



**POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP**  
**School of Management Studies**  
**Faculty of Commerce**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is an inclusive and engaged research-intensive African university that inspires creativity through outstanding achievements in learning discovery and citizenship, enhancing the lives of its students and staff, advancing a more equitable and sustainable social order, and influencing the global higher education landscape.

**We invite applications for One (X1) postdoctoral fellowship position in the School of Management Studies, to work on the following Consumer Neuroscience Research Project:**

**Consumer Neuroscience Research Project:**

**Analysing Consumer Behaviour through the science and application of Neuroscientific Techniques (Dr Pragasen Pillay).**

**Overview of the Consumer Neuroscience Research Project:**

Consumer Neuroscience or Neuromarketing is the union of cognitive psychology, which studies the mental processes, neurology and neurophysiology, which analyses the functioning and responses of the brain and body's physiology to external stimuli, and marketing, which studies valuable exchanges, to explain marketing effects on customers' and consumers' behaviours and on buying and decision processes. It includes a set of research techniques that, by observing and evaluating how the brain and other body parts respond, avoids possible biases and provides truthful and objective information on the consumer subconscious. Brand owners, i.e., advertisers, expect more accurate results from market researchers, and consumers have become more advertising-avoidant, making it much more difficult to reach them with advertiser messages. In addition to more accurate data, there is a need to understand, explain, and, above all, predict the behaviour of individuals, groups, and firms toward relevant markets. This type of prediction is becoming more accurate using available technological tools. All of this has had a logical impact on market research practice: with the rapid development of technology, software and applications have become available and more widely used to explore consumers' needs. This trend has given rise to a research method called neuromarketing or consumer neuroscience.

The Post-doctoral candidate will be required to assist with consumer neuroscience research which will position UCT as the leading university in Africa with regards to neuromarketing research and research publications in terms of delving into empirical research to answer the following neuromarketing research questions:

- Does exposure to marketing stimuli create an emotional attachment to brands?
- How does the subconscious mind of the consumer contribute to purchase decisions?
- Is it possible to predict consumer decision-making through utilisation neuroscientific techniques?
- How does psychophysiological responses of consumers impact purchase decisions?
- Is it possible to identify flaws in current theoretical marketing models of purchasing behaviour by utilising neuroscientific techniques?

**About the PI:** Pragasen Pillay holds a Doctor of Commerce degree in Marketing and is registered as a Chartered Marketer with the Marketing Association of South Africa (MASA). Dr Pillay has occupied senior marketing and academic roles in his corporate career including Brand Manager, Group Marketing Manager, Head of Academics, and Head of Research. These various positions have provided a solid foundation for his current role as a Senior Marketing Lecturer in the School of Management Studies at the University of Cape Town. Dr Pillay lectures to both undergraduate and postgraduate students; supervises the research studies of Honors, Masters, and PhD candidates; and regularly publishes research articles in leading accredited journals and conferences including: The Journal of Social Marketing, The Journal of Consumer Marketing, The European Marketing Academy, and The Australia New Zealand Marketing Academy to name a few. For more information, please check <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=3TeqRrcAAAAJ&hl=en>

The successful candidate will be involved in co-designing and implementing participatory research, conceptualizing novel innovative research, co-supervising postgraduate students, participating in grant writing, contributing to teaching, assisting with managing social media to promote research outputs and knowledge sharing, publishing research outputs, assisting with the application and setup of a consumer neuroscience research unit, and contributing to capacity-building projects.

Applications are invited from candidates who:

- Have achieved a doctoral degree no more than 5 years ago
- Have not previously held any Comprehensive permanent professional academic posts

#### Value and Tenure:

The total value of the postdoctoral fellowship will be R400 000 per year, for two full academic years commencing 1 April 2024 and ending 30 March 2026.

**NB** – The 2<sup>nd</sup> year renewal will be subject to the candidate achieving a satisfactory level of performance in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of employment.

#### Eligibility Criteria:

Applicants must have:

- A PhD in a social-science related field in line with the either of the two project topics
- Evidence of strong scholarly performance (publications, participation in research projects, research networks and conference presentations)
- Excellent writing, presentation, and organisational skills
- Good conceptualisation skills
- Experience in teaching and student supervision will be an advantage
- The ability to work independently and as part of the team

Applicants are required to submit:

- A letter of application
- A CV including details of any conference presentations, working papers, and/or publications
- The names and contact details of 2 academic references who have taught/supervised the candidate at university level

#### Conditions of Award:

The successful candidate will be required to:

- Register as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Management Studies at UCT
- Enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant Principal Investigator and adhere to the plans and agreements therein
- Comply with the University's approved policies, procedures, and practices for the postdoctoral sector
- No benefits or allowances are included in the value of the fellowship

Closing date for receipt of applications is 16 February 2024.

- Enquiries should be forwarded to the PI: Dr Pragasen Pillay ([p.pilay@uct.ac.za](mailto:p.pilay@uct.ac.za))
- Completed applications should be sent to departmental manager, Mr Zaeem Najaar in a single file to [zaeem.najaar@uct.ac.za](mailto:zaeem.najaar@uct.ac.za)

Selection: Eligible applicants will be considered by a sub-committee convened by the PI.

The University of Cape Town reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, to change the conditions of award and/or to make no award at all.

*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 including candidates with disabilities*

**APPROVED**

