



Centre for Statistics in Ecology, the Environment and Conservation (SEEC)

Department of Statistical Sciences
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch 7701
South Africa
www.seec.uct.ac.za



We are looking for a postdoc with skills in statistical ecology to join the centre for Statistics in Ecology, Environment and Conservation (SEEC) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) on the project *South Africa Wetlands Biodiversity Data Pipeline* (see www.seec.uct.ac.za/ for more info about SEEC). The project is funded by the JRS Biodiversity Foundation through the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), in collaboration with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS), SeaScape Belgium, the FitzPatrick Institute for African Ornithology and the Kenya BirdMap team. The overall project is led by Nancy Job at SANBI and the UCT-based part is led by Res Altwegg and Vernon Visser. The postdoc will be based at SEEC within the Department of Statistical Sciences at the University of Cape Town and co-mentored by Res Altwegg, Vernon Visser, Andrew Skowno (SANBI) and Francis Strobbe (SeaScape Belgium).

This project aims to improve and leverage two citizen science-based freshwater bird monitoring data sets which are rich in detail, one consisting of bird counts (<http://cwac.birdmap.africa/>) and the other one consisting of checklist data (<http://sabap2.birdmap.africa/>). The project will develop data pipelines that use state-of-the art statistical tools (state-space models and occupancy models) to extract policy-relevant information from the data and serve this information to decision makers in an online dashboard.

We are looking for a person with a PhD either in ecology with a strong statistical component, in applied statistics with a strong ecological component or in biodiversity informatics with a strong statistical component. Candidates must be able to demonstrate strong quantitative skills, have experience working with large data sets and have experience with hierarchical models. Prior experience with occupancy models, state-space models and modeling spatial data would all be of advantage.

Conditions of Award

- The fellowship is only available to individuals who have achieved the doctoral degree within the past five years.
- Applicants may not previously have held any full-time academic or professional posts.
- The successful candidate will be required to register as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Cape Town.
- The successful candidate will be required to comply with the university's approved policies, procedures and practices for the postdoctoral sector.

Value and tenure

The value of the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship is R350,000 per annum for up to two years. The second year will be contingent on satisfactory academic progress. The fellowship does not include any benefits. The fellowship is compliant with the SARS policies/rules and is therefore exempt from taxation.

Preferred starting date is 1 March 2021.

Application Process

To apply, send a letter of application, a CV including a list of publications, conference presentations and software expertise, together with copies of academic transcripts, a copy of the relevant thesis (if no publications have emerged from this work yet), and names (and contact details) from two academics who have taught, supervised or worked alongside the applicant.

Applications (preferably by email) should be sent to:

Sharon Bosma, Centre for Statistics in Ecology, Environment and Conservation,
Department of Statistical Sciences, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7701,
South Africa, Sharon.Bosma@uct.ac.za
BY NO LATER THAN 1 Dec 2020

For more information contact Res Altwegg (res.altwegg@uct.ac.za) or Vernon Visser (vervis@gmail.com).

Selection process

Selection of eligible candidates will be made by the team of project leaders. Applications that are incomplete, late or inappropriate will be disqualified. The University of Cape Town reserves the right to: disqualify ineligible, incomplete, inappropriate and/or late applications, and to change the conditions of award or to make no awards at all.