

# **Call for applications**

## **PhD bursary for 2024**

**Overcoming acceleration  
challenges in the South African  
energy transition (ACCELERATE)**

Applications are open for a three-year PhD Bursary at the Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST) at Stellenbosch University.

## **Project background**

ACCELERATE is an applied research project, funded by the DANIDA Fellowship Centre implemented by the Danish Technical University (DTU). The project is a collaboration between DTU, Stellenbosch University and the University of Cape Town. ACCELERATE focuses on the design of procurement policies to accelerate the energy transition in South Africa and explores the implications of a shifting procurement landscape in terms of governance, industrialisation and job creation.

## Call for applications

The PhD will take a leading role in research as part of the CST work package in ACCELERATE. The WP investigates how relations are (re)negotiated and power dynamics shift, how the arenas opened by new governance arrangements are taken up by diverse actors, and what new forms of community involvement and local interactions emerge. Empirical fieldwork will be carried out in two selected Renewable Energy Development Zones in South Africa: the Emalahleni in the Mpumalanga province and Springbok in the Northern Cape. The PhD student will conduct research on *“Shifting energy landscapes: tracing the emergence of new governance mechanisms in two Renewable Energy Development Zones (REDZ) in South Africa”*.

## Funding

The bursary is valued at R300 000 annually, for three years, and includes the cost of tuition, a monthly stipend, and compulsory course work.



## Requirements

We seek a motivated individual interested to pursue a PhD linked to the ACCELERATE project, who have a keen interest in sustainability and energy transitions research, have the ability to work independently and collaborate in an interdisciplinary, international research project.

Potential PhD students must have completed a Masters degree and have a background in energy transitions, sustainable development, energy policy, development studies, or related field(s). Demonstrable qualitative research and analytical skills are required. All candidates should show evidence of strong scholarly performance.

# Application process

The application process entails two steps:

## **Step 1:** Departmental application

All interested candidates should first apply to the CST by emailing the following documents to [cstenquiries@sun.ac.za](mailto:cstenquiries@sun.ac.za) by 23 October 2023 with the subject line: “PhD application: ACCELERATE”.

- A 1 – 2 page motivation letter detailing your previous academic and work experience, and how your experiences, education and skills speak to the proposed research topic, as well as your specific interests with regard to the proposed project,
- A concept note of 1 – 2 pages that provides a description of the proposed research project, based on the title of the PhD (this description is not final but rather a demonstration of the applicant's ability to think critically and independently and should include some high level literature, problem statement and research methodology),
- A detailed CV that includes your academic record, previous work experience, any scientific publications on which you have been an author, and the names of at least two academic referees,
- Transcripts of academic qualifications,
- At least one example of recent written work (e.g., a paper, report, thesis chapter).
- Shortlisted candidates will then be invited for an online or in-person interview between 24 and 25 October 2023.

## **Step 2:** Stellenbosch University application

The successful applicant must then apply formally to Stellenbosch University via [www.maties.com](http://www.maties.com) by 30 November 2023.

The successful candidate must comply with the Centre for Sustainability Transitions' PhD application and registration process and requirements.

## **Enquiries**

Enquiries can be directed to Amanda October, MPhil and PHD administrative officer, at [cstenquiries@sun.ac.za](mailto:cstenquiries@sun.ac.za). Please use the subject line "PhD application: ACCELERATE Enquiry".

## ***About the CST***

*The Centre for Sustainability Transitions builds on a strong history of transdisciplinary research and complexity studies at Stellenbosch University, providing a vibrant hub for solution-oriented sustainability science that hosts leading scientists and students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds in a state-of-the-art research centre. The primary objective of the CST is to provide transformational knowledge on the dynamics of multi-scale socio-technical and social-ecological change, and strategic insights into the new modes of research and governance that can bring about a just transition to a more equitable and sustainable society, in southern Africa and globally.*



**Centre for Sustainability Transitions**

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Stias Campus | Stellenbosch | South Africa

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