National Research Foundation

DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding for the 2026 Academic Year – CALL NOW OPEN

The DSTI and NRF are pleased to announce a call for new applications for **EXTENSION MASTERS AND DOCTORAL Student Funding for the academic year 2026**. All continuing students who are eligible for a second or third year of funding must submit a Progress Report and not a new application.

The NRF **minimum academic requirement** for postgraduate funding is **65%** for the previous degree. Successful applicants will be funded either at **Full Cost of Study (FCS)** or **Partial Cost of Study (PCS)**. The FCS funding will be awarded to South African citizens and Permanent Residents only, who are either **financially needy** (i.e., those whose combined household family income is less than or equal to R350 000 per annum), **living with a disability** or **exceptional academic achievers**. However, the PCS funding will be awarded to **5% of international students** including South African citizens and Permanent Residents who could not be funded under FCS but meet other minimum requirements for the NRF scholarship funding criteria. The scholarships are intended to support master's and doctoral candidates to pursue studies in all areas of **Science, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences, and Humanities**.

ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Please refer to the DSTI-NRF Postgraduate Scholarship Framework for 2026 Funding section 4 on which all other eligibility criteria is stipulated

HOW TO APPLY?

- **Download** the **DSI-NRF Master's and Doctoral Application and Funding Guide 2026**
- Application forms must be completed on the NRF Connect System at **https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za**
- **Login or register for ORCID iD**
- **Complete/Update** your personal profile and CV information and upload relevant documents if so applicable
- **Select** and **complete** the application you wish to be considered for
- Students may only **submit ONE application**
- Please **Select the correct options under application category _IF_** you are applying under your supervisor's grant. This does not apply to applicants. Please read pages 14 – 16 of the above application and funding guide. It is very important that you apply correctly so that your application be screened and reviewed with the correct panel. Your careful attention to this is thus crucial
- **MANDATORY:** When completing the **application support input section**, please ensure that the **correct email address for your academic referee is captured**. _The NRF system will automatically generate a request to the identified individual to complete the referee report._ Please refer to pages 27 to 32. ***If the referee does not respond by the closing date, the system will not allow the institution to submit the application to the NRF. A referee response is an application requirement!**
- **Upload all relevant attachments.** Please refer to pages 27 to 32 of the above application and funding guide

Please refer to the Application and Funding Guide and Framework documents when completing the online application form at every step of the process. *All postgraduate call documents can be accessed via the NRF website: https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/nrf-call-for-proposals-for-funding-in-2025-and-2026/.

- DST-NRF Master's and Doctoral Application and Funding Guide for 2026
- DST-NRF Postgraduate Scholarship Framework for 2026
- NRF Statement of expectation for Postgraduate Training 2026
- Frequently Asked Questions Postgraduate Funding

STUDENTS' APPLICATIONS OPENING AND CLOSING DATES:

2025 FUNDING CALLS	NRF OPENING DATES	UCT CLOSING DATE	DA (PGFO) APPLICATION SCREENING	UCT INTERNAL REVIEW	DA (PGFO) CLOSING DATE
EXT MAST AND DOCT	14-May-25	15-Aug-25	18 AUGUST 2025 TO 5 SEPTEMBER 2025	8 TO 22 SEPTEMBER 2025	30-Sep-25

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION?

- Once you submit your application, it will automatically be routed to UCT
- For your application to be considered for 2026 funding, you must submit your application and all supporting documentation on or before UCT's CLOSING DATE
- After DA screening, eligible applications will be submitted to UCT's internal review panel
- Following UCT's internal review panel process, the DA will consolidate all results for submission to NRF for their further consideration.
- Ineligible applications will be rejected. Your application status can be monitored via your NRF Connect Profile
- The NRF will inform all applicants of the outcome of their application

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS

Please be advised that no incomplete applications will be submitted to NRF. It is the applicant's responsibility to familiarise themselves with all eligibility criteria and requirements. During DA screening, if your application is incomplete, the office will contact you via email requesting information. Such requests must be responded to within 24 hours. Failure to do so will result in your application being disqualified and as a result, will not be considered.

For enquiries

Please forward all enquiries to email: nrfdasupport@uct.ac.za or call the office at +27 21 650 3622 and selection option 3.
Website: https://uct.ac.za/students/fees-funding-postgraduate-degree-funding-bursaries-scholarships/research-scholarships

For Technical related enquiries, please contact:

NRF Support desk
Telephone: 012 481 4202
Email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

Queries related to specific funding opportunities can be directed to: postgraduatequeries@risa.nrf.ac.za.
The subject line of your email must have the following information in order to be routed correctly:

- **Level i.e., Honours, Master's or Doctoral**
- **Funding opportunity e.g., General, SARChI, NRF-MINDS, Manus MatSci**
- **Application reference number starting with prefix PMDS25…**

The UCT NRF administration team wishes you success with your application.