

Application and Funding Guide for 2021 academic year

NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Call

Grants Management and Systems Administration

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List of Acronyms

PR	Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation

Contact Details

For Grant Management and System Administration related enquiries, please contact:

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Application and funding guidelines are explained in this document. Applicants must read this document together with the following document: Application and Funding Framework for Postgraduate Funding for the 2021 Academic year which highlights the eligibility criteria and requirements of each funding instrument.

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours from 08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday:

Tel: 012 481 4202

E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

1. Introduction

This Application and Funding Guide provides an overview of the application process and funding guidelines for Honours, Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for the 2021 academic year. It should be read in conjunction with the above-mentioned **framework document**, which can be accessed from <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents>. The framework document provides detailed information with respect to objectives of each funding instrument, eligibility criteria, etc. This document does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

2. Application Process

The NRF issues a call for Postgraduate Scholarships for Full-time Studies in 2021 that is published on the NRF website and is accessible online at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. The call will not accept more than one (1) application per applicant. Current recipients of NRF Masters scholarships who wish to apply for half-year extension support as well as half-year Doctoral support under the first time applicant category will have to choose between the two.

Once an applicant submits an application, it will be automatically routed to the institution the applicant is applying with. The applications will be screened for eligibility, reviewed and scored by the institutions and only eligible applications will be submitted to the NRF. The institutions will set their own internal cut-off dates for students' submission of applications, before the NRF deadline, to enable completion of the institutional processes outlined above. **Please ensure that you submit your application before your institutional cut-off date for the application to be considered for 2021 funding.** The applications are handled by an NRF Designated Authority (DA) who is based at the University Research/Postgraduate office. Should a DA contact you before your application is submitted to the NRF, please make sure you respond as soon as possible or within the timeline given in the communication. Failure to do so might result in the application being rejected at an institutional stage.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to check the institution's internal cut-off date with the Research or Postgraduate office.

3. How to Submit Applications

Applications may be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call opens to prevent IT system overload closer to the cut-off dates.

Step 1: This is an electronic submission system and applicants must be registered on the system in order to create and complete an application. If you had previously registered and submitted an application on the NRF Online System (<http://nrfonline.nrf.ac.za>) before February 2012, your details would have been migrated to the new NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>). If you experience problems accessing the system with your NRF Online password, use the Reset Password button. If your e-mail address is outdated, please contact the NRF Support Desk for assistance. Contact details for the NRF support desk are in page 3 of this document.

If you are not yet registered on the NRF Online Submission System, you must register to access the application form.

Most application screens have application-specific instructions to help you work through the section. Please read the instructions carefully before completing the section.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the NRF Online Submission System. At the top, there is a header with the NRF logo, the text 'RISA Research and Innovation Support and Advancement', and the title 'NRF Online Submission System'. Below the header, there is a navigation menu on the left with links: 'Home', 'New Registration', and 'Reset Password'. A blue arrow points to the 'Home' link. In the top right corner, there are links for 'Feedback' and 'Support'. Below the navigation menu, there is a section titled 'Instructions' with the following text: 'If you have already registered on the previous systems (NRF Online and Interim), please use your existing login details to access this system. If you have forgotten your password, please click on the Reset Password link on the left-hand menu. For technical online enquiries, please contact the Support Desk (Mondays to Fridays from 08h00 to 16h30) on: Tel: +27 12 481 4202 E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za To access call related documents, please refer to the Open Calls block below. Click on the icon next to the relevant call to show a list of document(s). To open the document, click on the relevant link.' Below the instructions, there are two main sections: 'Log In' and 'Open Calls'. The 'Log In' section has a blue header and contains the following text: 'ID/Passport/Unique Number: [text box] Password: [text box] Show Password [checkbox] login [button]'. Below the login fields, there are links for 'Reset password.' and 'Not registered? Click here to register.' The 'Open Calls' section has a blue header and contains a list of calls: 'Community Engagement 2017', 'Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers 2017', 'Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers 2017', 'DST-NRF Professional Development Programme (PDP) Call for 2016', 'Equipment-related Travel and Training Grants 2016', 'Infrastructure Funding Instruments in support of the: National Equipment Programme (NEP) and National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme (NNEP) 2016', 'Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) 2016 – Round 1', and 'Research Development Grants for Y-Rated Researchers 2017'. A blue arrow points to the 'Log In' section.

Home
New Registration
Reset Password

Home

Feedback Support

Instructions

- If you have already registered on the previous systems (NRF Online and Interim), please use your existing login details to access this system. If you have forgotten your password, please click on the Reset Password link on the left-hand menu.
- For technical online enquiries, please contact the Support Desk (Mondays to Fridays from 08h00 to 16h30) on:
Tel: +27 12 481 4202
E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za
- To access call related documents, please refer to the Open Calls block below. Click on the icon next to the relevant call to show a list of document(s). To open the document, click on the relevant link.

Log In

ID/Passport/Unique Number:

Password: [Show Password](#)

[Reset password.](#)
[Not registered? Click here to register.](#)

Open Calls

- Community Engagement 2017
- Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers 2017
- Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers 2017
- DST-NRF Professional Development Programme (PDP) Call for 2016
- Equipment-related Travel and Training Grants 2016
- Infrastructure Funding Instruments in support of the: National Equipment Programme (NEP) and National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme (NNEP) 2016
- Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) 2016 – Round 1
- Research Development Grants for Y-Rated Researchers 2017

Step 2: After logging onto the NRF Online Submission System, applicants get to the **landing page** where there is a menu at the top left side of the screen (tab indicated with blue arrow below). Start by filling in all the sections under **My Profile – My CV** to create a CV. To create a new application, click on My Applications - Create Application.

NRF Online Submission System

My Profile
My Applications
Tools
My Progress Reports
Reports
Logout

Create Application
List of Applications


Welcome Mrs Melissa Govender
 Feedback Support

Landing Page

Information






- PLEASE NOTE: The summary below only lists output records that were migrated from the previous NRF Online system. New records that are added on this system will not form part of this summary.
- Applicants must ensure that their CV is updated/completed before creating an application.
- In order for your migrated research outputs to show on the CV or be accessible for selection on applications that require your publication record, you **must** verify (review) the outputs listed in the **Research Outputs Summary** table below. In order to do this, click on the output type that still has outputs to be verified (see the To be Reviewed column). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and a heading saying cleaned-up research output records from NRF Online will be displayed. Click on the little black arrow. This will display the output(s) that needs to be verified. Then click on the View icon, it will open a screen with the data for the output. Please fill in the missing information and save the page. If you have more than one output per output type, click on View for the next output. Do this for all the outputs, the output type on the landing page should now say 0. Move on to the next output type and repeat the process. Should you wish to delete an output, then click on the Feedback box, fill in the **Feedback to the NRF box** (e.g. output duplicated, please delete) and in the **Status** field, please select Delete.
- In some cases, researchers' outputs don't show at all. The reason for this is
 - The ID/passport number which the cleaned data was linked to when the clean-up exercise was undertaken differs from the ID/passport number you have just used to login to the NRF Online Submission System.
 - No outputs were added on the old NRF Online system so there was nothing to migrate. If there were outputs on the old NRF Online system but they do not show in the summary below, you need to ensure that the ID/passport numbers used on both the old NRF Online and this system (NRF Online Submission System) are the same. Please contact the NRF should your outputs not show so that this can be rectified.

Step 3: Select **NRF Postgraduate Scholarships Call** funding category on the **Create Application** screen and a new application will open for the applicant to complete. Please note that this must be selected only once. To continue working on the same application, go to My Applications – List of Applications, and click the Edit button.


Create Application

Instructions

- Check your intended institution's internal closing date as it will be prior to the closing date listed for applications, where applicable.
- A timeout will appear when there is no activity on the system for 25 minutes. Click on the refresh button (in the popup box) as this will enable the continuation/completion of the application. When clicking on the close button the system will close.
- Due to potential international review of applications and progress reports, the NRF requires that all applications and progress reports be completed in English.
- Please consult the Funding Framework and Funding & Application Guide for more information to assist you in your choices. These documents can be accessed at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents>.
- **Ensure that you complete or update your CV. This is very important as applications without an updated CV will not be considered.**

>	Funding Category	Create
	Concept Notes	
>	Customised Programmes	
>	Institutional Grants	
	NRF Postgraduate Scholarships Call	
	Postdoctoral Grants	
>	Research Grants: General	
>	Research Grants: International	
>	Research Grants: Without student support	
	Research Grants: Thuthuka	
>	Travel, Training and Conference Grants: General	
	Travel, Training and Conference Grants: Scholarship- and Fellowship-holders	

Step 4: All sections marked with red **asterisks (*)** are compulsory. These sections must be completed in order for the final submit button to be activated. Applicants may enter information in the non-compulsory sections only if they have information to fill in, such as research outputs. Completed sections will be indicated by a green tick on the main menu, while incomplete sections will have a yellow cross.

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
NRF Call Information Documents (Please read before starting this application)		29 Mar 2019	
Registration Details *		29 Mar 2019	
Contact Details *		23 Aug 2017	
Qualifications *		04 Feb 2019	
Career Profile		29 Mar 2019	
Research Expertise *		02 Jun 2016	
Student Supervision Record		29 Mar 2019	
Absence from Research		29 Mar 2019	
Personal Profile *		29 Mar 2019	
Books		29 Mar 2019	
Chapters in Books		29 Mar 2019	
Refereed/Peer-reviewed Conference Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Articles in Refereed/Peer-reviewed Journals		29 Mar 2019	
Patents		29 Mar 2019	
Keynote/Plenary Addresses		29 Mar 2019	
Articles in Non-refereed/Non-peer Reviewed Journals		29 Mar 2019	
Other Significant Conference Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Technical/Policy Reports		29 Mar 2019	
Products		29 Mar 2019	
Artefacts		29 Mar 2019	
Prototypes		29 Mar 2019	
Other Recognised Research Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Disability *		23 Aug 2017	
ORCID *		29 Mar 2019	
Application Category *		29 Mar 2019	
Print Preview		29 Mar 2019	

Final Submit

©NRF Online Submission System

All compulsory sections will guide applicants with error messages. Please follow these messages to complete the sections correctly.

Step 5: To add the field of study under **Qualifications**, click on the “**Add**” button as shown below. As you start typing the name of the field, the system will provide options on the drop-down list.

If you have already obtained the undergraduate degree, please attached the academic records as shown below.

Qualification Record

and PhD (degree).

- Postdoctoral fellowships do not fall under Qualifications. Please capture these under Career Profile.
- Should your qualifications history have been migrated from a previous NRF Online system, please click on 'Edit' and check that all the fields have been completed and are correct.**

Level (e.g Honours / Doctoral)

Select an option

Name of Degree/Diploma (e.g. PhD)

[List of Primary and Secondary ResearchFields](#)

In order to add a Field of Study to the grid below, please click on the "Add" or "Add Another" button below the grid.

Field of Study	Delete
<div>Add</div>	

Institution

Select an option

New

Full-time

☐ Yes
☐ No

Distinction

Select an option

Date of First Registration

Completed

☒ Yes
☐ No

Highest Completed Qualification

☐ Yes
☐ No

Date Obtained

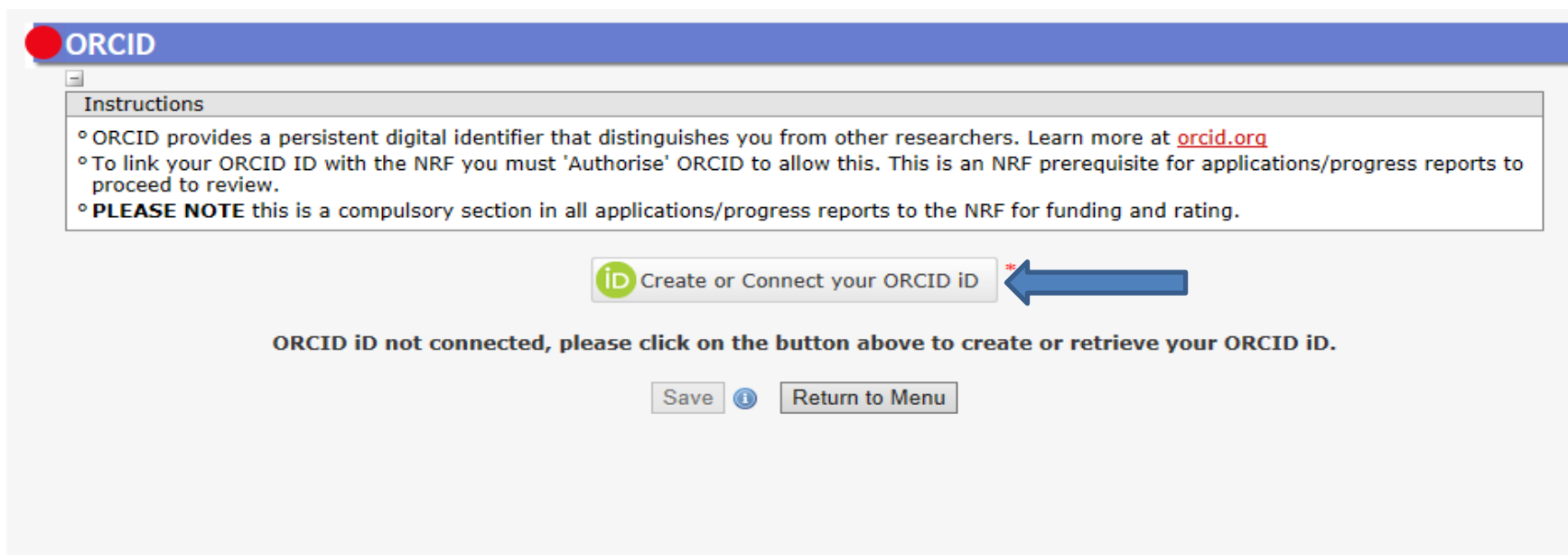
Description	File
No academic transcript uploaded.	

Add Transcript

Save

Cancel

Step 6: ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from other researchers and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized. If you don't have an ORCID ID, please click on *Create or Connect your ORCID iD*, you will be redirected to the ORCID website where you will have to register to obtain an ORCID ID. If you already have an ORCID ID, please click on *Create or Connect your ORCID iD* and your ORCID number will be pulled through.



The screenshot shows a web interface for ORCID integration. At the top is a blue header with a red circle icon and the text "ORCID". Below this is a grey box titled "Instructions" containing three bullet points: "° ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from other researchers. Learn more at orcid.org", "° To link your ORCID ID with the NRF you must 'Authorise' ORCID to allow this. This is an NRF prerequisite for applications/progress reports to proceed to review.", and "° **PLEASE NOTE** this is a compulsory section in all applications/progress reports to the NRF for funding and rating." Below the instructions is a button with a green "iD" icon and the text "Create or Connect your ORCID iD". A large blue arrow points to this button. Below the button, the text reads "ORCID iD not connected, please click on the button above to create or retrieve your ORCID iD." At the bottom are two buttons: "Save" and "Return to Menu".

ORCID

Instructions

- ° ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from other researchers. Learn more at orcid.org
- ° To link your ORCID ID with the NRF you must 'Authorise' ORCID to allow this. This is an NRF prerequisite for applications/progress reports to proceed to review.
- ° **PLEASE NOTE** this is a compulsory section in all applications/progress reports to the NRF for funding and rating.

iD Create or Connect your ORCID iD

ORCID iD not connected, please click on the button above to create or retrieve your ORCID iD.

Save **Return to Menu**

Step 7: The **Application Category** section is a very important section, please pay attention when completing it. The applicant is required to select the level of study they want to be funded for. There are four templates (Honours, Master's, Doctoral and Extension support) within the call. When a study level is selected, a template relevant to that level will be available for the applicant. For Master's and Doctoral applicants, additional options will be available for the applicant where they will be required to indicate whether they are applying as First time applicants or Extension support applicants and also indicate which programme they are applying under. **Please refer to the Framework document as well as the instructions under this section to ensure you are applying for a programme you are eligible under.** Change of programme will not be allowed once the application has been submitted to the NRF.

Application Category

Instructions

Only South African citizens and permanent residents are eligible for honours scholarships.

- **First Time Applicant:** Honours or masters or doctoral applicant without NRF funding for the degree you are applying for in this year.
- **Extension Support Applicant:** Masters or doctoral applicant who holds an NRF scholarship for the current degree who is either in second year of masters or third year of doctoral studies.
- **TWAS Doctoral Applicant:** Citizens and permanent residents in Africa or developing countries outside South Africa at the time of application. (See list of eligible countries/states in the Framework document)
- **NRF-Nuffic Doctoral Applicant:** South African citizens or permanent residents apply for either full-time doctoral studies at a Dutch HEI (Single-site mode) OR full-time doctoral studies jointly developed and implemented by a Dutch HEI and a Partner University in South Africa resulting in a joint degree (Spilt-site mode).
- **SASAC Applicant:** Masters or doctoral applicant who will be using systems analysis methodology in their research.
- **DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Applicant:** South African citizens or permanent residents (masters and doctoral applicants) who have interest in undertaking short term research visits in Germany for a duration of 2- 6 months.
- **General Scholarship:** NRF honours, masters and doctoral scholarships excluding TWAS, NUFFIC, DAAD, SASAC, SARAO and Extension Support.
- **SARAO Scholarship:** Honours, Masters and Doctoral Scholarships funded by The South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (please refer to SARAO-specific Applications Guides)
- **NB: FOR DETAILED AND IN-DEPTH INFORMATION, KINDLY REFER TO THE FRAMEWORK AND APPLICATION GUIDE DOCUMENT.**

Type of Scholarship

Doctoral

☒ First Time Applicant
 ☐ Extension Support Applicant

Please indicate if you are

General Scholarship

Select an option

Save

Return to Menu

Steps relevant to each template:

Step 1 – step 7 are generic steps of the application, applicable to all templates

Additional steps for each template:

Honours application template: **8, 9, 10, 17, 24 and 25**

Masters first time application template: **8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24 and 25**

Doctoral first time application template: **8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24 and 25**

Extension Masters and Doctoral application template: **19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25**

Step 8: The **Person History** section is required for statistical purposes by the NRF. If the previous or current study is funded by NSFAS, ISFAP or University financial aid, please attach official proof under the attachment section. Proof can be an official letter from NSFAS, ISFAP or University stating that you have previously received financial assistance from them. It can also be an official stamped account statement from the funder or university that clearly shows where the funds were received from.

Previous studies funded by	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSFAS funded <input type="checkbox"/> University Financial Aid <input type="checkbox"/> ISFAP <input type="checkbox"/> Self funded <input type="checkbox"/> Other Government departments <input type="checkbox"/> International donor funds <input type="checkbox"/> NRF Funded <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Not funded from any other source <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector Company <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable *
Current degree funding	<input type="checkbox"/> NSFAS funded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University Financial Aid <input type="checkbox"/> ISFAP <input type="checkbox"/> Self funded <input type="checkbox"/> Other Government departments <input type="checkbox"/> International donor funds <input type="checkbox"/> NRF Funded <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Not funded from any other source <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector Company *
Are you currently a DST-NRF intern	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No *
<div>Save Return to Menu</div>	

Step 9: By the **Financial Need** section, the NRF (through Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP)) aims to establish whether the applicant is financially needy or not (please refer to the Framework document for more information). If the applicant selects an option of a combined family income of more than R350 000, the section will be complete and the financial means test will not be requested from the applicant. If the applicant selects an option of less than or equal to R350 000, more questions will pop up as shown below. If this option is selected, please complete the ISFAP Consent form and upload.

Financial Need

Instructions

- This section is only applicable to South African citizen and permanent residents. All international applicants must select a combined gross family income of more than R350 000. This will not have any influence on the outcome of your funding application.
- In order to complete this financial needs section, you will be required to upload a copy of the signed consent form.
- In the instance where there is financial need has been indicated and consent has been given, please download the form, have it completed, and upload the completed document as an image or scanned document.
- The signed consent form needs to be certified by a commissioner of oaths in order for this application to be processed.

Combined gross family income

☒ Less than or equal to R350 000
 ☐ More than R350 000 *

Has a Financial Means Test been done?

☐ Yes ☒ No *

If no Financial Means Test has been done, do you give consent for it to be done?



☒ Yes ☐ No *

Download consent form

['ISFAP Consent Form'](#)

Upload completed consent form

*

For applicants who give the NRF and ISFAP consent to conduct the financial means test, **a *Household Contributor*** section will pop for them. The applicant is required to provide contributors' information as well as that of the dependents living in the same household. In order to provide information of all dependents, please indicate their exact number as shown below for the system to give enough fields to capture all of them.

Household Contributor

Instructions

- Please provide details of your household income contributor(s)
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that correct details of the contributor(s) is provided. Failure to provide correct information will result in your application not receiving NRF funding.

Household Contributor(s)

Relationship	Surname	First Name(s)	Financial Contributor	Edit	Delete
--------------	---------	---------------	-----------------------	------	--------

Add ⓘ


Household Details

Full Name	ID Number	Edit	Delete
-----------	-----------	------	--------

Number of Dependents: 0

Add ⓘ

Return to Menu



Step 10. Under the honours **Details of Degree** section, applicants are required to fill in details of the degree, discipline of study that is being applied for and information related to past studies and future intentions.

NB: Applicants that have been recruited by a supervisor to be part of an NRF funded project, should provide an NRF 5 or six digit grant UID (unique identification number). If there is an application submitted to the NRF for the project an applicant is recruited to be part of, the applicant should provide an NRF application reference number in the section shown below. You can get the UID or the NRF application reference number from your supervisor.

In the **Average percentage mark for major subject(s)**, applicants are required to click on **“Add”** and list major subjects with marks obtained in the final year of study of the undergraduate degree and click on save.

Details of Degree

Instructions

- Employed applicants in 2021 will not be considered.
- A minimum average percentage mark for major subject(s) refers to: **A minimum average of 65% for major subjects in the final undergraduate year of study for honours funding;**
- Minimum prescribed period means the minimum academic years prescribed for the completion of a Designated Qualification.
- Postgraduate students who have been recruited by a supervisor (e.g. SARChI, CoE, Thuthuka) to be part of a research project that is **currently funded by the NRF** should provide the NRF six-digit grant UID (unique identification number).
- Postgraduate students who have been recruited by a supervisor (e.g. SARChI, CoE, Thuthuka) to be part of a research project application that has been **submitted to the NRF for review** should provide the NRF application reference number.
- Postgraduate students who have not been recruited by an NRF funded researcher will not need to provide a UID or application reference number.
- Student who will be registered for a full time honours qualification must select either full year or semester under funding period. (This does not apply to Graduate Internship Programme applicants).

Applicant's Proposed Institution
Funding Period
Supervisor's UID number (Grant Number)
Supervisor's Application Reference Number
Discipline (of degree to be funded)
Department/School (of degree to be funded)
Full-time
Are you currently registered for the degree for which you are applying for funding?
Start date for this degree
Anticipated date of completion for this degree
Registration Year
Completion time for undergraduate degree

Select an option

☐ Full Year
☐ Semester
☐ Two Years (Graduate Internship) *

Select an option

☐ Yes ☐ No *
☐ Yes ☐ No *

CCYY/MM/DD

CCYY/MM/DD

Select an option

Major subject(s) and final results

Subject

Mark(s) obtained

Edit

Delete

Average percentage mark for major subjects
0
%

Add

Save

Return to Menu

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Step 11. Under the Master's and Doctoral ***Degree to be funded*** section, applicants are required to fill in details of the degree and discipline of study that is being applied for. The applicant is also expected to indicate if the study will be conducted on a full time or part time basis.

Degree to be Funded

Instructions

° Only students who will be registered or intend to register for full-time studies in 2021 may apply.

Date of first registration for this degree

 *


Full-time

☐ Yes ☐ No *

Will Master's registration be upgraded to doctoral status?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Date of upgrading



Does any financial support received for previous studies bind you to a service contract?


☐ Yes ☐ No *

Are you currently enrolled for the degree/research for which you are applying for support?

☐ Yes ☐ No *

Student Number (if currently registered at a university)


Discipline (of degree to be funded)

 *

Department/School (of degree to be funded)

Faculty (of degree to be funded)

Indicate what you are doing presently

 *

Save

Return to Menu

Step 12: The *Research Project Information section* requires the applicant to indicate when the project will be started or scheduled to start if it hasn't started. Also provide title and abstract of the proposed research project.

Step 13: In the *Academic Achievements* section, please capture the academic average percentage for the honours degree if completed, an average percentage for major subjects in the final-year undergraduate courses for students currently registered for a honours degree or an average percentage for major subjects in the third-year undergraduate courses for students in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.

Academic Achievements

Instructions

- The minimum average of 65% for major subjects refers to:
Masters:
A minimum average of 65% for the honours degree if completed;
OR
A minimum average of 65% for major subjects in the final-year undergraduate courses for students currently registered for a honours degree;
OR
A minimum average of 65% for major subjects in the third-year undergraduate courses for students in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
Doctoral:
A minimum average of 65% for the masters degree if completed;
OR
If the masters degree is in progress, a minimum average of 65% for the honours degree;
OR
A minimum average of 65% major subjects in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
- Students who received a "Pass" and have not entered a percentage pass mark will be given a default score of 1.
- Minimum prescribed period means the minimum academic years prescribed for the completion of a Designated Qualification.

Average percentage mark for major subjects e.g. 65% or pass

Year in which previous degree was completed

Completion time for previous degree

Select an option

Save

Return to Menu





Step 14: The **Details of Research** section is one of the most important sections in the application. The section has specific instructions related to each screen. Follow the instructions to complete the sections. Applicants must give a concise overview of the proposed research in this section as the input is taken into consideration during the review of the application. Appropriate literature references must also be included in this section. The requirements under this section are different for masters and doctoral applicants. Please refer to the **Framework Document** for the scorecards which will be used to review the applications.

For a Masters applicants:

Details of Research


Instructions

- ° Please note that all fields in this section are compulsory and unless fully completed your application/progress report cannot be submitted.
- ° **Please refer to the Framework document of the call that you are applying for.**

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
Project Outline *		27 Mar 2020	
Alignment to National Imperatives *		27 Mar 2020	









Return to Menu

For a Doctoral first time applicants:

Details of Research

Instructions

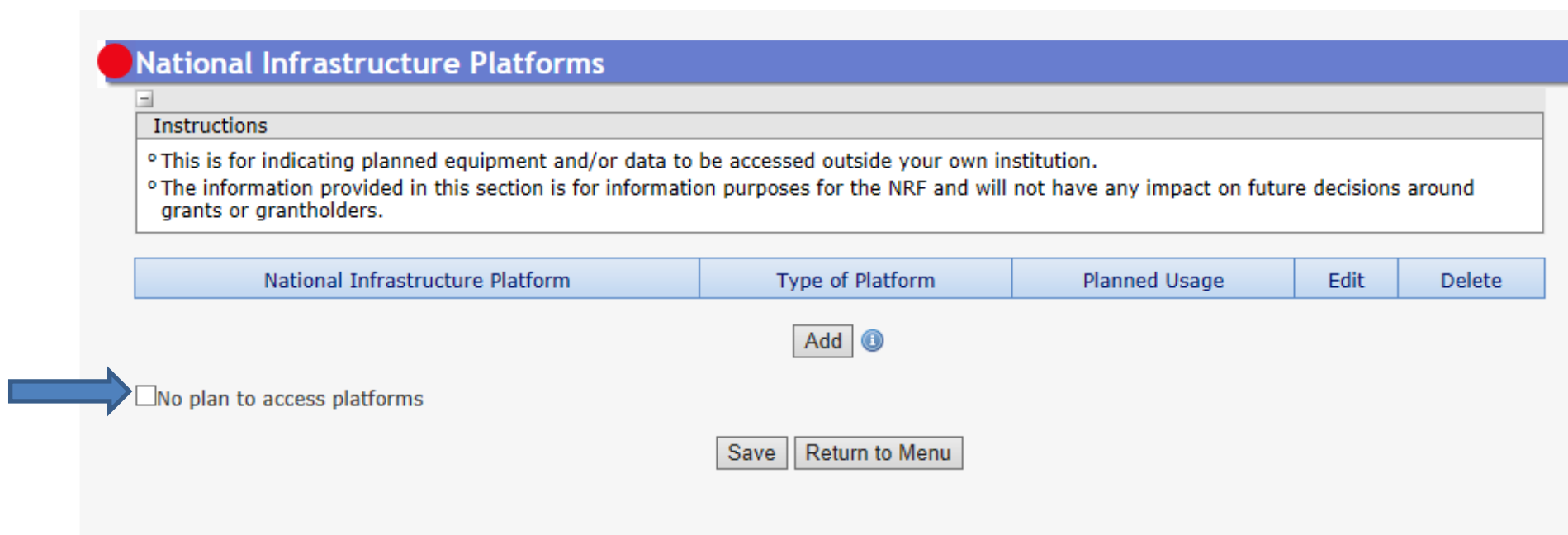
- Please note that all fields in this section are compulsory and unless fully completed your application/progress report cannot be submitted.
- **Please refer to the Framework document of the call that you are applying for.**

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
Problem Statement (Originality of Doctoral Study) *		28 Mar 2020	
Aims and Objectives (Originality of Doctoral Study) *		28 Mar 2020	
Potential Impact of the Research *		28 Mar 2020	
Alignment to National Imperatives *		28 Mar 2020	

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***Please note that the Details of Research section will only be marked as complete when all the sub-sections have been completed.**

Step 15: In the **National Infrastructure Platform section** if an applicant with plans to access any equipment or collect data from any platform outside the proposed institution, relevant information should be captured under this section. If there is no such planned, please click on “No plan to access platforms” and save.



National Infrastructure Platforms

Instructions


- This is for indicating planned equipment and/or data to be accessed outside your own institution.
- The information provided in this section is for information purposes for the NRF and will not have any impact on future decisions around grants or grantholders.

National Infrastructure Platform	Type of Platform	Planned Usage	Edit	Delete
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ⓘ

☒ No plan to access platforms

Step 16: The **Science Engagement** section is a compulsory section. Should applicants not be running any science engagement activities, they must click on “add” and select “N/A” under “activity” and category”.


Science Engagement

Instructions

- For the purposes of this application/report, the use of the overarching term science engagement is inclusive of all aspects of public engagement with science, science communication, science literacy as well as science outreach and awareness. It includes all participation by various groups of society in a programme aimed at generating mutual (two way) understanding and responses to science, including but not limited to awareness, accumulation of knowledge, enjoyment, opinion formulation and scientific literacy.
- The approach acknowledges the importance of citizens in the research and innovation process.
- It also embraces a broad understanding of “science” and “the sciences”, encompassing systematic knowledge spanning natural and physical sciences, engineering sciences, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, mathematics, social sciences and humanities, technology, all aspects of the innovation chain and indigenous knowledge.
- Broader impact encourages engagement beyond the boundaries of academia and considers the impact of the activities/project on the various public(s) and/or the various participants in terms of knowledges and/or awareness, behavioural and/or attitudinal change, skills acquisition etc.
- For more information, [click here](#). The attached Strategy is for the South African Context and may be used by applicants as input to their science engagement strategy. International applicants could utilise this or draw from their own national strategy if it already exists.

Category	Engagement to be undertaken and desired outcome	People/audiences	Intended engagement with audiences	Plan to assess broader impact(s)	Edit	Delete
No records to display.						

Add

☐ No science engagement planned

Save

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Step 17: In the **Attachment section**, please print or make a copy, certify and then scan all the required documents and submit as a **single PDF file**. The applicant is required to attach the following documents:

First time honours, masters and doctoral applicants; and extension support applicants must attach the following documents in the attachment section of the online application:

- a. South African citizens and permanent residents must attach a certified copy of their South African Identity Document. Other foreign nationals must attach a certified copy of their valid Passports. **These documents must be attached under the Registration Details section only**
- b. An official academic record on the university letterhead.
- c. Applicants with outstanding fees are required to attach **an official letter from the university** confirming their first year of registration for the degree and indicating that the student still has outstanding fees owed to the university.
- d. Applicants with disabilities must upload a medical certificate, in support of the disability. **Document must be attached under the Disability section only.**
- e. First time honours, masters and doctoral applicants who were previously supported by NSFAS or ISFAP must attach proof in the form of an official university stamped financial statement clearly showing that the funds are coming from these funders, a statement from the funder or a letter from NSFAS, ISFAP or the university stating that the applicant received funding from them.

First time masters and doctoral NRF-DAAD applicants

In addition to the above mentioned attachments, the NRF-DAAD applicants must attach the following document in the attachment section of the online application:

- a. A brief motivation on the interest to undertake a two (2) to six (6) months research visit in Germany.

- b. Applicants must also indicate if they have established collaborations in Germany and if they do, the applicant must provide the details of the collaborator.

NRF-TWAS doctoral applicants

All NRF-TWAS doctoral applicants must attach the following documents in the attachment section of the online application:

- a. Proof of evaluation of all foreign qualifications (obtained from non-South African universities) evaluated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) **or** proof that the applicant has submitted his/her qualifications to SAQA for evaluation. Failure to submit proof will result in the application being rejected. Further information on the process can be accessed by logging on to www.saga.org.za.
- b. An English language proficiency certificate (if available at the time of the application). If not available, this will be required before any NRF funds will be released to the student. Applicants must meet the following requirements of the English Language Proficiency Academic test: IELTS 6.5 (no band less than 6.0); or TOEFL (paper) 575 (TWE 4.5); or TOEFL iBT (min. 20); or Cambridge minimum 58. Information on the IELTS tests can be obtained from the British Council in applicant's home country or accessed at: www.ielts.org. Further information on the TOEFL test can be accessed at: www.toefl.com. Applicants may consult the British Council in their home country for assistance.
- c. Applicants must provide an official proof of study application and/or acceptance letter from their South African institution, department or laboratory.
- d. A motivation from the prospective doctoral supervisor. It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the respective institution to apply for acceptance and to secure a supervisor for the doctoral study.
- e. Official academic record on the university letterhead.

SARAO masters and doctoral applications

Prior to applying for a SARAO Masters Scholarship, students will be required to review the list of approved research projects for 2021, and identify a project they wish to pursue for their Masters or Doctoral degree. Once a student has identified a project, he/she must then contact the relevant supervisor to discuss the project. Additionally, to discuss if the student have the required qualifications, skills and abilities to undertake the project.

If a supervisor agrees to supervise a student, the supervisor will be required to provide the student with a signed letter, on a university letterhead, stating that he/she has agreed to supervise the student for the relevant project. The student must upload a signed copy of this letter with their application.

Attachments

Instructions

- **Please consult with the Call documents to determine what attachments are compulsory. Please note that if they are not attached, the application will not be processed for reviewing.**
- Please do not upload a copy of your ID document of passport under this section. This is done under Registration Details.
- Capture an appropriate Description for the document to be uploaded.
- Select the Document Type to be uploaded.
- Click the Browse button below to select the file on your local machine.
- Click on the Upload button to save.
- Upload pages individually if document is larger than 4MB. **(For rating applications, please see specific instructions in this section of the rating application.)**
- Please do not upload zip files. Acrobat reader has built-in security to prevent the opening of zip files by default (please read the article at <http://forums.adobe.com/thread/520515> for more information).

Description	Type	File Name	Edit	View	Delete
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Add

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***Applications without the required attachments will be rejected.**

Step 18: The **Reference** section allows an applicant to include academic referees who can comment on the applicant's academic abilities. On final submission of the application, emails requesting a referee's response, are sent automatically to the nominated referees to provide a report on the academic and research capabilities of the applicant. Types of references required are listed below: Applicants must ensure that the contact details for the referee are correct.

- Master's applicants - Master's supervisor and an academic referee
- Doctoral applicants - Master's supervisor, Doctoral supervisor and an academic referee
- For extension support applicants - either Doctoral or Masters Supervisor who can comment on the progress of the studies. If there is no response from the supervisor, the application will be rejected without review. **Only current supervisor(s) required.**

At Doctoral level, an applicant is expected to have identified a supervisor at the time of application. The supervisor should respond to the link sent by the NRF by the due date provided on the link, or the application will be rejected.

At Master's level, an applicant is expected to have identified a supervisor at the time of application. If not yet identified, the applicant is expected to capture the information of the Head of School/Departments who will guarantee that the applicant will be allocated a supervisor in case their application is successful. The Head of School/Department should respond to the link sent by the NRF by the due date provided on the link, or the application will be rejected.

References

Instructions

- Please consult with the Call documents to determine the compulsory number of references that need to be added.
- Please note that if an insufficient number of references is submitted, the application will not be processed for reviewing.
- For extension applications, only current supervisor references are required.

NRF Postgraduate Scholarship

- Postgraduate students who have been recruited by an NRF funded supervisor [e.g. SARCHI, CoEs, Thuthuka, Global Knowledge Research Programmes such as Earth Systems Science Research Programme (ESSRP); Global Change Social Sciences Research Programme (GCSSRP); Risk and Vulnerability Science Centres (RVSCs); African Earth Observation Network (AEON); Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) and South African Earth Observation Network (SAEON)] to be part of a research project should provide the NRF six-digit grant UID (unique identification number) or provide the NRF application reference number if the research project application has been submitted to the NRF for review.
- If the Supervisor is NRF funded, provide the relevant UID number (Grant Number) for Supervisors grant(where relevant).
- Postgraduate students 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.
- It is the responsibility of the applicants to make sure that the Supervisors UID or application reference number is correct. If an incorrect UID or application reference number is provided, your application will be marked as ineligible for funding.

Surname	Initials	Email Address	Faculty	Responded	Edit	Delete
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[Add](#)[Return to Menu](#)

Step 19: The **Details of Extension** section requires the applicants to indicate which institution they will be registered with. If the applicant is an NRF grantholder in 2020, the grant details will pull into this section. If your grant details does not pull into the section, it means that the NRF system does not recognise you as a grantholder. Please call the NRF contact person for assistance.

NB: Block grant and Grantholder linked students will have to be nominated on the system in 2020 for your information to pull through.

Applicants funded under the PDP programme, the applicant's institution should be the university you will be registered with (**not the Science Council or Research facility**). Please take note of the university internal closing date.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Details of Extension" with a blue header bar. Below the header is a "Instructions" box containing two bullet points: "Your NRF grant details will pull into this section." and "If the UID and value of your grant has not pulled into the section, it means that the system does not recognise you as an NRF grantholder in 2020. Please contact the NRF for assistance before submitting the application." The form fields are arranged in two columns. The left column lists labels: Applicant's Institution, UID, Value of Grant, Date of first registration for the degree, Full-time, Student Number, Discipline, Department/School, Faculty, Project Start Year, Project End Year, Title of Research Project, and Abstract of Research Project. The right column contains the corresponding input fields: a dropdown menu for Applicant's Institution, a text field for UID with a calendar icon, a text field for Value of Grant showing "R 0,00", a date field for registration with a calendar icon, radio buttons for "Yes" and "No", a dropdown menu for Discipline, a text field for Department/School, a text field for Faculty, a text field for Project Start Year, a text field for Project End Year, a text field for Title of Research Project, and a large text area for the Abstract of Research Project. Red asterisks indicate required fields. At the bottom are "Save" and "Return to Menu" buttons.

Details of Extension

Instructions

- Your NRF grant details will pull into this section.
- If the UID and value of your grant has not pulled into the section, it means that the system does not recognise you as an NRF grantholder in 2020. Please contact the NRF for assistance before submitting the application.

Applicant's Institution ⓘ *

UID ⓘ

Value of Grant ⓘ

Date of first registration for the degree ⓘ

Full-time ☐ Yes ☐ No ⓘ

Student Number

Discipline ⓘ

Department/School

Faculty

Project Start Year ⓘ

Project End Year ⓘ

Title of Research Project ⓘ

Abstract of Research Project ⓘ

Step 20: The **Original Problem statement** and the **Original research plan** sections are compulsory sections, the reviewer might not have the applicant's original application so the information is very important to determine what was originally proposed prior to progress to date.

Original Problem Statement

Instructions

◦ Provide the problem statement as in the original application.

Description

5000 characters left.

Save

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Step 21: The *Progress to Date* section requires applicants to indicate the work done so far under the Research Project.

Step 22: The *Reason why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period* section requires an explanation as to why the study could not be completed within the NRF maximum funding period time.

Reasons why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period

Instructions

Explanation of why the study could not be completed within the NRF maximum funding period.

Description

5500 characters left.

Save

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Step 23: The *Work plan to complete the degree within the defined timeframes* section requires the applicant to provide a workplan to complete the degree within the requested period of extension. Clear timelines of activities to take place during the period of extension should be provided.

Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframes

Instructions

- Start and end dates for the six (6) or twelve (12) months' work plan;
- Proposed date for submission of the Masters or Doctoral Dissertation for examination;
- Proposed graduation date;
- Activities for completing outstanding research, indicating the start and completion date of each activity;
- Plan with timelines for completion of the Masters or Doctoral dissertation;
- Details of manuscripts to be drafted and submission timelines; and
- Timelines for corrections to dissertation from reviewers.

Description

5500 characters left

Step 24: Applicants must adhere to their institution's internal cut-off date for submission of their applications to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The institution's internal cut-off date will be determined by the respective Research Office or Postgraduate Office and is usually at least two weeks prior to the NRF's cut-off date. DAs ensure that all proposals are screened and approved through internal institutional processes before submitting the applications to the NRF. The NRF assumes that the respective DAs are satisfied with the standard of all proposals validated and submitted, and that the institution approves and supports the proposed research.

Step 25: The final submit button will only be activated when all compulsory sections are complete. If all the compulsory sections are complete and the final submit button does not appear, resave the Project Information section to refresh the application. The final submit button should then be active. A submitted application is automatically routed to the DA in the Research or Postgraduate Office of the South African public institution that was selected, for internal review and validation. Late applications, additional supporting documentation or information received after the closing date will not be accepted or considered.

The NRF will not process applications that are incomplete, contain insufficient or incorrect information, or fail to comply with instructions. These applications will be rejected. The application must be completed in sufficient detail to allow for a comprehensive review and evaluation by external reviewers. In addition to the electronic application and required attachments, the NRF may request additional information or documentation to support an application if required. Failure to supply such information or documentation upon request may result in the rejection of the application.

Incomplete applications is an application without:

- a. Any of the required attachments e.g. official academic transcript or proof of NSFAS or ISFAP funding.
- b. Supervisor response on the application viz.:
- c. Response from current supervisor for Extension Support applicants; or
- d. Response from proposed masters supervisor for first-time masters applicants; or

- e. Response from proposed doctoral supervisor for first-time doctoral applicants; or
- f. Response from proposed doctoral supervisor for first-time NRF-TWAS doctoral applicants.

4. Tracking the application

This section explains different application statuses to assist the applicant track the application. The status of your application will determine the stage the application is at.

Applicants should direct queries to the University Research/Postgraduate office if the application is still at the university.



5. Screening Processes

5.1. Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated and reviewed by South African public institutions and submitted to the NRF, are further screened by the NRF for compliance with the eligibility criteria and requirements of the Call for applications. Applications that fail to meet the stipulated requirements will be rejected.

6. Applications Feedback and Disputes

Once the assessment processes have been completed and the recommended funding decision has been approved by the NRF, the NRF will publish a list of successful applicants on the NRF website at www.nrf.ac.za/bursaries/calls. The application status online will indicate whether or not the application has been approved for funding. If your name does not appear on the published list of successful applications it means that your application was unsuccessful.

Unsuccessful applicants that wish to appeal the funding decision taken by the NRF must follow the appropriate Appeals Process of the NRF. Appeals for this funding instrument will only be considered two (2) months after the official publication date of the results on the NRF website.

7. Awardee Responsibilities

7.1 Managing changes during the project life cycle

Changes may occur during the project life cycle due to unforeseen and extenuating circumstances. Please note the following on how to manage the award and subsequent changes (planned or unanticipated) should they arise during the project life cycle.

7.2 Change Requests

7.2.1 Prior Approval Requests

Applicants must submit all change requests in writing to the NRF for approval before effecting any changes. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the South African institution's Research Office / Postgraduate Office for approval prior to the change.

7.3 Changes in Project Scope, Supervisor or Institution

Changes may occur where a project scope, supervisor or institution needs to be changed from the original research proposal, supervisor or institution respectively. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Research / Postgraduate Office. Such requests must be forwarded to the NRF 30 days before the change is intended to take place.

8. Scientific Compliance

8.1. Methodology

The student takes scientific responsibility for the research to be undertaken, including its objectives and the methodology outlined in the project proposal. The student is required to devote the necessary time to the research project in compliance with the work-plan for the research proposal approved by the NRF so as to achieve the project's stated aims and objectives.

8.2. Intellectual Property Rights

The intellectual capital generated by NRF funded research must be appropriately protected and exploited for the benefit of South Africa. This condition should not interfere with the Intellectual Property Rights arrangements already made, on condition that the majority of the benefits arising from the intellectual capital accrue to South Africa and its citizens. This condition is aligned with the *Intellectual Property Rights Act*,¹ which will override this condition of grant.

8.3. Ethics

The student is required to maintain the highest ethical and safety standards in conducting the research, particularly when human and animal subjects are involved. It remains the responsibility of the project leader to comply with all relevant regulations in this regard, including those of the institution at which the research is carried out. An ethical clearance certificate (where applicable) must be submitted to the NRF in respect of successful applications before funding can be released.

¹ RSA (2008). Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act 51 of 2008. *Government Gazette*, 22 Dec 2008. Vol 522, No 3174