

MASTERS BURSARY OPPORTUNITY (2021–2023):

THE ROLE OF YOUNG MIGRANTS IN SHAPING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN QWAQWA

(QWAQWA, FREE STATE, SOUTH AFRICA)



Background

The Afromontane Research Unit (ARU) is the flagship research unit of the University of the Free State-Qwaqwa Campus (UFS-QQ), and seeks to become a continental leader in African mountain research.

The ARU has recently been awarded a Risk & Vulnerability Science Centre (RVSC) by the Department of Science & Innovation (DSI)/National Research Foundation (NRF). The RVSC: UFS-QQ seeks to contribute relevant research to the Global Grand Challenges from a South African perspective around the theme ***The Sustainable Development of Phuthaditjhaba as an African Mountain City***. This theme has direct applications to other high elevation high-density conglomerations (“ruralopolis”) of planned and unplanned settlements in former homelands in South Africa, with relevance to unstructured urban-rural development in other developing countries.

Phuthaditjhaba, and the former homeland of Qwaqwa (now part of Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality, MAP, eastern Free State, South Africa), has a population of c.400,000 people that is facing various sustainable development challenges. Outmigration of young people is one such sustainable development challenge. At the same time, in-migration can have many positive impacts on sustainable development. This Masters project asks what is the role of young returning or in-migrant entrepreneurs in shaping sustainable development, in QwaQwa?

To understand the nexus between migration, entrepreneurship and sustainable development, the ARU has established the project: **“EXPLORING INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN MIGRATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MARGINAL MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES”**. The study will feed into a wider collaborative research programme between the UFS-QQ and the University of Tokyo’s Graduate Programme in Sustainability Science – Global Leadership initiative (GPSS-GLI). The Programme links the rural mountainous communities of Qwaqwa and Gojome town, in Akita Prefecture, Japan, through a trans-local learning approach. Trans-disciplinary, trans-local approaches grounded in Sustainability Science have the potential to create nuanced knowledge about global sustainability challenges, such as migration. Using a participatory multi-method and multi-disciplinary approach, the study will be rooted in engaged scholarship.

Research focus

The RVSC: UFS-QQ seeks a suitably qualified and motivated master’s degree candidate from 2021. The successful candidate will be affiliated to the RVSC: UFS-QQ, and will be an integral component of an interdisciplinary team that explores migration in Phuthaditjhaba. The Bursary is R90,000 per year. Project running costs will be covered by the research consortium.

Eligibility:

1. 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.

2. An Honours degree in Human Geography or motivated other (e.g. Sustainability Science, Social Science, Anthropology, Sociology).
3. An ability to use interdisciplinary logic and thinking in research.
4. The candidate must be willing to spend significant time with young entrepreneurs in their context; fluency in Sesotho would be ideal, but if not this can be accommodated.
5. Applicants who intend to complete their Honours degrees in 2020 may apply.
6. Valid passport.
7. Self-driven and be able to set and meet own deadlines.
8. A valid driver's license is preferable.

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 Melissa Hansen hansenmm@ufs.ac.za AND Dr Ralph Clark ClarkVR@ufs.ac.za of their intentions to submit, by the 30th June 2020, with a copy of their CVs, academic transcripts, 3 referees, and a motivation letter.

The appointment will reflect the NRF 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: UFS-QQ.

For further details, please contact:

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