Postdoctoral Fellowship Opportunity – Invertebrate population genetics

Funded for 2 years (R320,000 per annum)

Hosted by Marine and Antarctic Research centre for Innovation and Sustainability (MARIS), University of Cape Town.

The Benthic BRACE project invites applications for a 2-year NRF grantholder-funded Postdoctoral fellowship in invertebrate population genetics commencing in July 2025.

Project Overview

We invite applications for a postdoctoral research fellowship to investigate the genetic diversity and population structure of selected benthic marine invertebrates—such as polychaetes, crustaceans, and echinoderms—inhabiting the seafloor sediments of False Bay, South Africa. False Bay represents a unique ecological setting, influenced by both the Agulhas and Benguela currents, and is characterised by a mix of urbanised pressures, pollution, and partial protection.

This foundational project aims to examine how natural oceanographic drivers and anthropogenic impacts shape population connectivity and genetic structure across multiple taxa. Outcomes will inform conservation strategies and marine spatial planning by identifying potential indicator species and genetic units of management relevance. The project will also contribute valuable barcode data to the Barcode of Life Data System (BOLD), supporting broader efforts in marine biodiversity assessment and monitoring.

Postdoc responsibilities

- Coordinate and participate in fieldwork including sampling logistics and site access
- Manage and maintain laboratory consumables and equipment inventories.
- Provide training and mentorship to PhD, MSc, and Honours students in molecular and genetic techniques.
- Curate and submit genetic data to the Barcode of Life Data System (BOLD).

Eligibility Requirements

- A **PhD** degree in **Marine Biology, Zoology, Molecular ecology, Microbiology** or a closely related discipline.
- Proven experience in genetic research, including population genetics and/or DNA barcoding.
- Demonstrable publication record
- Demonstrated proficiency in field sampling and molecular laboratory skills.

Application Details

Applicants should submit:

- A motivation letter outlining your interest in the topic and experience related to the responsibilities and requirements of the project
- Academic transcripts and PhD certificate
- CV

Application deadline: 20 June 2025

For more information or to express interest, please contact:
Natasha Karenyi (natasha.karenyi@uct.ac.za)