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Annual National Postdoctoral Research Forum
Towards the professionalisation of the Postdoc career

5-6 July 2022
Stellenbosch University



1 June 2022

RE: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

National Postdoc Forum, 5-6 July 2022
Jan Mouton learning Centre, Stellenbosch University

Postdoctoral Research Fellows (Postdocs) are emerging researchers who seek to establish themselves as global research leaders by conducting cutting-edge research and responding to fast-paced developments and technological advancement. Postdocs are therefore the foundation of our plans to become a knowledge-driven society and are critical members of the scientific community.

Postdocs should be engaged members of the academic community and contribute to economic and political issues within the academy. However, Postdocs are not recognised as staff or students, and are unique in their institutional identity. Most academic institutions are unable to provide them with the mentorship, tools or skills-development opportunities to develop their careers.

Postdoctoral research training not only gives early career researchers the opportunity to further their research contributions towards solving some of South Africa's most critical issues, it also equips them with the skills to take their rightful positions as leaders of research and innovation, regardless of their chosen working environment.

The multi-faceted nature of the research conducted by Postdocs warrants the need to bring this group of young researchers together, to establish collaborative networks to contribute to the knowledge economy for global impact on the African continent and beyond. But most importantly, we need to find ways to professionalise their research careers by creating clear and formal structures and career pathways into academia, government, industry or other professions.

The **National Postdoctoral Forum** aims to give fellows, postdoc office administrators, funders and service providers the opportunity to discuss concerns and suggest alternative approaches to maximising the postdoctoral research experience. Previously held by the NRF from 2009 to 2016, we hope to rekindle these conversations. Throughout this Forum we anticipate redefining the role of postdocs at South African research institutions, improve knowledge around the postdoc experience and how the experience can be used for career building.

We would like to extend a special invitation to you to join us at Stellenbosch University to participate in the important conversations around postdoctoral support in South African universities.

RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/rHHYVMSf8bSZTKcf8>

Draft program can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HtzqHGwTkausaaAyKMPnCabz1KTj-kh/view?usp=sharing>

Yours sincerely

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