



Deputy Director of Team Science (Fixed term 3 years)(PC12)

African Climate and Development Initiative
Faculty of Science

The African Synthesis Centre for Climate Change, Environment and Development (ASCEND) invites applications for the position of Deputy Director of Team Science for appointment as soon as possible.

ASCEND is a research centre based in the African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI) at the University of Cape Town. The aim of ASCEND is to accelerate discoveries for more rapid, equitable, and sustained action on climate change and development for vulnerable people and places.

To find out more about ASCEND, please visit <https://ascendclimate.org>

To find out more about ACDI, please visit <https://acdi.uct.ac.za>

This is a senior leadership position in ASCEND. The role will include: leading the implementation of ASCEND strategy; designing the calls for ASCEND visiting research teams; managing the hosting and facilitation of research teams; leading on the evaluation process of ASCEND; mentorship of Postdoctoral Research Fellows; representing ASCEND at events locally and internationally; managing relationships with diverse ASCEND stakeholders; leading on aspects of capacity building for research teams; and developing and disseminating learning from transdisciplinary practices of ASCEND. The Deputy Director of Team Science for ASCEND will work with the ASCEND Scientific Director to ensure the success of the Centre.

ASCEND was launched in October 2023 to be a platform for transdisciplinary research on climate change and development. ASCEND hosts transdisciplinary teams of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners drawn from across Africa and globally for multiple working group meetings that integrate and synthesize diverse existing data and knowledge to better understand climate risks and solutions. ASCEND teams have up to 15 participants with each team having up to four in-person meetings at ASCEND over a 2 year period. Each ASCEND team also has a full-time postdoctoral researcher based at ASCEND, who supports the data analysis, paper writing and other activities of the team. By growing to full capacity over the next several years, ASCEND expects to host 30–40 team meetings per year, which will amount to up to 600 climate change researchers, practitioners, and policymakers using the ASCEND synthesis research infrastructure each year.

If you have initiative and ambition to enable research for improved climate action, excellent management skills, and you meet the criteria as listed below, we invite you to apply for this fixed term 3-year position (with potential extension for further years depending on performance and funding).

Requirements:

- PhD in a subject relevant to climate change and/or sustainable development.
- At least 7 years of relevant experience, of which at least 5 years is post PhD.
- 5 years of experience leading or co-leading interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary team research projects.
- Track record of postgraduate student and/or postdoctoral researcher supervision.
- Track record of publications and disseminating knowledge products.
- Track record of securing and reporting on independent funding.
- Substantial experience working in a research-and-policy or research-and-practice environment (such as local, national or international environmental assessments, specialist advisory roles, or program management roles).
- Experience developing or coordinating knowledge-into-action processes and translating research knowledge into policy or practice locally, nationally, or internationally.
- Excellent skills in managing diverse teams and facilitating teamwork at the interface of research, policy and/or practice.
- Excellent skills in the communication of research to diverse audiences, such as through policy briefs, public speaking, traditional or social media, and/or arts.
- Experience of research management and reporting in a leadership role in academia, consulting, or other development sector institutional setting.



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- Experience of participating in synthesis research (that is, research that integrates existing data and knowledge).

The following will be advantageous:

- Experience with online project management software.
- Significant experience with developing monitoring, evaluation and learning processes.
- Experience leading or co-leading synthesis research teams.

Responsibilities:

- Leading the design of calls for new ASCEND research teams.
- Coordination of evaluation of proposals for teams and the team selection process.
- Leading on facilitation and monitoring of ASCEND research teams (team goals; team meeting processes; team access and use of ASCEND facilities such as data science; co-creation of research with knowledge users; and ensuring actionable research of teams).
- Leading the monitoring, evaluation, and learning process of ASCEND.
- Supervise ASCEND staff as required by the ASCEND Scientific Director
- Contribute to and approve financial planning and reporting.
- Leading on diversity and inclusion portfolio for ASCEND teams, and related training for research teams.
- Mentoring postdoctoral research fellows, as their primary supervisor at UCT.
- Facilitation of research teams, as needed when they are in residence at UCT or online.
- Publishing and disseminating learnings from transdisciplinary and actionable research processes of ASCEND.
- Co-develop the capacity strengthening curriculum and activities of ASCEND, targeted initially at research teams and postdoctoral research fellows.
- Representing ASCEND at national and global fora, including as a keynote speaker.
- Co-lead on strategic fundraising for ASCEND.
- Represent ASCEND within ACIDI management processes, and ensure excellent linkages between ASCEND and ACIDI.

The 2023 annual cost of employment, including benefits is between R961,360 and R1,131,011 depending on experience and qualifications.

For queries, please email Dr Christopher Trisos (christopher.trisos@uct.ac.za) and cc Mira Blumberg (mira.blumberg@uct.ac.za)

To view and apply for this position, please visit the [UCT Jobs site](#) to create a profile and to submit your application.

Please click the "**apply**" button to create a candidate profile and submit your application
Please complete and attach the following to your profile before submitting your application:

- Motivational letter (not more than 2 pages)
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- The names of three referees

Shortlisted candidates may be required to undergo competency assessments. References may be requested by UCT at any stage of the selection process.

Any enquiries around the application process to be addressed to Ms Natasha Khan at recruitment06@uct.ac.za or 021 650 3469

Closing date: 17 June 2024



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UCT is a designated employer and is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity and redress in achieving its equity targets in accordance with the Employment Equity Plan of the University and its Employment Equity goals and targets. Preference will be given to candidates from the under-represented designated groups. Our Employment Equity Policy is available at <https://uct.ac.za/media/9482>.

UCT reserves the right not to appoint.