

THE  
ROYAL  
SOCIETY

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WITWATERSRAND,  
JOHANNESBURG



### **Post-doctoral research assistant advertisement**

We are looking for a postdoctoral research assistant for a three-year position to research the biogeography of grass communities in southern Africa and Madagascar savanna ecosystems. Our goal is to enhance theoretical and quantitative understanding of how drought, fire and grazing interact to shape both the limits of grass species and determine community assembly. This knowledge will help inform regional stakeholders about the best approaches for sustainable rangeland production in a changing climate, via manipulation of fire and grazing regimes.

We will work with partners in Zambia, Mozambique, Madagascar and South Africa. We will test a new theoretical framework to predict biogeographic patterns in diversity and life history strategies of ground layer plant communities. Work includes a field component quantifying ground layer diversity and plant architectural, leaf and biomass allocation traits, along with experimental research examining hydraulic strategies in grasses.

The following are essential:

- Ph.D. in a relevant area (e.g. ecology, ecosystem science, ecophysiology) or near completion.
- Aptitude and motivation for fieldwork in diverse environments across Africa.
- Experience and skills in computer programming and statistical analyses.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, team-working and interpersonal skills
- Track-record in publishing in academic journals
- Excellent organisational skills
- Ability to work collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary research environment while also being able to work and solve problems independently

Desirable

- Experience with remote sensing data collection and processing
- Experience in manipulating large data sets.

This 3-year post is funded by a Royal Society International Collaboration Award to Caroline Lehmann and Sally Archibald. The PDRA will work within both the research groups of Caroline Lehmann and Sally Archibald and be based at the University of Witwatersrand with annual travel to the University of Edinburgh for further collaboration and training. The PDRA will be part of a vibrant group of ecologists, taxonomists and biogeographers, providing a great opportunity for career development and a highly supportive working environment. We provide support for career development.

The preferred start date is September 2018 although this is negotiable.

Please email your application with the subject "Post-doc application" to [caroline.lehmann@ed.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.lehmann@ed.ac.uk) and [sally.archibald@wits.ac.za](mailto:sally.archibald@wits.ac.za). Please include a cover letter outlining your research interests and qualifications for the position, a CV, and contacts of two references.