**The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is committed to meeting the objectives of Employment Equity to improve representivity within the Institution.   Preference will be given to applicants from designated groups in accordance with our Employment Equity Plan.**

**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE**

**MASTERS QUALIFIED RESEARCH ASSISTANT (2 POSTS)**

**HONOURS/4th YEAR QUALIFIED RESEARCH ASSISTANTS (10 POSTS)**

**FIVE-MONTH APPOINTMENTS**

**SCHOOL OF LIFE SCIENCES**

**PIETERMARITZBURG CENTRE**

**REF NO. SLS 22/2025**

The Sustainable and Healthy Food Systems – Southern Africa is a Wellcome Trust Funded six-year research programme that is based at UKZN, with multiple partners. These include the Institute of Natural Resources in PMB, the University of Zimbabwe, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University College London, Aberdeen University, and Royal Veterinary College.

SHEFS-SA will catalyse the transformation of Southern African food systems and communities towards systems and communities that are healthy and resilient to climate risks. We will do this by:

1. Undertaking SHEFS transdisciplinary research to shift understanding of complex climate change (CC)challenges for health, as mediated by food systems, within particular contexts, translated into scalable solutions and policy recommendations with high impact;
2. Developing a transdisciplinary Community of Practice (CoP), led by the Global South, that contextualises and applies systems thinking within an expanded climate sensitive SHEFS Framework, to improve food security, food safety, nutrition, and health, including mental health; and
3. Developing a Global South-led cohort programme to train emerging scholars and practitioners in transdisciplinary research approaches at the intersection of Climate and Health.

The SHEFS-SA consortium will focus on providing actionable evidence for informed decision-making and identifying and developing practical solutions for CC mitigation and/or adaptation, while evaluating in detail how their effects connect to health, including mental health, through food security, food safety and nutrition (public health areas of concern identified our previous SHEFS grant). The programme deepens our work in South Africa, and will expand to include Zimbabwe and Malawi to ensure regional policy impact.

Two B.Sc. Honours qualified positions are intended to provide assistance to Dr Caswell Munyai, an Academic Staff Collaborator on the SHEFS-SA project, with work linked to the SHEFS-SA project, as well as to provide the assistants with additional experience.

Three B.Sc. Agriculture/B.Sc. Honours qualified positions are intended to support the work of Dr Michelle North, a Senior Research Scientist on the SHEFS-SA project, with work linked to livestock-derived food systems in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, as well as to provide the assistant with additional research experience.

Two B.Sc. Agriculture/B.Sc. Honours Qualified position intended to provide assistance to Prof Mjabu Ngidi, Academic Staff Collaborator on the SHEFS-SA project. One with research on food policy, monitoring and evaluation, food and nutrition security or sustainable food systems in general. Another one with research on food and nutrition security, food safety, climate risks and health. This work will provide the assistants with additional experience.

One B.Soc Sci. Honours Qualified position intended to provide assistance to Prof Cathy Sutherland and Sibongile Buthelezi, Academic Staff Collaborators on the SHEFS-SA project, with research on mental health metrics and indicators for climate risk, as well as to provide the assistant with additional experience.

Two B.Sc Honours Qualified positions intended to provide assistance to Dr Matthew Burnett, an Academic Staff Collaborator on the SHEFS-SA project. These assistants will undertake systematic reviews on fisheries policy or inland fisheries in South Africa..

One Masters Qualified position intended to provide assistance to Dr Matthew Burnett, an Academic Staff Collaborator on the SHEFS-SA project. This assistant will undertake a systematic review of economics of fish production,

One MASTERS Qualified position intended to provide assistance to Prof Andrew Tomita, an Academic Staff Collaborator on the SHEFS-SA project, with work linked to the SHEFS-SA project, as well as to provide the assistant with additional experience.

**B.Sc. Honours Qualified Research Assistants (x2)** should have experience in entomology and processing of entomological specimens to museum standards, the details of which will be defined by Dr Munyai in line with the requirements of the research. Dr Munyai must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A B.Sc. Honours degree in an appropriate Life Science discipline.
* Honours research project on an Entomology topic.
* Experience in sorting insect samples to museum standards
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Dr Munyai.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

**B.Sc. Honours Qualified Research Assistants (x2)** should have experience in freshwater systems, fish and or fisheries related research, systems approach, economics/data analysis, and/or in conducting literature reviews, the details of which will be defined by Dr Burnett in line with the requirements of the research. Dr Burnett must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A B.Sc. Honours degree in in an appropriate Life Science discipline.
* An Honours research project on a freshwater water related topic.
* Experience working with experience in systematics and analysing literature to identify research gaps or understanding drivers of freshwater ecosystem and fish populations.
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Dr Burnett.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

**B.Sc. Agriculture/ B.Sc. Honours Qualified Research Assistants (x3)** should have experience in Animal Science/livestock research, and in conducting literature reviews, the details of which will be defined by Dr North in line with the requirements of the research. Dr North must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A B.Sc. Agriculture/B.Sc. Honours degree in an appropriate Life Science or Agriculture discipline.
* 4th year/Honours research project on an Animal Science/livestock topic.
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Dr North.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

**B.Sc. Agriculture/ B.Sc. Honours Qualified Research Assistants (x2)** should have experience in Food and nutrition security/Food policy/Food safety/monitoring and evaluation research, and in conducting literature reviews, the details of which will be defined by Prof Ngidi in line with the requirements of the research. Prof Ngidi must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A B. Agric/ B.Sc. Agriculture/B.Sc. Honours) or PGDiP – food security/Nutrition degree, in an appropriate Life Science or Agriculture discipline.
* 4th year/Honours research project in food systems, food policy or food safety.
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Prof Ngidi.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

**B.Soc Sci. Honours Qualified Research Assistants (x1)** should have experience in psychology and development studies, the details of which will be defined by Prof Sutherland in line with the requirements of the research. Prof Sutherland must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A B.Soc Science Honours degree in Psychology.
* Honours research project in Psychology
* Experience in Development Studies concepts and practices
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Prof Sutherland.

**M.Sc. Qualified Research Assistant (x1)** should have experience in research on fish, and in conducting literature reviews, the details of which will be defined by Dr Burnett in line with the requirements of the research. Dr Burnett must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A M.Sc. degree in Ecological Sciences.
* Honours research project on fish topic.
* Experience with systematic reviews and sourcing metadata from papers and grey literature.
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Dr Burnett.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

**Master of Science in Medicine Qualified Research Assistant (x1)** should have experience in clinical and population-based epidemiology, as defined by Prof Andrew Tomita, the SHEFS Project Collaborator for whom the incumbent will work. Prof Andrew Tomita must motivate the need for the work and for the support of the applicant as part of the application process., including climate change research project involving heat stress and mental health/gender-based violence.

**Minimum Requirements:**

* A Master of Science in Medicine (anatomy)
* Experience in working with nationally/regionally representative household survey datasets.
* Evidence of acceptance/support by Prof Tomita.
* Not currently appointed elsewhere within UKZN.

The Honours qualified candidates will be paid R10,727 per month.

The Masters qualified candidate will be paid R12,872 per month.

Enquiries regarding the full details of the SHEFS-SA projects and associated duties may be directed to Mendy Ndlovu, email: [NdlovuM2@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:NdlovuM2@ukzn.ac.za)

**The closing date for receipt of applications is 27 June 2025. The recruitment process will remain open until the required position is filled.**

**Applicants are required to submit the following: (1) Curriculum Vitae; (2) Letter of support from Dr Munyai (**[**munyaic2@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:munyaic2@ukzn.ac.za)**), Dr North (**[**NorthM@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:NorthM@ukzn.ac.za)**), Prof Ngidi (Ngidim@ukzn.ac.za), Prof Sutherland (**[**Sutherlandc@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:Sutherlandc@ukzn.ac.za)**), Dr Burnett (**[**Burnettm@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:Burnettm@ukzn.ac.za)**) or Prof Tomita (**[**Tomita@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:Tomita@ukzn.ac.za)**), the SHEFS-SA project collaborator for whom the incumbent will work, and (3) Letter to confirm/declare his/her previous or con/current contract/s with any other college/school/division in the university; to:**

**Ms Precious Nciliba, Email:** [**NcilibaP@ukzn.ac.za**](mailto:NcilibaP@ukzn.ac.za)**.**

*Kindly note that the University of KwaZulu-Natal (“the University”) is required to process any Personal Information (as defined by the Protection of Personal Act, 2013 “POPIA”) submitted by candidates when applying for positions at the University. The University will endeavour to ensure that the appropriate security measures are in place and implemented for both electronic and paper-based formats that are used for processing of the personal information recorded through this recruitment and selection process. We refer you to the University’s relevant Section 18 notice at*

[http://vacancies.ukzn.ac.za/Libraries/General\_Documents/Section\_18\_Notice\_-Employees\_and\_Potential\_Employees.sflb.ashx](http://vacancies.ukzn.ac.za/Libraries/General_Documents/Section_18_Notice_-_Employees_and_Potential_Employees.sflb.ashx)