

# Recruitment

## Call for Postdoctoral Fellow 2026 Sydney Brenner Institute for Molecular Bioscience (SBIMB) University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

The Sydney Brenner Institute for Molecular Bioscience, University of Witwatersrand, is recruiting a postdoctoral fellow to work on projects to explore the genetic and environmental contributions to depression and anxiety in African populations. The latest advanced statistical genetics methods will be applied to find genetic risk factors for depression and anxiety that may be both unique to African populations and shared across populations.

Understanding the combination of genetic and environmental risk factors that underlie depression and anxiety is key to developing new therapeutics and relieving the increasing burden that mental health conditions place on societies and economies worldwide. While the last decade has seen huge advances, these have been predominantly in European and East Asian populations. These studies aim to contribute towards the development of a better understanding of African populations to address health and economic inequality. The project is funded through the Wellcome Trust and is a multi-country collaboration.

### Eligibility

Applicants must have an appropriate PhD degree obtained within the last 5 years. As a multi-disciplinary project, applicants should be willing and able to rapidly acquire new skills in disciplines outside their core training area. The project would suit someone with a background in systems biology, bioinformatics, biostatistics, and/or genetics/genomics. Previous experience in using bioinformatics and computational models and tools to help interpret biomedical data would be advantageous, but is not mandatory.

The responsibilities of the candidate would include data curation, management, storage and analysis of phenotype and genomic data from over 10,000 participants. The ideal candidate would have some experience in big data management and Genome-Wide Association Study methodologies. The outputs would be well-curated datasets, high-impact publications and public communication of key outcomes.

The Fellowship support is for two years, with the possibility of extension depending on performance and funding. Preference will be given to applications from South African citizens or those who have Permanent Residence in South Africa. The selected applicant will be expected to be available within the next 6 months (ideally by April 2026).

### Submission

Please email your application with the following documentation:

- Your CV (maximum of 4 pages)
- A cover letter (maximum of 2 pages) indicating how your knowledge and skills would align with the research topic, and what your expectations are should you be successful.
- Academic record/transcript
- ID/Passport copy
- Contact details for three academic referees

Please make the subject of the email:

*APPLICATION-Postdoctoral fellowship-Mental Health Genetics in Africa*

Email your application to [sbimb@wits.ac.za](mailto:sbimb@wits.ac.za) and [jocelyn.gayenga@wits.ac.za](mailto:jocelyn.gayenga@wits.ac.za)

For further information, you may contact the Principal Investigator:

Prof Michele Ramsay: [Michele.Ramsay@wits.ac.za](mailto:Michele.Ramsay@wits.ac.za)

**Deadline: 20 February 2026**, although applications will also be considered beyond this if a suitable candidate has not been identified.

*The principal investigators reserve the right not to make an appointment if suitable candidates are not identified.*

*The Wits Health Consortium will only respond to shortlisted candidates. Candidates who have not been contacted within two weeks of the closing date can consider their applications unsuccessful. In accordance with our Employment Equity goals and plan, preference will be given to suitable applicants from designated groups as defined in the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 and subsequent amendments thereto.*