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| **INSTITUTIONAL REGULATORY CODE (IRC)****(Policies, Procedures, Rules etc.)** |
| ***To be completed by initiator of policy/policy owner:*** |
| 1**. POLICY** **TITLE**: | **POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS POLICY** |
| 2. **FIELD OF APPLICATION**:     (All persons to whom policy applies) | Faculties, Research Capacity Development, Office for International Education |
| 3. **COMPLIANCE OFFICER(S)**: (Persons responsible for ensuring policy       implementation) | Deans, Director: Office for International Education, Director: Research Capacity Development |
| 4. **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION** (State the stakeholder group/s consulted during policy formulation/revision) | NMMU RTI Committee, Faculty Boards |
| 5. **DESIGNATION OF** **POLICY OWNER**: (Person responsible for maintaining policy) | DVC: Research & Engagement /Director: Research Capacity Development |
| 6. **NAME OF POLICY OWNER:** | Prof. TV Mayekiso/Dr. BML Pretorius |
| **POLICY HISTORY *(To be completed by policy owner)*** |
| **Decision****Date**(Compulsory) | **Status**(New/Revised/No Changes) | **Implementation Date**(Compulsory if “new” or “revised”) | **Approving Authority**(If ”new” or “revised”. N/A if no changes) | **Resolution Number** **e.g.** 07/11-10.2(Minute number. N/A if no changes) | **Policy Document Number** (e.g. D/…./07 N/A if no changes) | **Pending date for next revision**(Compulsory) |
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| ***For office use only*** |
| **SUBJECT** (Broad policy field): |  |
| **SUBJECT NUMBER**: |  |
| **CATEGORY** (Policy sub-field): |  |
| **CATEGORY NUMBER**: |  |
| **IRC NUMBER**: |  |

**POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS POLICY**

**1. PREAMBLE**

This policy pertains to postdoctoral fellowships at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The purpose of a postdoctoral fellowship is to contribute to the strategic priority of the NMMU which is to create and sustain an environment that supports a vibrant research, scholarship and innovation culture. In order to achieve this purpose the university strives to attract postdoctoral fellows who have demonstrated outstanding talent in their area of research and would contribute to sustaining a research culture through enhancing research productivity.

The purpose of the policy is to set out the values and principles underpinning the policy on postdoctoral fellowships and to set up a framework within which the invitation and appointment of postdoctoral fellows is conducted at the NMMU.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

2.1 In the context of this policy *“Postdoctoral fellows”* are defined as graduates from universities other than the NMMU or one of its merger partners and have recently completed a doctoral degree (in the past 5 years).

2.2 A *“partner institution”* refers to an institution outside of South Africa with whom the NMMU has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate academic exchanges. A list of the eligible institutions is available on the RCD website as part of the procedure document.

2.3 The *“host”* in the context of this policy is the unit or entity within a specific Faculty where the postdoctoral fellow will be accommodated and mentored.

**3. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES**

This policy is underpinned by the following values:

* Respect for diversity: where critical scholarship and the expression of a multiplicity of opinions and experiences are actively encouraged
* Excellence: promoting and recognising excellence in research

**4. CATEGORIES OF POSTDOCTORAL FUNDING**

Two categories of postdoctoral funding will be governed by this policy namely, the NMMU Postdoctoral Fellowship and Partner Institution Postdoctoral Fellowships.

4.1 **NMMU Postdoctoral Fellowships**

The NMMU Postdoctoral Fellowship is available to both South African and international graduates, who have obtained their doctoral qualification from a university other than the NMMU.

4.2 **Partner Institution Postdoctoral Fellowships**

These postdoctoral fellowships are limited to students graduating with a doctoral qualification from one of the NMMU’s international partner institutions. The Office for International Education will liaise with the NMMU’s international partner institutions to source postdoctoral students, according to the needs identified by NMMU researchers.

**5. ELIGIBILTY CRITERIA**

Prospective postdoctoral fellows should meet the following criteria:

5.1 Must have completed their doctoral studies at an educational institution other than the NMMU within the past 5 years;

5.2 Should preferably be less than 45 years of age;

5.3 Demonstrate the drive and potential to contribute to an identified research theme at the NMMU.

**6. DURATION OF FELLOWSHIP**

6.1 Postdoctoral fellowships are initially awarded for a 12-month period.

6.2 Fellowships may be extended, upon evaluation of progress, for a further 12-month period (or part thereof).

6.3 The maximum duration of funding per fellowship holder is 24 months.

6.4 In exceptional cases, a period shorter than 12 months will be considered for postdoctoral fellowship funding, but these applications will have to be strongly motivated by the Dean of the relevant faculty.

**7. FELLOWSHIP VALUE**

7.1 The value of the postdoctoral fellowship will be determined on an annual basis by the Department: Research Capacity Development in conjunction with the relevant NMMU stakeholders.

7.2 The Department: Research Capacity Development may consider funding for research related costs. This will need to be applied for in terms of the procedures for accessing the NMMU’s Research Development Funding.

7.3 In consultation with the Director: RCD, Departments/Units may supplement the fellowship allocated up to a maximum value to be determined annually by RCD and the NMMU RTI.

**8. APPLICATION PROCESS**

8.1 Application for a postdoctoral fellowship should be facilitated by the host researcher who must be a permanent member of staff or Research Associate of the NMMU with a proven research track record in the specific area of the prospective postdoctoral fellow.

8.2 Projects which fall within the identified NMMU Research Themes will be given priority.

8.3 The role of the postdoctoral fellow needs to be clearly negotiated during the invitation and application process and should form the basis of a performance contract that will inform the assessment of an application by the host for renewal or extension of the fellowship.

8.4 Full particulars of the application process are outlined in the procedure document available from the Department: Research Capacity Development or accessible on the intranet.

**9. RENEWAL PROCESS**

9.1 Renewal of the fellowship is contingent upon the postdoctoral fellow having fulfilled their contractual obligations, and the availability of funds.

9.2 At the beginning of the final month of the fellowship period, the postdoctoral fellow and host are co-responsible for the submission of an application for renewal of the fellowship.

9.3 Full particulars of the renewal process are outlined in the procedure document available from the Department: Research Capacity Development or accessible on the intranet.

9.4 It is the responsibility of the mentor to initiate the process for the renewal of the postdoctoral fellowship at least three (3) months to the end of the original fellowship period.

**10. ROLE OF POSTDOCTORAL MENTOR**

10.1 The role of the postdoctoral mentor is to fulfill the role of host and to make recommendations to RCD in support of applications for fellowship funding.

10.2 The mentor is responsible for making appropriate logistical arrangements to ensure support for the productivity of the postdoctoral fellow, for example, securing office space, access to computer facilities, access to the library etc.

10.3 The role of the mentor is to facilitate the application for a prospective fellowship by supporting the applicant through the application process.

10.4 Upon approval of the fellowship the mentor is responsible for ongoing mentoring/coaching and monitoring of the fellow within the parameters of the agreed goal(s) and objectives. This process includes the submission of the progress report to RCD in the 5th month after commencement of scholarship in order to affirm progress and to evaluate the outputs at the end of the fellowship period.

10.5 The mentor is responsible for the approval of progress reports prior to submission to RCD.

10.6 The mentor is responsible for initiating efforts timeously towards accessing and securing alternative sources of funding to ensure sustainability of the fellowship beyond the period permissible in terms of the provisions of this policy.

**11. ROLE OF POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW**

As stated the purpose of a postdoctoral fellowship is to increase the research productivity of units and entities within Faculties at the NMMU through the specific expertise and value that postdoctoral fellows add. The benefit to the postdoctoral fellow is the opportunity to build a research profile and strengthen skills and capacity as a recently-qualified Doctoral graduate. In order to achieve this purpose:

11.1 The role of the postdoctoral fellow thus clearly needs to focus primarily on research related activities such as direct research, publication, research collaboration within the host unit or entity within a Faculty, co-supervision of postgraduate research, and mentoring of postgraduate students.

**12. ROLE OF RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

The role of RCD is as follows:

12.1 To support faculties and units by facilitating the appointment of postdoctoral fellows.

12.2 To monitor the progress of the postdoctoral fellow to ensure that the NMMU’s strategic objectives are attained.

Revised July 2007, December 2007 and April 2010