

# **DAAD-NRF JOINT IN-COUNTRY MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME**

## **FRAMEWORK**

**DIRECTORATE: International Relations and Cooperation (IRC)**

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## 1. Background

The core mandate of the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa, is to promote and support research through funding, human capital development and the provision of the necessary facilities in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of research. In order to realise this mandate, the NRF has made substantial commitment and investment towards supporting emerging researchers to intensify and strengthen African and global networks. This is in line with the National Development Plan 2030, and the national priorities as set out in the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MSTF). The continuous improvements in research and innovation set South Africa on a competitive platform globally to leverage effective partnerships and funding.

As part of the “In-Country Scholarship Programme”, in which more than two dozen African universities and university networks participate and which annually supports some 1000 African postgraduates, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in partnership with the NRF is able to offer scholarships for postgraduate studies at South African universities. The programme is co-funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the NRF. The scholarship is aimed at future academic staff development without neglecting other sector demands for academically trained personnel.

## 2. Rationale

International strategic partnerships remain the vehicle for development, within the context of the advancement of research and human capacity development. The DAAD-NRF Joint In-Country Scholarship Programme is a means of promoting academic, scientific and technological cooperation. The programme is crucial for the NRF as it assist the organisation to achieve its long-term objective of establishing high level strategic international collaborative networks and promoting research and knowledge generation through human capital development, as outlined in the *NRF Strategy 2020*. This Strategy, as aligned to the national strategic frameworks such as the Department of Science and Technology (DST) Ten Year Innovation Plan, the Human Capital Development Framework as well as the National Development Plan (NDP), seeks to ensure that South Africa has appropriately qualified human resources to produce knowledge that is both globally competitive, and able to transform the socio-economic landscape of the country.

### 3. Objectives

The NRF lauds this contribution of the German government as being of invaluable support to its own efforts. The objectives of this funding instrument are to:

- significantly increase the number of post-graduate candidates receiving quality education and training;
- contribute significantly to our national efforts of human capital development, especially at our tertiary institutions but also for the public and private sectors; and to
- engage in the South African PhD Project and, thereby, fulfilling one of the key strategic objectives of the NRF VISION 2020.

### 4. Areas of Support

**DAAD and NRF offer up to 120 new scholarships for Master's and Doctoral studies in 2017.**

The programme addresses young and rising candidates who aim at acquiring a Master's or Doctoral degree. Preference will be given to full-time registered young South Africans and permanent residents. University staff-members studying towards a doctoral qualification will also be considered.

Staff members should be enrolled for full-time doctoral studies and be exempted from teaching. In exceptional cases, a limited extent of teaching obligations may be accepted but has to be motivated in writing. The host institution has to document precisely and convincingly the quantity and content of the lecturing duties and their compliance with the prevailing goal of the academic qualification of the candidate. An intrinsic link between the teaching obligations and the content of the degree programme is indispensable.

The application is open to all subject areas with strong relevance to the national development of South Africa. This will include science, engineering, technology, applies social science, environmental and other special areas of law, but excludes the humanities and fine arts.

### 5. Application Process

The NRF online process for call for proposals will apply with this grant. All documentation related to the call is obtainable from the NRF website. To apply, use the NRF Online Submission system. Please consult the DAAD-NRF Application Guide for 2017 for further instructions about the application process.

## 6. Eligibility

In selecting applicants for consideration for the Master's and Doctoral scholarships, the following criteria will apply:

- Applicants must be South African citizens or hold permanent residence status in South Africa in the latter case, certified proof of residency must be provided.
- Female candidates and those belonging to designated groups are particularly encouraged to apply.
- Generally an age limit of 36 years at the time of application applies. However, excellent applications from slightly older candidates will be considered on an *ad-hoc* basis based on a strong motivation from the applicant.
- Applicants' last qualification should not be obtained longer than six (6) years prior to year of application.
- Applicants may come from all those fields of study that have a strong relevance to the national development of the country (including the applied social sciences, environmental and other special areas of law but excluding the humanities and fine arts).
- Applicants who already hold a qualification for the level of funding they are applying for are not eligible.
- The qualifications eligibility criteria is as follows:
  - persons having an Honours degree may apply for funding for a Master's degree;
  - persons having a Master's degree may apply for funding for a doctoral degree; and
  - persons having a 4-year Bachelor's degree qualified at least as second class upper or an aggregate academic performance of at least 60% for postgraduate studies.
- Scholarships-holders are allowed to hold supplementary bursaries, grants or emoluments which may be capped in line with NRF and university policies.
- The scholarship must **not** be held simultaneously with a bursary/scholarship from any other NRF source, NRF administered source, and DAAD administered source or other government sources without prior NRF / DAAD permission.
- If the applicant does receive any supplementary funding during the duration of the scholarship, this has to be declared to the NRF/ DAAD.
- Scholarship-holders must not hold full-time salaried employment during the duration of the scholarship. They will be allowed to undertake a maximum of 12 hours of employment which includes teaching, tutorials, and assistance or demonstration duties per week on average.

- University staff members are only eligible to apply for Doctoral funding under the programme. Proof of university employment must be provided.
- University staff members applying into the programme will have to provide a supporting letter from their human resource department clearly indicating their working hours and status of employment during the tenure of the award.

## 7. Selection Criteria

Applications will be adjudicated by an independent selection panel consisting of South African and German experts in the various fields, which may include representatives of the DAAD and the NRF, as well as South African and German academics and a representative of the German Embassy – Cultural or Research Division. Applications are assessed based on academic merit, research motivation and potential.

**NRF Scorecards for the Assessment of DAAD-NRF In-Country Master's and Doctoral Scholarship Applications**

Scorecard for the selection of Masters Candidates for 2016 Funding (Hurdles: 1.Promoter support; 2. Required supporting documents)						
Review Criteria/ Weight	Description	Five Point Rating Scale, Weight and Descriptor				
		5 = Excellent	4 = Very good	3= Good	2 = Fair	1 = Poor
<b>1. Academic merit (10 %)</b>	Average percentage for Hons or Final year B.Tech	80 -100%	70-79%	60-69%	55-59%	Below 55%
<b>2. Applicant's Track Record (15 %)</b>	Awards, bursaries and Past Research Outputs (e.g. Journal articles, conference presentations /proceedings, Book Chapters, Patents)	At least one award/bursary, <b>and</b> one poster presentation <b>and</b> one oral presentation <b>and</b> other research outputs	At least one award/bursary, <b>and</b> one poster presentation <b>and</b> one oral presentation	At least one award/bursary, <b>and</b> one poster presentation <b>or</b> one oral presentation	At least one award/bursary <b>or</b> one poster presentation <b>or</b> one oral presentation	No awards / bursaries; or poster presentations
<b>3. Scientific Merit of the Proposal (35%)</b>	Literature review Aims, objectives, methodology	Literature review Aims, objectives, and methodology are fully aligned and comprehensive	Literature review Aims, objectives, methodology are fully aligned and motivated	Literature review Aims, objectives, methodology have minor gaps may be revised and approved by the NRF without further merit review.	Research proposal is poorly developed and requires major revision	Insufficient information provided
<b>4. Feasibility (30%)</b>	Work plan, project organisation, project scheduling and timelines.	A thoroughly formulated project workplan with explicit and achievable project activities with	The project work plan is well formulated and achievable with some minor issues to be considered for improvement.	The project work plan requires minor revision that may be revised and approved by the NRF without	The project workplan towards study completion is poorly formulated with unspecific timelines and	No workplan towards study completion is provided

		realistic project timelines.	<b>Reviewer to specify revisions required</b>	further merit review. <b>Reviewer to specify revisions required</b>	requires major revision. <b>Reviewer to specify revisions required</b>	
<b>5. Alignment with National Research Priorities impact (10%)</b>	Alignment with one or more national research strategies and the potential for socio and/or economic impact	The candidate has explicitly described alignment with more than one national research priority and the potential for social or economic impact.	The candidate has described alignment with one national priority and the potential for socio or economic impact.	The candidate has described alignment with one national research priority but has not explained potential social or economic impact of the research	The candidate has vaguely mentioned a national research priority but has not explained the relevance of the research	No information is provided in the application

**Scorecard for the selection of Doctoral Candidates for 2016 Funding  
 (Hurdles: 1.Promoter support; 2. Required supporting documents)**

Review Criteria/ Weight	Description	Five Point Rating Scale, Weight and Descriptor				
		5 = Excellent	4 = Above average	3= Average	2 = Below average	1= Poor
<b>1. Academic merit (15%)</b>	Cumulative percentage from the previous degree	Above 80%	75-80%	65-74%	60-64%	Below 60%



<b>2. Applicant's Track Record (5%)</b>	Awards, bursaries and Past Research Outputs (e.g. Journal articles, conference presentations /proceedings, Book Chapters, Patents)	At least 2 awards /bursaries, 1 international peer reviewed publication, 1 International oral presentation.	At least one award /bursary and 1 national peer reviewed article or 1 national oral presentation or 1 book chapter.	At least one award/bursary or 1 International poster presentation or 2 national poster presentations.	No awards/ bursaries; 1 national poster presentation.	No information
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### 3. Scientific Merit of the proposal (45%)

Novelty and Scientific contribution to new knowledge;	The proposal is exceptionally strong and well-constructed.	The proposal is well constructed;	The proposal is fairly constructed.	The proposal structure is reasonable but the study will mainly utilise the application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.	The proposal structure is poorly formulated
	A novel project idea that will contribute to the generation of both new methodologies and new knowledge in the field.	The project idea will generate new knowledge with the application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.	The study involves unique application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.	The research question/problem statement and the rationale could be refined.	The problem statement and the rationale are not included in the proposal.
	The research question/problem statement is clear and the rationale of the study is well advocated.	The research question/problem statement is clear, but the rationale of the study could be refined.	Conceptualization could be strengthened;	Conceptualization is weak;	Conceptualization is weak;
	The study is well conceptualized;	The study is reasonably conceptualized;	The literature is relevant, cited, referenced but it is unclear which gaps in the extant literature are being addressed.	The literature is not relevant and is out dated. It is unclear which gaps in the extant literature are being addressed.	The literature is not relevant and is out dated.
	Literature is thoroughly reviewed, relevant, cited, referenced and addresses the existing gaps in literature.	the literature is relevant, cited, referenced and addresses the existing gap in extant literature, but some important references are not included.			

**Scientific  
merit...  
(continued)**

multidisciplinary aspects; alignment of the research question with the methodology.	The objectives are clearly stated and are appropriate to meet the aims of the study.	The research objectives are sound but have some inconsistencies and can be refined to appropriately meet the aims of the study.	The research objectives are appropriate but only partially address the aims of the study.	The research objectives are not aligned with the aims of the study.	The research objectives are not aligned with the aims of the study.
	The methodology is aligned with the objectives of study.	The research methodology is sound but has inconsistencies and can be refined;	The methodology fairly addresses the study objectives.	The methodology is vaguely articulated to assess the feasibility of the study.	The methodology lacks detail to assess the feasibility of the study.
	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects thereof have been fully addressed.	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects have been reasonably addressed.	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects have been partially addressed.	The project barely addresses multi- disciplinary aspects.	The project does not address multi- disciplinary aspects.

**4. Feasibility  
(30%)**

Work plan, project organisation, project scheduling and timelines.		The project work plan is reasonable but is not outstanding;			
	A thoroughly formulated project workplan;	Feasible project activities with realistic project timelines.	The project work plan can at best be described as average; some of the project timelines are problematic.	The project workplan towards study completion is poorly formulated with unspecific timelines.	No workplan towards study completion is submitted.
	Explicit and feasible project activities with realistic project timelines.	The role of the candidate in the project is clearly defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is vaguely defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is not defined
	The role of the candidate in the project is clearly defined.	The infrastructure at the institution/in the research group is could be strengthened to ensure successful project completion, but the proposal indicates how the gaps will be addressed.	The infrastructure at the institution could be strengthened to ensure successful project completion but the proposal does not indicate how the gaps will be addressed		
	The infrastructure at the institution/in the research group is adequate to ensure successful project completion.			The infrastructure to support the project is lacking but the proposal does not indicate how the gaps will be addressed.	Timelines and project activities are not documented.

<b>5. Potential Impact (5%)</b>			<p>The candidate has defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p>	<p>The candidate has defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p>		
	<p>Potential to contribute national research strategies and the strategic goals of the knowledge economy.</p>	<p>The candidate has clearly defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p> <p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant both in the national and international context.</p> <p>Therefore, the potential impact of the study is high based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant in the national context.</p> <p>Therefore, the potential impact of the study is high based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant in the national context.</p> <p>However, the potential impact of the study is moderate based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The candidate has vaguely defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p>	<p>The candidate has not defined the significance and the merit of the research.</p>

## 8. Scholarship Details

### 8.1. Value of Awards

The scholarships are designed for students enrolled in full-time two-year Master's courses or three-year Doctoral degree studies.

Category	Value (Rand per annum)	Maximum period of support
Master's	80 000	2 years
Doctoral	110 000	3 years

**\*Note: The period of support is calculated from the date of initial registration for the degree.**

Students upgrading from a Master's degree to a PhD are expected to complete an annual progress report, stating clearly that they have upgraded their studies. Upgrades will be included in the DAAD/NRF Joint In-Country Scholarship Programme.

Scholarship holders are not allowed to change to any other DAAD or NRF funding streams during the tenure of the award. However scholarship holders are encouraged to apply to other funding streams/ programmes on completion of their funding (e.g. completion of Master's degree and wanting to apply for Doctoral funding). Additional research funds and travel grants to conferences are not awarded to awardees on this scholarship: the exception will be for the short term (2-6 months) research visits to Germany mentioned below.

### 8.2. Short-term research scholarships

The scholarship-holder may apply for a short-term research fellowship (duration 2-6 months) in Germany where parts of the thesis-related research would significantly gain from this research visit because of required equipment, co-supervision or similar reasons. The applicant will have to present a current invitation by a German professor who is willing to supervise the research during the envisaged stay in Germany. A convincing letter of motivation and a clearly defined time schedule for the research stay must be attached.

Application forms for these short-term research fellowships and further information can be obtained from: [daad@wits.ac.za](mailto:daad@wits.ac.za).

## 9. Post-Award Process

- Successful candidates will be notified by the NRF regarding the NRF-DAAD Joint In-Country Scholarship award.
- All successful candidates should complete all the necessary documents/conditions of grant related to the acceptance of the award sent by the NRF.
- The DAAD/NRF may, during the course of the scholarship, hold annual research events (Winter or Summer Research Schools) which the scholarship-holder is expected to attend.
- The same applies should the scholarship holder be invited by representatives of the German diplomatic service, the DAAD or the NRF for award ceremonies or other events.

## 10. Reporting

The initial award is for one year only. For extensions of the award an annual progress report will have to be completed by the applicant, with input from the supervisor of the proposed research. These reports should be completed on the NRF Submission System during the Call for Annual Progress Reports by the NRF and submitted through the Research Office/Postgraduate Office/Financial Aid Office/Bursary Office; the university designated authorities will validate the application and forward it to the NRF to consider. Scholarship holders will be notified about the outcome of their renewal through their university Research Office / Postgraduate Office / Financial Aid Office / Bursary Office.

The NRF may in consultation with the grant holder's research office, request interim progress report for the purpose of implementing corrective measures timeously to ensure that stated objectives are met within the stipulated timeframes.

## 11. Financial Control

These awards will be managed in terms of standard NRF financial policies and procedures. The payment of the grant by the NRF to successful applicants will be administered by the Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Directorate to the relevant institutions' cost centres. The institutions will in turn administer the funds on behalf of the successful grant holder to the value of the full sum awarded by the NRF.

Additionally, the scholarship-holder must obtain the degree for which the scholarship was awarded by the contractual date which is within one (1) year after NRF funding has ceased and notify the NRF

via the university authority. Should the scholarship-holder not complete the degree for which the scholarship was awarded, the funds will have to be returned to the NRF plus interest at the prevailing prime rate charged by the NRF bankers.

Scholarships not taken up within six (6) months of the grant award will be cancelled for reallocation unless otherwise approved by the NRF.

## 12. DAAD-NRF Questionnaire

DAAD and NRF would like to strengthen and maintain contacts with former In-Country scholarship-holders. Therefore, every scholarship-holder who is about to complete his / her Master's or PhD degree will receive a questionnaire together with the final letter of award, requesting information on the result of the degree acquired, the future address and intended employment. The scholarship holder is obliged to respond to the questionnaire truthfully and to forward a certified copy of the degree certificate to the NRF. The scholarship holder gives consent for the questionnaire and certificate to be forwarded to the DAAD for their records. The university should take care that this information is transmitted 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)).

## 13. NRF Contacts

For funding instrument related queries, please contact:

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For NRF online application and grants management related enquiries, please contact:

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