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Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**National
Research
Foundation**

Application and Funding Guide for 2020

Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships

Grants Management and Systems Administration

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List of Acronyms

PR	Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation

Contact Details

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Application and funding guidelines are explained in this document. Applicants must read this document together with the following document: Framework for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies which highlights the eligibility criteria and requirements of each funding instrument.

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours from 08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday.

Tel: 012 481 4202

E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

1. Introduction

This Application and Funding Guide provides an overview of the application process and funding guidelines for Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for the 2020 academic year. It should be read in conjunction with the above-mentioned **Framework**, which can be accessed at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za> and under the *NRF Call Information documents* on the application. The Framework provides detailed information with respect to objectives of the funding instrument, eligibility criteria, etc. This document does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

2. Conditions of Grant

- The NRF scholarship shall be held as the primary source of funding.
- The scholarship-holder may hold bursaries, awards, assistantships and receive emoluments from *private institutions* in conjunction with the NRF scholarship.
- The scholarship-holder will be accepted as a full-time student during the tenure of the scholarship. Scholarship-holders may not concurrently hold the scholarship with any full-time salaried employment position.
- The scholarship holder must obtain the degree for which the scholarship was awarded by the contractual date, which is within one (1) year after NRF funding has ceased and notify the NRF via the relevant university authority, unless otherwise approved by the NRF in writing. Should the scholarship holder not complete the degree for which the scholarship was awarded, the funds will have to be returned to the NRF plus interest at the prevailing prime rate charged by the NRF bankers.

3. Application Process

The NRF issues a call for the Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies that is published on the NRF website and is accessible online at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. The Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies call will not accept more than one (1) application per applicant. Current recipients of NRF Masters scholarships who wish to apply for half-year extension support as well as half-year Doctoral support under the first time applicant category will have to choose

between the two. Once an applicant submits an application, the application will be automatically routed to the institutional Designated Authority (DA) based at the Research/Postgraduate office at the university for validation before or on the deadline date determined by individual institutions. The applications will then be authorised and approved by the institutional DA through a screening process using the call requirements. The processing of a successful grant application takes approximately five (5) months from the time of submission until the commencement of funding.

4. How to Submit Applications

Applications may be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call opened to prevent IT system overload nearer the closing date.

Applicants must ensure that they adhere to their institution's internal closing date for submission of their application to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The internal closing date will be determined by the respective Research Office or Post Graduate Office and is usually at least two (2) weeks prior to the NRF closing date. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check the institution's internal closing date with the Research or Postgraduate office.

Step 1: This is an electronic submission system and applicants must be registered on the system in order to create and complete an application. If you had previously registered and submitted an application on the NRF Online System (<http://nrfonline.nrf.ac.za>) before February 2012, your details would have been migrated to the new NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>). If you experience problems accessing the system with your NRF Online password, use the Reset Password button. If your e-mail address is outdated, please contact the NRF Support Desk for assistance. Contact details for the NRF support desk are in page 3 of this document.

If you are not yet registered on the NRF Online Submission System, you must register to access the application form.

Most application screens have application-specific instructions to help you work through the section. Please read the instructions carefully before completing the section.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the NRF Online Submission System. At the top, there is a blue header with the NRF logo (National Research Foundation) and RISA logo (Research and Innovation Support and Advancement) on the left, and the text "NRF Online Submission System" on the right. Below the header is a navigation menu with three items: "Home", "New Registration", and "Reset Password". A blue arrow points from this menu to the "Home" link on the page. The main content area includes a "Home" link, "Feedback" and "Support" links, and an "Instructions" section. The instructions section contains three bullet points: 1. "If you have already registered on the previous systems (NRF Online and Interim), please use your existing login details to access this system. If you have forgotten your password, please click on the Reset Password link on the left-hand menu." 2. "For technical online enquiries, please contact the Support Desk (Mondays to Fridays from 08h00 to 16h30) on: Tel: +27 12 481 4202 E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za" 3. "To access call related documents, please refer to the Open Calls block below. Click on the + icon next to the relevant call to show a list of document(s). To open the document, click on the relevant link." Below the instructions are two main sections: "Log In" and "Open Calls". The "Log In" section has a blue header, a red dot, and contains fields for "ID/Passport/Unique Number:" and "Password:" with a "Show Password" checkbox, a "login" button, and links for "Reset password." and "Not registered? Click here to register." A blue arrow points from the "Log In" header to the "ID/Passport/Unique Number:" field. The "Open Calls" section has a blue header, a red dot, and a list of call titles: "Community Engagement 2017", "Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers 2017", "Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers 2017", "DST-NRF Professional Development Programme (PDP) Call for 2016", "Equipment-related Travel and Training Grants 2016", "Infrastructure Funding Instruments in support of the: National Equipment Programme (NEP) and National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme (NNEP) 2016", "Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) 2016 – Round 1", and "Research Development Grants for Y-Rated Researchers 2017".

Step 2: After logging onto the NRF Online Submission System, applicants get to the **landing page** where there is a menu at the top left side of the screen (tab indicated with blue arrow below). Start by filling in all the sections under **My Profile – My CV** to create a CV. To create a new application, click on My Applications - Create Application.

NRF National Research Foundation | **RISA** Research and Innovation Support and Advancement | **NRF Online Submission System**

Welcome Mrs Melissa Govender
Feedback Support

My Profile
My Applications → Create Application
Tools → List of Applications
My Progress Reports
Reports
Logout

Quick Links

- [Grantholder Tools](#)
- [Institution Facilities](#)
- [Panel Meetings](#)
- [Application and Output History \(NRF Online\)](#)
- [Application History \(NRF Interim\)](#)
- [SKA SA Grants](#)

Landing Page

Information

- PLEASE NOTE: The summary below only lists output records that were migrated from the previous NRF Online system. New records that are added on this system will not form part of this summary.
- Applicants must ensure that their CV is updated/completed before creating an application.
- In order for your migrated research outputs to show on the CV or be accessible for selection on applications that require your publication record, you **must** verify (review) the outputs listed in the **Research Outputs Summary** table below. In order to do this, click on the output type that still has outputs to be verified (see the To be Reviewed column). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and a heading saying cleaned-up research output records from NRF Online will be displayed. Click on the little black arrow. This will display the output(s) that needs to be verified. Then click on the View icon, it will open a screen with the data for the output. Please fill in the missing information and save the page. If you have more than one output per output type, click on View for the next output. Do this for all the outputs, the output type on the landing page should now say 0. Move on to the next output type and repeat the process. Should you wish to delete an output, then click on the Feedback box, fill in the **Feedback to the NRF box** (e.g. output duplicated, please delete) and in the **Status** field, please select Delete.
- In some cases, researchers' outputs don't show at all. The reason for this is
 1. The ID/passport number which the cleaned data was linked to when the clean-up exercise was undertaken differs from the ID/passport number you have just used to login to the NRF Online Submission System.
 2. No outputs were added on the old NRF Online system so there was nothing to migrate. If there were outputs on the old NRF Online system but they do not show in the summary below, you need to ensure that the ID/passport numbers used on both the old NRF Online and this system (NRF Online Submission System) are the same. Please contact the NRF should your outputs not show so that this can be rectified.

Step 3: Select **NRF Postgraduate Scholarships Call NRF Postgraduate Scholarships Call**, on the **Create Application** screen and a new application will open for the applicant to complete. Please note that this must be selected only once. To continue working on the same application, go to My Applications - List of Applications, and click the Edit button.

Create Application

Instructions

- Check your intended institution’s internal closing date as it will be prior to the closing date listed for applications, where applicable.
- A timeout will appear when there is no activity on the system for 25 minutes. Click on the refresh button (in the popup box) as this will enable the continuation/completion of the application. When clicking on the close button the system will close.
- Due to potential international review of applications and progress reports, the NRF requires that all applications and progress reports be completed in English.
- Please consult the Funding Framework and Funding & Application Guide for more information to assist you in your choices. These documents can be accessed at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents>.
- **Ensure that you complete or update your CV. This is very important as applications without an updated CV will not be considered.**

>	Funding Category	Create
	Concept Notes	+
>	Customised Programmes	
>	Institutional Grants	
	NRF Postgraduate Scholarships Call	+
	Postdoctoral Grants	+
>	Research Grants: General	
>	Research Grants: International	
>	Research Grants: Without student support	
	Research Grants: Thuthuka	+
>	Travel, Training and Conference Grants: General	
	Travel, Training and Conference Grants: Scholarship- and Fellowship-holders	+

Step 4: All sections marked with red asterisks (*) are compulsory. These sections must be completed in order for the final submit button to be activated. Applicants may enter information in the non-compulsory sections only if they have information to fill in, such as research outputs. Completed sections will be indicated by a green tick on the main menu, while incomplete sections will have a yellow cross.

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
NRF Call Information Documents (Please read before starting this application)		29 Mar 2019	
Registration Details *		29 Mar 2019	
Contact Details *		23 Aug 2017	
Qualifications *		04 Feb 2019	
Career Profile		29 Mar 2019	
Research Expertise *		02 Jun 2016	
Student Supervision Record		29 Mar 2019	
Absence from Research		29 Mar 2019	
Personal Profile *		29 Mar 2019	
Books		29 Mar 2019	
Chapters in Books		29 Mar 2019	
Refereed/Peer-reviewed Conference Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Articles in Refereed/Peer-reviewed Journals		29 Mar 2019	
Patents		29 Mar 2019	
Keynote/Plenary Addresses		29 Mar 2019	
Articles in Non-refereed/Non-peer Reviewed Journals		29 Mar 2019	
Other Significant Conference Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Technical/Policy Reports		29 Mar 2019	
Products		29 Mar 2019	
Artefacts		29 Mar 2019	
Prototypes		29 Mar 2019	
Other Recognised Research Outputs		29 Mar 2019	
Disability *		23 Aug 2017	
ORCID *		29 Mar 2019	
Application Category *		29 Mar 2019	
Print Preview		29 Mar 2019	

[Final Submit](#)


©NRF Online Submission System

Step 5: ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from other researchers and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized. If you don't have an ORCID ID, please click on *Create or Connect your ORCID iD*, you will be redirected to the ORCID website where you will have to register to obtain an ORCID ID. If you already have an ORCID ID, please click on *Create or Connect your ORCID iD* and your ORCID number will be pulled through.


ORCID

Instructions

- ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from other researchers. Learn more at orcid.org
- To link your ORCID ID with the NRF you must 'Authorise' ORCID to allow this. This is an NRF prerequisite for applications/progress reports to proceed to review.
- **PLEASE NOTE** this is a compulsory section in all applications/progress reports to the NRF for funding and rating.

 Create or Connect your ORCID iD *

ORCID iD not connected, please click on the button above to create or retrieve your ORCID iD.

Save  Return to Menu

Step 6: Under the **Application Category** section, you have an option of applying for **Extension support** or applying as a **First time** applicant.

NB: You can only apply for Extension support if you are a current recipient of an NRF scholarship and you need an additional year or six months funding to complete your current degree.

Select *Extension support Application* option and indicate the required period of support (6 or 12 Months).

Application Category

Instructions

- **First Time Applicant:** Honours or Masters or Doctoral applicant without NRF funding for the degree you are applying for in this year.
- **Extension Support Applicant:** Masters or Doctoral applicant who holds an NRF scholarship for the current degree who is either on second year of Masters or third year at Doctoral level.
- **TWAS Doctoral Applicant:** Citizens and permanent residents in Africa or developing country outside South Africa at the time of application. (See *list of eligible countries/states in the Framework document*)
- **NRF-Nuffic Doctoral Scholarships:** South African citizens or permanent residents apply for either full-time doctoral studies at a Dutch HEI (Single-site mode) OR full-time doctoral studies jointly developed and implemented by a Dutch HEI and a Partner University in South Africa resulting in a joint degree (Spilt-site mode).
- **SASAC Applicant:** Masters or Doctoral applicants who will be using systems analysis methodology in their research.
- **Other:** Includes Freestanding, Innovation and Scarce-skills (FISS) and DAAD.
- **FOR DETAILED AND IN-DEPTH INFORMATION, KINDLY REFER TO THE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT.**

Type of Scholarship: Masters *

Please indicate if you are:
 First Time Applicant
 Extension Support Applicant *

Extension Requested for: 6 Months *

Save ⓘ Return to Menu

Please note that the system will not allow you to make changes after the saving on this section. If you want to change something, please delete the application and create a new one.

Step 7: The **Details of Extension** section requires applicants to select their institution. If the applicant is an NRF grantholder in 2019, the grant details will pull into this section. If your grant details does not pull into the section, it means that the NRF system does not recognise you as a grantholder. Please call the NRF contact person for assistance.

Details of Extension

Instructions

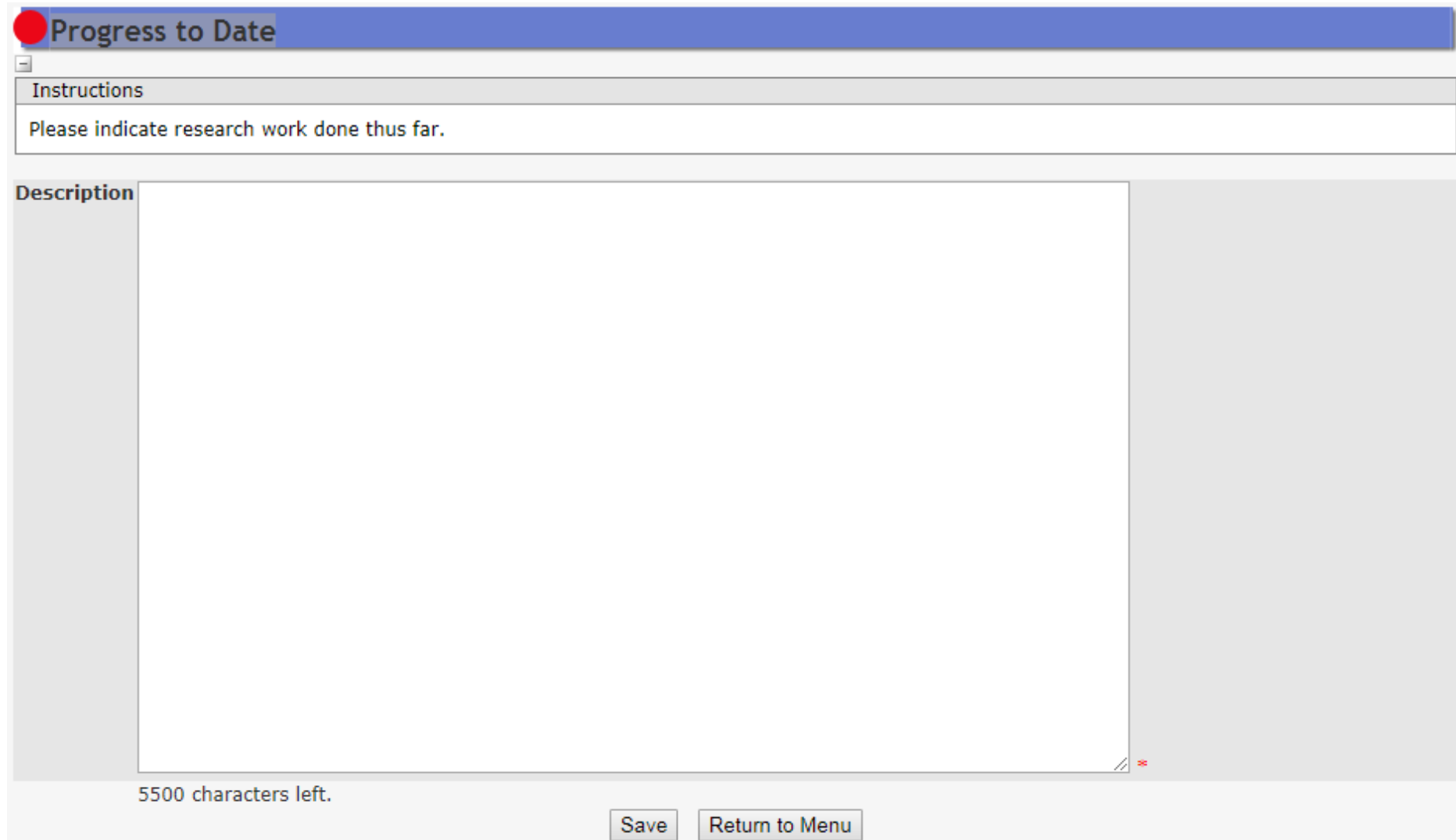
- Your NRF grant details will pull into this section.
- If the UID and value of your grant has not pulled into the section. It means that the system does not recognise you as an NRF grantholder in 2019. Please contact the NRF for assistance before submitting the application.

Applicant's Institution ⓘ *

UID

Value of Grant R 0,00

Step 8: The **Progress to Date** section requires applicants to indicate the work done so far under the Research Project.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Progress to Date" with a blue header bar. Below the header is a "Instructions" section with a minus sign icon and the text "Please indicate research work done thus far." The main part of the form is a large text area labeled "Description" on the left side. At the bottom left of the text area, it says "5500 characters left." At the bottom right of the text area, there is a small red "x" icon. Below the text area are two buttons: "Save" and "Return to Menu".

Step 9: The **Reason why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period** section requires an explanation as to why the study could not be completed within the NRF maximum funding period time.

Reasons why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period

Instructions

Explanation of why the study could not be completed within the NRF maximum funding period time.

Description

5500 characters left.

Step 10: The **Work plan to complete the degree with the defined timeframes** section requires the applicant to provide a workplan to complete the degree within the requested period of extension.

Work plan to complete the degree with the defined timeframes

Instructions

- Start and end dates for the six (6) or twelve (12) months' work plan;
- Proposed date for submission of the Masters or Doctoral Dissertation for examination;
- Proposed graduation date;
- Activities for completing outstanding research, indicating the start and completion date of each activity;
- Plan with timelines for completion of the Masters or Doctoral dissertation;
- Details of manuscripts to be drafted and submission timelines; and
- Timelines for corrections to dissertation from reviewers.

Description

5500 characters left.

Step 11: The **Reference** section allows applicants to include 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. Applicants must ensure that the contact details for the referee are correct. The supervisor response under this programme is very important.

If there is no response from the supervisor, the application will be rejected without review.

Surname	Initials	Email Address	Faculty	Responded	Edit	Delete
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NB: The applicant must periodically view the application PDF to ensure referees have responded to the request.

Step 12: In the Attachment section, please print or make a copy, certify and then scan all the required documents and submit as a **single PDF file**. The applicant is required to attach the following documents:

(i) Certified South African Identity Document or Passport in the case of non-South Africans.

(ii) Certified academic record or, in case of applicants with outstanding fees due to the university, attach an official statement that is stamped and signed, as proof that the transcript is not issued due to outstanding fees owed to the university.

(iii) Official proof of National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) or University Financial Aid funding for applicants that have indicated that they were previously funded by NSFAS or University Financial Aid.

Attachments

Instructions

- Please consult with the Call documents to determine what attachments are compulsory. Please note that if they are not attached, the application will not be processed for reviewing.
- Capture an appropriate Description for the document to be uploaded.
- Select the Document Type to be uploaded.
- Click the Browse button below to select the file on your local machine.
- Click on the Upload button to save.
- Upload pages individually if document is larger than 4MB.
- Please do not upload zip files. Acrobat reader has built-in security to prevent the opening of zip files by default (please read the article at <http://forums.adobe.com/thread/520515> for more information).

Description	Type	File Name	Edit	View	Delete
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***Applications without the required attachments will be rejected.**

Step 16: Applicants must adhere to their institution's internal closing date for submission of their applications to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The Institution's internal closing date will be determined by the respective Research Office or Postgraduate Office and is usually at least two weeks prior to the NRF's closing date. DAs ensure that all proposals are screened and approved through internal institutional processes before submitting the applications to the NRF. The NRF assumes that the respective DAs are satisfied with the standard of all proposals validated and submitted, and that the institution approves and supports the proposed research.

Step 17: The final submit button will only be activated when all compulsory sections are complete. If all the compulsory sections are complete and the final submit button does not appear, resave the Project Information section to refresh the application. The final submit button should then be active. A submitted application is automatically routed to the DA in the Research or Postgraduate Office of the South African institution that was selected, for internal review and validation. Late applications, additional supporting documentation or information received after the closing date will not be accepted or considered.

The NRF will not process applications that are incomplete, contain insufficient or incorrect information, or fail to comply with instructions. These applications will be rejected. The application must be completed in sufficient detail to allow for a comprehensive review and evaluation by external reviewers. In addition to the electronic application and required attachments, the NRF may request additional information or documentation to support an application if required. Failure to supply such information or documentation upon request may result in the rejection of the application.

5. Screening and Review Processes

5.1. Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated by South African institutions and submitted to the NRF, are 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.

5.2. Overview of the Review Process

The NRF's peer review policy requires that all applications be subjected to a review process. Applications submitted to this funding instrument will go through a panel review process.

5.2.1. Panel Review

Panel members are selected from the NRF database that is updated on a continuous basis, and other sources. In compiling the review panel, the expertise and experience of individuals in application adjudication are taken into account. In assessing the application, agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard (please refer to the **Framework Document**).

The Review Panel provides recommendations to the NRF and the final funding decision is made by the NRF. In awarding grants in this funding instrument, the NRF takes into account the recommendations of the peer review panels, the objectives and targets of the funding instrument, and the available funds.

6. Applications Feedback and Disputes

Once the review and 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/bursaries/calls. 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.

Unsuccessful applicants that wish to appeal the funding decision taken by the NRF must follow the appropriate Appeals Process of the NRF. Appeals for this funding instrument will only be considered two to three (2-3) months after the official publication date of the results on the NRF website.

7. Awardee Responsibilities

7.1. Reporting

A PR must be submitted by the awardee / grant holder in a format provided by the NRF, documenting progress made against set objectives and research outputs. The NRF may, in consultation with the Research Office, request interim progress reports for the purpose of implementing corrective measures timeously to ensure that stated objectives are met within stipulated timeframes.

7.2. 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.

7.2.1. Change Requests

7.2.1.1. 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.

7.2.1.2. 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.

8. Scientific Compliance

8.1. 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.

8.2. 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.

8.3. 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. An ethical clearance certificate (where applicable) must be submitted to the NRF in respect of successful applications before funding can be released.

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