

Allan Gray Centre for Africa Entrepreneurship  
Research Assistants  
2026-2029

## Scope of Research

We are looking for THREE Research Assistants to contribute capacity on three intellectual projects newly initiated by the Allan Gray Centre for Africa Entrepreneurship (AGCAE) at Stellenbosch University.

## South African Innovation Ecosystem Policy HUB

**The Policy Hub** will help us better understand how and when to create bridges and the necessary scaffolding needed for collaboration opportunities between the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation ecosystem. This research project is funded by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and aims to build within the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem the basis of innovation ecosystem, and vice versa. The envisioned research outcomes can help frontload the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem with innovation capabilities and enablement to deliver on AI-based, deep tech and other forms of R&D innovations. This first-of-its-kind research initiative will be the core basis of a three-year pilot plan to institutionalise a dedicated national Policy Hub in the medium term. We are looking for **three** research assistants to assist on three cross-cutting research initiatives and sister activities we see as a roadmap for seeding the successful setting up of a National Innovation Ecosystem Policy Hub in South Africa: i) Ecosystem Intelligence, ii) Funding and Financing of Innovations, and iii) Ecosystem Building for creating policy bridges and scaffolding work to connect the entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation ecosystem.

## Requirements

- An **honours degree** in a relevant discipline, such as Economic and Management Sciences, Statistics, or a related field.
- Passion for research, with a strong ability to work with, analyse, and interpret data.
- Good organisational skills, attention to detail and professionalism.
- Strong planning skills, including the ability to work under pressure, set priorities, and function effectively under strict deadlines and shifting priorities.
- The ability to work independently under supervision and function effectively within a multicultural team environment.
- Willingness and availability to work extra hours during busy weeks.
- A valid driver's licence and the willingness to travel domestically and abroad for meetings and programme activities where necessary.
- Fluency in oral and written English.
- Proficiency in MS Office and Excel.
- Being a South African is a **non-negotiable** since the Research Assistants will be part of a South African skills development component as per the requirements of the funding agreement.

## Recommendations

- Past exposure or experience in youth development and/or working in different African markets will be an advantage.
- Past exposure or experience in entrepreneurship development will be an advantage.
- Past experience with some basic research, data software packages, and/or coding will be an advantage.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills for coordinating across teams and stakeholder groups.
- A drive to learn and master new technologies and research methods.
- Passionate about the transformative power of entrepreneurship

**Commencement date:** 1 January 2026

**Appointment period:** Three years

**Closing date:** 31 October 2025

**Enquiries:** [tyracole@sun.ac.za](mailto:tyracole@sun.ac.za)

Contact details of the founding academic director (Dr Phumlani Nkontwana): [pnkontwana@sun.ac.za](mailto:pnkontwana@sun.ac.za)

- Applicants should request their referees to forward confidential reports by the closing date directly to the same address.

**APPLY ONLINE AT <https://agcae.africa/careers> BY USING THE APPLY NOW LINK AT THE TOP RIGHT-HAND CORNER OF THE RESEARCH ASSISTANT OPPORTUNITY.**

Your application should be supported by the following documentation:

- Send a cover letter of motivation
- Accompanied by a comprehensive curriculum vitae and certified copy of honours certificate
- The names and contact details of at least two referees

### About AGCAE

The Allan Gray Centre for Africa Entrepreneurship (AGCAE) is a new flagship research project within the School of Public Leadership in Stellenbosch University's Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS). Our mission, vision, strategic priorities and values are inspired by Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies' (AGGP) mission to lead social change by contributing to job creation and poverty alleviation through the development of responsible entrepreneurs across the African continent in service of the common good.

We are also aligned with Stellenbosch University's mission to be a research-intensive university that attracts outstanding students, employs talented staff and provides a world-class environment. We also seek to be a place connected to the world that enriches and transforms local, continental and global communities.

We plan to achieve our strategic priorities through a triad of specialist services: research, ecosystem building and developing a data hub of hubs.



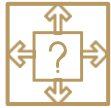
### Our Mission

The AGCAE creates, integrates and diffuses knowledge to improve data- and dialogue-driven entrepreneurial ecosystem development in Africa in order to increase the wellbeing of communities with entrepreneurship.



### Our Vision

The AGCAE aims to enable entrepreneurship-led development in Africa with a data- and dialogue-driven entrepreneurial ecosystem approach.



### Our Strategic Priorities

1. **Create and integrate** entrepreneurial ecosystem data of African countries and regions
2. **Analyse and interpret** entrepreneurial ecosystem data of African countries and regions
3. **Develop and communicate** scientifically rigorous and societally relevant entrepreneurial ecosystem research
4. **Create** a platform for stakeholders that provides and uses entrepreneurial ecosystem data and knowledge in Africa. Relevant stakeholders include academics, governments, entrepreneurship service providers, entrepreneurship associations, philanthropies, NGOs, and venture capitalists
5. **Contribute** to the development of entrepreneurship and economic development scholarship in Africa