



PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL

7th International Barcode Of Life Conference 20-24 November 2017

CONFERENCE MANAGER:

Professor Michelle van der Bank
African Centre for DNA Barcoding
Department of Botany and Plant Biotechnology
University of Johannesburg
PO Box 524, Auckland Park, 2006, RSA
TEL: +27 11 559 3477
FAX: +27 11 559 2411
EMAIL: mvdbank@uj.ac.za
WEBSITE: <http://www.acdb.co.za>

RETHINK. REINVENT.



“DNA barcoding has had profound effects on scientific research and led through to practical societal applications. This conference will bring together the field leaders to summarise recent successes, and of particular importance to consider future strategic direction. There is a time of great opportunity ahead, with developments in genomic science. There is also a great pressing need for deploying this technology to support sustainable use of the world’s biological resources.”

- **Professor Pete Hollingsworth**

Director of Science, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh

INTRODUCTION

The African Centre for DNA Barcoding (ACDB) at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) is holding the 7th International Barcode of Life (iBOL) Conference in November 2017 and is seeking sponsorship for this prestigious global event.

The Conference will be held over five days (20-24 November 2017) at the Nombolo Mdhuli Conference Centre, Skukuza, a state-of-the-art conference centre, located in the heart of African wildlife at the Kruger National Park that offers facilities for up to 700 people.

Given that this will be the first Conference of its kind to be held on the African Continent, the organisers intend to give the conference a distinctive African flavour and establish a strong African representation. The conference will highlight and address current issues in the fields of ecology, climate change, wildlife forensics, and biodiversity and species documentation. Furthermore it aims to expose African scientists to the global initiative of DNA barcoding so as to increase both the skill level and recognition of Africa in the global image of biological sciences. This esteemed barcoding hub will also play host to over 500 delegates from countries across the globe, including Canada, United States, Mexico, China, United Kingdom, Germany and Australia.

All invited plenary speakers have agreed to attend the conference and to date 320 local and international delegates and 180 students have already registered for the conference. The Conference Organising Committee has estimated the total budget for the Conference at just over R6 million (R6 023 460).

To date, the conference has received R1.45 million in sponsorship support, including R250 000 from the University itself. Additionally, it has secured R2.64 million through registration fees for delegates and student attendees, **leaving an estimated funding shortfall of R1 933 460.**

The University is seeking urgent funding support to meet this shortfall and is reaching out to interested donors/sponsors, who are involved in advancing scientific research in South Africa, to assist the University in ensuring that this important conference goes ahead without any funding shortfall.

BACKGROUND

A series of **International Barcode of Life Conferences** have been held every other year since 2005. These scientific gatherings have provided an invaluable platform for the global research community to share ideas and to initiate international collaborations in the field. Previous conferences have been held in the UK, Taiwan, Mexico, Australia, China and Canada. This year the University of Johannesburg (UJ) is proud to be arranging this conference in South Africa and will be hosting leading international and local scientists and researchers in the field for the first time.

The African Centre for DNA Barcoding (ACDB) at the University of Johannesburg has been in the forefront of the field since 2005. It has been involved in a number of paramount initiatives including the development and validation of the matK gene in a standardised barcode. The Centre has

published over 24 000 specimen records to the Barcode of Life initiative of which 89% were plants. The majority of these records are African stationed where 21 countries have documented collections by the ACDB.

THE PROBLEM

While it is anticipated that around 500 delegates with 100 accompanying individuals will eventually attend the conference, the Organising Committee must secure in advance the venue, accommodation for the anticipated numbers, and organise and pay for international and local flights for the plenary speakers. With this in mind, the University is asking interested parties to assist with the funding shortfall.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CONFERENCE

This conference will bring together an estimated 500 global leaders in the field of DNA barcoding to showcase the latest scientific achievements and socio-economic implications (including agricultural pests, quarantine and invasive species, wildlife forensics, disease vectors and marketplace surveys), as well as considering future strategic direction.

The ultimate aim of the conference engagements is to promote partnerships between local and international scientists that will enable the international scientific and policy community to better understand, quantify and manage their biodiversity.

A priority for the African Centre for DNA Barcoding, in collaboration with the 7th iBOL conference, is to enhance pan-global African relationships through DNA barcoding initiatives. Subsequently, the travel of many African delegates will require sponsorship towards their participation in this prestigious conference. Previous sponsorship initiatives have proven to be successful and highly fruitful for African researchers and students alike. In the past the African Centre for DNA Barcoding has been justified by the success of this skill development intervention, as ten African students previously or currently involved with ACDB are now well established researchers or supervisors at a number of reputable institutions, including, but not limited to, Harvard University.

It is anticipated that the 7th iBOL conference will allow greater African representation. The long-term goal of this initiative is to further develop African students' skills, through postgraduate courses available through the host institution of The African Centre for DNA Barcoding. Such initiatives will require long-term investment from various stakeholders.

Twenty-four plenary speakers -- of whom 25% are women -- from across the globe, have accepted invitations to the conference. They come from diverse but complimentary backgrounds in DNA barcoding, including eight from Africa. Plenary speakers were selected by members of the International and National Scientific Organising Committee based on past scientific contributions and current involvement in large-scale barcoding projects.

VALUE-ADDING INITIATIVES THAT PLENARY SPEAKERS WILL ENGAGE IN:

To ensure that the Conference delivers maximum value, a number of value-adding initiatives have been planned for the plenary speakers. These include:

- All plenary speakers will be involved in the pre-Conference training courses during the first day of the conference;
- The Conference programme has been designed to reserve time between the talks and evening activities to enable delegates to arrange for shorter meetings and discussions with the plenary speakers;
- A number of the plenary speakers and members of the International Scientific Organising Committee have already established strong and functional collaborations with researchers in

South Africa and have indicated their enthusiasm to engage in value-added programmes that will involve interactions with postgraduate students and established and young researchers;

- Visits to different institutes across South Africa have been arranged where plenary speakers will present public lectures and engage with scientists/students that were unable to attend the Conference; and
- Proactive engagement with the media will be actioned to assist in profiling plenary speakers. Media releases will be posted on the Conference website and distributed to various institutional and partner media contacts. Solid media partnerships will be created with prominent local and international media houses on various platforms ranging from online publications, print media (magazines and newspapers), radio shows and television programmes.

BUDGET

The budget for the Conference, reflecting expenses and anticipated income in South African Rands is as follows:

INCOME	ZAR	EXPENSES	ZAR
Registration fees	2 640 000	Plenary speakers, committee members, travel grants	1 656 360
Other	1 920 000	Meals & events	1 764 600
		Conference venue	2 041 000
		Prizes/awards	60 000
		Other	501 500
TOTAL	4 090 000		6 023 460

Funds still needing to be raised: R1 933 460.00

Deposit payable to SANParks on the 31st of May: R751 971.00

Note: A full breakdown of the conference budget is available on request.

BENEFITS TO THE DONOR

- Press Releases will promote sponsor support for the Conference among prominent local media and will also be sent to international news agencies;
- E-marketing on Conference website, social media handles, LOC signatures;
- Coverage on UJ marketing platforms such as the UJ website and social media, and the Faculty's own site.
- Coverage will be arranged on UJfm (UJ's own commercial radio station) and through UJ's corporate magazine;
- Brand exposure at all Conference social events (e.g. the welcome cocktail function and the gala dinner);
- Opportunity for sponsors to mount branded exhibits at the Conference;
- Flyer insertion in all Conference bags to be given to delegates.
- Exposure in the Conference programme;
- Prominent placement of sponsor logos on all conference material -- both online and print;
- Presence through Branding & Marketing collateral (Banners, Posters, Boards etc.);
- Brochure placement in Conference main foyer, reception and other strategic areas.

BENEFITS TO THE UNIVERSITY

- Contribute to the advancement of the International Barcode of Life Project and biodiversity management and conservation;
- Remain at the forefront of research regarding DNA barcoding and its applications for biosecurity and surveillance and biodiversity surveys;
- Increase UJ's international footprint by engaging in more collaborative projects;
- Increase the number of postgraduate students; and
- Involve policy-makers, industry, government and the private sector to enable greater collaboration and innovation.

These objectives are aligned with UJ's strategic thrusts, in particular to develop world-class research that brings South African and African expertise to the global academia and corpus of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

UJ considers this to be a critical scientific engagement that will have considerable benefits for local and international scientists in the Barcoding field. It is vital that the **7th International Barcode of Life Conference** is a resounding success. We are keen to take all discussions regarding sponsorship of this conference forward with interested parties and we look forward to engaging with you in this regard at your earliest convenience.

CONTACT:

PROF MICHELLE VAN DER BANK
DIRECTOR & PROFESSOR
African Centre for DNA Barcoding
Department of Botany and Plant Biotechnology
University of Johannesburg
PO Box 524, Auckland Park, 2006, RSA
TEL: +27 11 559 3477
FAX: +27 11 559 2411
EMAIL: mvdbank@uj.ac.za
CONFERENCE WEBSITE: <http://www.dnabarcodes2017.org>
WEBSITE: <http://www.acdb.co.za>

THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG (UJ)

The University of Johannesburg - one of the largest residential universities in the country - has firmly established itself as a comprehensive, new-generation, multi-campus university since the merger in 2005 of the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR) and the Soweto Campus of the then Vista University.

With roughly 50 000 students on its four campuses, UJ has become the university of choice for working-class, first-generation students. The University produces an average output of 12 500 graduates annually and has gained a proud reputation for making a sizeable contribution to the skilled population of the country. Our student profile comprises 22% new undergraduates and 12% postgraduates (annually) of which 84% are black and 55% are female.

To get a measure of the popularity of UJ among school leavers, this year 138 000 matriculants applied for the 10 500 available first-year placements at UJ and for the past six years UJ has been voted the second most favoured university brand in the annual *Sunday Times* brand survey, after the University of Cape Town.

Over the past decade, the University has also built a strong international brand by more than doubling its research outputs and greatly increasing its international research collaborations. According to the authoritative QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings, UJ is ranked among the top 4% of universities in the world, among the top 1% of universities in the BRICS region and within the top six universities in South Africa. UJ is also the only African university admitted to Universitas 21, a respected consortium of 28 research-intensive universities in the world.

The University is committed to the pursuit of excellence in its teaching and learning, research and community engagement, and it aims to produce graduates who are able and willing to play meaningful roles in the development of South Africa. For further details about the University, please visit our website at www.uj.ac.za