Postgraduate Scholarship:
Regional Dynamic Fire Danger Index (ReD-FDI)

Project Reference: NEOFIS2204214101

June 2023

The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies warmly welcomes aspiring applicants and offers its support for the prestigious 2024 NRF NeoFrontiers Master's Scholarship. This scholarship opportunity centres around the exciting fields of Earth observation and artificial intelligence, with a specific focus on developing a regional and dynamic fire danger index model. We encourage passionate individuals to seize this chance to contribute to the advancement of fire hazard monitoring and mitigation strategies in South Africa.

Context and scope

Fire is a major factor in many South African biomes and critical to the healthy function of our ecosystems. Our team at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies aims to develop a cloud-based, multi-sensor platform designed to aid localised fire hazard monitoring in South Africa. The project represents a collaborative initiative between Stellenbosch University, The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), The South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), The Western Cape Disaster Management's Fire Rescue Services, The Overstrand Municipality's Environmental Management Services, Contour Enviro Group and renowned Fire Ecology expert, Mr Greg Forsyth.

The ReD-FDI project has been awarded two MSc scholarships in the amount of **R162,900** for the years 2024 and 2025. Our team would like to provide support and assistance to eligible candidates who wish to apply for this scholarship and contribute to the ReD-FDI project in 2024 and 2025. Interested candidates must submit their application through the NRF's online platform at https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za. **Please note: the project's reference number must be included in your online application.** Successful applicants will be required to enrol in the two-year Geoinformatics MSc programme (full-time) at Stellenbosch University in 2024.

Information about the NRF fellowships

You can find information about the NRF fellowships at this link, and an application guide at this link.

Requirements

- BScHons or 4-year BSc degree in Geoinformatics / Data Science / Computer Science / Statistics or a related field, with demonstrated knowledge of Earth observation and artificial intelligence;
- A minimum average of 65% for all subjects at the honours level, postgraduate diploma or final year subjects of a four-year degree;
- Candidates should have completed their degree by 31 December 2023;
- Excellent English writing skills.

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How to Apply

Interested applicants should email Prof Helen De Klerk (hdeklerk@sun.ac.za), Mr Curtis Bailey (cbailey@sun.ac.za) or Mr Kyle Loggenberg (kyleloggenberg@sun.ac.za). Please include the following in your email:

- A brief CV (1 – 2 pages);
- A copy of your academic transcript;
- A copy of your degree certificate, or a letter from your supervisor stating that you will graduate by December 2023;
- A short motivation letter (1 page) explaining your interest in, and suitability for the bursary. In the interest of expediency, this can be included in the body of the email;

Your email should reach us **before 17:00 on Friday, 23 June**. Your submission will be screened by the project team, and if you are eligible, you will be contacted by us to assist you with completing the NRF online application at https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za. The internal deadline for submission of the online applications is **Friday, 30 June 2023.**

Feel free to contact Prof De Klerk, Mr Bailey or Mr Loggenberg if you have any questions, or are unsure about whether you should apply.