



Application and Funding Guide for NRF Master's and Doctoral Scholarships 2024

Directorate: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

Date: April 2023

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
NRF	National Research Foundation
SARChI	South African Research Chairs Initiative
CoE	Centre of Excellence
NASSP	National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme

Contact Details

Contact Details for Technical NRF Connect Enquiries

For Online Submission Technical Enquiries, please contact the **NRF Support Desk** on weekdays, during office hours (08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday): E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

Contact Details for the Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunity	Responsible person	Email address
NRF (General) Master's and Doctoral Scholarships	Melissa Govender	M.Govender@risa.nrf.ac.za
NRF-DAAD Master's and Doctoral Scholarships	Nozine Nqeketo	N.Nqeketo@risa.nrf.ac.za
NRF Extension Support Scholarships	Nozine Nqeketo	N.Nqeketo@risa.nrf.ac.za
SASAC Master's and Doctoral Scholarships	Melissa Govender	M.Govender@risa.nrf.ac.za
Grantholder-linked Scholarships - Thuthuka - Institutional Grants (CoEs; SARChI) - NASSP - General Research Grants	Thandeka Mthethwa Judith Mahlanya Stephen Dlamini Jane Mabena Motsakwe Rakgoale	T.Mthethwa@risa.nrf.ac.za JK.Mahlanya@risa.nrf.ac.za SM.Dalmini@risa.nrf.ac.za JS.Mabena@risa.nrf.ac.za MR.Rakgoale@risa.nrf.ac.za

1. Introduction

- This Application and Funding Guide provides an overview of the application process and funding guidelines for master's and doctoral Scholarships for the 2024 academic year.
- It should be read in conjunction with the **DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Framework for Funding in 2024 Academic Year**. The framework document provides detailed information with respect to objectives of each funding opportunity, 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's call for Postgraduate Scholarships for full-time studies in 2024 is published on the NRF website (www.nrf.ac.za).
- Application forms are accessible online at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Applicants may only submit ONE application.
- Once an applicant submits an application, the application will automatically be routed to the institution where the applicant is applying to study.
- The applications will be screened for eligibility, and reviewed and scored by the institutions, and only **eligible** applications will be submitted to the NRF.
- In order for an application to be considered for 2024 funding, applicants must ensure that they submit their applications on or before the applicant cut-off date.
- All applications are processed by an NRF Designated Authority (DA) who is based at the University Research/Postgraduate office. Should a DA contact you regarding your application, 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 may result in the application being rejected at the institutional-review stage.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to check the application closing date with the relevant Research or Postgraduate office.

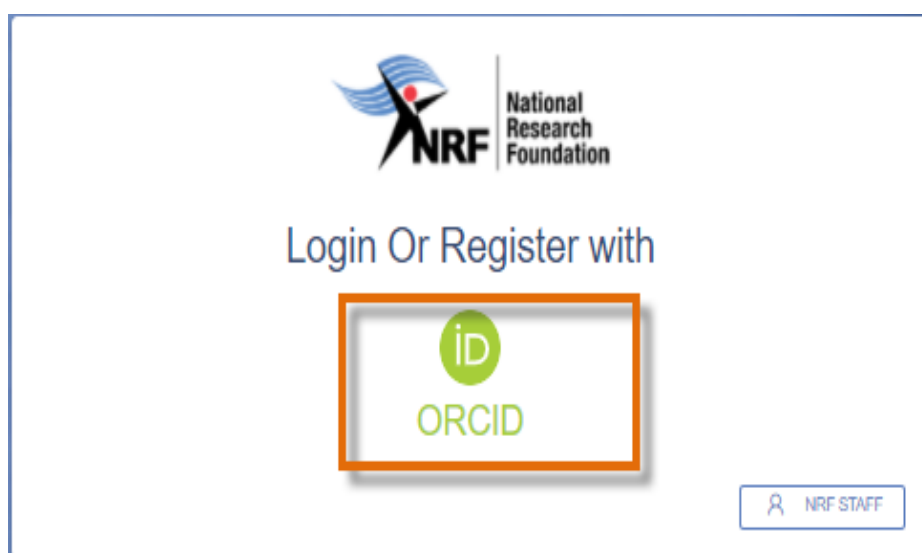
3. How to Submit an Application

- Application forms must be completed on the NRF Connect System at <https://nrconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call opens, to prevent IT system overload, which may occur close to the cut-off dates.

Step 1: Login or Register

- When accessing NRF Connect (<https://nrconnect.nrf.ac.za>), the applicant will be directed to a Login (for registered users) and Register (for new users) page.
- All applicants are required to be registered on the NRF Connect system to make use of the relevant functionality.

Applicants must click the **ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID)** icon to login or register.



Step 2: Signing in with ORCID iD

Applicants already registered on ORCID, must sign in using one of the following options:

- ORCID iD
- Email address linked with your ORCID profile
- GMAIL account linked with your ORCID
- Facebook account linked with ORCID

When clicking on **Sign In**, the system will redirect you to the NRF Connect login page and automatically log you in.

Sign in


Email or 16-digit ORCID iD
example@email.com or 0000-0001-2345-6789


Password

SIGN IN

[Forgot your password or ORCID ID?](#)
Don't have an ORCID ID yet? [Register now](#)

or

 **Access through your institution**

 **Sign in with Google**

Step 3: Creating the ORCID iD

- Applicants that are not registered on ORCID, must click **“Register now”** and follow the steps to create an ORCID profile.

Sign in


Email or 16-digit ORCID iD
example@email.com or 0000-0001-2345-6789


Password


SIGN IN

[Forgot your password or ORCID ID?](#)
Don't have an ORCID ID yet? Register now

or

 **Access through your institution**

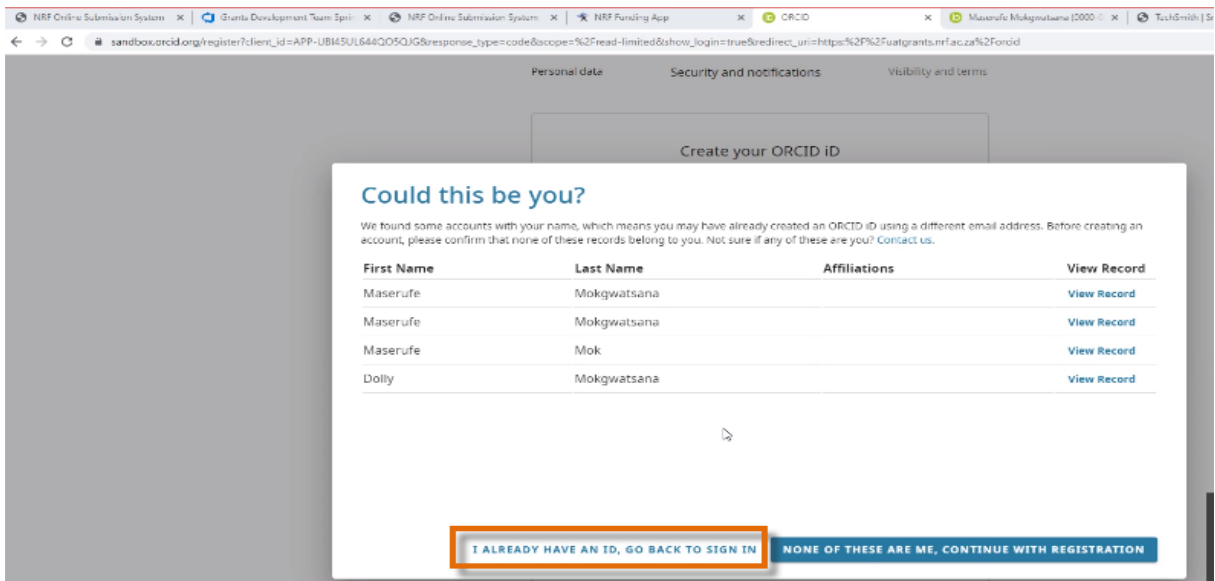
 **Sign in with Google**

 **Sign in with Facebook**

Step 4: Existing ORCID Profiles

- On clicking 'Register Now', the system will return the following message: *“We found some accounts with your name, which means you may have already created an ORCID iD using a different email address. Before creating an account, please confirm that none of these records belong to you. Not sure if any of these are you?”*
- If any of the listed profile(s) belong to you, click *“I already have an ID, go back to sign in”*
- If none of the profiles are yours, click *“None of these are me, continue with registration”*

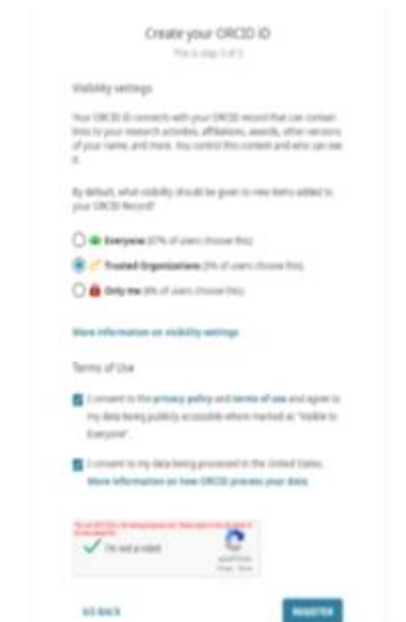




Step 5: Visibility of ORCID iD

Please select one of the options for the visibility of the ORCID records.

- Should you choose the first or second option, the ORCID records will be visible on NRF Connect
- Should you choose the third option; the records will not be visible on NRF Connect

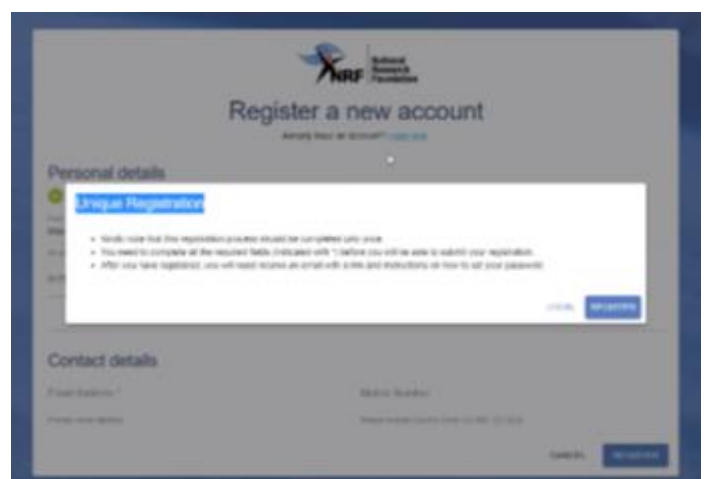


Step 6: Authorize Access

Continue with the ORCID registration as prompted.

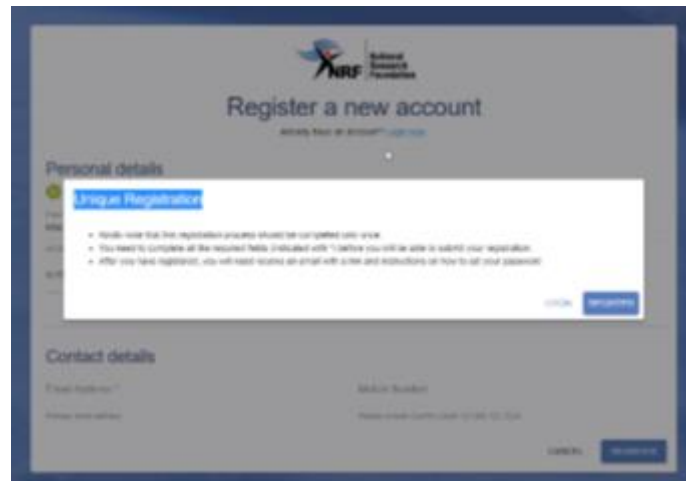
Step 7: Register on NRF Connect

When the ORCID registration process is complete, you will be redirected to NRF Connect login screen to register on the system.



Step 8: Applicants with NRF Online Submission Profile

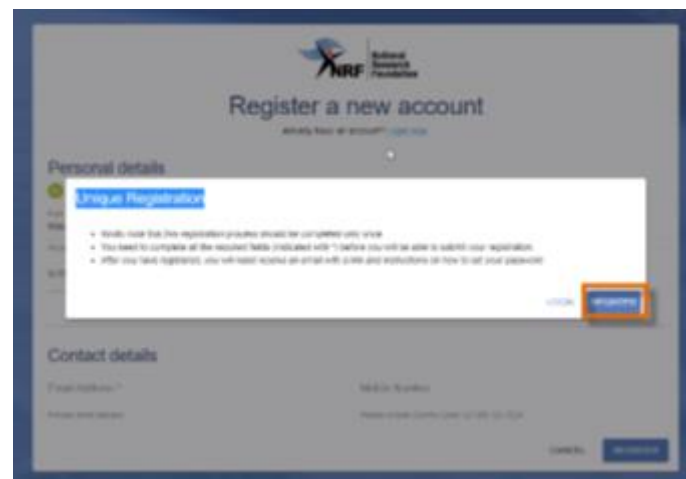
Applicants who are currently registered on the NRF Online Submission System, will be automatically logged in to NRF Connect with the ORCID profile.



The screenshot shows the 'Register a new account' page for the National Research Foundation. The page is titled 'Register a new account' and includes a sub-header 'Already have an account? Login now'. Under the 'Personal details' section, there is a 'Unique Registration' box with instructions: 'Please note that this registration process should be completed only once', 'You need to complete all the required fields (indicated with *) before you will be able to submit your registration', and 'After you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions on how to set your password'. Below this, there are fields for 'Email Address *' and 'Mobile Number', with a note 'Please include Country Code +27 982 123 1234'. A 'REGISTER' button is visible at the bottom right.

Step 9: Applicants without NRF Online Submission Profile

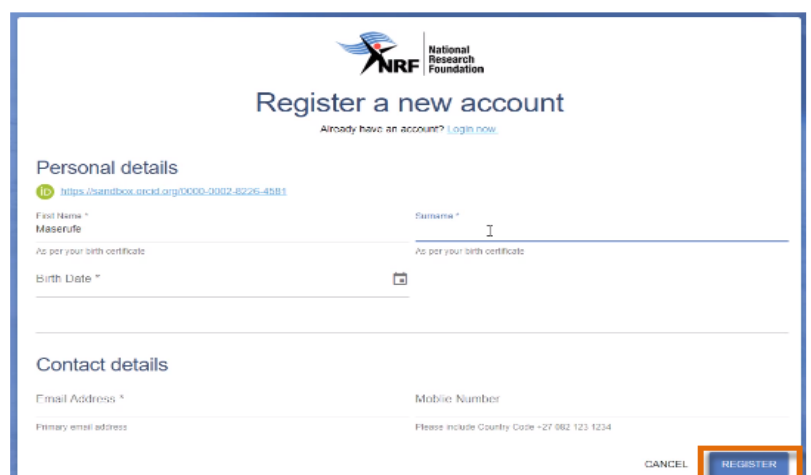
If you're not registered on NRF Online Submission system, click '**Register**' to register and create a profile on the new NRF Connect system.



This screenshot is identical to the one in Step 8, showing the 'Register a new account' page. The 'Unique Registration' box and the 'REGISTER' button are highlighted with a red rectangle, indicating the next step in the process.

Step 10: Login on NRF Connect

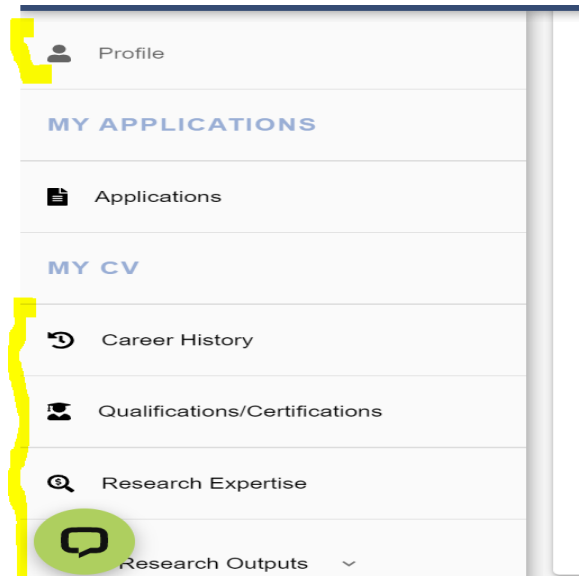
Complete the missing fields and click Register to complete the process and the system will automatically log you in.



This screenshot provides a detailed view of the registration form. The 'Personal details' section includes an ORCID iD field with the value 'https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8226-4581', a 'First Name *' field with the value 'Maserufe', and a 'Surname *' field. Below these are 'Birth Date *' and 'As per your birth certificate' fields. The 'Contact details' section includes an 'Email Address *' field with the value 'Primary email address' and a 'Mobile Number' field with the value 'Please include Country Code +27 982 123 1234'. A 'REGISTER' button is highlighted with a red rectangle at the bottom right, next to a 'CANCEL' button.

Step 11: Complete the “My Profile” and CV sections

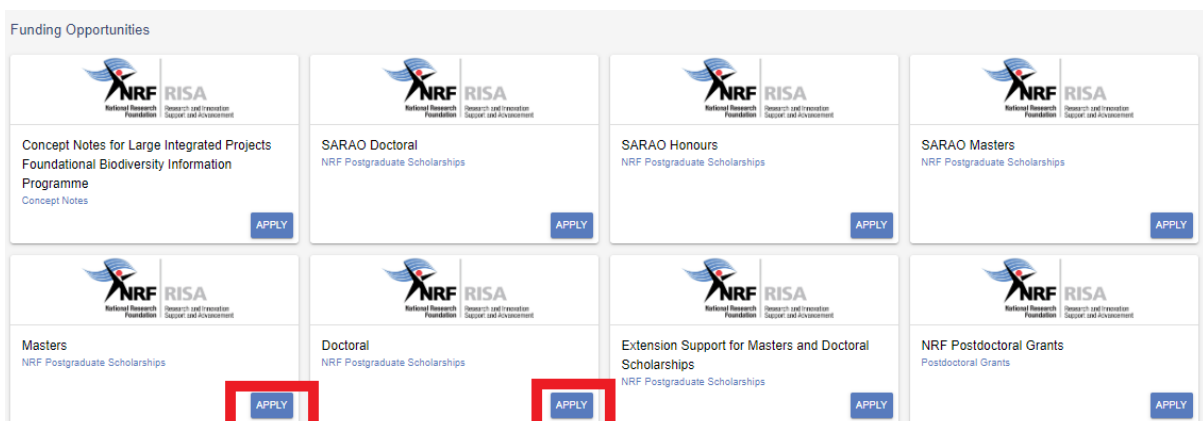
- Applicants must first complete or update the section ‘My Profile’ and ensure that they upload a clear, certified copy of their valid ID document or passport (foreign applicants). ***If the ID copy or passport is not certified, the application will be rejected as this is an audit requirement.**
- Applicants with disabilities must upload a medical certificate, in support of the disability. **Document must be attached under the Disability field (profile section) only.**
- The CV sections on the left side of the NRF Connect screen must also be completed before they can complete the application.
- All fields with an asterisk * are compulsory.
- If tertiary qualification is completed, upload proof of completion by clicking on “Click here to upload the relevant document” field which will redirect to your list of files.




















Accessing the application

Applications that you are potentially eligible for will be displayed on the homepage of NRF Connect. For the postgraduate scholarships, if you meet the age criteria for master’s and doctoral applications, then you will have access to these. If however, you are over the age limit, then you will not see the funding opportunities displayed on the homepage.

You can click on the “apply” icon in order to start an application.



Applicants can then complete the application:

PMDS23040589560 PREVIEW 			
Section	Complete	Updated	Edit
Personal Profile *	✓	02/06/2022	
Qualifications/Certifications *	✗		
Research Expertise *	✓	04/06/2022	
Career History	✗		
Student Supervision	✗		
Research Outputs	✗		
Patents	✗		
Application Category - Masters *	✗		
Basic Information *	✗		
Geographical Area *	✗		
Person History *	✗		
Financial Need *	✗		
Financial Need - Proof Of NSFAS/ISFAP Funding *	✗		
Household Contributor *	✗		
Attachments	✗		
Degree To Be Funded *	✗		

Sections marked with a red asterisk (*) are compulsory and all these sections have to be completed in order for you to submit your application. Completeness is indicated by a red cross (incomplete) or a green tick (complete). Sections can be edited by selecting the edit icons of the far right side.

*Please ensure that you complete and submit your application by the closing date of the call. The system will not allow applicants to submit after the call has closed.

Step 12: Application Category

- The **Application Category** section is a very important section.
- **Scholarship applying for** = each level has different types of scholarships linked to it.
- Only one option can be selected.
- Please refer to the Framework Document for further details and associated eligibility criteria.
- **Note:** A change of scholarship type will not be allowed once the application has been submitted to the NRF.

General NRF Scholarship:

- The scholarship is intended to support candidates at South African public universities, in all areas of Science, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences and Humanities, including Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Are you/will you be registered as a full-time student? *

Scholarship applying for *

Type of NRF-SARAO Scholarship * NRF-funded researcher's application/grant... Funding Opportunity

Scholarship linked to NRF-funded researcher:

NOTE: Grant holder-linked students i.e., applicants who have been recruited to work under an NRF funded project (SARChI, CoE, Thuthuka, NASSP, General Research Grants etc.), **MUST** choose ‘**Scholarship linked to NRF-funded research**’ under the relevant academic level.

Applicants must list either the application reference number or the UID (grant number) of the **supervisor** in this section. In the case of a student being linked to a CoE, the CoE grantholder may not be the supervisor but must be listed together with the UID (grant number). This will enable the NRF to separate your application during the funding decisions process.

Research Grants that students may be linked to include:

- Thuthuka
- NASSP
- Institutional Grants (SARChI; CoE)
- General Research Grants
 - African Coelacanth Ecosystem Programme
 - Africa Origin Platform
 - ACCESS Funding Instrument
 - Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Programme
 - Human and Social Dynamics Funding Instrument
 - Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme
 - Global Change Funding Instruments
 - South African National Antarctic Programme
 - Marine and Coastal Research Grants
 - Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers
 - Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers
 - Community Engagement Grants

NRF-SASOL Scholarship:

- Only South African citizens are eligible.
- Only applicants registered in chemistry and related disciplines with specific focus on the green economy will be considered.
- Only applicants who intend registering at one of the following South African public universities viz. University of Fort Hare, University of Limpopo, University of Venda, University of Free State (Qwaqwa Campus), and North-West University (Mahikeng Campus), will be considered.

Step 13: Basic Information

- **Applicant's proposed institution** = this is the South African institution where you intend to register for your degree. Once your application is complete, it will be routed to the research office at the selected institution for review and processing.
- The **Basic Information section** requires the applicant to indicate the funding period required for the study.
- Also provide title and abstract of the proposed research project.

Title = Project title

Descriptive title = descriptive title of your project

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Basic Information". It contains several input fields:

- Institution ***: A text input field with a dropdown arrow. Below it, the text "Type part of the institution name to search" is visible.
- Title ***: A text input field with a character count "Maximum 100" and "0".
- Funding start year**: A date picker field showing "2023".
- Descriptive title/abstract ***: A large text area with a character count "Maximum 450" and "0".
- Select max funding years ***: A dropdown menu.

At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "CANCEL" and "SAVE".

Step 14: Additional Information - Masters/Doctoral

- The **Additional Information section** requires the applicant to indicate when the project will be started or scheduled to start if it hasn't started.
- Applicants must also indicate if they were previously funded by NRF and select from the drop-down list the programme/funding instrument that funded them

Additional Information - Masters/Doctoral

Research Project Start Year *	▼	Research Project End Year *	▼
Have you previously been funded by the NRF? <input type="checkbox"/>		Please indicate the programme/ funding opportunity *	

Step 15: Geographical Area

Please refer to the instructions online to complete the section.

Geographical Area

Province of origin/birth	▼	District of origin/birth	▼
Municipality of origin/birth	▼	Current province	▼
Home language	▼	Other	

Step 16: Person History

- The **Person History** section is required for statistical purposes by the NRF.
- If the **Previous or Current Study** is funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, please attach official proof under the **Financial Need: NSFAS/ISFAP Funding** section.

Person History

Previous studies funded by *	▼	Current degree funding *	▼
Are you currently a DSI-HSRC intern? * <input type="checkbox"/>			

Step 17: Financial Need: NSFAS/ISFAP Funding

- Move the Toggle to the right (blue tick) if you're previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP.
- Move the Toggle to the left (grey cross) if you were not funded by NSFAS/ISFAP.

- Applicants who were previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, **must** upload proof of funding in a form of:
 - an official university stamped financial statement clearly showing that the funds are coming from these funders, or
 - a statement from the funder or
 - a letter from NSFAS, ISFAP or the university stating that the applicant received funding from them.

*Please do not upload unsigned NSFAS bursary agreements!

Step 18: Financial Need

- With the **Financial Need** section, the NRF (through Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP)) aims to establish whether an applicant is financially needy or not (please refer to the Framework document for more information).
- Applicants who were previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, don't have to give consent for a financial means assessment. They must upload proof of funding under the "NSFAS/ISFAP Funding" section. Please select **not applicable** under the combined gross family income field.
- If an 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 an 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 which is downloadable from the Financial Need section and upload to the **Financial Need** section only. If the form is not uploaded or incomplete, a financial means test cannot be conducted.

NSFAS/ISFAP funding

Have you previously received or are you currently receiving NSFAS/ISFAP funding?



 Upload proof of NSFAS/ISFAP funding

EDIT FILE

CANCEL


SAVE

Financial Need

Combined gross family income *

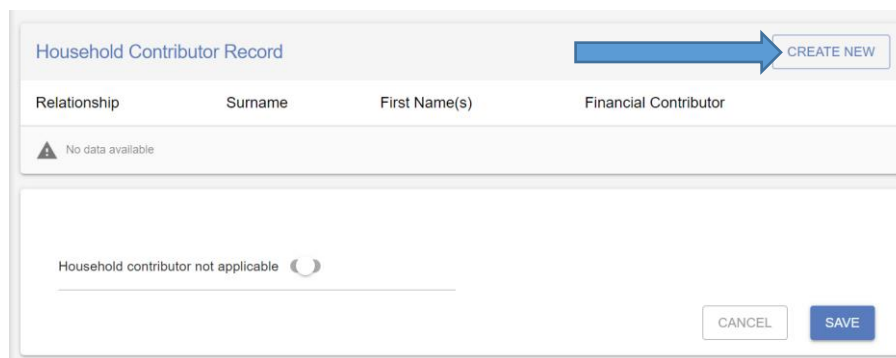
Has a Financial Means Test been done?

Do you give consent for a Financial Means Test to be done?

 Upload completed consent form *

Step 19: Household Contributor Record

If a financial means test is required, please complete the household contributor section and input the details of the household contributors as they appear on the completed ISFAP consent form.



Relationship	Surname	First Name(s)	Financial Contributor
No data available			

Household contributor not applicable

Click on the create new tab to add a record for the household contributor(s).

Household Contributor Record

Relationship Identity number *

Surname * First Name(s) *

Email address * Contact number *

Does person contribute financially? * Number of dependency for the hou...

***If a financial means test has not been requested, please move the toggle for not applicable so that it's green with a tick.**

Household Contributor Record
CREATE NEW

Relationship	Surname	First Name(s)	Financial Contributor
⚠ No data available			

Household contributor not applicable

CANCEL SAVE

Step 20: Degree to be Funded

- Under the master’s and doctoral **Degree to be funded** section, applicants are required to fill in the details of the degree and the discipline of study that is being applied for.
- Full-time employed applicants cannot hold the NRF scholarship unless they’re willing to resign if successfully awarded. If “no” is indicated under willingness to resign, the application will be rejected.
- Applicants are also required to indicate the first date of registration for the degree. Please ensure that the correct date is indicated as the scholarship period of support is determined by this date.

Degree To Be Funded

Are you currently registered for the degree for which funding is being applied for? * <input type="radio"/>	Date of first registration for the degree for which funding is being applied for *
Has your Master's degree been upgraded to a Doctorate? * <input type="radio"/>	Date of upgrade *
Does your degree include a pre-proposal year? * <input type="radio"/>	Indicate the year in which your pre-proposal year was/will be taken * ▼
Does any financial support received for previous studies bind you to a service contract? * <input type="radio"/>	Student number (if currently registered at a university)
Discipline * ▼	Faculty (of degree to be funded) ▼
Department/School (of degree to be funded) ▼	Indicate what you are doing currently * ▼
Are you willing to resign in order to take up the scholarship? * <input type="radio"/>	

CANCEL SAVE

Step 21: Academic Achievements

- In the **Academic Achievements** section, please capture the academic average **percentage** for the previous degree.

- Masters applications must indicate the average for the honours or equivalent degree. If still busy with the honours degree, applicants must capture the average percentage for major subjects in the final-year undergraduate courses, OR the average percentage for major subjects in the third-year undergraduate courses for students in the final year of a four-year undergraduate degree.
- Doctoral applicants must indicate the average obtained for their masters. If currently busy with masters, then the average for the honours or equivalent degree must be captured.
- As per the Framework document, South African citizens or permanent resident applicants who have **graduated from 2021 academic year onwards with a classification of Pass will not be allowed to apply in the current call**, only applicants with a numerical pass mark may apply for NRF funding. However, the following individuals will be allowed to apply without a numerical mark:
 - South African citizens or permanent residents who graduated prior to 2021 academic year with a 'Pass' and 'Pass with a distinction'. Applicants with a 'Pass' should enter the 'Pass' under the academic achievement section of the application form, and those with 'Pass with a distinction' should enter 75%;
 - South African citizens or permanent residents with a 'Pass with distinction'. These applicants should enter 75% mark in the application form;
 - International applicants applying for master's and doctoral scholarships. These applicants should enter a 'Pass' in the application form; and
 - South African citizens with international qualifications applying for master's and doctoral scholarships. These applicants should also enter a 'Pass' in the application form.

Academic Achievements

Name of previous degree *	Average percentage mark for major subjects or completed degree e.g. 65% o...
Year in which previous degree was completed *	Completion time for previous degree *

CANCEL
SAVE

Step 22: Details of Research

- The **Details of Research** section is one of the most important sections in the application.
- 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 or can be attached to the attachments section.

- Please avoid one-liners. Applications with no or insufficient research content will be rejected.
- Some free-text sections have character limitations, therefore please read the instructions on the 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.
- Potential impact relates to the impact that your research may have on society (e.g. poverty alleviation etc.) or knowledge generation.

Details of research – Master’s application

Details of Research * x -

Section	Complete	Updated	Edit
Project Outline *	x		✎
Alignment to National Imperatives *	x		✎

Details of research – Doctoral application

Details of Research * x -

Section	Complete	Updated	Edit
Alignment to National Imperatives *	x		✎
Potential Impact (Societal and/or Knowledge) of the Research *	x		✎
Problem Statement *	x		✎
Aims and Objectives *	x		✎

Step 23: National Infrastructure Platform

- In the **National Infrastructure Platform section**, if an applicant 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 plan, please move the Toggle to the left on “No plan to access platforms” (See blue arrow on screen shot), and the click save.

Step 24: Science Engagement

- The **Science Engagement** section is a compulsory section.
- Science engagement relates to activities where the applicant will communicate their science to the public.
- Should applicants not be running any science engagement activities, they must move the 'Toggle' to the left

Step 25: Application Support Input

The **Application Support Input** section allows an applicant to include the names and email addresses of 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. *If the referee did not receive an email, the report can be accessed on their NRF Connect profile.

References for Master's-level Applicants

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/Department** who will guarantee that the applicant will be allocated a supervisor in case their application is successful.

References for Doctoral-level Applicants

At doctoral level, applicants are expected to have identified a supervisor at the time of application.

***If the referee does not respond by the applicant closing date, the system will not allow the application to be submitted to the NRF. A referee response is an application requirement!**

A guide to assist students in identifying a supervisor is as follows:

- a. Think about your interest area of research, considering your past research endeavours and where you see yourself in future;
- b. Identify the university you would want to pursue your doctoral study with;
- c. Review the research profiles of the staff in the relevant university department or school (including a literature search to see what they have published);
- d. Contact the staff member who you think may be a potential supervisor, detailing your interest area and finally request that they supervise you; and
- e. Once you have confirmation that you have a supervisor for your doctoral study, proceed by completing the details of your supervisor in the reference section of the application you send to the NRF.

***Note:** Once you submit your application online, an email will be sent to your referee directing them to login to the NRF Connect profile to complete the referee report. Your referee **MUST** submit the report in order for your application to be considered for funding.

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
 - HoD if a supervisor has not been allocated
- **Doctoral applicants**
 - Doctoral supervisor

Application Support Input						CREATE NEW
Role	Surname	First Name	Institution	Email	Delete	
⚠ No data available						

Step 26: Attachments

- In the **Attachments section**, please print or make a copy, certify and then scan all the required documents and submit as a **single PDF file**.

Master's and doctoral applicants **must** attach the following documents to the online application:

Attachments section

- a. An official academic record on the university letterhead. Certificates will not be accepted.
- b. 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.

Profile section (Step 11)

- a. Clear, certified copy of ID document or passport (foreign applicants)
- b. Doctor's letter as proof of disability (if applicable)

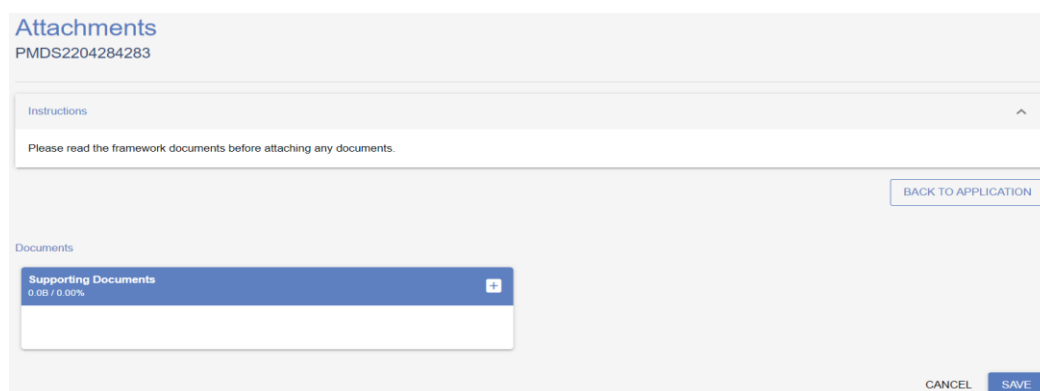
Financial need – NSFAS/ISFAP funding

- a. Proof of previous NSFAS/ISFAP funding (see Step 17)

First Time Master's and Doctoral NRF-DAAD Applicants – additional attachments

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

- a. A brief motivation on the interest to undertake a three (3) 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.



The screenshot shows a web interface for the 'Attachments' section. At the top, it displays the title 'Attachments' and a unique identifier 'PMDS2204284283'. Below this is an 'Instructions' box with the text: 'Please read the framework documents before attaching any documents.' To the right of the instructions is a 'BACK TO APPLICATION' button. Underneath is a 'Documents' section with a blue header 'Supporting Documents' and a progress indicator '0.00 / 0.00%'. Below the header is a large empty white box for uploading documents. At the bottom right of the interface are 'CANCEL' and 'SAVE' buttons.

Once all the compulsory sections are completed on the application, the system will allow you to submit the application. Please ensure that you adhere to the applicant closing date. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

4. Screening Processes

4.1 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.

5. 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. 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.

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000) give effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action as contemplated in section 33 of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The NRF and the universities are expected to provide feedback to all applicants on the status of their application.

Feedback from the University:

- Universities must provide feedback to applicants who were screened at the universities for eligibility and deemed not eligible for funding.
- Universities must provide feedback to applicants who were reviewed at the universities and were recommended not eligible for funding by the panel of reviewers.

Feedback from the NRF

- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants whose applications were recommended for funding but were not awarded funding due to budget constraints. In this instance the NRF will send a regret letter directly to the affected applicants.
- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants whose application were recommended for funding and approved for funding. In this instance, the NRF will publish a list of the successful applicants on the NRF website and share the list with the Research/Postgraduate Offices at respective universities.

The NRF will conduct an Appeals Process two (2) months after the official publication date of the results on the NRF website. Only those applicants who were not recommended by the institutional review panel or where a system issue was encountered with the submission of an application to the NRF, are eligible to appeal. An appeal must be justified and must be supported by the supervisor in order to be considered.

Note: A successful appeal does not automatically constitute an award, rather the application will be moved to the list of applications recommended for funding but not awarded due to budgetary constraints.

6. Awardee Responsibilities

6.1 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.

6.2 Change Requests

6.2.1 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.

6.3 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.

NOTE: The above-mentioned changes are dependent on the scholarship category. Example, grantholder-linked scholarship-holders cannot change their institution, unless they will remain linked to the NRF-funded research. Further, supervisor changes will also not be allowed as the scholarship was awarded on the basis that the student will be working under the supervisor's NRF-funded research.

7. Scientific Compliance

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

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

7.3 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.

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