



# National Research Foundation (NRF)-SASOL Young Academics Accelerator Programme (YAAP)

# **Framework Document**

Directorate: Human and Infrastructure Capacity
Development

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# **List of Acronyms**

PR	Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
CF	Carry forwards
CoG	Conditions of Grant
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
NRF	National Research Foundation
RE	Reviews and Evaluation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HDIs	Historically Disadvantaged Institutions
nGAP	New Generation of Academics Programme
CSUR	Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers
ВААР	Black Academics Advancement Programme

#### 1. Introduction

The intent of the National Research Foundation (NRF) includes continuous investment in scientific research in alignment with Government priorities as indicated in the National Development Plan. The NRF and Sasol have partnered to support Science and Engineering research initiatives intended to strengthen collaboration between industry and academia. The partnership aims to provide funding towards PhD attainment and strategic support such as assistance with research focus and direction in science and engineering areas that can enable South Africa's energy transition, as well as the development of its green economy. Sasol is a global chemical and energy company that harnesses knowledge and expertise with a purpose of innovating for a better world.

The white paper in Science, Technology and Innovation (2019) identifies science, innovation and technology imperative for the economic growth and socio-economic development of South Africa, which necessitates a transition towards a knowledge-based economy. The knowledge-based economy is attributed by high-level skills that are required to continuously generate quality research and innovation in pursuit of socio-economic development and to support the country's global competitiveness.

A major barrier for advancing research and postgraduate training at South African universities is the low proportion of academic staff with the appropriate qualifications to drive postgraduate research and to advance knowledge creation. The Ministerial Task Team Report for Black Academics indicates that students funding for post-graduate studies must be enhanced to attract high-achieving students to continue to doctoral and postdoctoral programmes and into academia. It further states that black doctoral graduates are significantly underrepresented in relation to the general population. As a result, there is a need to increase the number of African and female South African masters and doctoral graduates at universities. With the recent launch of the Sasol-NRF research and skills development partnership, Sasol and NRF have dedicated additional funds for research activities in energy transition, specifically dedicated to supporting young female academics to undertake research within the energy sector by establishing the NRF-SASOL Young Academics Accelerator Programme (YAAP).

According to the Council on Higher Education (CHE), in 2009 only one third of full-time permanent academic staff (PAS) held PhD degrees. Furthermore, there was a net decline in the number of full-time university academic staff across all public universities over the same period. The impact of the low proportion of suitably qualified academic staff increases the "burden of supervision" for postgraduate supervisors. This burden of supervision, at both the masters and PhD levels increased across all fields of science between 2000 and 2005.

The energy sector remains one of the least gender diverse sectors in the South African economy despite numerous efforts by the government to encourage participation of females. Females encounter cultural and structural challenges and lack of females in leadership positions in the energy sector exacerbates the difficulty in recruiting and retaining female leaders. According to the women empowerment and gender equality strategy for the energy sector for 2021 to 2025, women only account for 20% of the workforce in the oil and gas industry while the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) (2019) indicates that of the total 10.3 million people employed in the renewable energy (RE) sector, only 32 percent are women.

The YAAP is designed to ensure a pipeline of young skilled talent to inform processes towards a just energy transition, while fulfilling the objectives of both Sasol and the NRF. Sasol and NRF have jointly established academic initiatives to further advance research and capacity development in science and engineering. This includes the NRF-Sasol Foundation Scholarship Programme, with the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), Postdoctoral Innovation Fellowship programme, Collaborative Research Grants, as well as the research Chair in Energy and Power Systems Modelling, and Green Hydrogen. These initiatives are intended to enhance South African tertiary institutions' research capacity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), particularly in the field of energy.

The NRF-Sasol YAAP call in Energy Transition is the result of the recommendations from the NRF-Sasol Energy Transition Summit, which took place in October 2022. The recommendation made was for dedicated funding to support young academics to conduct research that will contribute towards the Energy Transition interventions in South Africa, to address energy challenges, while informing policy processes. This call will also aim to address gender diversity challenges and skills shortages within the energy sector.

#### 2. Aim

The aim of the programme is to accelerate the development of demand-driven research and innovation in the renewable energy sector by young academics in South Africa.

## 3. Objectives

The objectives of the YAAP funding instrument are to:

- Promote the attainment of a doctoral qualification, by young academics employed at South African public universities and training of the academics in the energy sector;
- Promote networking and collaboration of young researchers with national and international academics, and companies in the renewable energy sector;
- Support research and skills development of young academics to be international experts in the energy sector;

• Effect transformation in the demographic composition, of academics undertaking research within the energy sector as recognised by the NRF, with respect to gender, race and persons with disabilities.

#### 4. Research Focus

The research undertaken by the young academics must align with the thematic focus area, Sustainable Energy 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. Specifically, there are five identified focus research themes for the NRF-Sasol YAAP and funding will be awarded to applicants with proposals that are aligned to one of these themes.

- 1. Environmental Sustainability (e.g. Water, Coal, Air, Waste)
- 2. Clean Energy Solutions (e.g. Renewable Energy, Energy Storage, Energy and Power System modelling, Techno-economic Modelling)
- 3. Sustainable Fuels and Chemicals Production (e.g. CO<sub>2</sub> capture, Fischer–Tropsch (FT), CO<sub>2</sub> utilisation and conversion)
- 4. Sustainable Feedstock (e.g. Green H<sub>2</sub> Development, Biomass, DAC)
- 5. Electrification of industry processes

# 5. Allocation Principles

The YAAP funding instrument supports well-structured research projects with achievable aims and sound methodologies, which support the study objectives and demonstrate the prudent use of funds. The funding decisions will be guided by the following principles:

**Equity and redress**: In keeping with the equity and redress objectives, the YAAP funding instrument is based on a preferential funding model. In terms of this model, targets for supporting individuals from designated groups are set as in point 7 below;

**Developmental**: Even though the funding instrument has a developmental focus, only quality proposals that are scientifically sound will be considered for funding;

**Achievability**: The research proposal must be realistic, i.e. achievable in terms of the research objectives, the resources required and the projected completion times.

## 6. Eligibility Criteria

The following eligibility criteria apply to all applicants:

 Only South African citizens and South African Permanent Residents with a valid South African Identity Document (ID) number may apply. Individuals who are in the process of obtaining permanent residence will not be considered.

- Applicants must hold a permanent, full-time academic appointment at one of the 26 public universities in South Africa, or a fixed-term appointment that extends for the full grant period plus one additional year.
- Applicants should have obtained a masters qualification or in their final year of a masters qualification at the time of application and intending to pursue doctoral studies.
- Applicants must be registered for a doctoral degree at the time of commencement of the YAAP grant.
- Applicants must generally be under the age of 45 years at the time of first application.
- Applicants over the age of 45 years, at the time of first application, may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research after a period of absence from research e.g. due to family responsibilities. This information must be included in the application template under Absence from Research.
- This grant may not be held concurrently with a Thuthuka Grant, New Generation Academics Programme (nGAP) scholars, Black Academic Advancement Programme (BAAP), a grant as a Director of an NRF Centre of Excellence (CoE), Institute or Centre, South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) grant, any NRF Knowledge Advancement and Support (KAS) grants, NRF postgraduate student bursary, Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) and any Established Researcher grant.
- The employing institution must provide written commitment pledging to allow the applicant time release for research and relief from teaching duties to conduct research.

## 7. Application Process

#### 7.1. Call for Applications

The NRF issues an annual Call for applications for the YAAP funding instrument and applications should be completed and submitted *via* the NRF Connect System at <a href="https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za">https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za</a>. An Application and Funding Guide, which provides step-by-step instructions for completing the application template, will be available on the NRF website at <a href="https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/">https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/</a>.

# 7.2. Application Requirements

It is important to complete all the compulsory sections as well as the non-compulsory sections relevant to you. Any information submitted as attachments that should have been completed in the YAAP online application form, will render the application incomplete, resulting in a rejection of the application.

All applicants, whether South African citizens or permanent residents, are required to submit a copy of their South African ID document under Personal Profile for audit purposes.

Applicants are required to list all their qualifications in the Curriculum Vitae (CV) section.

#### 8. Attachments

- Applicants over the age of 45 must attach a motivation as to why they were not able to achieve their Doctoral qualification or research capabilities by the stipulated age.
- Applicants over the age of 45 years may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research after a period of absence due to family responsibilities. This must be done by selecting the "Absence from Research" type on the Career Profile. Applications must include an endorsement by the nominated supervisor, supporting the proposed doctoral research to be undertaken. Applicants under the PhD track must add their supervisor's details under the Application Support Input section on the application. Once the application has been submitted, an e-mail will be generated requesting the supervisor to complete the reference report electronically by login to NRF Connect and providing the support for the applications. Please ensure that the contact details provided in the application are correct.
- A proof of registration for PhD should be provided for access to the funding under the PhD Track.

#### 9. Ethical Clearance

It is the responsibility of the grantholder, in conjunction with the institution, to ensure that all research activities carried out in or outside South Africa comply with the laws and regulations of South Africa and/or the foreign country in which the research activities are conducted. These include all human and animal subjects, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other regulations or laws, as appropriate. A research ethics committee must review and approve the ethical and academic rigor of all research in accordance with institutional ethical policies and procedures. The ethical clearance approval should be held by the institution and the grantholder and accessible on request, if necessary.

Please also refer to the "Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices" on the NRF website at <a href="https://www.nrf.ac.za/statement-on-ethical-research-and-scholarly-publishing-practices/">https://www.nrf.ac.za/statement-on-ethical-research-and-scholarly-publishing-practices/</a>.

## 10. Granting Rules

# 10.1. Funding Model

This call is highly competitive and only 13 awards will be granted in the initial phase. An additional thirteen (13) awards will be included at the next phase if additional funding becomes available. Grants are awarded for well-structured research projects that demonstrate the prudent use of funds. Projects should have a clear aim and objectives and sound methodologies that support the study objectives.

As the YAAP grant is aimed at development and the advancement of designated groups per race and/or gender, the NRF has set the following targets for allocation of grants to designated groups, to bring about this transformation:

- at least 80% of all funded grantholders to be Black; and
- at least 55% of all funded grantholders to be female.

# **10.2.** Funding support

The YAAP grants will be funded to a set maximum amount for each budget category, subject to budget availability. The grant is intended to fund three (3) distinct budget categories:

**Running Expenses** to a maximum value of one hundred and fifty thousand rand (R150 000) per year. Running expenses must be motivated for in detail and may include projected costs for the budget line items listed below:

- Hardware and Supplies (Materials and supplies);
  - Includes costs for editing of PhD thesis
  - Includes costs to attend a workshop
- Research Equipment;
- Science Engagement; and
- Research/Technical/Ad Hoc Assistants.
- Lecturer replacement costs to a maximum value of one hundred thousand rand (R100 000) per year. Should the lecturer replacement costs exceed the NRF maximum amount, the shortfall must be covered by other sources of funding.
- Local and International travel to a maximum value of fifty thousand rand (R50 000).

# **NRF Exclusions for Financial Support**

- Indirect costs or institutional overheads;
- Registration fees for PhD enrolment;
- Basic office equipment;
- General stationery, photocopying and printing costs;
- Journal publications, journal subscription costs and textbooks;
- Telephone, fax and internet costs;
- Personal laptops, computer hardware, and purchase or renewal of software licenses unless for specialised equipment and software licenses;
- Netbooks, hand-held notebooks, and personal digital assistant (PDA) devices;

- Any funding item that is listed as: "miscellaneous", "other" or "etc";
- Visa and permit fees;
- Events not attached to a conference;
- Presentation of the same work at multiple conferences;
- Attendance of more than one conference abroad per year;
- · Meetings, workshops, networking and collaboration event; and
- Administrative and/or secretarial support;

Applicants with a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA), may apply to the NRF for additional support for assistive devices following the approval of the award. An assistive technology device is "any piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities".

# 10.3. Postgraduate student support

This programme does not include support for postgraduate students supervised by the applicant. However, applicants are encouraged to include student supervision as it forms an integral part of their career advancement.

Postgraduate students to be supervised by YAAP grantholders must apply for NRF postgraduate funding independently in the open competitive Call for Applications for Postgraduate Scholarships. Only students intending to pursue full-time postgraduate studies will be eligible for NRF postgraduate student funding. These students will be prioritized for funding pending eligibility and budget.

All postgraduate students will be expected to apply on the NRF Connect system by accessing the link: <a href="https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za/">https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za/</a>.

For further details on the NRF Postgraduate Funding policy, kindly refer to the framework document which will be available on https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/ when the Call for Applications for Postgraduate Scholarships opens in **April 2024**.

#### 10.4. Awards and period of funding

Funding is available for a maximum period of three years. The budget request for each year of the grant period should be submitted with the first application. The release of continued funding for the second and third year will be linked to the grantholder's progress. The grantholder will be required to submit a detailed Progress Report (PR) to the NRF, on the NRF Connect system, at the end of each academic year. Approved funding beyond the first year will only be released upon submission of the approved PR to the NRF.

#### 10.5. Reporting

Continued funding beyond the first year of funding will be released based on satisfactory progress achieved by the grantholder. The grantholder will be required to submit a detailed Progress Report (PR) to the NRF by 15 February of each subsequent year. The PR will be used to assess project performance against timeframes and deliverables as indicated in the project work plans, institutional financial contribution and expenditure of project funding. Approved funding for continuing grantholders will only be released upon submission of the DA approved PR to the NRF.

At the end of the three-year funding period, a PR must be submitted detailing the outputs and expenditure of the previous years, as well as containing a final assessment of progress made in relation to the project objectives.

# 10.6. Carry Forward of Grant Funding

The Carry Forward (CF) of unspent/unclaimed funds to the next grant year is not automatic and will only be considered according to the regulations provided in the 'Guidelines for the Carry Forward of Unspent/claimed Grant Allocations'. A CF motivation must be submitted with the PR by grantholders who must consult the NRF's Carry Forward Guidelines, sent to the Institutions in September each year, wherein exceptions and detailed rules be adhered to, are included. The NRF reserves the right to refuse such a request.

At the end of the stipulated grant period, all unspent funds will revert to the NRF unless a well-motivated request has been approved by the NRF for funds not claimed. Approved carried forward amounts that are not claimed by June of each funding year, will revert to the NRF without notification to the grantholder or the Institution's Research Office.

#### 11. Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated by institutions and submitted to the NRF are screened by the NRF for compliance with the requirements of the Framework, the stipulations set out in the Application and Funding Guide, and the content requirements indicated in the online application screens. Applications that fail to meet the requirements and stipulations will be rejected.

## 12. Overview of the Review Process

Following institutional and NRF screening, proposals that meet the eligibility criteria and application requirements will be subjected to a merit review by peers to assess substantive issues such as scientific merit and any other pre-determined content criteria. The NRF's peer-review policy requires that all YAAP applications be subjected to a two-tiered review process, firstly for remote review and secondly for panel review.

#### 12.1. Remote Peer-review

After the closing date for the submission of applications, all eligible applications are subjected to remote peer-review. The reviewers are selected from the list of suggested reviewers provided by the applicant, as well as additional reviewers selected by the Reviews and Evaluations (RE) directorate of the NRF, from existing databases and other sources. Applicants are encouraged to suggest reviewers from abroad. A minimum of six (6) written reviews per application are solicited, with the ultimate aim of eliciting at least three (3) well-substantiated remote review reports per application for submission to the panel review process.

Applications are sent for review to researchers with research knowledge and insight in relevant disciplines, after which written online review reports are submitted to the NRF. The remote review reports, together with the proposals and supporting documentation are then deliberated upon in the Panel Review Process.

#### 12.2. Panel Review

Following the remote review process, applications are subjected to panel review. The remote reviewers' reports serve as the basis for discussion and review by the panel members. Panel members are selected from the NRF database, which is updated on a continuous basis, as well as other sources. In making the selection, the expertise and experience of individuals in funding proposal adjudication are taken into account. In assessing the proposals, the remote reviewers' reports are referred to, and agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard.

The panel provides recommendations to the NRF. The final funding decision is made by the NRF. When awarding YAAP grants, the NRF takes into account the recommendations of the review panels, budget motivations by the applicant, the objectives and equity targets of the funding instrument, as well as the available budget.

## 13. Ranking of Proposals

#### 13.1. Scoring Proposals

The purpose of the scoring system is to evaluate proposals, based on the YAAP research grant criteria, in order to identify applicants that are most deserving of the limited funds available. All research proposals submitted to the NRF for funding, are evaluated according to a number of predetermined criteria. Proposals are assessed and ranked on the basis of qualifiers as listed in Table 1. Each area is given a weight to indicate its relative importance. Kindly consult Table 1 for details on the criteria used as well as the relative weighting.

#### 13.2. Review Outcome

Based on the outcomes of the review process, projects will either be eligible for funding or not.

Table 1: NRF Scorecard for the Assessment of Proposals for Young Academics Accelerator Programme

Criterion	Review Dimensions	% Weighting for PhD Track
Track record of the applicant	Past research outputs that outline the candidate's research experience and contributions to knowledge production. Outputs could be from the past 5 years (or from a longer period in the past). This could include journal articles/peer reviewed publications, conference presentations and proceedings, book chapters, patents and awards, designs, performances, student supervision and/or expertise in a specified knowledge area that will enable the applicant to successfully undertake the proposed research.	5%
Human Capital Development	Diversity, including sex and gender. This could include: (i) the involvement of postgraduate students (i.e., at Masters' and Doctoral 'level) from designated/under-represented groups in the proposed project, and/or (ii) the number of students that have completed their degrees/graduated in the past 5 years with considerations of race, gender and representation from designated/under-represented groups.	5%
Scientific Merit	<ul> <li>The proposal is comprehensive and well-constructed.</li> <li>Research novelty refers to whether project idea is novel and will contribute to the generation of both new methodologies and new knowledge in the field.</li> <li>The study is well conceptualized: i.e., the problem statement; research question aligns with methodology; the rationale of the study, research approach and methodology are clearly articulated, the aim is clear and objectives that align with a problem statement.</li> <li>Alignment of the overall research proposal with the (i) objectives of the funding programme - proposal fit within the scope of the Call, (ii) the applicant's institutional research strategy &amp; (iii) specified national research strategies.</li> <li>Literature is thoroughly reviewed, relevant, cited in text and well referenced, and addresses the existing gaps in extant literature.</li> <li>Pluri-disciplinarity: The multi-, inter, and trans - disciplinary aspects of the proposed study; The project addresses one or more aspects of pluri-disciplinarity attributes.</li> </ul>	35%
Project management and Feasibility	<ul> <li>Project organisation detailing the composition of project teams, roles &amp; responsibilities and contributions of all identified roles; research activities and supervision.</li> </ul>	30%

Criterion	Review Dimensions	% Weighting for PhD Track
	<ul> <li>Project scheduling/work plan detailing the project work breakdown structure comprising the project tasks, activities, timelines (in line with the funding period) and outputs</li> <li>Project budget plan defined by effective planning of the budget, listing the line items and related costs in consideration of project objectives, activities, outputs and additional services required to produce outputs (such as DNA sequencing services possibly rendered abroad).</li> </ul>	
Collaboration	<ul> <li>This includes: a description of collaborations between institutions with limited infrastructure &amp; research activity, and research-intensive institutions with varied capabilities.</li> <li>The proposal should clearly indicate that team members possess complementary skills sets that can be leveraged for the success of the project.</li> <li>The proposal should clearly state research collaborations to meet the study objectives and clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of each collaborator.</li> </ul>	5%
Outputs	<ul> <li>Proposed outputs should be aligned to instrument objectives and the Professional development of the applicant.</li> <li>Outputs should include Journal articles, conference presentations and proceedings, books, patents, and other relevant outputs.</li> <li>The achievability of the proposed outputs within the given timeframe.</li> </ul>	5%
Knowledge Production Impact	This could include detailing the potential/contribution of the study outcomes to the strategic goals of the knowledge economy and advancement of discovery and understanding of the field; and/or demonstrated high return on investment and embedding of specified realistic societal benefits (e.g., social, economic, environmental) ex-ante (potential) ex-nunc (during) and ex-post (after) the implementation of study in the proposal; e.g., the project could have the potential to resolve taxonomic problems to unlock knowledge critical to other projects related to the bioeconomy or global change; Identifying the end-users of both the knowledge/information produced; dissemination format of generated knowledge/information, the extent to which the project will contribute to the funding opportunity deliverables.  The return on investment (quantifying records of generated/mobilised, species pages compiled, or species/specimens barcoded).	5%

Criterion	Review Dimensions	% Weighting for PhD Track
	Align assessment to clear articulation of scientific merit.	
Broader Societal Impact	<ul> <li>Demonstrated high return on investment and embedding of specified realistic societal benefits (e.g., social, economic, environmental):</li> <li>the defined impact could be ex-ante (potential); ex-nunc (during); and/or expost (after) the implementation of the proposed study</li> <li>e.g., explain the project potential to resolve taxonomic problems to unlock knowledge critical to other projects related to the bioeconomy or global change.</li> <li>Identify the end-users of both the knowledge/information produced.</li> <li>Describe the dissemination format of generated knowledge/information,</li> <li>Describe the extent to which the project will contribute to the funding opportunity deliverables.</li> <li>The return on investment (quantifying records of generated/mobilised, species pages compiled, or species/specimens barcoded).</li> <li>Align assessment of impact to articulation the Scientific Merit content in the proposal. High scores for impact cannot be given to a poorly articulated scientific merit.</li> </ul>	5%
Ethical considerations, Data Management and Use	Ethical considerations: Ethical issues including data sharing and collecting/import/export permits, specimen repository has been considered. The proposal should clearly indicate how expected findings and outputs will be disseminated including the use of science communication strategies, and open access.  Data management and use: The proposal should clearly indicate how expected findings and outputs will be disseminated including the use of science communication strategies, and open access.	5%
Total		100%

# 14. Conditions of award for the Young Academics Accelerator Programme

- Successful applicants will be required to sign a Conditions of Grant (CoG) document with the NRF and the university.
- Ethical Clearance procedures for the respective university should be followed and applied. Approval of the ethical clearance should be held by the respective university.
- Applicants under the PhD Track, should be registered for the PhD degree at a public university in South Africa.
- This grant may not be held concurrently with NRF Thuthuka or nGAP grant or any scholarships or fellowships.
- This grant may be held with another NRF research grant, in accordance with the NRF multiple grants eligibility table.
- Applicants must spend 80% of their time each year on research-related activities and, may not spend more than 20% of their time each year, on postgraduate teaching and supervision duties during the time-off period.
- Grantholders registered for a PhD degree will be required to provide proof of PhD graduation within one (1) year of completion of the programme.
- All grantholders must submit a PR on the NRF Connect system, by 15 February of each
  year, indicating the nature (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, books) and quality (e.g.
  impact factor of the journal) of outputs produced, grant applications prepared and/or
  submitted within one year of completion of the three-year programme.
- In addition to the annual PR submitted, all grantholders must complete an NRF administered annual online YAAP Survey for the full duration of the YAAP grant and, a further five (5) years after the funding period has ended. The YAAP Survey will focus on tracking the achievements and career advancement of YAAP beneficiaries.
- Should the grantholder decide to discontinue the programme, he/she should inform the NRF in writing 30 days prior to the exit of the programme. This grant is non-transferable and will be cancelled within 30 days of receipt of written official notification by the NRF.
- Should a grantholder discontinue or fail to successfully complete his or her PhD studies,
  or resign from the employer of a South African public university before completion of their
  funded degree, he/she will be required to repay the full grant amount. Under such
  instances the grantholder will enter into an acknowledgement of debt with the NRF. The
  grantholder should submit a progress report upon exit.
- There will be special provision made in the event of ill-health, maternity and bereavement leave. The grantholder shall inform the NRF no later than a week of any of these occurrences. The grant payment will be deferred while the individual is on paid maternity leave, or extended sick or special leave exceeding two (2) calendar months.

## 15. Contact Details

For NRF Connect and Grants Management-related queries contact:

**Professional Officer: GMSA** 

Ms Thandeka Mthethwa

Tel: (012) 481-4163

E-mail: T.Mthethwa@risa.nrf.ac.za

For NRF-SASOL YAAP funding instrument-related queries contact:

**Professional Officer: HICD** 

Ms Nthabeleng Makhetha

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For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours

(08:00- 16:30) on:

E-mail: Supportdesk@risa.nrf.ac.za