



## Call for PhD and Post Doc Funding

The governments of South Africa and Tunisia recently launched a bilateral research project under the auspices of the ‘South Africa-Tunisia Science and Technology Collaboration’ initiative. The research project is aimed at identifying realistic and sustainable export opportunities between the two countries, with a specific focus on SME (small and medium enterprise) exporters. Following an extensive bidding process, a research consortium comprising the WTO Chairs at the North-West University (South Africa) and the University of Tunis (Tunisia) were awarded the project. The project, which is funded by South Africa’s NRF (National Research Foundation) and Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research Tunisia’s Department of Science and Technology will span a three-year period (2019-2021).

One of the main obstacles to successful trade expansion in Africa is that policymakers and businesses often lack relevant and reliable data on which to base their market selection and/or development decisions. Where data is available, notably in international databases, it is often not readily accessible – especially to SMEs which face financial, knowledge and capacity constraints. For the purpose of the project, the North-West University’s TRADE-DSM®(Decision Support Model) will be used to identify realistic export opportunities for targeted SMEs in each country. The TRADE-DSM® is a market selection tool that uses a sophisticated data-filtering methodology to identify those opportunities that have the best chances of meeting market demand and delivering value. When the TRADE-DSM® is run for a particular country, it reveals a list of product-country combinations with the highest ‘untapped’ export potential for that country. These results then inform country or sector export strategies for particular markets – with a strategy either being aggressive or defensive, depending on the size, concentration and growth potential of the market in question.

The WTO Chair at ESSECT would like to recruit PhD students and Post doc to work on these issues for three years. She/he will be working under the supervision of the WTO Chair Senior Fellows.

### **Application and selection process**

Interested candidate should apply to [leilabaghdadi@gmail.com](mailto:leilabaghdadi@gmail.com) and send the following documents:

- A letter of motivation ;
- A CV ;

- Grades available from master in Economics or related fields;
- Master thesis for PhD students and Post Doc;
- PhD thesis for Post Doc.

**Skills needed**

- Data analytics
- Economics and econometrics
- Knowledge of international trade issues preferred
- Knowledge of computer sciences is valued but not requested

The deadline is March 15th, 2021. Final decision will be made by April 30th, 2021.

More information about the WTO Chair at ESSECT:

Website: <http://wcp-tbs.org>

More information about Dr. Leila Baghdadi, WTO Chair Holder, ESSECT, University of Tunis

Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/leilabaghdadi/research>