South African Reserve Bank Scholarship for Master's programmes specialising in Data Science and Machine Learning, with specific reference to financial analytics

The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) is inviting prospective Master's degree in Data Science and Machine Learning students to apply for a full scholarship for the 2026 academic year.

What the South African Reserve Bank does

The SARB serves the economic well-being of all South Africans through maintaining price stability and financial stability. It is responsible for regulating the South African financial sector, designing and distributing banknotes and coin, managing interest rates, setting the cash reserve requirement for banks, and ensuring the stability of both the banking sector and the wider financial system.

The purpose of the scholarship

The SARB, as part of addressing the severe shortage of skills in South Africa, provides scholarships and bursaries to students in relevant fields of study who are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In support of the corporate social initiatives of the SARB and its External Bursary Scheme, a number of external scholarships and bursaries are made available annually to qualifying prospective postgraduate students.

The SARB, in collaboration with the Data Science Academic Committee of the National Graduate Academy for Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (NGA(MaSS)), hereby invites prospective Master's degree students to apply for competitive SARB bursaries in the fields of data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence, with specific reference to financial analytics.

Requirements to qualify for the scholarship

For students to be considered for the scholarship, they must meet the following requirements:

- have provisional acceptance into one of the identified Master's programmes;
- have selected modules that should include financial analytics topics;
- have a relevant Honours degree with an average of at least a 65% overall pass mark;
- be a full-time student;
- be a South African citizen; and
- be younger than 35 years of age.

As part of the acceptance criteria of the scholarship, students might be expected to attend specific workshops, as required by the SARB and the NGA(MaSS).

Below is a list of institutions and programmes that the scholarship will cover.

Acceptance into one of the following Master's programmes will be considered:

Institution	Programme	Website
North-West University	MSc (Business, Mathematics and Informatics)	https://natural-sciences.nwu.ac.za/bmi
University of the Western Cape	MSc (Statistical Science with specialisation in Data Science) (in collaboration with the North-West University Centre for Business, Mathematics and Informatics® (BMI)	https://www.uwc.ac.za/study/all-areas-of-study/departments/department-of-statistics-and-population-studies/data-science
University of the Witwatersrand, University of Pretoria, North-West University, University of Venda, University of Limpopo, Sol Plaatje University	MSc (eScience)	https://www.wits.ac.za/course-finder/postgraduate/science/e-science/
Stellenbosch University	MSc (Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence)	https://mlai.sun.ac.za/
Stellenbosch University	MCom (Financial Risk Management)	http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/economy/statistics/programmes/financial-risk-management/fin-risk-postgraduate#Masters
University of KwaZulu-Natal	MSc (Data Science)	https://smscs.ukzn.ac.za/data-science-centre/
University of Pretoria	MIT (Big Data Science)	https://www.up.ac.za/yearbooks/2022/EBIT-faculty/MA-programmes/view/12254017#programme_information
University of Cape Town	Master's degree (Analytics or Data Science)	http://www.stats.uct.ac.za/stats/study/postgrad/masters
University of Pretoria	MCom (Advanced Data Analytics)	https://www.up.ac.za/yearbooks/2022/pdf/programme/07250067

How to apply

The closing date for the submission of applications is Friday, 31 October 2025. Late applications will not be considered.

Examination results, proof of acceptance at a recognised institution (a student number) and any other supporting documents must be submitted with the application.

Use PROMO CODE: SARBDSM26

Online applications: https://ttibursaries.co.za/students/

Submission of examination results by bursary holders

Bursary holders will be required to submit their examination results before Wednesday, 31 December 2025, regardless of whether they will be awarded a bursary for the following year or not.

Scholarship agreement

Potential external bursars will be required to avail themselves for interviews. Successful applicant(s) for the scholarship will be expected to sign an agreement with the SARB.

A purposeful journey

SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVE BANK