



Call for applications for two African Urban Futures Postdoctoral Research Fellowships at the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town

ACC and the Urban Futures Studio at Utrecht University are undertaking a two-year investigation into processes of futuring that can advance traction for sustainable urban transitions among city leaders and decision-makers. The project rests on the assumption that sustainable urban development requires a break with the present logic of development that predominates in most African countries. This logic is tethered to a modernist vision of advanced post-industrial development that thrives through extractive energy and production systems, reinforced by a consumerist culture. In this imagination chamber, cities are the most sophisticated expressions of modernist progress and productive circulation, manifest in highways, skyscrapers, pristine suburbs and convenience for urban consumers. The environmental, social and economic costs of these ambitions are usually ignored. The project recognizes that there is now considerable evidence and discourse on what sustainable urbanisms might entail in an African context, but this has not been translated into compelling narratives that are resonant with political and policy leaders. The project asks, how might this be changed? How can examples of emergent experiments in sustainable inform new narratives. What kind of institutional and regulatory adaptations and inventions are required to translate experimental intent to the new normal?

Call for applications:

The ACC invites applications from suitably qualified applicants to apply for these one-year renewable Postdoctoral Research Fellowships (renewable for up to a total of two years, depending on satisfactory progress). Two positions are available. The successful candidates will be part of the Urban Policy Research Chair at ACC. Beyond the pursuit of their own postdoctoral research, the successful applicant is expected to contribute to the project in one of the following two domains:

- 1) Undertake case study research to identify the emergent pockets of urban development innovation in African cities that, if stitched together, may help create an imaginary of alternative futures for African cities.
- 2) Undertake an analysis of the crucial 'agents of change' for this new approach to urban Futures, in conjunction with various urban and city networks and key stakeholders that shape the urban governance landscape in Africa.

As part of Urban Futures Studio and ACC's intellectual and institutional enterprise, the successful applicant will also be expected to share their work in internal and public forums, be able to engage with colleagues in relation to at least one of our areas of existing work (please see our website: www.africancentreforcities.net) and provide mentorship to ACC's postgraduate student cohort.

Conditions:

Applicants are expected to have completed a doctoral degree in an area of study relevant to urban studies within the past five years (e.g. Urban Planning, Urban Studies, Urban Geography, and related fields). Applicants may not previously have held permanent full-time professional or academic posts. As the Lab has a pan-African focus, applicants should have an extensive knowledge of cities across least two different sub-regions of Africa as defined by the United Nations (Southern Africa, East Africa, Middle Africa, West Africa, and Northern Africa) and a track record of relevant research and publication. Fluency in English is a requirement and fluency in French will be an advantage. The successful candidate will be required to comply with the University's approved policies, procedures, and practises for the postdoctoral sector.

Value and tenure:

The fellowships are valued at R350,000 per annum and are tenable for one year, renewable for a total of up to two years subject to satisfactory progress. There are no other benefits. The fellowships are compliant with the SARS policies/rules and are therefore exempt from taxation.

Non-South African citizens may be required to apply for a study visa.

Application requirements:

Applicants are required to submit the following documents, via email, to:

Associate Professor Warren Smit (warren.smit@uct.ac.za) by no later than **10 June 2022**:

- A letter of application stating your expertise, research interests, experience (particularly with regard to urban research in a least two sub-regions in Africa), and motivation for this position;
- A two-page concept note on what you see as the key sustainability challenges facing African cities, with some suggested approaches to using futuring to address those challenges;
- A CV including a list of publications/scholarly output;
- Copies of academic transcripts;
- Names and contact details of at least two academics who have taught, supervised, or worked alongside you.

Closing date: 10 June 2022

Submission:

Please submit your application to Associate Professor Warren Smit (warren.smit@uct.ac.za). Please clearly state that this is an application for the "African Urban Futures Postdoctoral Research Fellowships".

Enquiries:

For more information on this position, please contact Associate Professor Warren Smit at warren.smit@uct.ac.za.

Please note that correspondence will only be entered into with shortlisted candidates.

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, to change the conditions of award, and/or to make no awards at all.