

Postdoctoral Position in FABI

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

Botryosphaeriaceae 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. *Botryosphaeriaceae* cause disease when the plants are under stress and are therefore of increasing importance in the context of 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 genome sequences for hundreds of strains representing the breadth of diversity in this family. These genomes provide a rich resource to address a range of questions, from species boundaries to the mechanisms of endophytic infection and persistence.

The successful candidate will be expected to work with a team of researchers at FABI and collaborating institutions to unlock the potential of large-scale genomic datasets to better understand the diversity, evolution and plant infection mechanisms in these fungi. The study will form part of a broader project that includes studies on the molecular biology, chemical ecology and field biology on *Botryosphaeriaceae*.

Required Qualifications: PhD in bioinformatics, molecular biology, or a closely related field; having experience in working with genomics data, Linux, R and Python; demonstrated analytical and writing skills; ability to work independently and as part of a team (see <https://www.fabinet.up.ac.za/>); and a strong 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) 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: 12 months, full-time initial appointment with the possibility of two years additional support, conditional on satisfactory performance (evaluated annually) and the availability of funds.

Review of applicants will commence on 12 June 2023 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) and Prof Cobus Visagie (cobus.visagie@fabi.up.ac.za): 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.

