Sydney Brenner Scholarship

Call for PhD/Post-doctoral fellowship 2021
Sydney Brenner Institute for Molecular Bioscience (SBIMB)
University of the Witwatersrand in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh and the Sydney Brenner Charitable Trust

On Sydney Brenner’s request, The Sydney Brenner Charitable Trust (SBCT) was established to provide opportunities for scientific advancement through capacity development and to continue the research legacy of Dr Sydney Brenner (13 January 1927 – 5 April 2019). To develop this goal, the SBCT aims to contribute to the advancement of biomedical research, especially in Africa, by providing scholarship support to talented and ambitious young researchers of African nationality to advance their careers in health related research on the continent. The SBCT has partnered with the SBIMB, Wits University in South Africa and the University of Edinburgh to realize Dr Brenner’s request.

The successful candidate will be hosted at the SBIMB, Wits University in Johannesburg, and jointly supervised by scientists from the SBIMB and the University of Edinburgh, UK. The key areas of research at the SBIMB include genomics, human genetics, population genetics, bioinformatics, biomedical informatics, molecular and cellular biology, computational and structural biology and epidemiology, as well as large-scale data integration (https://www.wits.ac.za/research/sbimb/). Due to the multidisciplinary nature of the Institute’s research, we work with collaborators at Wits, in South Africa, elsewhere on the African continent and across the globe. The fellow will spend time at the University of Edinburgh to receive additional training and skills development, as well as mentoring and network opportunities. An annual visit of between 1 and 3 months will be arranged and funded as part of the fellowship. The fellowship will be awarded for four years and will include candidate’s annual stipend for four years, a computer to facilitate research, funding to attend conferences and spend time at University of Edinburgh, modest start-up funding for their research, and one round-trip flight ticket to their home country (if not South African) per annum. If a PhD is undertaken, the tuition fees will be supported from the fellowship.

Research Areas
As Dr Brenner had a deep interest in solving problems in genetics, complex traits, bacterial genetics and viral infections, the fellow’s research should aligned to these broad areas. The research will involve working with large data sets. If selected for a second interview, the candidate will be expected to submit a proposed research topic, building on the research areas at the SBIMB.

Eligibility Criteria and Attributes
• Talented medical graduate or PhD graduate with interests in human genetics, genetic epidemiology, infectious diseases, molecular biology or a related discipline
• Must have graduated within the last 5 years
• Must not be older than 35 years at the time of application
• If a medical graduate without a PhD, they need to commit to completing a PhD in at most four years, registered at The University of the Witwatersrand
• Must be an African national with a commitment to working in Africa
• Previous research experience in related field(s) and publications would be an added advantage
• Highly motivated and committed to biomedical research
• Drive to advance research in Africa
• Available to start fellowship in Jan/Feb 2021

Application
Please email your application through as follows:
• Your CV (maximum of 5 pages)
• A cover letter (maximum of 2 pages) indicating how your knowledge and skills would align with the research areas, and what your expectations are should you be successful
• Academic record
• Contact details for three academic referees

Please make the subject of the email:
APPLICATION-Scholarship-SydneyBrenner: PhD/Postdoc

Email your application through to sbimb@wits.ac.za and jocelyn.gayenga@wits.ac.za

For further information you may contact the Principal Investigator:
Prof. Michele Ramsay: Michele.Ramsay@wits.ac.za
Prof. Wendy Bickmore: hgu.director@igmm.ed.ac.uk

Deadline: 16 November 2020, 16:00 CAT although applications will also be considered beyond this if suitable candidates have not been identified.

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