

GreenMatter Fellowship Postgraduate Awards for Study in South Africa in 2015

GUIDANCE NOTES

General Information

The GreenMatter Fellowship brings together a cohort of dynamic, talented and committed biodiversity practitioners, with the objective of developing and unlocking their potential. It affords participants the opportunity to fully engage in tackling biodiversity issues through their study and career paths, alongside peers who share in that commitment.

GreenMatter have identified the following priority skills areas within the biodiversity sector that they are targeting. These skills specialisations are:

- Agricultural extensionists with biodiversity specialism;
- Bioinformatics: ICT specialists and technicians with biodiversity skills;
- Curators of biodiversity collections;
- Ecologists: esp. in marine but also aquatic and terrestrial systems;
- EIA practitioners;
- Engineers (civil) with biodiversity specialism;
- Geneticists: molecular biology with a specialisation in biodiversity conservation (as opposed to commercial applications);
- GIS specialists and technicians;
- Human Capital Development: High level biodiversity education and HCD specialists;
- Lawyers with environmental specialism;
- Monitoring specialists, species protection officers and inspectors;
- Policy developers & analysts, urban & regional planners with biodiversity insight;
- Protected area managers;
- Resource economists with biodiversity related specialism;
- Social scientists specialising in environment, indigenous biodiversity knowledge;
- Social ecologists;
- Soil scientists;
- Statistical ecologists & modellers;
- Taxonomists; and
- Wildlife veterinarians.

Applications are invited for GreenMatter Bursaries for Masters and Doctoral study at any tertiary institution in South Africa. This round of applications is for students who are starting or continuing a course of study in the 2015 academic year. GreenMatter will provide funding for up to a maximum of two years for Masters and three years for PhD. Please note that bursary contracts are renewed on a year by year basis. Funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and students will be required to submit an application for bursary extension at the end of each year.

A GreenMatter bursary provides holistic support in the form of:

- a) a cash contribution towards costs of living, study fees, research equipment, research costs, travel opportunities and mentorship costs - ZAR 40,000 per year for Masters and ZAR 90,000 per year for PhDs, though higher amounts may be awarded in exceptional cases or under the terms of named awards (see below); and
- b) the opportunity to access mentoring support, career guidance and platforms to engage in learning networks – estimated value of ZAR 50,000 per year.

The GreenMatter Fellowship includes three named awards. All eligible applications will automatically be considered for these awards as part of the standard selection process; however please stipulate in your application if you are particularly interested in any of the following:

The Crossley-UCT Award: for students wanting to enrol at the University of Cape Town to commence PhD studies in 2015 (2nd and 3rd year students are not eligible). This award is supported by UCT and the Harry Crossley Foundation. The cash bursary amount is ZAR 150,000 per year. All other Fellowship criteria apply.

The Crossley-Stellenbosch Award: for students wanting to enrol at Stellenbosch University to commence PhD studies in 2015 (2nd and 3rd year students are not eligible). This award is supported by Stellenbosch University and the Harry Crossley Foundation. The cash bursary amount is ZAR 150,000 per year. All other Fellowship criteria apply.

The Mapula Award: for students wanting to enrol at Stellenbosch University to commence PhD studies in 2015 (2nd and 3rd year students are not eligible). The successful candidate will be part of a bigger research project team based at Stellenbosch University's Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology with field work focused primarily on the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. The aim is to develop a protocol for assessing the success of a Biosphere Reserve in terms of its various zones and their increasing land use intensity away from the core. The research should lead into how this protocol might be applicable to Biosphere Reserves in general. The cash bursary amount is ZAR 90,000 per year.

There will be a **Fellowship Orientation** in April 2015. Please be aware that all successful applicants will be expected to attend and must be available (dates will be confirmed as part of any offer). The costs of attendance will be covered by GreenMatter.

Mentoring and Networking

GreenMatter is part of a network of biodiversity experts working in industry, academia and the public sector. They recognise the importance of networking with peers and exposure to positive role models in supporting professional development. Fellowship participants will have access to various forums for networking and will be supported to identify a suitable mentor (if they do not already have one).

Mentoring relationships are most successful where they fulfil an identified need on the part of the mentee. Successful applicants will be provided with guidance on mentorship and GreenMatter will assist both parties in establishing realistic targets in terms of the nature and regularity of communication. However, once mentoring relationships have been established it is the responsibility of the mentor and mentee to commit to sustaining them. Mentees will be responsible for taking the initiative in setting up meetings with their mentor.

A mentoring and networking workshop will be held in the second half of 2015. Attendance is optional and costs will be covered by GreenMatter.

Are you eligible?

Applicants must be:

- a national of South Africa;
- in possession of a good first degree (minimum second class, upper division or equivalent) or about to graduate in the year of application
- seeking funding for a full or part-time Masters or doctoral programme at a South African higher education institute;
- able to motivate how your field of study aligns to the GreenMatter [priority skill areas](#) identified (described above).

Please apply only if you are eligible.

Application Process:

The application form is of primary importance as it serves as the basis for assessment.

The form should be completed and submitted online via the [Canon Collins](#) website. It MUST be neat and easy to read. Please do not type in block capitals.

Please remember to fill in all sections of the form. If you experience any problems, guidance notes are provided on the form. Other questions can be emailed to greenmatter@canoncollins.org.uk and will be responded to within 2 working days.

The following supporting documents must be included and should be uploaded at the end of the form.

Please make sure the documents are labelled accordingly.

- Proof of South African citizenship;
- Proof of registration if you are already studying the course for which you are seeking funding;
- Certified copy of degree certificate(s);
- Certified academic transcripts;
- Doctoral thesis proposal if applying for a PhD award; and short project description if applying for a Masters Award (maximum one page).
- Reference letters from two referees.

Ideally, you should submit an academic reference and a reference from an employer. If you have never been employed, we will accept a reference from voluntary work, or two academic references.

You should ask your referees to write a reference that relates to your application for this bursary and reflects how you meet the selection criteria. It should outline your strengths as an applicant, demonstrate your capacity to study at the level required, and identify your potential impact in the future.

You can submit your references with all the other supporting documents or, should your referee prefer to submit their reference directly, ask them to email it to greenmatter@canoncollins.org.uk. The subject of the email should state that it is a reference and comprise the name and surname of the applicant, e.g., Reference: LASTNAME, First name. Once your referee has submitted their reference we will email you a confirmation of receipt, which you will need to upload to your online application.

You will not be able to submit your form until you have uploaded your references or confirmations of receipt in the appropriate section.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that references are sent to us well before the deadline, to ensure there is enough time for the receipt to be sent back to you and uploaded before applications close. **Late references will not be considered.**

Selection Criteria

Your application will be assessed on the basis of the information given in the application form. We apply the following criteria:

1. Relevance in terms of [priority skills](#)

Applicants are expected to articulate how their field of expertise and research topic aligns with the priority skills listed above. If you are applying for the Mapula Award, please also ensure you have explained how your proposed research fits with the specific focus area outlined above.

2. Leadership Competencies

Applicants will be asked to demonstrate how they have developed their leadership skills in the workplace, academia or in their personal life. Priority will be given to those who can describe an occasion/s in which they have used their skills to formulate a shared vision or strategy, build strategic relationships and networks, support peers and mentor others, and/or deliver results that have led to innovation and step changes. GreenMatter places a great deal of emphasis upon the leadership potential of individuals and may require awardees to contribute to the Fellowship by mentoring others or providing peer support.

3. Academic Record and References

Applicants should have a minimum of an upper second-class (merit) undergraduate or Honours degree and excellent references.

4. Transformation and Access to Opportunity

GreenMatter has a strong transformation agenda and is looking to support black South African candidates where possible. Candidates are also asked to provide details of their financial situation. While we recognise that the GreenMatter bursaries are insufficient to provide for 100% of students costs, and will therefore complement other sources of support, we are looking to assist students that will otherwise struggle or face particular challenges in financing their studies.

5. Application form

The application form matters. Applicants should:

- Demonstrate a good command of the English language;
- Answer all of the questions properly and completely; and
- Complete the application and upload all supporting documents in a timely manner.

Timetable

The deadline for applications is **Friday 29 August 2014**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

We will acknowledge receipt of your application. We will be interviewing shortlisted applicants by telephone in October. We will let you know the outcome of your application in November.

Please do not email us to ask about the outcome of your application. All notifications will be by email so please make sure you provide an accurate email address.

Any questions regarding the GreenMatter Bursaries can be directed by email to greenmatter@canoncollins.org.uk and will be responded to within 2 working days. Frequently Asked Questions have been posted on the Canon Collins website, so please check the GreenMatter section there first to see if your question has already been answered.

The final selection rests with GreenMatter. No correspondence will be entered into.

Good luck! We look forward to receiving your application.