

06 June 2026

Research Nurse Opportunities (x2 positions in the Free State Province and KZN)

The University of the Free State (UFS) Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) Unit is seeking qualified and experienced Research Nurses to join the UFS Research Chair in Genomic Surveillance of Respiratory and Enteric Pathogens from Children in South Africa. This flagship initiative, led by Prof. Martin Nyaga, applies next-generation sequencing (NGS) and metagenomics to characterise respiratory and enteric viral pathogens in children under five years of age, with emphasis on antimicrobial resistance genes (ARGs), vaccine efficacy, and transmission dynamics.

The successful candidates will play a critical role in hospital-based syndromic surveillance across the Free State Province and KZN, contributing directly to the collection of clinical specimens over the 2026–2030 period.

Position Details

- ☒ Contract Type: Part time (**12 hours a week**).
- ☒ initial 12 months, renewable annually up to 2030 based on performance.
- ☒ Location: Public hospitals and healthcare facilities in the Free State Province and KZN.
- ☒ Hourly rate will be discussed with the shortlisted candidates.

Key Responsibilities

- ☒ Participant recruitment and screening of children under five years presenting with respiratory or enteric symptoms at participating hospitals.
- ☒ Obtaining informed consent from parents/guardians.
- ☒ Collection of nasopharyngeal swabs (respiratory) and stool specimens (enteric) following study protocols.
- ☒ Completion of standardised case report forms and questionnaires.
- ☒ Proper labelling, storage (-20°C where required), and bi-weekly cold-chain transportation of specimens to the UFS-NGS Unit in Bloemfontein.
- ☒ Accurate record-keeping and timely submission of bi-weekly progress reports.
- ☒ Maintaining excellent relationships with hospital staff, patients, and families.
- ☒ Adherence to all ethical, GCP, POPIA, and biosafety protocols.

Requirements

- ☒ Registered Nurse with current SANC registration.
- ☒ Minimum 2 years' clinical nursing experience, preferably in paediatrics, infectious diseases, or community health.
- ☒ Experience in clinical research, participant recruitment, and informed consent processes will be a strong advantage.
- ☒ Valid driver's licence and willingness to travel within the Free State Province and KZN.
- ☒ Excellent communication, interpersonal, and organisational skills.
- ☒ Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- ☒ Proficiency in English and at least one local language (Sesotho/Afrikaans/isiXhosa/Zulu) is essential.
- ☒ Computer literacy (Microsoft Office) and experience with electronic data capture is advantageous.
- ☒ GCP and research ethics training will be an added advantage.

Eligibility

- ☒ South African citizens, particularly from the Free State and KZN Provinces.
- ☒ Candidates with previous experience in paediatric or infectious disease surveillance projects are strongly encouraged to apply.

Deadline and Starting Date

Applications must be received by Friday, 20 June 2026. Preferred starting date is 01 August 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Host Information

The positions are hosted under the leadership of Prof. Martin Nyaga, Head of the UFS-NGS Unit and Research Chair holder. The research nurse will work with the core research team at the UFS-NGS Unit on the Bloemfontein Campus.

Application Procedure

Submission details: (email: ngsunit@ufs.ac.za) the following documents:

- A cover letter outlining your relevant experience and motivation for the position.
- A detailed CV including nursing qualifications, work history, and references.
- Copy of current SANC registration certificate.
- Copy of driver's licence.
- Contact details of three referees.

Kindly don't email to personal email addresses of the UFS-NGS Unit personnel.

Note: The University of the Free State reserves the right not to make an appointment. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Preference will be given to candidates from designated groups in line with the UFS Employment Equity Plan.