

Call for Nominations: 2025/2026 NSTF-South32 Awards

National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF)

Important deadlines:

| Activity | UCT internal deadlines | NSTF deadlines |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Register Nominees | 26 January 2026, 09h00 amanda.raman@uct.ac.za | 29 January 2026, 12h00 Online form |
| Submit Nomination Forms | 16 February 2026, 09h00 researchfunding@uct.ac.za | 5 March 2026, 12h00 |

The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) [call for nominations](#) for the 2025/2026 round of NSTF-South32 Awards. These prestigious awards focus on Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) and Innovation in South Africa (SA). South32 is the co-branding sponsor for the past seven years. As such, the name of the awards is the NSTF-South32 Awards.

New award categories

The call includes nominations in two new award categories, the **Research Software Award** and the Annual Theme Award for contributions to **Healthy Aging** through sustainable science in South Africa.

Special Annual Theme Award for 2026: [Healthy Aging](#). This theme was chosen to recognise the research and innovation contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of the aging population.

Nomination is a two-step process:

Step 1: Register nominations for one of the categories (see list in the next page) by **26 January 2026, 12h00**. This can be done via the [Research Office](#) or by a nominator completing the NSTF [online nomination form](#). If you wish the Research Office to nominate you, please inform us by no later than **Monday, 12 January 2026, 09h00**.

Step 2: Submit a lengthy nomination form, which includes your research achievements and research publications, to the NSTF by **Thursday, 5 March 2026, 12h00** to be considered for an award. Sample nomination forms are available for [download here](#).

If you would like to be nominated by the Research Office in one of the categories or have queries about the process, please email Amanda.Raman@uct.ac.za.

If you require feedback on your full application, please submit this to the Research Office via researchfunding@uct.ac.za by the internal deadline on **Monday, 16 February 2026, 09h00**.

Please see a full list of the award categories, new categories, below and visit the [NSTF website](#) for more information.

Award categories

Full title of categories: All the awards are 'for an outstanding contribution to science, engineering and technology (SET) and innovation in SA...' (The complete title of each award starts with this wording in place of "contribution".)

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| 1. Individual Awards | a) Lifetime Award – outstanding contribution over 15 years or more. |
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| | <p>b) TW Kambule-NSTF Researcher Award – contribution through research and its outputs over a period from 6 years up to 15 years of research work from the commencement of the research career, predominantly in SA.</p> <p>c) TW Kambule-NSTF Emerging Researcher Awards – contribution through research and its outputs over a period of up to 6 years of research work from the commencement of the research career, predominantly in SA.</p> <p>d) Management Award – contribution through management of SET and innovation and related activities over the last 5 to 10 years in SA.</p> |
| 2. | Engineering Research Capacity Development Awards – outstanding contribution by an individual or a team in their chosen SET fields over the last 5 to 10 years. |
| 3. | NSTF-Water Research Commission (WRC) Award – outstanding contributions in SA by an individual, team, partnership or an organisation towards sustainable water management, knowledge generation and solutions over the last 5 to 10 years. |
| 4. | NSTF-SAMRC Clinician-Scientist Award – outstanding contributions through research and its outputs in biomedical areas over a period of up to 6 years of research work from the commencement of the research career, predominantly in SA, and focussed on work to enhance life and to improve the health of the community. |
| 5. | NSTF-TIA Green Economy Award – outstanding contribution by an individual, team or an organisation towards achieving biodiversity conservation, environmental sustainability and a greener economy over the last 5 to 10 years. |
| 6. | Science Diplomacy for Africa Award – outstanding contribution by an individual or a team in SA, which has led to impactful solutions and/or collaboration in the SET and innovation fields, within the last 10 years, through science diplomacy between and among countries, for the benefit of SA and the African continent. |
| 7. | NSTF-Agricultural Research Council (ARC) Award – outstanding contribution by an individual or team in SA towards sustainable agricultural management, knowledge generation and solutions over the last 5-10 years. |
| 8. | <p>Research Software Awards – outstanding contributions by an individual or team to science, engineering, technology (SET) and innovation through the development, maintenance, or extension of research software that has enabled research within the South African context over the last 10 years.</p> <p>a) Research Software – contribution that enables research in any scientific field, including humanities and social sciences (HSS).</p> <p>b) NSTF-SADiLaR Research Software: Human Language Technologies (HLT) – contribution that enables the processing, understanding, generation, or analysis of human language in written, spoken, or signed form (Sponsor: South African Centre for Digital Language Resources – SADiLaR)</p> |
| 9. | Data for Research Award – contribution by an individual or a team for advancing the availability, management and re-use of research data |
| 10. | <p>Innovation Awards – for innovations and their research and/or development</p> <p>a) Corporate Organisation – contribution by an individual or a team.</p> <p>b) SMME – contribution by an individual or a team in an SMME.</p> |
| 11. | Communication Award – outstanding contribution for outreach and creating awareness of SET and innovation by a team or individual over the last 5 years. |
| 12. | Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Award – contribution by an NGO/NPO/PBO/CBO including technology transfer, and education and training activities in SA over the last 5 to 10 years. |
| 13. | Special Annual Theme Award – Healthy Aging: (awarded according to criteria in any of the other categories) For 2025/2026 the award is made for an outstanding SET contribution to Healthy aging. |