

NRF Free-standing Masters and Doctoral Scholarships Call for 2015

1. Background

The National Research Foundation (NRF) is mandated by an Act of Parliament, the National Research Foundation Act (Act No. 23 of 1998) to support and promote research through funding, human capacity development and the provision of the necessary research facilities, in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including indigenous knowledge. Funding from the core parliamentary grant has been made available to support masters and doctoral candidates for the 2015 academic year.

2. Objectives

The programme supports full-time students at South African public higher education institutions (HEI's), science councils and national research facilities. A small number of scholarships are also made available to South African students who wish to pursue their doctoral studies on a full-time basis at recognised universities abroad.

The objectives of the NRF Free-standing programme are to:

- Contribute towards the increase in the number and quality of South African postgraduate students at masters and doctoral levels in South Africa
- Enable South African doctoral students to pursue research study opportunities at international universities.

3. Areas of Support

The scholarship is intended to support masters and doctoral candidates who would like to pursue research studies in all areas of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and in Social Sciences and Humanities, at public research institutions in South Africa. A small number of scholarships are made available to students pursuing doctoral studies abroad. The percentage of supported students will be 80% from the Science, Engineering and Technology disciplines and 20 % Social Sciences and Humanities.

4. Value of the scholarship

For the 2015 academic year, the value of the scholarships are set as follows:

Master's Scholarships	R 40 000 p.a
Doctoral Scholarships	R 60 000 p.a
Doctoral Scholarships Abroad	R220 000 p.a

Masters awards will be allocated as a block grant to universities/ institutions. Applications should be submitted online, <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>.

Successful candidates may apply for a once- off travel grant up to a maximum amount of R 5000. This grant may be used to cover research related travel costs; such as conference/ workshop attendance or visit to a laboratory during the funding period.

A travel grant application needs to be completed to be considered for any travel grant and the guidelines, terms and conditions related to travel will apply.

5. Criteria for Selection

5.1. Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria listed below applies:

- Scholarships are open to full-time registered **South African citizens and permanent residents**.
- Full- time employees of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are not eligible to apply.
- Scholarship-holders are allowed to hold non- binding supplementary grants or emoluments up to the university capped value for the level of study.
- Scholarship-holders must not hold full-time salaried employment during the tenure of the scholarship.

- Scholarship- holders will be allowed to undertake a maximum of 12 hours of teaching, tutorials, assistance or demonstrations duties per week on average during the year of study and may be remunerated for these duties, provided that they are reimbursed at a rate not exceeding the normal institution tariff for services rendered.

5.2. Equity

In line with the national imperative of equity and redress, scholarship funds will be allocated with an attempt to meet the set targets of 80% Blacks, 55% Females and 4% to students with disabilities.

5.3 Conditions of Award

- The award of a scholarship to a student will be based on past, current and potential academic performance. Selection criteria will include academic merit, promise of research ability, leadership qualities and previous awards, various prizes and honours.
- In addition to the above criteria, the award of the scholarship will be based on the feasibility and merit of the applicant's research project proposal.
- Successful students who are offered the scholarship by the NRF are required to complete and sign the scholarship agreement which will be communicated at the time of the award.
- A list of successful candidates will be published on the NRF website as soon as the internal NRF approval processes for the award are finalised.

6. How to apply for funding

Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the National Research Foundation .
- **Applicants can apply for the NRF Free-standing Masters and Doctoral Scholarship Call for 2015 by accessing the link: <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/>**
- **Register/ Login using your ID number and password.**
- Select create new application from the list of existing calls.



- Select the call for which you are applying to: **NRF Free-standing Masters and Doctoral Scholarship Call for 2015**
- Please attach the necessary documents in **one PDF file in the following order: ID document and certified academic transcripts.**
- Should you not follow the guidelines for attaching the necessary documents your application will not be considered.
- **Submit** your application upon completion.
- Complete applications will go to the host university for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered (please refer to section 5.1 for details on eligibility for the NRF Free-standing Masters and Doctoral programme).
- Please contact the university postgraduate office or research office if you have any queries.
- The closing date for submitting applications is **15 August 2014.**
- **Please take note of your institutions internal closing dates as these may be set before the actual NRF call closing date.**

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