

**Call for expression of interest:**  
**Postdoctoral project and the**  
**NRF Green Economy Postdoctoral Fellowships 2015**

**Applied phylogeography of *Cyclopia* (Fabaceae, tribe Podalyrieae ):**  
conserving the genetic diversity of Honeybush during the transition  
from wild harvesting to an agricultural crop

**Supervisors: Prof. Richard M. Cowling and Dr Alastair J. Potts**  
**Botany Department, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University**

The Cape Floristic Region (CFR) of South Africa is well-positioned to grow and develop industries based on indigenous plant products, given the region's incredibly high species diversity and wide range of traditional and commercial plant uses. Initially these industries will be, or have been, fuelled by collecting material from wild populations, a transition from wild harvesting to an agriculture-based setting (e.g. Rooibos) will be, or has been, required as demand outstrips supply. Different aspects of this transition may establish new threats or boons to conserving Cape biodiversity. As highlighted by van Wyk (2008), one aspect rarely considered during the neo-crop transition is the underlying genetic structuring of species and populations.

The aim of this project will be to determine the phylogeographic structure and diversity of wild populations across the species within this genus. These data will enable the industry to make conscience decisions about genetic structuring and diversity of this resource; this includes planning regarding the distribution of seed, potential problems of hybridisation, Honeybush of Local Origin marketing etc. This project also will also provide insights into the evolution of the Cape flora.

We encourage any postdoctoral researchers or students with PhDs currently under examination who are interested in applied phylogeography to contact us with a brief CV and motivation for interest in this project (**email: [Richard.Cowling@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:Richard.Cowling@nmmu.ac.za) and [Alastair.Potts@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:Alastair.Potts@nmmu.ac.za)**). If we identify a potential candidate with exceptional promise,

we will help provide the necessary information for the postdoctoral funding application for the Green Economy Postdoctoral Fellowships in 2015.

Please note that this is a call for an expression of interest regarding this project. Project funding is available, as is the possibility of top-up funding, but the onus will be on the applicant to apply for this funding (with the help of the principle investigators).

**Principle investigators:**

Prof. Richard Cowling (Botany Department, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University;

<https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=eH34bIQAAAAJ&hl=en>;

[Richard.Cowling@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:Richard.Cowling@nmmu.ac.za))

Dr Alastair Potts (Botany Department, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University;

[https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=U\\_gXR\\_oAAAAJ&hl=en](https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=U_gXR_oAAAAJ&hl=en);

[Alastair.Potts@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:Alastair.Potts@nmmu.ac.za))

**Relevant information regarding the Green Economy Postdoctoral Fellowships 2015**

**NMMU internal deadline for application: 16 April 2015**

**Start of fellowship:** any time before January 2016

**Eligibility Criteria:**

In selecting applicants for consideration for funding, the following criteria will apply:

- Fellowships are open to ***bona fide* South African citizens or permanent residents and foreign citizens** including applicants from the SADC region.
- Up to 30% of recipients may be foreign citizens including applicants from the SADC region.
- Applicants already in possession of a PhD, must have obtained their PhD within the last five (5) years.
- Applicants that are not yet in possession of a PhD will be required to fulfil all requirements for the awarding of the PhD before the fellowship may be taken up.

**Value of the Scholarships**

Successful applicants will receive funding for a period of up to **three years** and must commence the fellowship **no later than January 2016**. The total Green Economy Postdoctoral Fellowship package for 2015 is indicated below:

**R250 000 p.a.** (Non-taxable stipend); **R50 000 p.a.** (Contribution towards research costs);

**R15 000 p.a.** (Institutional contribution).