



## Postgraduate Research Scholarship (Masters and Doctoral)

Department of Paediatrics and Child Health

Faculty of Health Sciences

*Note: Although preference will be given to students wishing to pursue a PhD, qualified applicants interested in completing a Masters degree on the project are welcome to apply.*

### **Project title: Longitudinal neuroimaging and early neurocognitive correlates of children with prenatal alcohol exposure in the first 5 years**

**About the study:** There is growing awareness that in the South African context, many women continue to use alcohol and substances during pregnancy, and that such use may lead to fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). There is also a growing awareness of a broader spectrum of clinical manifestations, including partial FAS and alcohol related neurocognitive damage. This study investigates the effects of maternal alcohol consumption during pregnancy on early neurocognitive development. The project is a nested substudy in an ongoing birth cohort study (the Drakenstein Study Health Study). The investigation employs a range of methods including multimodal MRI brain imaging, early neurobehavioral assessments and follow-up neurodevelopmental and neurocognitive assessments.

#### **Purpose:**

The scholarship has been established to provide support for a PhD (or Masters) student who will be required to assist the research team in the Department of Child Health and Paediatrics to study the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure on early neurocognitive development. The successful candidate will be required to assist with data collection, other operational aspects of the study, and contribute to academic outputs for the research project. The student will gain the opportunity to learn about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, work in a multidisciplinary research environment and develop their skills in a broad range of methods.

The successful candidate will be supported by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and will work under the supervision of the study PI, Associate Professor Kirsty Donald.

#### **Conditions:**

The successful incumbent will be required to:

- Register for full-time study in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health in the Faculty of Health Science at the University of Cape Town
- Comply with the University's approved policies, procedures and practices for the postgraduate sector.
- Although successful candidates will be permitted to take up part-time employment (maximum 15 hours per week) they may not hold scholarships and salaried/full-time employment concurrently.
- Note that no service will be required in return for the award

#### **Value and Tenure:**

The value of the scholarship amounts to R50 000 per annum for Masters students and R100 000 per annum for PhD students. The value will not increase over subsequent years.

The scholarship is tenable for one year. Renewal for further years will be considered on evidence of satisfactory academic progress and availability of funds.

#### **Academic Requirements:**

- Masters (or Honours) Degree in appropriate Health Sciences or Social Sciences discipline (e.g., Public Health, Paediatrics, Human Biology, Psychiatry, Psychology, or related discipline)
- Strong verbal and written communication in English
- Interest in research on child health and development

#### **Desirable skills:**

- Clinical research experience
- Fluent in one of the following languages: Xhosa or Afrikaans
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Experience working with young children and their caregivers
- Experience administering formal cognitive and behavioural assessments to children and their parents

#### **Academic Requirements:**

- UCT Application Form (download at <http://forms.uct.ac.za/hr201.doc>)
- A letter of motivation
- Copies of academic transcripts



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- Letters of reference from two academics, and
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)

**To apply**, please e-mail the below documents in a **single pdf file** to Emma Eastman at [emma.eastman@uct.ac.za](mailto:emma.eastman@uct.ac.za)

**Closing date:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications,  
The University of Cape Town reserves the right to change the conditions of award or to make no awards at all.

*UCT is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity and redress in achieving its equity targets. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at <http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/eepolicy.pdf>*

UCT reserves the right not to appoint.