

UCDP: Strengthening Academic Staff Development in Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (UCDP – MSS) Programme of the National Graduate Academy (NGA-MaSS)

2020 FUNDING GUIDELINES

In order to qualify for funding, an applicant has to be:

- A South African citizen or permanent resident of South Africa; and
- A full-time academic employee (or someone on a fixed term full-time contract continuous for at least 3 years) at any of the universities that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Pretoria which is the Lead Institution for the University Capacity Development Programme Grant (UCDP-MSS) awarded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET); and
- Graduate Academics/Early Career Academics satisfying one of the following:
 - Young academics registered for an M.Sc. or PhD, or intending to register within 12 months after receiving a grant ((Graduate Academics are any academics who qualifies for funding from the UCDP-MSS grant who has not yet completed a PhD);
 - Early Career Academics within five years after completion of PhD;
 - Late Entrants to Academia (Early Career Academics – within five full-time active years in academia after completion of PhD excluding any periods away from academia).

Anyone who qualifies for financial support can request funding, through their institution, for:

1. Activity 1: Winter/Summer School travel and Board:

a. Workshop or Research School attendance:

- **Local workshop:** Graduate Academics/Early Career Academics will be fully funded (travel, accommodation and subsistence) to attend Graduate Workshops or Research Schools whose duration is at least 3 days or for Technical Workshops whose duration is at least 1 day. No one will be funded to attend commercial (for profit) workshops. This includes pre- or post-conference workshops. No one will be funded to attend both a local and regional conference/workshop within a period of 12 months.
- **International workshop:** Graduate Academics/Early Career Academics will be fully funded (travel, accommodation and subsistence) to attend Graduate Workshops or Research Schools hosted by overseas academic organisations and whose duration is at least 3 days. No one will be funded to attend more than one international workshop/conference within a period of 12 months.

- **Online workshop participation:** Due to the spread of coronavirus and outbreak of COVID-19 epidemic, travel has been severely restricted. This means that face-to-face academic events are restricted and there has been a rise in online academic events: workshops, seminars and conferences. The cost to participate in these is mainly provision of additional data for those who may need it. Universities can apply for the following grants:
 - **Data packages:** Graduate Academics/Early Career Academics would qualify for a grant of about R500 per month for up to 6 months.
 - **Mobility:** Beneficiaries of the UCDP grant who reside in communities with poor telecommunication network coverage and where it is possible for them to book and reside at an establishment where they can access adequate Wi-Fi connectivity would qualify for a grant to attend up to 3 events per month. Quotes for participation should be submitted with the application and a motivation from the Head of Department and supervisor.
 - **Registration fees:** Where this is required, UCDP beneficiaries can apply for registration fees for online events.
- b. **Workshop Organisation I:** Academics from any of the universities that have signed an MoU with the University of Pretoria and who organise/host a graduate workshop or research school can apply for a grant of up to R100 000. This contribution may be used to cover the costs for invited speakers, both local and international, if they have managed to recruit at least five (5) Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics. Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics who wish to attend the workshop should apply directly, through their institutions, to University of Pretoria for funding.
- c. **Workshop Organisation II:** The Academic Committees of the National Graduate Academy for Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, Statistics and Data Science) may request a group of up to four (4) academics to organise a Graduate Workshop or Research School on a theme aimed at PhD Graduate Academics. A grant of up to R150 000 may be awarded to cover the costs for speakers, both local and international, venue hire and refreshments if the organisers manage to recruit at least 10 Graduate Academics. The event will be open to other postgraduate students and early career academics from any universities provided they can secure funding for travel and accommodation from other sources, for example, from the DSI/NRF Centre of Excellence for Mathematical and Statistical Sciences.
- d. **Online Workshop Organisation III:** Academics from any of the universities and organisations (for example SAMS, SASA, AIMS) that have signed an MoU with the University of Pretoria and who organise/host an online graduate workshop or research schools can apply for a grant of up to R30 000 for an event of 10 hours duration. Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics who wish to attend the online event qualify for additional data funding as described above.

- e. **Online Workshop Organisation IV:** The Academic Committees of the National Graduate Academy for Mathematical and Statistical Sciences may request a group of up to 4 academics to organise a Graduate Workshop or Research School on a theme aimed at PhD Graduate Academics. A grant of up to R90 000 for an online event of about 30 hours will be allocated to cover the costs associated with organizing and running the event provided the organisers manage to recruit at least 10 Graduate Academics from any of the universities that have signed an MoU with the University of Pretoria. The event will be open to other postgraduate students.
 - f. **Rural Universities allocations:** Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics working in rural universities and residing in communities with poor telecommunication network coverage, will be provided with mobility grants to attend online events at conference centres where, if possible, they could stay overnight. This would need motivation from the Head of Department and the research supervisor. The requisite funding allocation will be R9 000 per person per month.
 - g. **Mobility Grants:** These can be allocated to Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics for the following:
 - i. For a Graduate Academic to visit a local PhD supervisor at another institution for consultation, where the visit is at least a full week (equivalent of at least 5 working days). A maximum of R50 000 per annum will be awarded per applicant.
 - ii. For an Early Career Academic to undertake a research visit or sabbatical leave at another institution locally or overseas where such a visit is at least for one month duration. A maximum of R150 000 per annum will be awarded per applicant to cover travel costs and accommodation and augment living expenses. A letter of invitation from the host will be required as well as the research programme to be undertaken and expected outcomes.
 - h. **Planning meetings:** A group of academics, from at least three different institutions that are members of the UCDP-MSS consortium can apply for a grant for a face-to-face planning meeting aimed at organizing a workshop or school.
 - i. **Once-off grants:** A once-off grant of up to R15 000 will be allocated to successful project beneficiaries to be utilised to support teaching and research activities. To benefit from this funding a full motivation from the applicant supported by the Head of Department will be required.
2. **Activity 2: Activities Planning Workshops:** The UCDP-MSS Advisory Committee may schedule two face-to-face strategic planning meetings which will be funded under this item. Similarly, each Academic committee of the National Graduate Academy for Mathematical and Statistical Sciences may schedule three face-to-face strategic planning meetings which will also be funded under this item.

3. Activity 3: Conference attendance

- a. **Local Conference:** Graduate academics would qualify for a grant of up to R20 000 to attend a local conference, for example, the annual meetings of South African Statistical Association (SASA) and South African Mathematical Society (SAMS).
- b. **Regional Conference:** Graduate academics would qualify for a grant of up to R40 000 to attend a conference hosted in the SADC region, for example, the annual meetings of Southern African Mathematical Sciences Association (SAMSA). No one will be funded to attend both a local and regional conference/workshop within a period of 12 months.
- c. **Online conference participation:** Due to the spread of coronavirus and outbreak of COVID-19 epidemic, travel has been severely restricted. Similar to Activity 1, the cost to participate in virtual conferences will also be covered under this activity.
- d. **Rural Universities allocations:** Graduate Academics or Early Career Academics working in rural universities and residing in communities with poor telecommunication network coverage, will be provided with mobility grants to attend online conferences at conference centres where, if possible, they could stay overnight. This would need motivation from the Head of Department and the research supervisor. The requisite funding allocation will be R9 000 per person per month.

4. **Activity 5: Overseas Conference Participation:** Graduate academics would qualify for a grant of up to R65 000 to attend an overseas conference, provided their paper or poster has been accepted by the conference organisers. No one will be funded to attend more than one international conference within a period of 12 months.

5. **Activity 6: Staff Replacement:** A once-off grant of R120 000 for one(1) semester (6 months), but could be for two (2) semesters in exceptional cases, for anyone in need of time off to concentrate on PhD or MSc research. Priority will be given to staff in the final stages of their degrees and the request needs motivation from the research supervisor and agreement from the applicant's Head of Department. In exceptional cases, an HOD can motivate for a higher amount and provide supporting evidence.

All funding contributions from the UCDP-MSS Program depend on availability of funds in the annual budget allocated for specific activities in 2020 - 2022. **Funds can only be utilised once official communication (including a Purchase Order) has been received from University of Pretoria.**

Requests for funding received from academics either working at institutions that have not signed an MoU with the University of Pretoria or who have not submitted a report to UP for previous funding, will not be processed. Templates for reporting are available for download on the NGA (MaSS) website. For reporting purposes to the Department of Higher Education and Training, applicants are required to provide all the information required in the application forms – incomplete application forms will not be processed. Early career academics (within 5 years after PhD completion) are requested to demonstrate how their application fits with their career development plan (for example, goals with respect to research output, teaching portfolio, envisaged collaborations, promotion aspiration and NRF rating).