The FNB Fund, a part of the FirstRand Foundation has entered into a partnership with the Department of Education at the University of Oxford to allow an outstanding South African student to undertake postgraduate study at one of the world’s foremost universities.

The scholarship will provide full funding for one student each year to study a masters degree at the Department of Education of the University of Oxford. The partnership is for five years and successful candidate will be housed at Wadham College.

" The Department of Education is delighted to inaugurate this relationship with FirstRand, continuing a rich tradition of working with South African institutions and providing opportunities for South Africans to study at Oxford." Steve Strand, Professor of Education, University of Oxford.

FirstRand will conduct the interviewing and selection process, which will run concurrently with the FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar scholarship for international postgraduate study, based on academic excellence, leadership ability, community involvement and the candidate’s potential to be a destiny changer.

The First National Bank (FNB) Fund, as a sub set to the FirstRand Foundation, has an ambition to contribute to the growing health of South Africa’s education system. This investment includes both a systemic and programmatic approach. The National Development Plan proposes that “improved education…. will lead to higher employment and earnings, while more rapid economic growth will broaden opportunities for all and generate the resources required to improve education”.

“We hope that this scholarship, in time to come, will positively contribute to producing new leaders in South African education and contribute to furthering excellence in education.” Howard Arrand, FNB Fund Chairman and FirstRand Foundation trustee.

“The candidates historically interviewed all have amazing talent and I have always been impressed by the enthusiasm shown for their chosen field of study. They have excelled academically as well as in their outside interests, such as sport, music and community service. Leadership qualities also seem to be part and parcel of their make-up.

The interviews are a humbling and rewarding experience.” Prof Kgethi Phakeng, UCT vice chancellor and trustee of the FirstRand Foundation.

Candidates have to apply and be accepted to do a masters in education at the University of Oxford and must apply online for the FirstRand FNB Fund Oxford Education scholarship for their application to be considered.

Shortlisted candidates will be notified by mid-April and should be available for final interviews to be held in Sandton towards the end of April 2018. A final announcement will be made by end May 2018.

FirstRand and the Education Department at the University of Oxford are looking for the best applicants who will truly benefit from the opportunity and contribute to South Africa on their return.

The successful candidate is required to return to South Africa for at least five years after completing his or her studies.

Online applications for the FirstRand FNB Fund Oxford Education Scholarship and the FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar Scholarship for international postgraduate study for 2018 will open on 16 December 2017 and close on 22 February 2017. No late applications will be accepted.

Eligible courses are any of the four pathways of the full-time Masters in Education (Child Development and Education, Comparative and International Education, Higher Education and Research Design and Methodology) or the Masters in Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition. Applications for the Masters in Education at the University of Oxford close on 19 January 2018. For more information visit: https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses where students can find out more about a Masters in Education, application requirements and deadlines

Information and the application form will on the FirstRand website from December 2017, [www.firstrand.co.za](http://www.firstrand.co.za)