

THE RISK & VULNERABILITY SCIENCE CENTRE – UFS-QQ



DOCTORAL BURSARY OPPORTUNITY **Water Security and Invasive Plant Ecology** **University of the Free State – Qwaqwa Campus (ARU/RVSC/CBC)**

The Risk & Vulnerability Science Centre (RVSC) of the Afromontane Research Unit (ARU), at the University of the Free State (UFS)'s Qwaqwa Campus (QQ), in collaboration with the Centre for Biological Control (CBC), Department of Zoology and Entomology, at Rhodes University, is calling for a **PhD candidate** for full-time study at UFS-QQ, starting in early **2021**. The bursary value is **R120,000** per annum for three years, and forms part of the Department of Science & Innovation-National Research Foundation's (DSI-NRF) Global Grand Challenges research agenda.

The doctoral focus will explore the complex ecological, social, cultural and economic challenges of high elevation invasive plant species in the Maloti-a-Phofung Local Municipality (MAP), in the context of water security for the city of Phuthaditjhaba and adjacent towns in MAP in the upper Elands and Wilge Catchments.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A knowledge of invasive species as well as previous field experience is an important requirement, as this project entails field research in a montane environment. It is recommended that the student has a valid drivers' license.
- The bursary is open to South African and non-South African students for full-time research at the University of the Free State, Qwaqwa Campus.
- The minimum requirement is a Masters degree in a relevant discipline.
- Successful applicants will demonstrate excellent academic performance and potential to contribute to the creation of knowledge in their future academic career.
- Ideally, the candidates will have demonstrable experience with ecological fieldwork, invasive species, GIS and biological control.
- Applicants may not hold full-time salaried employment during the tenure of the award.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Potential students need to apply through the current NRF Post Graduate Call by the 30th June 2020 (UFS internal closing date) <https://www.nrf.ac.za/division/funding/call-nrf-postgraduate-scholarships-2021>, referencing the Risk & Vulnerability Science Centre – University of Free State-QwaQwa.
- **Applicants should advise Dr Grant Martin g.martin@ru.ac.za AND Dr Ralph Clark ClarkVR@ufs.ac.za of their intentions to submit, by the 25th June 2020, with a copy of their CVs and a motivation letter.**

The appointment will reflect the RVSC and UFS's equity and diversity imperatives, including those for gender, racial/cultural and intellectual diversity. A bursary is currently available for this position through the NRF, and will be awarded on a competitive basis, taking into account the applicants' academic achievements and research potential. Application through the NRF does not automatically assume acceptance by the RVSC.

For further details, please contact:

- Dr Grant Martin, Centre for Biological Control, Dept. Zoology & Entomology, Rhodes University, Grahamstown; g.martin@ru.ac.za; +27 83 442 5099.
- Dr Ralph Clark, Director: Afromontane Research Unit/Interim Co-ordinator: RVSC: UFS-QQ, Qwaqwa Campus, University of the Free State, Phuthaditjhaba; ClarkVR@ufs.ac.za; +27 72 439 8981.