**The University of KwaZulu-Natal 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 LAW AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES**

**Graduate School of Business and Leadership**

**Young Researchers Programme (12 months)**

**Westville Campus**

**Reference No: YR/2026**

The EDTEA-UKZN Young Researchers Programme invites applications from high-calibre students for the 2026 intake to commit to at least 20 hours per week within an LED environment. This initiative is a collaboration between the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the KZN Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The programme supports innovative research and capacity building in the field of Regional and Local Economic Development (RLED) in KwaZulu-Natal.

Young Researchers will complete a Master’s dissertation aligned to RLED, contribute to team-based research activities, and participate in field-based learning. The research themes are:

* Economics and Public Policy
  + Economic development and policy analysis
  + Impact of government regulations on business
  + Public-private partnerships
  + Regional and Local Economic Development
* Entrepreneurship and Innovation
  + Start-up ecosystems and venture capital
  + Social entrepreneurship
  + Innovation management
  + Entrepreneurial finance/business support
* Digital Transformation and Technology Management
  + Impact of digital technologies on business models
  + Cybersecurity and information management
  + E-commerce and digital marketing
  + Artificial intelligence and automation in business

**Minimum Requirements:**

* South African citizen aged 18–35
* Currently unemployed or planning to study full time in 2026
* Eligible for full-time Master’s in Leadership (Full Research) at GSB&L or Master of Commerce (Full Research) in any specialisation within the School of Commerce
* Strong academic track record
* Exposure to research (academic or professional)
* Ability to conduct desktop research and manage research materials
* Excellent writing and communication skills
* Commit to at least 20 hours per week within an LED environment
* Own working tools (laptop or desktop computer)

**The appointment of the selected candidate can only be finalised, once the following are concluded:**

* Application form
* A detailed CV
* Certified copies of your ID and academic certificates
* Academic transcripts

A monthly stipend of R8000 will be provided for 12 months to support selected participants during the programme.

**Enquiries about this post may be directed to Ms S Mkhize @ Mkhizes14@ukzn.ac.za**

**The closing date for receipt of applications is 12 September 2025**

**Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted**

**Please state Advert Reference Number: YR /2026 in your EMAIL subject line. Submit your application as a single PDF attachment containing all the required documents.**