Post-doctoral Fellowship in Natural Language Processing at the University of Cape Town

The University of Cape Town NLP group is looking for a post-doctoral researcher to join our work on language models and language resources for low-resource South African and African languages. The group, led by Dr Jan Buys and Dr Francois Meyer, regularly publishes research at top international NLP conferences and has received best paper awards at the AfricaNLP and Multilingual Representation Learning workshops.

This is a full-time position based in Cape Town, starting in February 2027. The fellowship will be funded through the NRF Presidential PhD Programme (PPP) in Digital Transformation, which focuses on AI and cybersecurity for South Africa's priority areas: agriculture, health, small business and public sector innovation (programme details). This is a 2-year position, subject to confirmation of funding and demonstration of adequate progress after the first year. International applicants are welcome to apply.

The fellowship will be from R370 000 per annum (tax-free), including an equipment allowance and conference travel funding. The group has access to GPU compute resources and a stimulating research environment with regular seminars and access to collaboration opportunities.

The postdoc will contribute to research in one or more of the following directions:

- African language data collection and annotation
- Language models for low-resource languages
- New methods for cross-lingual adaptation, linguistic structure modelling and knowledge enhancement in low-resource language models
- Applying LLMs for African languages in health or education

The requirements for the position are:

- A PhD in Computer Science, Computational Linguistics or a closely related area, awarded in the last five years (or thesis under examination, with the degree awarded before the start date).
- Demonstrated research experience in NLP, Machine Learning, or an adjacent research area. Publications at top NLP or AI venues will be advantageous.

Applicants should email the following as a single PDF to both jan.buys@uct.ac.za and sit-manager@uct.ac.za by Friday 20 November 2026 with the subject line "PPP Postdoc application":

- A CV (2-3 pages) including a publication list
- Academic transcripts (including proof of thesis submission if applicable)
- A 2–3 page research proposal outlining which directions you would pursue

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and will be expected to arrange for three reference letters to be submitted and be available for a video-conference interview. Informal enquiries are welcome.