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ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POSITION OF

Coastal/Marine Field Technician

Four-year fixed term contract

Location: Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

1. Background

The Oceanographic Research Institute (ORI) is the research division of the South African Association for Marine Biological Research (SAAMBR), a non-profit, public benefit organisation based at uShaka Marine World in Durban. SAAMBR's mission is to contribute to the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and resources by generating and disseminating scientific information, and by inspiring and empowering people to connect with the ocean. An exciting opportunity presents itself in the dynamic Estuaries and Soft Sediment research team. The group has several projects in estuaries and the marine environment and requires special assistance with a new, large interdisciplinary programme focusing on estuaries within, or associated with the uThukela MPA, that will study adaptation responses to climate change.

ORI is seeking a motivated and capable field technician to assist with data and sample collection (water quality, sediments, invertebrate and fish sampling and habitat mapping) and various other activities related to the project, such as logistical and technical support in the field and ORI laboratories.

2. Key Responsibilities

- Managing scientific monitoring instruments and equipment, including storage, set-up, testing, cleaning, troubleshooting, field trip packing, routine maintenance, repairs, and safety checks.
- Driving large passenger vehicles with attached trailer carrying equipment to remote locations.
- Skippering small semi-rigid inflatable boats and other craft in estuaries.
- Assistance with occasional marine biophysical sampling.
- Supporting sampling efforts, including deployment of specialised survey equipment and the collection, preservation and storage of water, sediment, and biological samples.
- Assisting in the preparation of water samples in a laboratory setting, including sample bottle sterilisation, vacuum pump filtration, and chemical preservation of samples.
- Other ad hoc duties required for the successful completion of surveys and field-work related activities, including field data capture and data retrieval from in situ monitoring instrumentation.
- Administrative control of field equipment and consumables, including assistance with procurement.

3. Key Requirements

Qualifications

- Minimum BTech or BSc degree in marine biology, ecology, or related field. Postgraduate qualifications would be a strong advantage.
- Valid code EB driver's license.



SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR MARINE BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH (RF) NPC

1 King Shaka Avenue, Point, Durban, 4001, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

P. O. Box 10712, Marine Parade, 4056, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Tel: +27 31 328 8177. Fax: +27 31 328 8188. Email: loellermann@saambr.org.za

Registration No. 1951/000002/08 | Public Benefit Organisation No. 930025295 | Non-Profit Organisation No. 000-347 NPO

SAAMBR is a Non-Profit Company and a member of the IUCN (World Conservation Union) and WAZA (World Association of Zoos and Aquaria)

An accredited member of PAAZA (Pan-African Association of Zoos and Aquaria)

ORI is academically affiliated to the University of KwaZulu-Natal

- Minimum of R Category Skipper's License – Sheltered Waters (inland waters, rivers and estuaries) for vessels under 9 m. Boat handling and navigational training would be an advantage.

Experience

- Previous relevant experience with field logistics in aquatic environments. Experience in conducting physico-chemical and biological research sampling from small vessels would be an advantage.
- Experience with standard laboratory procedures, techniques, and equipment, including the ability to read and understand equipment manuals and troubleshoot instrumentation.

Core skills

- Good oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and within a team.
- Strong time management skills, organisational skills, and attention to detail.
- Ability to adapt quickly to changing priorities and strict timelines.
- Ability to use standard office software applications, including word processing, spreadsheets, electronic mail, and calendar systems.
- Ability to swim or be water safe.
- Be physically able and fit.
- CPR/First Aid training would be an advantage.
- Formal 4 x 4 driver training would be an advantage. The incumbent will require skills in offroad driving, including beach driving, as vessel launches will be from formal and informal launch sites.

4. Working conditions

The candidate will be based at the SAAMBR offices at uShaka Marine World, Durban. Administrative and logistics duties will be conducted under standard office conditions, in a standard eight hour working day. The incumbent will report to the Group Senior Scientist and project leader, Fiona MacKay (fmackay@ori.org.za).

Periodically, field work will be in remote locations along the northern KZN coastline where working conditions can be difficult, with exposure to hazards such as bad weather, high temperatures, stinging and biting insects, and encounters with wildlife. Working off small craft for long hours and lifting of heavy objects, operation of winches and specialised sampling gear may be challenging to some. The incumbent will be expected to participate in trips that may run over consecutive days with the team overnighing in guest accommodation for up to 10 days at a time.

This is a research project linked, fixed term contract position.

If you feel that you meet the requirements and would like to apply for this position, please submit your Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter, in which you motivate why you are the most suitable candidate, by either:

- email: kramsaroop@saambr.org.za or
- Hand delivery: K Ramsaroop, Personnel Manager, SAAMBR, uShaka Marine World, 1 King Shaka Avenue, Point, Durban.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 22 MAY 2023

Appointments will be made in line with SAAMBR's employment equity requirements. SAAMBR reserves the right not to make an appointment.

Only potential short-list candidates will be contacted. Should you not have heard from us by **30 May 2023**, please consider your application unsuccessful.