



POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW

Organization:

Health Economics & HIV & AIDS Research Division (HEARD), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN).

Type:

One (1) Year Fixed Term Post-Doctoral Scholarship (Renewal subject to performance & funding availability).

Location:

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus, Durban, South Africa.

Focal Area:

Adolescent Health • Mental Health • Structural Vulnerability • Quantitative Social Science •
Community Resilience • Health Economics

HEARD invites applications for a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to join a multidisciplinary programme focused on understanding and addressing the social, behavioural, economic, and structural factors that shape adolescent wellbeing and resilience in contexts of ongoing and emerging shocks. The fellowship is suited to researchers interested in how inequality, resource insecurity, disrupted services, violence, mental health burdens, and community-level capability interact to influence outcomes for adolescents, families, and youth, especially in settings marked by instability, crisis exposure, or rapid change.

The work lies at the intersection of:

- Adolescent mental health and psychosocial wellbeing
- Family- and community-level responses to shocks and stressors
- Quantitative and mixed-methods research on vulnerability and resilience
- Health economics and social determinants of health
- Access to and navigation of essential services (health, education, social protection)
- Behavioural and socio-political factors influencing trust, coping and adaptive capacity

These thematic areas directly reflect HEARD's research priorities within the adolescent and youth health space, particularly the focus on vulnerability and resilience, service access, behavioural insights, and multi-level socio-ecological dynamics in crises.

Eligibility criteria:

- This opportunity is open to South African citizens and South African Permanent Residents only.
- Applicants must hold a PhD in Health Economics, Economics, Public Health, Epidemiology, Psychology, Biostatistics, Sociology, Development Studies, or a related discipline.
- The doctoral degree must have been obtained within the last five (5) years.
- Applicants must be 45 years of age or younger on the closing date of applications.
- Candidates should demonstrate strong quantitative analysis skills (e.g., econometrics, multilevel modelling, causal inference, structural equation modelling, or longitudinal analysis).
- Applicants should show interest or experience in adolescent mental health, social determinants of health, community resilience, or behavioural responses to crises.
- At least one peer-reviewed publication is required.
- Excellent English writing and communication skills are essential.
- Applicants must be willing to be based at the UKZN Westville Campus for the duration of the fellowship and be present in the office as required.
- A valid driver's licence is advantageous.

Applications & queries

- **Closing date, Friday, 27th February 2026**
- All documents must be saved with the full name and surname of the applicant.
- One-page statement describing research interests and how the fellowship aligns with their scholarly trajectory.
- A full curriculum vitae, including all conference attendance, publications and other scholarly research output.
- All qualification certificates
- A copy of ID or passport, copy of visa etc.
- Names and contact details of at least two referees who have supervised or worked with you and can speak about your experience and skills. Email enquiries and application to Mrs Robyn-Lee Wagner, heardhr@ukzn.ac.za, **031 260 7873**. Please use the subject heading: **Application for Postdoctoral Fellowship** *Please note: Incomplete and/or late applications will not be considered. Postdoctoral scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis, considering the applicant's academic achievements.*