

Postdoctoral Fellowship Position in FABI

We seek to hire a Postdoctoral Fellow to conduct research on the genomics of the *Botryosphaeriales* in the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) at the University of Pretoria.

The *Botryosphaeriales* are amongst the most widespread and common causal agents of dieback, canker and death of woody plants. These fungi also live as endophytes in various tissues of woody plants, and this means that they can easily be spread when plants are moved between regions. *Botryosphaeriales* cause disease when the plants are subjected to stress and are therefore of increasing importance due to widespread stress on plant communities due to climate change. We have a long-standing interest in studying the diversity of these fungi and their interaction with plants. FABI has a collection of thousands of these fungi and extensive associated knowledge of their biology. We have recently acquired more than 1000 genome sequences for these species representing the breadth of diversity in this order, and are planning to perform additional sequencing of further selected species and genera in collaboration with the Westerdijk Biodiversity Institute. These genomes provide a rich resource to address a range of questions, from systematics to ecology and evolution.

The successful candidate will be expected to work with a team of researchers at FABI and the Westerdijk Institute to unlock the potential of large-scale genomics to better understand the diversity, ecology and evolution of these fungi. The study will form part of a broader project that includes studies on the molecular biology, chemical ecology and field biology on the *Botryosphaeriales*.

Required Qualifications: PhD in bioinformatics or a related field; demonstrated analytical and writing skills; ability to work independently and as part of a team (see <https://www.fabinet.up.ac.za/>); publication record. Preference will be given to candidates with previous research experience post a PhD.

Responsibilities: The postdoc will be responsible for: 1) contributing to the design of the study and future proposals; 2) analysis and publication of the results of the project; 3) co-supervising postgraduate students; 4) engagement and support of related research projects; and 5) presenting results at professional and stakeholder meetings.

Compensation: The compensation package for this position is very competitive and is dependent on experience.

Duration: 24 months, full-time initial appointment with the possibility of additional support, conditional on satisfactory performance (evaluated annually) and the availability of funds.

Review of applicants will commence on 30 July 2024 and continue until a suitable candidate is identified.

Preferred start date: As soon as possible.

Application Process: Email to Prof Bernard Slippers (bernard.slippers@fabi.up.ac.za), Prof Tuan Duong (tuan.duong@fabi.up.ac.za) or Prof Pedro Crous (p.crous@wi.knaw.nl) with 1) a cover letter that includes your research interests and qualifications and analytical and writing experience; 2) Curriculum Vitae; 3) representative publications, and; 4) contact information for three referees.

