Application and Funding Guide

Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies 2019

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 the Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for the 2019 academic year. It should be read in conjunction with the abovementioned **Framework**, which can be accessed at https://nrfsubmission.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 should be registered 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.
- 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://nrfsubmission.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. When an application is submitted, the application will be automatically routed to the institutional Designated Authority (DA) in the Research/Postgraduate office at the University for Validation. Applicants should ensure that applications are submitted before or on the deadline date

as determined by their institution. Applications will be screened according to the call requirements and then submitted to the NRF for review. The processing of successful grant applications takes approximately five (5) months from the closing date until the commencement of funding.
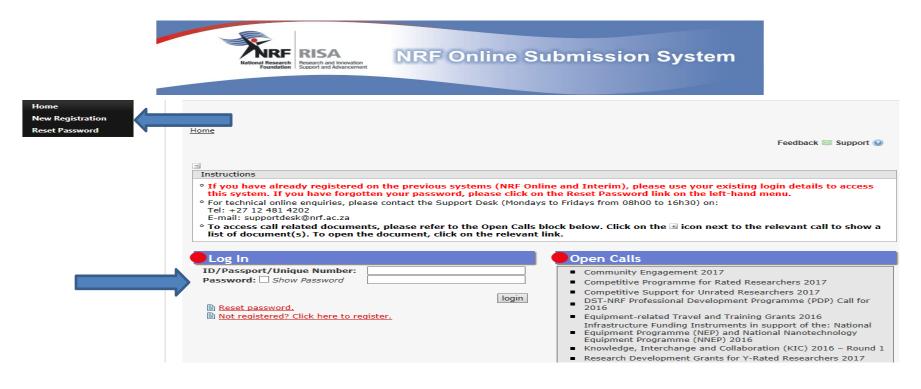
4. How to Submit Applications

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 of 15 June 2018.

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 Postgraduate 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 on page 3 of this document.
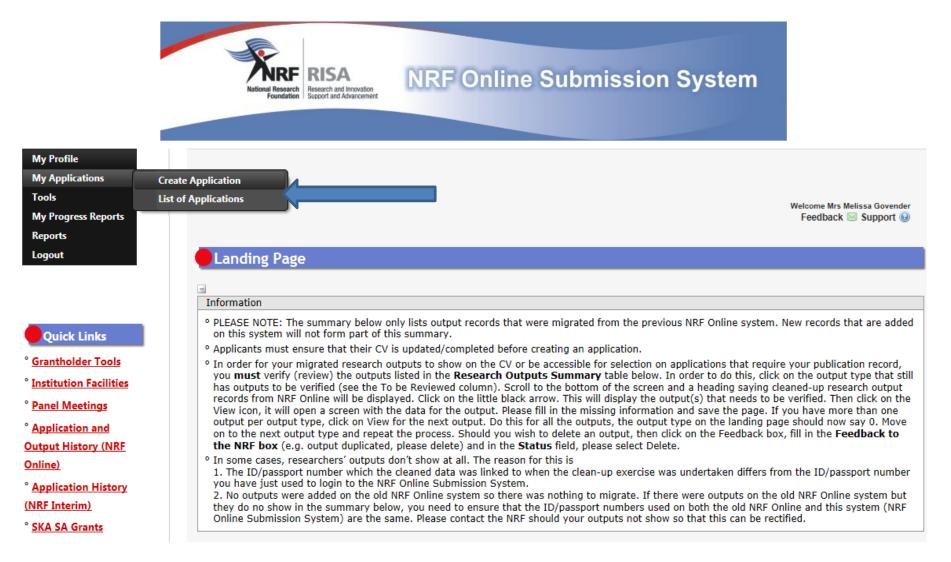
If you are not yet registered on the NRF Online Submission System, you must register to access the application form.

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

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**.

Step 3: Select Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies 2019 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.

CVC
Reports
Logout

🔴 **Quick Links**

° **Grantholder Tools**

° **Institution Facilities**

° **Panel Meetings**

° **Application and Output History (NRF Online)**

° **Application History (NRF Interim)**

° **SKA SA Grants**

🔴 **Create Application**

Instructions

° Check your intended institution's internal closing date as it will be prior to the closing date listed for applications.
° 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.

Call	Open Date	Closing Date	Apply
CSIR National Laser Centre Rental Pool Programme 2014	15 January 2018	31 December 2018	⊕
Human and Social Dynamics 2019	23 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
Indigenous Knowledge Systems Call 2015	18 June 2014	01 August 2214	⊕
JINR test call for Motsakwe	09 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
KIC Test Call 2018	13 April 2018	14 May 2018	⊕
Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies 2019	24 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
Mobility Grants for South Africa – Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (SA-JINR) Collaboration 2018	20 April 2018	30 April 2018	⊕
nGAP 03 04 2018	03 April 2018	04 May 2018	⊕
Nkateko test Concept Notes	05 March 2018	29 April 2018	⊕
NRF FRF Sabbatical Grant Documents Late	03 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
NRF-Nuffic Doctoral Scholarships 2018	24 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
Queen testing	03 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
SASAC Late	03 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
South Africa – Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR) – Grants for Student Practice 2016	03 May 2016	30 April 2018	⊕
South Africa – Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (SA-JINR) – Mobility Grants for Researchers and Postgraduate Students 2017	11 April 2017	30 April 2018	⊕
South African System Analysis Capacity (SASAC)	16 April 2018	27 April 2018	⊕
Testing CR	25 April 2018	26 April 2018	⊕

©NRF Online Submission System

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)	ℹ	28 Mar 2018	✎
Registration Details *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Contact Details *	✔	28 Mar 2018	✎
Qualifications *	✔	09 Nov 2017	✎
Career Profile *	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Research Expertise *	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Student Supervision Record	✔	18 Jan 2018	✎
Absence from Research	✔	21 Aug 2012	✎
Personal Profile *	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Disability *	✔	17 May 2017	✎
ORCID *	✔	28 Mar 2018	✎
Books	✔	27 Sep 2017	✎
Chapters in Books	✔	27 Sep 2017	✎
Articles in Refereed/Peer-reviewed Journals	✔	17 Oct 2017	✎
Refereed/Peer-reviewed Conference Outputs	✔	27 Sep 2017	✎
Patents	✔	06 Feb 2014	✎
Keynote/Plenary Addresses	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Articles in Non-refereed/Non-peer Reviewed Journals	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Other Significant Conference Outputs	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Technical/Policy Reports	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Products	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Artefacts	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Prototypes	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Other Recognised Research Outputs	✔	26 Sep 2017	✎
Type of Fellowship *	✔	28 Mar 2018	✎
Fellowship to be Funded *	✔	28 Mar 2018	✎
Research Project Information *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Details of Research *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
National Infrastructure Platforms *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Science Engagement *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
References *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Attachments	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Possible Reviewers *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Preferred Panel *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Person History *	✗	28 Mar 2018	✎
Print Preview	ℹ	28 Mar 2018	🖨

Final Submit ℹ

©NRF Online Submission System

Disclaimer

All compulsory sections will guide applicants with error messages if the section is not completed correctly. Please follow these messages to complete the sections correctly.

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.

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.**

First time applicants, are applicants who do not have NRF funding in 2018 for the degree they are applying for.

If you are applying for Extension support, select *Extension Support Application* option and save.

When you select *First Time Applicant* option, a *Scholarship applying for* section will appear. On the dropdown list you can select the programme you want to apply for e.g. (TWAS Doctoral or other (Freestanding, Innovation, DAAD and SASAC). Please refer to the Framework document for eligibility criteria and requirements under each Programme.

NB: *NRF-Nuffic Doctoral* is one of the options on the first time applicant dropdown list, but please note that you are not allowed to apply for this programme under this call. This programme has a separate call on the NRF website called **NRF-Nuffic Doctoral Scholarships 2018,** closing date is 14 May 2018. Applications received for this programme under the Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies 2019 call will be rejected.

Step 7: The **Degree to be Funded** section requires applicants to select either Masters and Doctoral local. Applicants who will be studying full-time must select Full-time if they will be studying on a full-time basis in 2019, failing which the application will be rejected. Students in their second year of Masters or third year of Doctoral studies in 2018 are not eligible for funding. Please note that awards not taken up by **30 April 2019** will be cancelled automatically.

Sabbatical Grant category - Masters and Doctoral Scholarships for Full-time Studies applicants are not eligible for sabbatical; please therefore click ''No' to this question.

Step 8: The Research Project Information section requires applicants to select the proposed institution. South African Higher Education Institutions (HEI), including SA national facilities, as well as Research institutions will be listed. If the institution to be selected is not amongst those on the drop-down list, it can be requested by selecting the support tab on the far right at the top of the screen. Please note that it is the applicant's responsibility to find an institution and supervisor in South Africa that is willing to host them.

NB: Extension support applicants must clearly indicate whether they need an additional year (12 months) or 6 months of funding under *Required Funding Period* section.

Step 9: In the *Academic Achievements* section, please enter the academic average from the final year of your previous degree by adding up all your marks and dividing by the number of courses/modules. If your institution does not provide a mark, please enter pass in the field. The review panel will compare the scores entered with your academic transcript.

Academic Achievements

Instructions

° Please calculate your accumulated grade average for all subjects in final year of previous degree as well as the average for your major subjects in the final year of your previous degree and indicate the year that your previous degree was completed.

° If your academic record does not have percentages and you have passed your degree, please enter the word "pass" in the two cumulative grade point average fields below.

Cumulative grade point average percentage for all subjects of previous degree (e.g 65 or pass) [ ] *

Cumulative grade point average percentage for major subjects in the final year of previous degree (e.g 65 or pass) [ ] *

Year in which previous degree was completed [ ] *

[Save] [Return to Menu]

Step 10: The *Details of Research* section is one of the most important sections in the application. The section has specific instructions related to each screen. Follow the instructions to complete the sections. Applicants must give a concise overview of the proposed research in this section as the input is taken into consideration during the assessment of the application. Appropriate literature references must also be included in this section. It is acceptable to attach a page of literature references. The Scorecard that will be used to assess the application can be viewed in the **Framework Document.**

Details of Research

Instructions
° Please note that all fields in this section are compulsory and unless fully completed your application cannot be submitted.
° **Please refer to the Framework document of the call that you are applying for.**

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
Problem Statement *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Rationale and Literature Review *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Aims and Objectives *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Methodology and Proposed Research Plan *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Anticipated Outputs *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Potential Impact *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏
Alignment to National Imperatives *	✗	26 Apr 2018	✏

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*Please note that the Details of Research section will only be marked as complete when all the sub-sections have been completed.

Step 11: The *National Infrastructure Platform section* is not relevant to this call, please click on "No plan to access platforms" and save.

National Infrastructure Platforms

Instructions

° This is for indicating planned equipment and/or data to be accessed outside your own institution.
° The information provided in this section is for information purposes for the NRF and will not have any impact on future decisions around grants or grantholders.

National Infrastructure Platform	Type of Platform	Planned Usage	Edit	Delete

Add ⓘ

☐ No plan to access platforms

Save | Return to Menu

Step 12: The *Science Engagement* section is a compulsory section. Should applicants not be running any science engagement activities, they must click on "add" and select "N/A" under "activity" and category".

Step 13: 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. Types of references required are listed below. Applicants must ensure that the contact details for the referees are correct.

- Master's applicants - Master's supervisor and an academic referee
- Doctoral applicants - Master's supervisor, Doctoral supervisor and an academic referee
- For extension support applicants - either Doctoral or Masters Supervisor who can comment on the progress of the studies. If there is no response from the supervisor, the application will be rejected without review.

NB: The applicant must periodically view the application PDF to ensure referees have responded to the request.

Step 14: *Person History* section is required for statistical purposes by the NRF.

Person History

Instructions

° Proof of NSFAS or University financial aid scheme must be attached.

Previous studies funded by

☐ NSFAS funded
☐ University Financial Aid
☐ Self funded
☐ Other Government departments
☐ International donor funds
☐ NRF Funded
☐ Not funded from any other source *

Current degree funding

☐ NSFAS funded
☐ NSFAS loan
☐ University Financial Aid
☐ Family funded
☐ Self funded
☐ Other Government departments
☐ International donor funds
☐ NRF Funded
☐ Not funded from any other source *

Are you currently a DST-NRF intern

○ Yes ○ No *

[Save] [Return to Menu]

Step 15: 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.

(i) 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.

(ii) 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.

 (iii) Applicants with disabilities must upload a medical certificate, in support of the disability.

 (v) Certified copy of SAQA certificate of qualifications obtained outside SA - **only applicable to TWAS applicants.** Applicants who are still waiting for the SAQA certificate to be issued, proof that the applicant has at least submitted his/her qualifications for evaluation to SAQA must be submitted with the application.

 (vii) Letter of acceptance from a South African university and/or a letter from the supervisor approving the research project - **only applicable to TWAS applicants.**

 (viii) English Proficiency Certificate (if available at the time of application and is compulsory if the application is funded) - **only applicable to TWAS applicants.**

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

Add   Return to Menu

*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. If your name does not appear on the published list of successful applications it means that your application was unsuccessful. The application status online will indicate whether or not the application has been approved for funding.

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

Continued funding beyond the first year is dependent on the submission of a Progress Report (PR) when the official process has opened on the NRF Online Submission System. Continued funding will be considered based on satisfactory progress.

A PR must be submitted by the awardee / grantholder 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.

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[1] RSA (2008). Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act 51 of 2008.G*overnment Gazette*, 22 Dec 2008. Vol 522, No 3174