POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP: RURAL EDUCATION (2026–2027)

The Faculty of Education at Sol Plaatje University, Kimberley, South Africa, invites applications for a postdoctoral research fellowship position in the Centre for the Advancement of Rural and Inclusive Education Research (CARIER).

We are seeking a motivated and suitably qualified candidate who is eager to contribute to a vibrant and growing research envi ronment and make a meaningful, lasting impact in their field of study. The fellowship will commence in 2026, with opportunities to collaborate across disciplines and advance research excellence within the faculty.

Faculty of Education - Ref (PDRF/009/2026)

Description of planned research: Rural Education

The Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship (PDRF) in Rural Education will focus on, but not limited to, South African and African education systems. The PDRF in Rural Education offers an exceptional opportunity for an early-career scholar to advance their research and publication agenda within a dynamic and supportive academic environment, with a particular focus on the rich and diverse experiences of the people of the Southern African region and the African continent at large.

An applicant should have received their PhD in the last five years. Applications from scholars pursuing innovative research in the field of Education, including Rural Education, and other related field across education and social sciences will be welcomed.

Candidates would be expected to have strong empirical grounding in quantitative research methodologies, the correct use of quantitative research methods, the design of appropriate quantitative research tools, and quantitative data analyses in Education. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate a strong collaborative spirit, theoretical fluency, and ability and willingness to develop innovative articulations of original research. A strong engagement with the existing body of scholarship in educational research is essential.

The successful candidate must be able to collaborate with distinguished researchers in the Faculty of Education and to conduct interdisciplinary research in the fields of Rural Education, Language Education and Mathematics.

Minimum requirements:

- PhD degree in Rural Education or a related field
- Sound experience in conducting advanced research (please provide evidence as part of the application)
- Experience in conducting mixed-methods research (quantitative and qualitative research)
- Ability to effectively use current data analysis tools and to conduct analysis (please provide evidence)
- Ability to do statistical analysis
- Experience in Southern African and African education systems
- Evidence of publications in the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) and DHET listed and accredited journals
- Open to all South Africans and foreign nationals for full-time research at the Sol Plaatje University. However, preference will be given to South Africans
- The candidate must have completed their doctoral studies within the past five years in the fields relevant to the position
- Successful applicants must be younger than 40 years of age and may not hold full-time salaried employment during the duration of the fellowship

- Applicants who are selected for the fellowship must be able to relocate to Sol Plaatje University for the full duration of the award. This is a residential fellowship, which means that the recipient is obligated to spend at least 90% of their postdoctoral stay at the University
- Excellent written, oral, and interpersonal skills
- A project plan and achievable timelines with a view to producing original research outputs. Please list current and forthcoming research projects

Duties and deliverables

- Publish a minimum of three (3) articles per year with the mentors in DHET-accredited, peer-reviewed journals
- Contribute to book chapters and conference proceedings
- Visit various areas in the Northern Cape and beyond doing field work
- Attend conferences and present papers which will lead to future publications
- Timeous submission of quarterly reports to the assigned mentors
- Research publications will bear only the affiliation of the Faculty of Education at Sol Plaatje University
- Complete any other assigned duties relevant to this position or which are deemed necessary by the Mentor
- Attend workshops, seminars, webinars
- Engage in community engagement activities and in scholarship of engagement

Bursary value:

Fellows will receive a flat-rate, tax-free bursary of R280 000 per year (to cover living expenses) and an additional R40 000 research-expense allowance. The fellowship is awarded for one year, with the option of renewal subject to funding availability and a satisfactory annual performance review.

Proposed starting date: 1 January 2027

Application procedure:

Each application is to be accompanied by a completed application form (see download link below) with the following supporting documents:

- A detailed Curriculum Vitae
- Certified copy of ID document or passport
- Certified copies of academic transcripts
- Two professional reference letters from individuals familiar with your work or who have supervised you in a professional capacity
- A brief description of the proposed research

Click here to download the application form.

Applications and supporting documentation should be emailed to: post.doctoral@spu.ac.za
Subject line: “Post-Doctoral Fellowship + Reference No.”

Contact details: For questions regarding the application process, project, or academic queries:
post.doctoral@spu.ac.za

Applications close: Friday, 30 November 2026

Candidates from outside the borders of South Africa must ensure they have all required legal documentation. Sol Plaatje University reserves the right not to fill this fellowship if no suitable candidates are identified. If no response is received within 21 days of the closing date, candidates may assume their applications were unsuccessful.