NRF | MASTERS AND DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS 2020

Please note: This call can be accessed under the heading “Masters and Doctoral Grants”

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG) focus area(s)

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Masters Applications: 12 August 2019
Doctoral Applications: 30 June 2019
Masters and Extension Support: 15 July 2019

BACKGROUND

The (National Research Foundation) NRF is mandated by an Act of Parliament, the NRF 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.

The purpose of this document is to outline the funding principles and implementation of the Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for full-time studies. The NRF awards bursaries and scholarships through three modalities viz. (i) competitive scholarships awarded as free-standing scholarships following an NRF merit review process; (ii) block grants to universities that nominate students for the bursaries following an institutional selection process; and (iii) grantholder-linked bursaries in which the grantholder nominates students linked to his/her research project. This document also presents a unique opportunity for Doctoral scholarships for research using systems analysis methodology, with specific capacity development interventions provided through the Southern African Systems Analysis Centre (SASAC), hereafter referred to as SASAC Doctoral scholarships. Systems analysis requires thinking in systems and the application of systems modelling tools and approaches to global challenges.

The Scholarships are funded by the NRF core grant allocation from National Treasury, the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the British Council, the International Institution for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for Human Capital Development (HCD).

In addition, these scholarships also support Persons with Disabilities as defined by The Code of Good Practice on Employment of People with Disabilities and the Employment Equity Act, (Act No 55 of 1998). The act states that: only people who satisfy all the criteria in the definition: (i) long-term or recurring; (ii) having a physical or mental impairment; (iii) which substantially limits them, are considered as persons with disabilities.

In an effort to address the high volume of applications received annually, duplication of applications submitted to different programmes and long turnaround time to informing successful applicants, the NRF has consolidated all the Masters and Doctoral scholarship programmes such as DAAD, Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral studies, Innovation, NRF Freestanding, Scarce Skill Development Fund (SSDF), The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) Doctoral and SASAC Doctoral scholarships into this framework document.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility criteria listed below apply to all first time applicants for Masters and Doctoral scholarships:
- Scholarships are open to South African citizens, South African permanent residents as well as a limited percentage of foreign nationals who will register at a South African public university in 2020 on a full-time basis.
- NRF Masters scholarship-holders who wish to register for Doctoral degrees in 2020 must apply for funding.

The eligibility criteria for applicants seeking Extension Support are as follows:

- Applicants must be NRF scholarship-holders in 2019. Extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances and will either be six (6) or twelve (12) months as the NRF expects all students to complete their qualifications within regulation time of the funding period.
- Applicants applying for extension support at the Masters level should have commenced their degree in 2018.
- Applicants applying for extension support at the Doctoral level should have commenced their degree in 2017.
- Only students pursuing full-time Masters or Doctoral studies in South Africa are eligible to apply.

The eligibility criteria listed below apply to all NRF-TWAS Doctoral applicants:

- Applicants must register at a South African public university in 2020 on a full-time basis and may be based at any South African public research institution including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Science Councils and National Research Facilities. Details of Recognised HEIs and other Public Research Institutions are available [here](#).
- The NRF-TWAS Doctoral Scholarships are only open to citizens and permanent residents from developing countries on the African continent and elsewhere. It is important to note that South Africans are not eligible to apply. Please refer to the list of eligible developing countries and the list of 66 priority countries for TWAS funding.
- Applicants may not be living, studying or working in South Africa at the time of application.
- Applicants who were previously employed or studying towards a degree or undertaking research in South Africa, and have returned to their country of origin but have been in their country of origin for less than two (2) years are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must be thirty five (35) years of age or younger on the 31st of December of the year of application for the Doctoral scholarship.
- Visa and immigration laws of the applicant’s home country and South Africa must be met by the applicant. The applicant must secure his/her own Visa or study permit under the programme for study in South Africa. **Neither NRF nor TWAS will be responsible for assisting with visa requirements.**
- Upon completion of the studies, all successful applicants must return to their country of origin. **Students who fail to return to their home country will be liable to pay back the amount to the NRF equal to the number of years of study support they have received.**
- Applicants who wish to pursue research under Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines will be supported through the Scholarship.

**IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS:**

Please adhere to the respective closing dates so that your application is considered.
HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call opened to prevent IT system overload nearer the closing date.

- Complete applications are sent to the host institution 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 the NRF Framework documents for details on eligibility criteria - www.up.ac.za/funding

All continuing students that are eligible for a second or third year of funding must submit a Progress Report and not a new application.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

Masters Applications: 12 August 2019
Doctoral Applications: 30 June 2019
Masters and Extension Support: 15 July 2019