working hours unless travelling for research purposes or on annual leave.
- Must comply with the University's approved policies, procedures and practices for the post-doctoral sector.

Value and Tenure

The value of the fellowship is R380 000 – R480 000 per annum, depending on experience and qualifications. The award is initially for 12 months, renewable for a second and then a third year subject to satisfactory progress and availability of funds. Twenty working days leave per year is allowed for. An office and a laptop will be provided, with access to a shared kitchen and printing facilities.

Prerequisites

- A PhD in environmental humanities, social science, environmental and geographic sciences, or soil science obtained in the last 5 years, with a strong commitment to African decolonial thought and transdisciplinarity.
- Applicants must be actively involved in researching indigenous soil relations and producing scholarly works as well as versions suitable for communities.
- The successful applicant must be able to commence the fellowship on 1 September 2023. A later start can be negotiated.

Application requirements: All applications should be sent as a single PDF containing:

- A letter of application that includes areas of expertise, research interests and experience
- A detailed CV including details of publications and scholarly outputs
- A published paper or completed dissertation chapter on a relevant topic
- Copies of academic transcripts
- Contact details from at least two academics who will serve as referees.

Applications and enquiries can be sent to Prof Lesley Green, lesley.green@uct.ac.za. Please use "Soil Social Science PostDoc" in the subject line.

Applications close 21 August 2023 at 23:59 Southern African Time.

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to:

- **disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications,**
- **change the conditions of award or to make no awards at all.**