



**National  
Research  
Foundation**

**DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding  
Framework for the 2025 Academic Year**

**Date: May 2024**

# NRF Partners for Postgraduate Student Funding



science & innovation

Department:  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



energy mobility  
education trust



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



\*For more information on the NRF partners, please refer to Annexure A

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## Annexure A

## 1 Introduction

The National Research Foundation (NRF) is mandated by an Act of Parliament, the NRF Act (Act No. 23 of 1998, amended) to: “*contribute to national development by promoting and supporting research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities, in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of research, including indigenous knowledge and thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the Republic.*” In giving effect to its mandate, the NRF is guided by a Transformation Framework that identifies the specific need to focus on transformation of the equity profiles of the South African research workforce; of the knowledge enterprise; the relationship between science and society; and the building of a diverse and fully inclusive learning organisation. Additionally, the NRF through the projects that it supports will promote societal and knowledge impact of research. Knowledge impact refers to scientific advances in understanding, interpretation, methods, theory, application, and related advances that bring about positive change within and/or across various disciplines and fields. Societal impact refers to the value that research adds to society across various spheres, whether social, economic, or environmental. Societal impact reflects the direct or indirect relationship between research, or the research process, and improvement in the quality of people’s lives, inclusive of innovation, technological advancements, and policy developments.

Transformation of the equity profiles of the South African research workforce is reliant on the ability to attract, nurture and retain high academic achievers in the system to pursue postgraduate studies up to the doctoral level. The NRF is prioritising postgraduate students with research inclination as part of a national drive to grow the next generation of researchers and scholars to sustain South Africa’s knowledge enterprise. Another objective is to fast-track the development of postgraduate students in high impact, priority, and vulnerable disciplines that are critical for national socio-economic development.

In 2021, the NRF implemented the *DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy* wherein postgraduate funding allocations are underpinned by the principles of equity of

opportunity; representivity; prioritisation; and enhanced access, success and throughput. The *DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy* gives effect to the Ministerial guidelines for improving equity in the distribution of DSI/NRF Bursaries and Fellowships (2013). Citizenship, age, gender and disability are considered in the allocation of funding, with transformation of the postgraduate cohort as the core objective. Financial need is included as a criterion for determining the modality of funding. To attract and retain a diverse range of students, funding modalities include cover at full cost of study for students who meet the required criteria. In order to develop a future cohort of researchers and scholars, it is vital that postgraduate students complete their studies without delay and that they continue through to completion of their doctoral studies. To advance these priorities, the NRF will offer funding for full-time studies from honours through to the doctoral degree level, **subject to satisfactory performance at each consecutive postgraduate level.**

The purpose of this framework document is to outline the funding principles and implementation guidelines. The context within which the NRF functions is informed by various strategic frameworks, legislation, policies and plans of government. This framework document should be read together with the Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) System (2018); The Strategy for Human Capacity Development for Research, Innovation and Scholarships (2016); National Development Plan (2030); and the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Decadal Plan 2022.

## **2 Global Knowledge Partnerships (GKP)**

The Global Knowledge Partnerships presents international scholarship opportunities for exceptional doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and early career/emerging researchers, working in close collaboration with higher education and research institutions. For further information kindly refer to the Global Knowledge Partnership implementation framework at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/gkpif2025>.

### 3 Areas of Support

DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding is intended to support honours, master's, and doctoral candidates to pursue full-time studies at South African public universities, in all areas of Science, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences and Humanities, including Indigenous Knowledge Systems, focusing on research aligned with one of the National Priority Research Areas. Additionally, the research that is conducted by postgraduate students must align with the thematic focus areas as outlined in the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Decadal Plan 2022, which serves as an implementation guide of the 2019 White Paper on STI.

The **broad disciplines supported by the NRF for Postgraduate studies are:**

Accounting, Actuarial Science, Agricultural Sciences, Architecture Astronomy, Astrophysics, Auditing, Bibliometrics and Scientometrics, Science Biochemistry, Bioinformatics, Biotechnology, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Chemistry, Climate Change, Computer Science, Construction management, Cosmology, Data Science, Demography, Dermatological sciences, Drug Discovery and Development, Earth Sciences, Earth Observation, Ecology, Economic Sciences, Economic and Management Science, Education, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Financial Management, Functional Genomics, Geology, Geosciences, Global Change, Society and Sustainability, Higher Education (Policy) Studies, Health Sciences, History and Philosophy of Science, Information Science, Information Systems, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Law, Materials Research, Mathematical Sciences, Marine Sciences, Medicinal Plant, Medical Sciences, Microbiology, Nanotechnology, Nuclear Science, Nuclear Technologies in Medicine and Biosciences, Palaeosciences, Polar Science, Physics, Renewable Energy, Research Evaluation and Research Impact studies, Science Communication, Social Science and Humanities, Sociology of Science and Technology , Space Science, Statistics, Technology and Innovation (Policy) Studies, the Public Understanding of Science and Technology, Transportation Studies and Tourism.

The percentage split of overall students that the NRF will support is 80% from the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines and 20% from the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH).

## 4 Eligibility Criteria

### 4.1 Eligibility for first-time applicants for honours, master's and doctoral funding

#### i. Nationality

- Only South African citizens and permanent residents are eligible to apply for honours scholarships. All the other nationalities are eligible to apply for masters and doctoral scholarships.

#### ii. Age

- **Applicants for honours funding** must be **28** years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants **must not be older than 28 years** by 31 December 2024.
- **Applicants for master's funding** must be **30** years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants **must not be older than 30 years** by 31 December 2024.
- **Applicants for doctoral funding** must be **32** years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants **must not be older than 32 years** by 31 December 2024.

The maximum entry age requirement is 28, 30 and 32 years for honours, master's and doctoral studies respectively, in the year of application, regardless of first year of registration.

#### iii. Minimum Academic Requirements

- **For first-time honours funding** - A minimum average of 65% for major subjects in the final undergraduate year of study;
- **For first-time master's funding** - A minimum average of 65% for all subjects at the honours level OR a minimum average of 65% for all subjects of a postgraduate diploma OR a minimum average of 65% for all final year subjects of a four-year degree;
- **For first-time doctoral funding** - A minimum of 65% at the master's level.

**IMPORTANT:** South African citizens or permanent resident applicants who have graduated from 2021 academic year with a classification of Pass will NOT be eligible to apply for NRF Funding. Only applicants with a numerical pass mark may apply for NRF funding. However, the following individuals without a numerical mark are eligible to apply:

- South African citizens or permanent residents who graduated prior to the 2021 academic year with a 'Pass' or a 'Pass with a distinction'. Applicants with a 'Pass' should enter the word 'Pass' under the academic achievement section of the application form, and applicants who passed with a distinction should enter 75%;
- International citizens with an international degree applying for master's and doctoral scholarships, should enter the word 'Pass' in the application form.
- South African citizens with international qualifications applying for master's and doctoral scholarships should also enter the word 'Pass' in the application form.

**iv. Eligibility criteria for funding at Full Cost of Study (FCS) and Partial Cost of Study (PCS)**

The eligibility criteria for funding at Full Cost of Study (FCS) and Partial Cost of Study (PCS) listed in Table 1 apply to all first-time applicants for honours, master's and doctoral funding.

**Table 1. Eligibility criteria for first time applicants for the NRF postgraduate funding for Full Cost of Study and Partial Cost of Study for the 2025 academic year**

Study Level	Full Cost of Study		Partial Cost of Study
	Exceptional Achievers	Financially Needy and Applicants with a Disability	Other
Honours	Average results of $\geq 75\%$ mark for major subjects	Average results of $\geq 65\%$ mark for major subjects in	Average results of $\geq 65\%$ mark for major subjects in the final



Study Level	Full Cost of Study		Partial Cost of Study
	Exceptional Achievers	Financially Needy and Applicants with a Disability	Other
	in the final year of undergraduate study	the final year of undergraduate study	year of undergraduate study
	<p><b>Applicants for honours funding</b> must be <b>28</b> years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants <b>must not be older than 28 years</b> by 31 December 2024. Only South African citizens and permanent residents are eligible for honours scholarships.</p>		
Master's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 75% for all subjects at the honours level;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 75% for all subjects for a Postgraduate diploma level;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 75% for final year subjects of a four-year degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for all subjects at the honours level;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for all subjects for a Postgraduate diploma;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for final year subjects of a four-year degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for all subjects at the honours level;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for all subjects for a Postgraduate diploma;</li> </ul> OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum average of 65% for final year subjects of a four-year degree</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Applicants for master's funding</b> must be <b>30</b> years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants <b>must not be older than 30 years</b> by 31 December 2024.</p>		
Doctoral	Minimum average of 75% for Master's degree	Minimum average of 65% for Master's degree	Minimum average of 65% for Master's degree
	<p><b>Applicants for doctoral funding</b> must be <b>32</b> years of age or younger in the year of application i.e. applicants <b>must not be older than 32 years</b> by 31 December 2024.</p>		

- Only South African citizens and permanent residents who are either financially needy (as per financial means test outcomes or Proof of NSFAS/ ISFAP funding), living with a disability or exceptional academic achievers are eligible for FCS.
- Applicants who are eligible for FCS may be awarded funding at PCS due to budget constraints.
- The PCS funding will be awarded to South African citizens, permanent residents and 5% of international students.

**The NRF reserves the right not to make an award or to adjust a grant under any circumstances from PCS to FCS (Refer to section 13 for further information on considerations for funding).**

#### **4.2 Additional eligibility criteria for first-time applicants for master's and doctoral funding who commenced their studies on a part-time basis**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1:

- i. Applicants who commenced their master's and doctoral studies on a part-time basis and wish to be considered for funding for completion of their studies on a full-time basis, may apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However:
  - a) Only students who will be registered on a full-time basis for their second or third year of master's studies in 2025 may apply, and
  - b) Only students who will be registered on a full-time basis for their second, third, or fourth year of doctoral studies in 2025 may apply.
  - c) The initial date for registration of the degree will be taken into consideration to determine the support period if the student's application is successful.
- ii. Eligibility period for individuals who took gap year(s) due to exceptional circumstances will be calculated from date of initial registration which will exclude any gap year(s) taken. A valid proof must accompany the motivation.

#### **4.3 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF-SARAO applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for SARAO postgraduate scholarships must meet the following criteria:

- i. For NRF-SARAO Honours scholarships, SARAO will only consider applications from South African citizens or permanent residents.
- ii. For NRF-SARAO Master's and Doctoral scholarships, SARAO will only consider applications from South African citizens or permanent residents, and from citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.
- iii. For NRF-SARAO Master's and Doctoral scholarships, SARAO will ONLY consider applicants who wish to pursue research relevant to the scientific and technical goals of the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes, are eligible to apply for the NRF-SARAO scholarships.

**IMPORTANT:** For free-standing (non-grant holder linked scholarships), NRF-SARAO Master's and Doctoral scholarships, applicants must select a pre-approved research project. The process for the selection of a pre-approved project is provided in the SARAO Postgraduate Application Guide, available on the NRF and the SARAO website.

- iv. All applicants who will be funded by NRF-SARAO (that includes applicants for freestanding SARAO postgraduate scholarships; applicants linked to a SARAO research group; and applicants linked to a SARAO research chair) must select the **SARAO Scholarship** option in the application form.

#### **4.4 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF-DAAD applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for the NRF-DAAD master's and doctoral funding must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Only South African citizens and permanent residents are eligible for master's and doctoral bursaries.
- ii. Only applicants that are eligible for FCS funding will be awarded NRF-DAAD funding.
- iii. Applicants should have a general interest in an education and cultural exchange with Germany.

#### **4.5 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF-SASOL FOUNDATION applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for the NRF-SASOL honours, master's and doctoral funding must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Only South African citizens are eligible for honours, master's and doctoral scholarships.
- ii. Only applicants that are eligible for FCS funding will be awarded NRF-SASOL FOUNDATION funding.
- iii. Only applicants registered in chemistry and related disciplines with specific focus on green economy at the following South African public universities: University of Fort Hare, University of Limpopo, University of Venda, University of Free State (Qwaqwa Campus), and North-West University (Mahikeng Campus), will be awarded NRF-SASOL FOUNDATION funding.

#### **4.6 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF-MINDS applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for the NRF-MINDS funding must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Applicants must be a national of an African country other than South Africa and not residing in South Africa. Only a maximum of 10% of the total number of awarded scholarships will go to candidates already within the country. Candidates will have to provide evidence of the reasons for presently being in the country.
- ii. The NRF-MINDS programme is targeted at specialist postgraduate study in fields that are in short supply on the African continent. The priority research fields are: Water-Energy-Food Nexus; Smart Economy; African Heritage (People, Spaces and Settlements); ICT; Artificial Intelligence and Robotics; and Health (and Well-being).
- iii. Applicants must demonstrate leadership potential.

#### **4.7 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF- Sub-Saharan African Systems Analysis Centre (SASAC), applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for the NRF-SASAC doctoral funding must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Applicants from South Africa and the following seventeen (17) African countries participating in the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI): Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and the Sub-Saharan African Regional Member Organisation (SSARMO), are eligible to apply;
- ii. Students are required to have a supervisor from South Africa who is recognised as an expert in systems analysis methodology, and preferably a co-supervisor or mentor with UK researcher and/or IIASA or an IIASA alumnus; and
- iii. Applicants must demonstrate leadership potential.

#### **4.8 Additional eligibility criteria for NRF-Energy Mobility Education Trust applicants**

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, applicants for the NRF-EMET funding must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Applicants must be pursuing studies in Commerce and STEM disciplines with specific focus on Mathematical Science, Data Science, Computer Science, Green Economy, as Renewable Energy and Climate Change.
- ii. Will be studying in the following universities: University of Fort Hare, University of Limpopo, University of Pretoria, University of the Witwatersrand, University of the Western Cape; and the University of Johannesburg.

#### **4.9 Eligibility for NRF Uninterrupted Study Support**

Uninterrupted study support is funding of postgraduate students from the honours up to the doctoral level, however, students will have to submit a new scholarship application for each study level.

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 4.1, NRF-funded students will be eligible for uninterrupted study support provided that they meet the following requirements:

- i. The NRF-funded degree is completed within the NRF funding periods which are one (1) year for a full-time honours degree and two (2) years for a full-time master's degree;

- ii. Register for a master's degree immediately after completing the honours degree
- iii. Register for a doctoral degree immediately after completing the master's degree;
- iv. Meet all the university and NRF requirements for postgraduate funding;
- v. Submit a new scholarship application for each level of study; and
- vi. Submit the required progress report for the relevant levels of support.

#### **4.10 Eligibility for Extension Support applicants for full-time master's and doctoral studies**

The eligibility criteria for applicants for Extension Support for full-time master's and doctoral studies in 2025 are as follows:

- i. Applicants must be NRF scholarship-holders in 2024. Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances and will be for either six (6) or twelve (12) months as the NRF expects all postgraduate students to complete their qualifications within the NRF funding period;
- ii. Applicants applying for extension support at the master's level must have registered for their master's degree in 2023 or July 2022;
- iii. Applicants applying for extension support at the doctoral level must have registered for their doctoral degree in 2022 or July 2021;
- iv. Only students pursuing full-time master's or doctoral studies in South Africa are eligible to apply;
- v. Applicants for extension support will be eligible for postgraduate funding at the same value as their 2024 funding; and
- vi. Applicants must have the support from their supervisor in order for the Extension application to be considered.

#### **4.11 Individuals not Eligible for NRF Postgraduate Funding**

The following categories of individuals are not eligible to apply for NRF postgraduate funding:

- i. Students who hold NRF funding for first-year master's studies in 2024, or first- or second-year doctoral studies in 2024, are not eligible to apply for funding as new students or first-time applicants. Students in these categories are continuing students and must submit required Progress Reports (PR) on the NRF Connect

- System by the stipulated cut-off date to receive funding for the 2025 academic year, as per the Conditions of Grant and NRF approved funding level;
- ii. Individuals who registered for their masters' studies before July 2023;
  - iii. Individuals who registered for their doctoral studies before July 2022;
  - iv. Individuals who registered for their honours study before July 2024;
  - v. Individuals who graduated from the 2021 academic year without numerical marks are not allowed to apply;
  - vi. Eligibility period for individuals who took gap years is calculated from date of initial registration which includes any gap years taken. Should the total period of study exceed the NRF maximum funding period i.e., 2 and 3 years for master's and doctoral degrees respectively, the individual is not eligible to apply;
  - vii. Individuals that already hold a degree for the same level at which they intend studying, are not eligible to apply, e.g., individuals that hold a postgraduate diploma qualification may not apply for NRF Postgraduate Funding for honours studies;
  - viii. Individuals who de-registered from a degree and are applying for funding for the same level may apply, however the first date of registration for the original degree will be taken into account when determining the eligible period for NRF funding;
  - ix. Individuals who will be in their pre-proposal year in 2025 should not apply for NRF Postgraduate Funding for the pre-proposal year. In the case where a master's or doctoral programme includes a pre-proposal registration year prior to the first year of the programme, the NRF will not fund the pre-proposal year. The pre-proposal year will not be counted as a first year of registration for the degree;
  - x. Individuals who intend to register for, or who are studying for a 100% master's by coursework, professional master's or professional doctoral degree, may not apply for NRF Postgraduate Funding. Further clarification of the professional degrees may be obtained from the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) approved by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET);
  - xi. Individuals who will be in contractual or permanent employment, whether salaried or unpaid, that exceeds 12 hours of work per week, while pursuing honours, master's or doctoral studies may not hold DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding for full-time studies. The above-mentioned 12 hours of work per week only applies to the institutional students' academic services such as teaching, tutorials and assistance or demonstration duties during the year of study;

- xii. Individuals that are on sabbatical leave from their current employment may not apply for DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding;
- xiii. Individuals, including BTech qualification holders, who intend to study towards a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate in Education and any postgraduate qualification that does not entail research as a core component;
- xiv. Students pursuing an undergraduate degree irrespective of the degree that they are enrolled for.
- xv. Students who are currently nominated under a grantholder's NRF research grant with a zero value, are not eligible to apply for extension support; and
- xvi. Students who will be registered for two or more degrees simultaneously regardless of NQF exit levels per degree.

## 5 Financial Means Test

The **DHET** currently defines **financially needy students** as individuals who come from households with a **combined gross family income of no more than R350 000** (three hundred and fifty thousand rand) per annum.

Applicants who provide the required consent, will be subjected to a financial means test to determine their financial need status. Applicants for DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding who were previously supported by National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) or the Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) will not be subjected to a financial means test, however, they **must attach proof** in the form of an official university stamped financial statement or signed agreement with NSFAS or ISFAP. **If proof is not attached at time of application, the applicant will be eligible and considered for PCS.** A financial means test is conducted annually by 01 September. Continuing NRF-funded students requesting financial means test should liaise with the institutions and complete the relevant documents to be submitted by the institutions to the NRF by 15 August. The outcomes will be made available by 15 December.

The NRF acknowledges that there are financially needy applicants that may not have undergone a financial means test prior to applying to the NRF for postgraduate funding, and therefore, a financial means test for those applicants will be facilitated in partnership



with ISFAP. Applicants that need to undertake a financial means test must provide the following:

- i. Completed NRF-ISFAP consent form certified by a Commissioner of Oaths uploaded to the Financial Need section of the online application;
- ii. Consent form must be co-signed by the household contributor(s) whom the financial means test will be conducted against and their ID numbers must be included on the online application form; and
- iii. Consent to the NRF-ISFAP, and/or such other person or entity that the NRF-ISFAP may designate, the absolute right and permission to conduct creditworthy checks, affordability assessments and to verify his/her combined household income in order to ascertain whether they qualify for NRF-ISFAP funding.

The above checks and assessments by NRF-ISFAP will be conducted strictly in accordance and/or in compliance with the provisions of the National Credit Act No 34 of 2005.

Applicants who were previously funded by Funza Lushaka, Department of Military Veterans, or Department of Social Development (DSD) bursaries for their undergraduate studies must undergo a financial means test upon application for DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding. Typically, students funded by Funza Lushaka, Department of Military Veterans or DSD are nominated by the funder and financial need is not a criterion in the award of the undergraduate bursaries (although the bursaries are administered *via* NSFAS), hence they will be subjected to a financial means test at the postgraduate level.

## 6 Applicable Allowances

Successful applicants will be funded either at FCS or PCS, refer to **Table 2**.

Students living with a disability may apply for **additional funding** for an **assistive technology device** of up to **R20 000**. This is the **maximum amount allowed** during the tenure of the scholarship. **An assistive device** is defined as any device, product, equipment or tool that is designed or adapted to enable persons with disabilities to

participate in activities, tasks or actions including: (i) **mobility aids** such as wheelchairs, prostheses and crutches as well as service animals (ii) **communication aids** such as hearing aids, Frequency Modulation (FM) systems; (iii) **sensory aids** such as white canes; noise reducing headphones and coloured lenses (iv) **technology aids** such as computers for alternate and augmentative communication, screen readers, magnifiers, texts in audio format (Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the PSET, 2018). The assistive devices are aligned to requirements related to research purposes rather than social services, as a result, the NRF will not pay costs for human support such as guide dogs, scribes, carers, note takers, sign language interpreter and tutors .

**Table 2: Annual NRF allowances applicable for FCS and PCS for honours, master’s and doctoral studies.**

Category	Funding per level of Postgraduate Study <sup>1</sup>					
	Honours		Master’s		Doctoral	
	FCS	PCS	FCS	PCS	FCS	PCS
Value of the Scholarship (Rand)	163 892 pa	124 892 pa	182 836 pa	126 836 pa	188 820 pa	131 320 pa
Electronic study device allowance (Rand) <sup>2</sup>	10 000	n/a	10 000	n/a	10 000	n/a
Maximum Assistive Technology Device (Rand) <sup>3</sup>	20 000	n/a	20 000	n/a	20 000	n/a

<sup>1</sup>The scholarship amounts will be reviewed on an annual basis subject to the agreed CPI-linked sector-wide increases and alignment with the *Guidelines for the Department of Higher Education and Training Bursary Scheme for Students at Public Universities*.

<sup>2</sup> The electronic study device allowance will be provided as a once-off allowance for the duration of the postgraduate studies.

<sup>3</sup> The Assistive Technology Device allowance will only be for students living with a disability.

## 7 The Maximum Period of Support for each Postgraduate Level of Study

The DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding is aimed at supporting individuals intending to register at a South African public university for full-time honours, master’s or doctoral studies. Extension support for master’s and doctoral students will be approved only under exceptional circumstances.

The maximum period of support for each postgraduate level of study is indicated in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Maximum period of NRF funding for each postgraduate level of study.

Level of study	Maximum period of support
Honours	One (1) year
Master's	Two (2) years
Doctoral	Three (3) years
Master's upgrade to doctoral	Four (4) years
Extension Support for master's and doctoral	Six (6) or twelve (12) months

The period of support is calculated from the first year of registration for the study or research regardless of NRF funding and excludes the pre-proposal year.

## 8 Application Process

**Applicants must first identify the university where they will be registered for their postgraduate degree before submitting an application to the NRF.** When an applicant submits an application on the NRF Connect System, the application is routed to the university where the applicant intends to register. The NRF Connect System can be accessed on: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>. Further instructions on the application process will be made available in the DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Guide for 2025. Additionally, applicants must familiarise themselves with the NRF Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document.

### **Students' applications opening and closing dates are as follows:**

Level of study	Opening dates	Closing dates
Honours (General)	<b>01 July 2024</b>	22 November 2024
First-time Master's		05 July 2024

Level of study	Opening dates	Closing dates
First-time Doctoral	23 May 2024	05 July 2024
Master's and Doctoral Extension Support		15 September 2024

***NB: Honours General Scholarships will open in July 2024 and institutions will have until end of March 2025 to claim funds of recommended eligible students. Honours applicants requiring ISFAP assessment should submit their applications by 02 September 2024.***

### **8.1 Grantholder-linked (GHL) associated applicants**

Applicants who have been recruited by an NRF-funded supervisor to be part of a research project/group, under any of the NRF Funding Instruments listed below, should apply *via* the **Scholarship linked to NRF-funded research category** and **should provide the supervisor's NRF Grant UID Number (unique identification number), OR, provide the NRF Application Reference Number if the supervisor's research project application has been submitted to the NRF for review:**

- Research Chairs (SARChI);
- Centres of Excellence (CoE);
- Thuthuka;
- Global Knowledge Research Programmes such as
  - Earth Systems Science Research Programme (ESSRP);
  - Global Change Social Sciences Research Programme (GCSSRP); and
  - Risk and Vulnerability Science Centres (RVSCs);
- African Earth Observation Network (AEON);
- Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP);
- South African Earth Observation Network (SAEON);
- SARAO-Funded Research Groups and Research Chairs; and
- National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme (NASSP)

## 8.2 Non NRF Grantholder-linked applicants

Applicants who have **not** been recruited by an NRF-funded supervisor will **not** need to provide a UID or application reference number on the online application template. These are applicants applying for General Scholarships, PDP, NRF-SASOL, NRF-DAAD, NRF-SASAC, NRF-MINDS, NRF-EMET and NRF-SARAO.

## 8.3 Continuing NRF funded master's and doctoral students

All **current (2024 academic year) NRF funded** students who are eligible for a second or third year of funding must submit a Progress Report and not a new application. Refer to section 14. A new application should only be submitted for consideration to be funded for the next level of postgraduate study.

## 9 Documents to be Attached to Applications

Applicants must refer to the **DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Guide** for 2025, for a list of required attachments as these may differ for each scholarship category.

## 10 Review of Applications

### 10.1 Review of applications by university review committees

Honours, master's and doctoral funding applications will be reviewed at the institution where the student intends studying for the postgraduate degree. Reviews will be undertaken using standardised scorecards provided by the NRF as shown in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7. As a result of the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DAAD and the NRF, DAAD alumni will participate in the institutional review process provided that there are applicants that have selected NRF-DAAD funding in their application.

Only applications that are recommended by the university for NRF funding, based on the review outcome, may be submitted to the NRF, by the university Designated Authority (DA). Review scores and recommendations must be uploaded onto the NRF Connect System by the university DA when approving an application on the system. Applications which are not recommended for funding after the institutional review process should be rejected on the NRF Connect System and formal review feedback should be sent to applicants by the university. Appeals that relate to the review of applications by the

universities must be responded to by the respective institutional DA. Refer to section 11 on the role of the NRF and the universities regarding the feedback that must be provided to applicants.

The university DA must submit a report on the review process, including comments from the reviewers, and signed by either the Deans of Faculties or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research.

#### **10.4 Review of Applications for Strategic Initiatives**

Applications that fall under specific strategic initiatives MAY be reviewed by separate review panels using standardised scorecards provided by the NRF as shown in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7. The strategic initiatives include, amongst others, the NRF-SARAO postgraduate funding, the DSI-NRF Centres of Excellence (CoE's) and the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI). Only applications that are recommended for NRF funding based on the review, may be submitted to the NRF by the DA. Review scores and recommendations will be uploaded onto the NRF Connect System by the DA when approving an application on the system. Applications which are not recommended for funding after the institutional review process should be rejected on the NRF Connect System and formal review feedback should be sent to applicants by the university. Appeals that relate to the review of applications by the universities must be responded to by the respective institutional DA. Refer to section 11 on the role of the NRF and the universities regarding the feedback that must be provided to applicants.

The DA must submit a report on the review process and comments from the reviewers signed by either the respective Director, Deans of Faculties or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research.

#### **10.3 Transparency and accountability**

To be compliant with the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000) and in order to respond to appeals from applicants, the reports on the review process undertaken must include proof of the following:

- i. The names of committee or panel members of subject experts that participated in the review of applications for DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding;

- ii. Minutes of the review meeting and sign-off by the Chairperson of the review committee;
- iii. Recommendations made by the panel on whether applications are recommended or not recommended for funding, with clearly stated reasons; and
- iv. Correctly allocated scores against each criterion as per weighting provided in the relevant scorecard.

#### 10.4 Standardised review scorecards for reviewing applications

Four standardised scorecards as shown in **Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7** must be used to review applications for honours, master’s, doctoral and extension support funding respectively.

**Table 4. Review Scorecard for First-Time Applications for Honours Level Funding**

Review Criteria and Weighting	Description
<b>1. Academic merit (40%)</b>	Average percentage mark for major subjects in the final-year undergraduate courses.
<b>2. Completion time for undergraduate degree (40%)</b>	Time taken to complete the undergraduate degree.
<b>3. Priority Research Area (20%)</b>	Research aligned with one of the national research priority areas.

**Table 5. Review Scorecard for New Applications for Master’s Level Funding**

Review Criteria and Weighting	Description
<b>1. Academic merit (35%)</b>	Average percentage mark for the honours degree if completed; <b>or</b> Average percentage mark for major subjects in the final-year undergraduate courses for applicants currently registered for honours degree; <b>or</b>

Review Criteria and Weighting	Description
	Average percentage mark for major subjects in the third-year undergraduate courses for applicants in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
<b>2. Completion time for previous degree (15%)</b>	Time taken to complete the honours degree if completed; <b>or</b> Time taken to complete the undergraduate degree if the honours degree is in progress; <b>or</b> Time taken to complete third-year undergraduate courses for applicants in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
<b>3. Priority Research Area (20%)</b>	Research aligned with one of the national research priority areas.
<b>4. Project Outline (30%)</b>	Provide an overview of your research concept and your proposed aim.

**Table 6. Review Scorecard for New Applications for Doctoral Level Funding**

Review Criteria and Weighting	Description
<b>1. Academic merit (30%)</b>	Percentage mark for the master's degree if completed; <b>or</b> If the master's degree is in progress, average percentage mark for the honours degree; <b>or</b> Average percentage mark for major subjects in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
<b>2. Completion time for previous degree (15%)</b>	Time taken for completion of the master's degree if completed; <b>or</b>



<b>Review Criteria and Weighting</b>	<b>Description</b>
	If the master's degree is in progress, time taken to complete the honours degree or four-year undergraduate degree.
<b>3. Track record or Research Outputs (15%)</b>	Evidence of research outputs in accredited peer-reviewed publications and, presentations at conferences/symposiums.
<b>4. Priority Research Area (10%)</b>	Research aligned with one of the national research priority areas.
<b>5. Originality of the Doctoral study (20%)</b>	Problem statement, Identified knowledge gaps relating to the problem statement, Aim and Objectives of the study.
<b>6. Potential Impact of the research (Societal and/ or Knowledge) of the research (10%)</b>	Potential to contribute to national research strategies and the strategic goals of the knowledge economy.

**Table 7. Review Scorecard for Master's and Doctoral Level Extension Support**

<b>Review Criteria and Weighting</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1. Progress to date (25%)</b>	Report on research work completed in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree.
<b>2. Reasons why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period (25%)</b>	Explanation of why the study could not be completed within the NRF funding period.
<b>3. Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframes (50%)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work plan for six (6) or twelve (12) months, indicating activities for completion of master's or doctoral degree, indicating the start and completion date of each activity;</li> <li>2. Proposed date for submission of the dissertation for examination;</li> <li>3. Timelines for corrections to dissertation from reviewers;</li> <li>4. Details of manuscripts to be drafted and submission timelines; and</li> <li>5. Proposed graduation date.</li> </ol>

## 11 Feedback to Applicants

Applicants must refer to the **DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Guide** for 2025, regarding the role of the NRF and the universities on feedback for applications submitted.

## 12 Appeals

Appeals relating to the review process will be undertaken by the university that reviewed the application. Appeals are only based on an unsuccessful outcome during the review process by the university i.e., unfair comment from the review panel or scientific merit. It is the responsibility of the applicant to request formal review feedback from the institution. Appeals may not be lodged against the funding decision taken such as PCS funding or not being awarded funding due to budget constraints.

## 13 Equity and Redress

The NRF applies measures for enhancing equity, fairness, and justice in accordance with the South African Constitution. The NRF adheres to the Immigration Act of 2002 which states that the holder of a permanent resident permit *"has all the rights, privileges, duties and obligations of a citizen, save for those rights, privileges, duties and obligations which a law or the Constitution explicitly ascribes to citizenship"*. Additionally, the NRF adheres and supports the SADC protocol on education and training requiring member states to reserve at least 5% of admissions for students from South African Development Community (SADC) nations other than their own, treating these as home students for purposes of tuition and accommodation.

In line with the national imperative of enhancing equity of postgraduate student access, success and throughput using funding, all postgraduate funding must prioritise support for appropriately qualified applicants from designated groups *viz.* Black, female and persons living with disabilities, while ensuring that only applications that meet the merit review and selection criteria are supported. Additionally, the NRF will prioritise applicants who are financially needy, yet academically capable and previously funded by the NSFAS, NRF and/or ISFAP.

All DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding will be allocated as follows:

- **95%** to South African citizens and permanent residents;
- **5%** to students from the SADC countries and the rest of the world; and
- **55%** to women.

The **South African Citizens and permanent residents' targets** are further disaggregated in terms of **race and disability** as follows:

- **90%** Black (African, Coloured and Indian);
- **10%** White; and
- **1%** Students living with a disability.

When funding decisions are made by the NRF, consideration will be given to ensuring the need to strengthen research capacity in scarce skills, priority skills and knowledge fields as well as to accelerate the demographic transformation. Allocation of funding will be determined by the following criteria: Recommendation by the institutional merit - review panel; NRF Annual Performance Plan (APP) targets; Institutional rate of scholarship awards uptake; Postgraduate enrolments at each university; Institutional spread; Knowledge domains as specified by the funder; Financially need as determined by ISFAP facilitated household means test; Previously NRF, NSFAS and/or ISFAP funded students and Availability of budget.

## **14 Progress Reporting**

All continuing students that are eligible for continuation of scholarship funding for the next year of study must submit a Progress Report (PR) and not a new application. Final year students must submit final year reports.

All students who have received the DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding at either FCS or PCS as well those students funded under the old NRF policy, are required to submit Progress Reports on the NRF Connect system on the dates indicated in the NRF Conditions of Grant (CoG).

**Students will be expected to submit the Annual Progress Reports to the NRF as follows:**

- i. The **honours students**, in place of progress reports, are expected to submit certificate of honours degree completion to the Postgraduate and/or Research Office at their respective institutions after graduation.

**Master’s and doctoral students** must submit the progress reports on the NRF Connect System, see **Table 8**.

**Table 8: Progress Reporting for Masters, Doctoral and Extension Support Grantholders.**

Levels of study	Opening date for progress reports	Cut-off date for progress reports	Number of reports to be submitted at the end of the degree
<b>Masters</b>	November Annually	Mid-February	Two (2)
<b>Doctoral</b>		Annually (during the year of study)	Three (3)
<b>Extension Support</b>			One (1)

Failure to submit a progress report on time will result in the cancellation of a grant for the subsequent year(s) and the grantholder will not be eligible for further funding at the postgraduate level at which they were in breach of the CoG. Students will not be considered for funding for the next level of study if they have failed to comply with the progress reporting requirements as per the CoG.

Note: Reporting requirements for NRF-SARAO-funded postgraduate students are provided in the Terms and Conditions / Conditions of Grant, provided by NRF-SARAO.

## **15 Financial Control**

The DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding awards will be managed in terms of standard NRF financial policies and procedures. The payment of the grant to successful applicants will be administered by the NRF to the relevant institutions. The institutions will in turn administer the funds on behalf of the NRF to the successful applicant to the value of the full sum awarded by the NRF.

## 16 Monitoring and Evaluation by the NRF

The NRF will continuously monitor and review the progress of the students at an individual and institutional level. On an ongoing basis, the NRF will undertake institutional visits and focus group discussions which will be conducted at the host universities.

### 16.1 NRF-DAAD Funded students

The DAAD and NRF would like to strengthen and maintain contacts with former in-country scholarship-holders, therefore the NRF-DAAD funded final year students will receive a questionnaire that they must complete truthfully and forward to the NRF. The scholarship-holder gives consent for the questionnaire to be forwarded to the DAAD for their records. The universities should ensure that this information is submitted to the NRF as soon as the scholarship ends. The scholarship-holder is expected to uphold contact with the DAAD and join its extensive Alumni family. Please contact the DAAD Information Centre, Johannesburg for further information ([daad@wits.ac.za](mailto:daad@wits.ac.za)).

## 17 Additional Information

- i. Applications for NRF funding are completed online on the NRF Connect system.
- ii. All applicants have to be registered on NRF Connect (ORCID) to enable submission and consideration of applications.
- iii. Successful applicants that receive a provisional award for postgraduate funding from the NRF are required to accept the NRF CoG online via NRF Connect, which will be uploaded to the application at the time of the award. The required documents must be uploaded to the system when accepting the award on NRF Connect.
- iv. Successful applicants that receive the NRF-SASOL FOUNDATION scholarship who are not registered in one of the five mentioned institutions on section 4.5, or who want to change institutions after being awarded the scholarship, will forfeit the scholarship.
- v. Applicants recommended by universities for NRF-MINDS funding will be interviewed to assess leadership potential.
- vi. The Student-Supervisor Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) clarifying expectations and preferences in managing the research project, must be signed by both the student and supervisor and submitted with the mid-year reports due by

the end of August. Honours students should submit the signed MoU between student and HoD/Supervisor at take up of award or with the mid-year reports. Master's students registered for coursework in the first year of study, should submit the agreed and signed MoU with their year-end reports due by mid-February of the following year.

- vii. Postgraduate funding awarded for the 2025 academic year, that is not taken up by 30 April 2025 will be automatically cancelled for reallocation unless otherwise approved by the NRF.
- viii. All DSI-NRF postgraduate student funding shall be held as the primary funding towards the research study.
- ix. Grantholders are expected to undertake at least 80 hours of Academic Service Work per annum in the form of structured, university determined academic support activities. University determined academic support activities may include tutoring/mentoring of other students; volunteering for orientation of new students and on career days; or science engagement activities. Academic support activities must be included in the student-supervisor MoU and reported on in the students' Progress Report. Please refer further to the *Statement of Expectations for DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding* available under call documents on the NRF website.
- x. The grantholder must obtain the degree, for which the postgraduate funding was awarded, by the contractual date, which is within one (1) year after NRF funding has ceased and must notify the NRF *via* the university DA of the completion of the degree.
- xi. Grantholders may not hold bursaries, awards, assistantships and/ or receive emoluments from public or private institutions in conjunction with the DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding. The grant may not be held concurrently with any other DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding or fully funded government scholarship/ bursary from organisations, such as Council for Scientific and Industrial Research or the South African Medical Research Council.
- xii. Grantholders on "FCS" or "PCS" funding **may receive supplementary<sup>4</sup> or top-up<sup>4</sup> funding** from another private-sector source, another South African government source, the NRF supervisor's running expenses (SARChI, CoEs, etc.)

or any other source (E.g. merit award), provided that the total funding received from the NRF, and the other source(s) does not exceed institutional maximum limit.

*4Supplementation or top-up is additional funding on an existing scholarship, however, it cannot be another fully funded scholarship.*

xiii. By submitting an application, the applicant consents to the NRF for processing of personal information in compliance with the "POPI Act" as required from time to time for funding and statistical purposes.

***NB: Applications submitted without supervisor support will be deemed ineligible.***

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that:**

- They have read and understood the requirements as laid out in the DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Framework as well as the DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Guide for 2025;
- They have applied for the correct category/scholarship;
- All attachments are translated into English as a medium of communication;
- A suitable supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable) has been identified;
- For first-time honours applicants, the final examination results are captured in the scorecard of the application as soon as they are made available by the institution.
- For first-time master's applicants, the identified master's supervisor and referee submit the required report *via* the NRF Connect System;
- For first-time doctoral applicants, master's supervisor, identified doctoral supervisor and referee submit the required report *via* the NRF Connect System;
- The application is completed in full and the information furnished is correct;
- The university has received the application submitted on the NRF Connect System.
- To ensure that proof of NSFAS/ISFAP funding is attached at time of application if applicant was previously funded NSFAS/ISFAP.

## **18 NRF Contact Persons**

For enquiries, applicants are encouraged to contact the Research or Postgraduate offices at their universities. Should there still be a need to contact the NRF, below are the contact persons and details:

***For General honours related enquiries, please contact:***

Mr Lehlogonolo Phaahla: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4315.

Email Address: [LA.Phaahla@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:LA.Phaahla@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For General First-time master's and doctoral, and NRF-DAAD related enquiries, please contact:***

Ms Kgaugelo Molepo: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4148.

Email Address: [KJ.Molepo@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:KJ.Molepo@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For master's and doctoral Extension Support, PDP and NRF-SASOL related enquiries, please contact:***

Ms Nontokoza Kunene: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4105

Email Address: [NS.Kunene@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:NS.Kunene@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For National Skills Fund and NRF-MINDS related enquiries, please contact:***

Ms Busisiwe Sibiyi: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4166

Email Address: [BG.Sibiyi@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:BG.Sibiyi@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For Global Knowledge Partnerships related enquiries, please contact:***

Mr Nelson Komane: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4219.

Email Address: [SN.Komane@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:SN.Komane@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For First-time SARChI honours, master's and doctoral related enquiries, please contact:***

Ms Andisiwe Jukuda: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4113.

Email Address: [AH.Jukuda@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:AH.Jukuda@risa.nrf.ac.za)



***For First-time CoEs honours, master's and doctoral related enquiries, please contact:***

Ms Malekgotla Finger: Professional Officer . Telephone: 012 481 4003.

Email Address: [MD.Finger@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:MD.Finger@risa.nrf.ac.za)

***For SARAO Master's and Doctoral related enquiries, please contact:***

Annah Mashemola at [amashemola@sarao.ac.za](mailto:amashemola@sarao.ac.za). Telephone: 011 268 3420.

***For SARAO Honours related enquiries, please contact:***

Mkhululi Jodwana at [mjodwana@sarao.ac.za](mailto:mjodwana@sarao.ac.za). Telephone: 011 268 3412.

***NRF FRAUD LINE to anonymously report any irregular, corrupt or unethical conduct relating to funding:***

Telephone: 0800 701 701

SMS: 39772

Website: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/pixpopup-item/fraud-hotline-popup/>

## **Annexure A: Information about the NRF partners for Postgraduate Student Funding**

### **1. British Council**

The British Council through the International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) offers a unique opportunity for international governments and research partners to collaborate with the UK's leading research and innovation bodies to address global challenges. The fund enables strategic science partnerships between the UK and other countries/territories where our scientific, strategic, and diplomatic interests align. Through interdisciplinary research and innovation, we aim to achieve tangible societal impacts in areas such as the planet, health, and technology. ISPF offers access to global talent, large-scale facilities, research ecosystems, and markets, enabling researchers and innovators to move forward ideas to greater maturity, applicability, and commercialisation.

### **2. Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)**

The DAAD is the world's largest funding organisation for the international exchange of students and researchers. Since it was founded in 1925, around two million scholars in Germany and abroad have received DAAD funding. It is a registered association and its members are German institutions of higher education and student bodies.

### **3. Energy Mobility Education Trust**

Founded in 2014 as the BPSA Education Foundation Trust, over the years the Energy Mobility Education Trust has evolved and grown, shaping our identity into the Energy Mobility Education Trust. Its mandate is to facilitate access to education, skills development and formal qualifications for young black South Africans, and our passion lies in helping our youth reach for their goals and drive lasting change.

### **4. Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP)**

ISFAP was established as a funding model to sustainably cater for the higher education needs and costs of South Africa's poor and middle-class students. The programme aims to fast-track South Africa's skills production for the 21st century by funding the higher education costs of mainly students studying towards a career in Occupations of High Demand (OHDs), which have been identified as critical to South Africa's economic development by the Human Resources Development Council (HRDC). These include Actuaries, Accountants, Engineers, Medical Doctors, Pharmacists and Prosthetists.

### **5. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)**

IIASA is an international research institute that advances systems analysis and applies its research methods to identify policy solutions to reduce human footprints, enhance the resilience of natural and socioeconomic systems, and help achieve the sustainable

development goals. South Africa and seventeen (17) African countries participating in the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI): Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, are members of IIASA through the Sub-Saharan African Regional Member Organisation (SSARMO).

## **6. Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS)**

MINDS is a pan-African policy think tank committed to addressing the challenges affecting democratic governance and strengthening of African institutions, as well as seeking new and progressive ways to transform the economic development of the continent. Established in 2010, MINDS emerged out of the observation that development efforts in Africa have failed to meet expectations with respect to social, institutional and economic outcomes in comparison to other regions of the world. Specifically, MINDS promotes the agency of African youth in driving a transformative agenda for sustainable socio-economic development of the continent.

## **7. Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems (Mitacs)**

Mitacs is a Canadian not for profit research organisation. In partnership with companies, government and academia, Mitacs is developing the next generation of innovators with vital scientific and business skills through unique research and training programs. In partnership with companies, government and academia, Mitacs is supporting a new economy using Canada's most valuable resource – its people.

## **8. National Skills Fund (NSF)**

The NSF is a public entity established by the government to provide funding for skills development initiatives in South Africa. With a focus on national priorities and the achievement of the Skills Development Act, the NSF supports education and training programs, including bursaries, scholarships, learnerships, and workplace-based learning. Additionally, the NSF invests in improving the post-school education and training system through capacity building, skills infrastructure, and research and innovation. Operating under the oversight of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the NSF plays a vital role in enhancing skills development and advancing the nation's workforce.

## **9. Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI)**

The SGCI is a multilateral initiative established in 2015 that is strengthening the institutional capacities of 17 public science funding agencies in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to support research and evidence-based policies that will contribute to economic and social development. The programme is supported by the NRF, Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), German Research Foundation (DFG), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and science councils in 17 African countries.

## **10. Sasol Ltd**

Sasol is a global chemicals and energy company. It harnesses its knowledge and expertise to integrate sophisticated technologies and processes into world-scale operating facilities. It safely and sustainably sources, produces and markets a range of high-quality products in 22 countries, creating value for stakeholders. Its purpose "Innovating for a better world" drive compels it to deliver on triple bottom line outcomes of People, Planet and Profit, responsibly and always with the intent to be a force for good.

## **11. Sasol Foundation**

is mandated to create impactful change through access to quality education that enables sustainable economic participation in a changing society, focused on the learner and execution through the school and the national government systems.