

CALL - Thuthuka - Early Career Researchers

Let asb daarop dat hierdie inligting aan 'n verspreidingslys van alle US-navorsers gestuur word. Dit mag dus wees dat hierdie spesifieke oproep nie van toepassing is op u nie. Ons vertrou dat toekomstige oproepe wel relevant mag wees.

Please note that this information is sent to a distribution list of all SU researchers. It may, therefore, be possible that this specific call is not applicable to you. We trust that future calls will be relevant.

## THUTHUKA PROGRAMME FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

### PLEASE NOTE

**INTERNAL CLOSING DATE** 31 March 2021 at 12:00 (noon)

**INFORMATION SESSIONS** This is **OBLIGATORY** for all applicants (see dates below). Applications of researchers who did not attend an information session, will not be evaluated by the institutional peer review panels. If you are not available on any of the dates given below, or if you attended an information session in 2020, please let us know as soon as possible.

Funding Opportunity	Research discipline	Activities to be funded	Funding amount	Funding duration	Eligibility / Special Conditions	Internal closing date
<b>Thuthuka</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PhD track</b></li> <li>• <b>Post-PhD track</b></li> <li>• <b>NRF Rating track</b></li> </ul>	All <i>(Except: projects for undertaking clinical trials).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Equipment</li> <li>• International Conferences (travel &amp; subsistence)</li> <li>• Local Conference (travel and subsistence)</li> <li>• Local Travel (travel and subsistence)</li> <li>• Materials and supplies</li> <li>• Research/Technical Assistants</li> <li>• Visiting scientists</li> <li>• Science Engagement</li> </ul>	<i>See p 18-19 of the Thuthuka Application Guide for maximum amounts allowed</i>	3 years  <i>Note:</i> Depending on the funding track and research progress made during the first 3-year cycle, it is possible to apply for grants for two subsequent cycles, potentially resulting in 9 years of funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>South African citizen or permanent resident.</b></li> <li>• <b>Full-time employed</b> early career academic staff.</li> <li>• <b>Staff employed on contract must have written proof of appointment for the duration of the funding period applied for.</b></li> <li>• <b>Researchers who currently hold a Thuthuka grant and would like to apply for a subsequent 3-year cycle, must submit a new application.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>THOROUGHLY read Section 5 in the Framework Document to determine whether you are eligible to apply or not.</b></p>	<b>31 March 2021 at 12:00 (noon)</b>

[Thuthuka information and support sessions](#)

Prospective applicants should attend one of these 2-hour sessions.

**CAREFULLY STUDY THE ATTACHED FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURES DOCUMENTS, AND START A DRAFT APPLICATION ON THE NRF ONLINE SYSTEM, BEFORE THE SESSIONS.**

Sessions:

- Wednesday 24 February : 10:00 – 12:00

**or**

- Monday 1 March : 11:00 – 13:00

Prior booking is essential in order to receive the Teams link to the information session. Please make the booking with Dominique Meyer at [dominiquem@sun.ac.za](mailto:dominiquem@sun.ac.za).

**IMPORTANT: APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

**Please take note of the attached application procedure, with timelines, at Stellenbosch University.**

**Enquiries re matters not addressed in the Framework document or online application instructions:**

**Please ensure that “Thuthuka” is indicated in the subject line of your e-mail**

Riana Coetsee (*General enquiries and guidance with grant proposal writing*)

E-pos/Email: [mjc@sun.ac.za](mailto:mjc@sun.ac.za)

Tel: 021-808 2580

Dominique Meyer (*Guidance with budget & RSVP for information sessions*)

[dominiquem@sun.ac.za](mailto:dominiquem@sun.ac.za)

Tel: 021-808 9566

*Riana Coetsee*

**Manager: International & Early Career Research Grants / Bestuurder: Internasionale & Vroeë-loopbaan navorsingstoekenings**

**Afdeling Navorsingsontwikkeling / Division for Research Development**

**T: 021 - 808 2580**



**VISION 2040 | VISIE 2040 | UMBONO 2040** 

Stellenbosch University has launched its Vision 2040 and Strategic Framework 2019–2024. [Click here to find out more.](#)



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# THUTHUKA APPLICATION PROCEDURE AT STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

Create an application on the NRF system <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>

Create or update your CV on the NRF online system.

**NB.** Attach a copy of your ID on the NRF system

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FORM (ISF)

Applicants from all faculties, except FMHS: complete the ISF and get it signed by the Dean or Vice-Dean:Research (leave "Research Office/DA Signature" open – this will be signed later)

Applicants from FMHS: send your (unsigned) Institutional Support Forms to [taniab@sun.ac.za](mailto:taniab@sun.ac.za) by no later than 31 March.

Complete the application & submit online

(Closing date: 31 March 2021 at 12:00)

**VERY IMPORTANT: incomplete applications or applications not complying with NRF requirements (including budget limits), will be rejected at this stage**

**INSTITUTIONAL PEER REVIEW** by Research Subcommittees  
(19 & 20 April)

Institutional peer review feedback given to applicants

Applications **approved** by the Subcommittees

Applications **not approved** by the Subcommittees  
Final submission to NRF not allowed – no further processing.

Applications re-opened on the NRF system for final editing

(Deadline for resubmission : 26 April 2021)

**INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FORM – attach to the application**

Ensure that it is now signed by the Designated Authority (Riana Coetsee). Without the ISF, signed by the Dean/Vice-Dean and the DA, the application will not be valid.

Resubmit the application on the NRF system

**VALIDATION AND FINAL SUBMISSION** by the Designated Authority  
(28 & 29 April 2021)



**Thuthuka**

**Framework**

**Institutional closing date at Stellenbosch University:  
31 March 2021 at 23:59**

**Please see document explaining  
procedures and timelines followed at SU.**

**Directorate: Human and Infrastructure Capacity  
Development**

**Date: February 2021**

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## List of Acronyms

PR	Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
CF	Carry forwards
CoG	Conditions of Grant
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
NRF	National Research Foundation
RE	Reviews and Evaluation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HDIs	Historically Disadvantaged Institutions
ISF	Institutional Support Form
nGAP	New Generation of Academics Programme
CSUR	Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers
BAAP	Black Academics Advancement Programme



## 1. Overview

The purpose of the framework document is to outline the context, organisation and operational procedures with regard to the Thuthuka funding instrument. The Thuthuka funding instrument links to the strategic intent of the National Research Foundation (NRF), which seeks to promote and support the establishment of a transformed, internationally competitive and sustainable research workforce. It is located within the Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development (HICD) Directorate and managed within the emerging/early career researchers cluster of programmes.

The Thuthuka Framework document is intended to inform potential and existing Thuthuka grantholders of the operational procedures for participation in this Funding Instrument. This document provides a brief overview of the Thuthuka funding instrument, eligibility, funding tracks, the application principles, funding guidelines and review procedures. It does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

## 2. Context

### 2.1. Transformation and Equity

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) in its White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation (2019) is committed to continue its support for the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (SSAUF), which aims to transform the demographic profile of university academic staff. As part of its Research Capacity Development Strategy (2002) and National Development Plan (2030), government committed to addressing the slow transformation of the research and teaching staff through targeted interventions to develop the Next Generation of Academics for the South African Higher Education system. The objectives of these interventions are to:

- Stimulate Research and Development at Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs);
- Target women and Blacks for research support; and
- Pursue this in partnership with institutions.

The Report of the Ministerial Task Team on the Recruitment, Retention and Progression of Black South African Academics (2019), commissioned by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, further highlighted the need for targeted support for Black and female academic staff in order to increase the proportion of permanent South African instructional/research staff at universities that hold doctoral degrees.

In alignment with these objectives, the NRF developed a set of strategic objectives and supporting programmes as an embodiment of this imperative.

## 2.2. NRF Perspective

The Thuthuka funding instrument, initiated in 2001, is central to the NRF's human capital development strategy in so far as it relates to advancing the equity and redress agenda within the research sphere. Operating within the constantly evolving higher education landscape, the Thuthuka funding instrument aims to develop human capital and to improve the research capacities of researchers and scholars from designated groups (Black [African, Indian and Coloured], female or persons with disabilities) with the ultimate aim of redressing historical imbalances. This is done in partnership with public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), science councils and other public research institutions, as recognised by the NRF as eligible beneficiary institutions for NRF funding.

Whilst the primary aim of the Thuthuka funding instrument is to promote professional development of researchers from designated groups, participation of individuals from non-designated groups is not excluded. The funding instrument does not only contribute to the NRF's strategic goal of creating a maximum number of high-quality doctoral graduates to drive the knowledge-based economy, but also contributes to the organisation's vision of growing a more representative science and technology workforce.

## 2.3. Objectives

The objectives of the Thuthuka funding instrument are to:

- Promote the attainment of a doctoral qualification, by early career academics employed at South African public universities, science councils and other research institutions as recognised by the NRF;
- Promote the research development of early career academics employed at South African public universities, science councils and other research institutions as recognised by the NRF;
- Promote the attainment of an NRF rating by early career academics, in particular black and female researchers and persons with disabilities;
- Promote the attainment of an NRF rating by academics that have not been able to realise their potential or sustain their research ability by virtue of the lack of an enabling research environment;
- Promote the attainment of an NRF rating by academics that have not been able to realise their potential or sustain their research outputs due to family responsibilities;
- Foster a culture of research excellence, and aid in the development and expansion of the national knowledge-based economy by boosting research outputs and human capital development; and
- Effect transformation in the demographic composition, of the established researcher community at public HEIs, science councils and other research institutions as recognised by

the NRF, with respect to gender, race and persons with disabilities.

### 3. Allocation Principles

The Thuthuka funding instrument supports well-structured research projects with achievable aims and sound methodologies, which support the study objectives and demonstrate the prudent use of funds. The funding decisions will be guided by the following principles:

**Equity and redress:** In keeping with the equity and redress objectives, the Thuthuka funding instrument is based on a preferential funding model. In terms of this model, targets for supporting individuals from designated groups are set as in point 8 below;

**Developmental:** Even though the funding instrument has a developmental focus, only quality proposals that are scientifically sound will be considered for funding;

**Achievability:** The research proposal must be realistic, i.e. achievable in terms of the research objectives, the resources required and the projected completion times; and

**Institutional co-funding:** In order to be considered for Thuthuka funding from the NRF, the applicant's institution must commit in writing to provide fifty (50) percent of the total awarded operational costs for all approved projects.

### 4. Thuthuka Funding Tracks

Emerging/early career researchers and scholars will be supported under the following three tracks:

- **PhD Track:** for applicants intending to obtain a doctoral degree within the funding period;
- **Post-PhD Track:** for applicants intending to become established researchers, by strengthening their research capabilities; and
- **NRF Rating Track:** for applicants wanting to apply for an NRF rating within the six-year funding period.

### 5. Eligibility Criteria

#### 5.1 General Eligibility Criteria

Only South African citizens and South African Permanent Residents with a valid South African Identity Document (ID) number may apply. Individuals who are in the process of obtaining permanent residence will not be considered.

The Thuthuka funding instrument is open to applicants employed at NRF recognised public universities and public research institutions in South Africa. Applicants are limited to (i) individuals that hold an academic position at a public university; (ii) individuals that hold a joint academic and administrative position at a public university and whose performance deliverables include research and postgraduate training outputs; (iii) researchers at Science Councils and other NRF recognised research institutions.

Applicants must be employed on a full-time permanent or full-time contractual basis. If the applicant is appointed on a full-time contractual basis, the appointment date must extend to cover the duration of the grant. Support staff such as technicians and research assistants, part-time lecturers, doctoral students, and postdoctoral fellows are not eligible to apply for a Thuthuka grant.

Female applicants that are appointed on a fixed-term half-day appointment in order to accommodate family responsibilities are eligible to apply. This is limited to women raising children of four (4) years of age and below. In the case of a fixed-term contract, the appointment must extend for the duration of the approved three-year funding cycle.

The employing institution must provide written commitment pledging to allow the applicant time release for research and relief of teaching duties to conduct research, by submitting a completed institutional support form *via* the electronic online application process as an attachment.

The employing institution must provide written commitment for co-funding for running expenses of the approved grant amount at the ratio of 1:1.

## 5.2 PhD Track

In addition to the general eligibility criteria, the following specific eligibility criteria will apply in respect of the PhD-Track:

- Applicants should have obtained a masters qualification at the time of application and intending to pursue doctoral studies.
- Applicants must be registered for a doctoral degree at the time of commencement of the Thuthuka grant.
- Applicants must generally be under the age of 45 years at the time of first application. This age eligibility does not apply to individuals that are current Thuthuka grantholders and that are applying for their second cycle of Thuthuka funding.
- Applicants over the age of 45 years may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research

after a period of absence from research e.g. due to family responsibilities.

- If an applicant in the PhD Track, has received funding for doctoral studies from any other NRF funded programme, the duration of prior NRF funding received will be taken into consideration when making a funding decision.
- Should a grantholder not have obtained his/her doctorate within six (6) years of funding in this funding instrument, no further funding will be considered beyond the sixth year.

### 5.3 Post-PhD Track

The following eligibility criteria will apply in respect of the Post-PhD Track:

- Applicants should have obtained a doctoral degree **no more than five (5) years prior to the date of first application.**
- Applicants must generally be under the age of 45 years at the time of first application. This age eligibility does not apply to individuals that are current Thuthuka grantholders and that are applying for their second or third cycle of Thuthuka funding.
- Applicants over the age of 45 may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research after a period of absence due to family responsibilities.
- Applicants, who have not finalised their doctoral degree at the time of application, are eligible to apply under this track, however, the NRF must receive proof of having passed the doctoral degree at the time of commencement of the Thuthuka grant.

### 5.4 NRF Rating Track

The following eligibility criteria will apply with respect to the NRF Rating Track:

- The applicant must have completed a doctoral degree prior to applying for a grant in the Thuthuka NRF Rating Track.
- Applicants should have obtained their doctoral degree **no more than eight (8) years prior to the date of first application.**
- Applicants may not be an NRF-rated researcher at the time of the Thuthuka application.
- Applicants must demonstrate that they have been unable to establish themselves as researchers due to limited research opportunities (e.g. working at an institution with limited research infrastructure and research activity, or due to family responsibilities).
- A research focus must have been identified in an area in which the applicant plans to establish a research track record.

### 5.5 Exclusions

The following exclusions apply for Thuthuka grant applications:

First-time applicants to Thuthuka **may not be rated researchers**, but may become rated during the tenure of the Thuthuka grant. Once rated, a grantholder must complete the current cycle and exit the Funding instrument. However, should an NRF Evaluation and Rating application and a Thuthuka application be submitted simultaneously and both are successful, then the Thuthuka grant will not be awarded.

This grant may not be held concurrently with a Black Academics Advancement Programme grant. In cases where the Black Academics Advancement Programme and Thuthuka applications are submitted simultaneously, and both are successful, then the Black Academics Advancement Programme will be awarded.

This grant may not be held concurrently with any NRF Established Researcher grant. In cases where an NRF Established Researcher grant and Thuthuka applications are submitted simultaneously, and both are successful, then the Thuthuka grant will not be awarded.

Individuals who have already received two cycles (six-years) of research grant funding from any other NRF competitive research grant funding instrument, are considered to have had the opportunity to become established researchers, and are therefore not eligible for Thuthuka funding, which is specifically aimed at supporting emerging/early career researchers.

Applicants who previously received NRF freestanding or grantholder-linked scholarships, for the maximum period of NRF support for doctoral studies, will not be eligible for further doctoral funding under the Thuthuka PhD Track.

## **6 Application Process**

### **6.1 Call for Applications**

The NRF issues an annual Call for applications for the Thuthuka funding instrument and applications should be completed and submitted *via* the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. An Application and Funding Guide, which provides step-by-step instructions for completing the application template, will be available on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents/funding-framework-documents>.

#### **Please note:**

The Thuthuka funding instrument does not accept more than one application per applicant within a three-year funding cycle, however a project proposal that has received an unfavourable review outcome may be revised and resubmitted to the NRF during this period provided that the applicant

is still eligible. In such cases, any revision or reworking of the proposal to accommodate the reviewers' feedback on the initial application should be explained and pointed out in the revision.

## 6.2 Application Requirements

It is important to complete all the compulsory sections as well as the non-compulsory sections relevant to you. Any information submitted as attachments that should have been completed in the Thuthuka online application form, will render the application incomplete, resulting in a rejection of the application.

An Institutional Support Form (ISF) that commits the institution to support the Thuthuka grant if awarded, must be completed for each application submitted to the NRF. The ISF is an electronic form that will be sent out with the call documents. The applicant must download the form for the relevant Dean or equivalent at their employing institution who will be able to confirm and verify the institution's support to the applicant for the proposed research project to sign.

- Failure to submit a fully signed and completed Institutional contribution form will render the application ineligible for review and will be rejected.

**The Funding Track must be indicated by the applicant on the ISF. Failure to include the funding track on the ISF will result in an automatic rejection of the application.**

- The application will be screened/reviewed under the track indicated on the ISF. If the applicant is either not eligible under the specified track or has indicated the incorrect track, the application will be rejected.

New applicants for a Thuthuka grant for a project that was previously funded by the NRF as a doctoral scholarship, or any other funding from the NRF, must include progress to date in the Thuthuka application.

All applicants (South African citizens and permanent residents) are required to submit a copy of their South African ID document under Registration Details on the online application for audit purposes.

## 6.3 Attachments:

- Female applicants that are appointed on a fixed-term half-day appointment must attach a copy of their child's birth certificate.
- Institutional support form duly completed, with funding track information and duly signed.

- Applicants in the PhD and Post-PhD Tracks over the age of 45 must attach a motivation as to why they were not able to achieve their Doctoral qualification or research capabilities by the stipulated age.
- 

## 6.4 PhD Track

- Applicants over the age of 45 years may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research after a period of absence due to family responsibilities. This must be done *via* the “Absence from Research” Section on the application. **Applications without the motivation will be automatically rejected.**
- Applications must include institutional commitment (i.e. Institutional support form) from the employing institution, pledging co-funding for running expenses of the approved grant amount at the ratio of 1:1 and, to allow the applicant time release for research and relief of teaching duties to conduct research, by submitting a completed institutional support as part of the application. Applications submitted to the NRF without the completed institutional form, including the funding track of the applicant will be automatically rejected without reconsideration or reinstatement of the application.
- Applications must include an endorsement by the nominated supervisor, supporting the proposed doctoral research to be undertaken, by submitting the supervisor’s report *via* the link to the NRF Online Submission System. The applicant must complete the supervisor’s details on the References section of the application. An e-mail will be generated requesting the supervisor to complete the form electronically. The supervisor’s report is an integral part of the application and without this information, the application will not be considered for funding.

### 6.4.1 Post-PhD Track

- Applicants over the age of 45 may be considered on submission of a motivation demonstrating that they are late entrants to research or that they are returning to research after a period of absence due to family responsibilities. This can be done *via* the “Absence from Research” Section on the application. Applications without the motivation will be automatically rejected.
- Applications must include institutional commitment (i.e. Institutional support form) from the employing institution, pledging co-funding for running expenses of the approved grant amount at the ratio of 1:1 and, to allow the applicant time release for research and relief of teaching duties to conduct research, by submitting a completed institutional support form *via* the electronic online application process. Applications submitted to the NRF without the



completed institutional form, including the funding track of the applicant will be automatically rejected without reconsideration or reinstatement of the application.

#### 6.4.2 NRF Rating Track

- Applicants must demonstrate that they have been unable to establish themselves as researchers due to limited research opportunities (e.g. working at an institution with limited research infrastructure and research activity, or due to family responsibilities). If such limitations are not clearly confirmed in the applicant's career profile, the application will be rejected and not considered for funding.
- Applications must include institutional commitment from the employing institution, pledging to allow the applicant time release for research and relief of teaching duties to conduct research, by submitting a completed institutional support form *via* the electronic online application process. Applications submitted to the NRF without the completed institutional form, including the funding track of the applicant will be automatically rejected.

### 7 Ethical Clearance

It is the responsibility of the grantholder, in conjunction with the institution, to ensure that all research activities carried out in or outside South Africa comply with the laws and regulations of South Africa and/or the foreign country in which the research activities are conducted. These include all human and animal subjects, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other regulations or laws, as appropriate. A research ethics committee must review and approve the ethical and academic rigor of all research prior to the commencement of the research and acceptance of the grant.

The awarded amount will not be released for payment if a copy of the required ethical clearance certificate, as indicated in the application, is not attached to the Conditions of Grant.

Please also refer to the "Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices" on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/media-room/news/statement-ethical-research-and-scholarly-publishing-practices>.

### 8 Granting Rules

#### 8.1 Funding Model

Thuthuka supports the advancement of individuals from Masters to Doctoral level in all fields of research. Grants are awarded for well-structured research projects that demonstrate the prudent use of funds. Projects should have a clear aim and objectives and sound methodologies that support the study objectives. The NRF **does not** fund any projects for undertaking clinical trials.

As the Thuthuka grant is aimed at development and the advancement of designated groups per race and/or gender, the NRF has set the following targets across all three funding tracks, for allocation of grants to designated groups, to bring about this transformation:

- at least 80% of all funded grantholders to be Black; and
- at least 55% of all funded grantholders to be female.

The grant covers Research Running Expenses and it excludes costs incurred by the researcher or institution for research prior to the approval of the Thuthuka award.

## 8.2 Funding support

Thuthuka research projects will be funded within a set maximum amount for each budget category as outlined under point 7; subject to budget availability. Applicants may request funding for the following items, by indicating projected costs on the NRF online application form:

1. Research Equipment;
2. International Conferences (travel and subsistence) including airfare and accommodation;
3. Local Conference (travel and subsistence) including airfare and accommodation;
4. Local Travel (travel and subsistence) including airfare and accommodation;
5. Materials and supplies;
6. Research/Technical Assistants;
7. Visiting scientists;
8. Science Engagement.

## 8.3 Institutional contribution or co-funding

The NRF policy on co-funding for this Funding instrument is a 1:1 funding ratio commitment by the NRF and the applicant's employing institution. By validating the application, the applicant's institution declares its funding commitment for running expenses of the approved projects at the ratio of 1:1. The onus is on the institution to ascertain that all budget rules have been adhered to.

### **Note:**

The application will be screened/reviewed under the track indicated in the institutional support form. If the applicant has not specified the funding track, or is not eligible under the specified track the application will be rejected.

Failure to submit an Institutional Support Form electronically, or receiving an incomplete form that is not supported by the Dean of Employing/Affiliated Faculty and Research Office/DA will result in the application being rejected.

## 8.4 Awards and period of funding

- Funding is available for a maximum period of six years (in two three-year cycles) within all Tracks. Successful research proposals will be approved for funding for a period of three years. A new application should be submitted for **each** three-year funding cycle in the same Track;
- Applicants who are progressing from the PhD Track to the Post-PhD Track need to submit a new application for consideration;
- The following apply if a grantholder in the PhD Track completes his/her doctoral degree within the first or second three-year cycle:
  - If the doctoral qualification is completed within the first three year cycle of the PhD Track, the grantholder may apply for funds for a **new** project in the Post-PhD Track for a second cycle, after which he/she will be eligible for a third three-year cycle in the Post-PhD Track.
  - If the qualification is completed in the second three year cycle of the PhD Track, the grantholder may apply for funds for a **new** project in the Post-PhD Track for one additional funding cycle.
  - Grantholders commencing their Thuthuka grant in the PhD Track, are therefore eligible for up to three, three-year cycles (9 years) in total within the funding instrument.
  - Grantholders in the PhD Track that have received 6 years of funding but have not completed their doctoral degree are not eligible for a third three-year cycle of funding.
- Grantholders who are successful in their NRF Evaluation and Rating application during a three-year Thuthuka funding period will be permitted to complete the three-year funding cycle but may not apply for a continuation grant.

### Applying for a second or third cycle of funding?

Funding is available for a maximum period of 6 years (2 cycles) within a track.

Applicants who completed a cycle (3 years) under Thuthuka are eligible for a second cycle (3 years) under the same track. Example: if a grantholder had one cycle under Post-PhD track, they can apply for a second cycle under the Post-PhD track. Progression from Post-PhD to NRF Rating track is not allowed due to the different eligibility criteria.

Continued funding beyond the first year is dependent on the submission of a Progress Report (PR) to the NRF for each grant year, for all three-year grants from 2022. Continued funding will be released based on satisfactory progress.

## 8.5 Reporting

Continued funding beyond the first year of funding will be released based on satisfactory progress achieved by the grantholder. The grantholder will be required to submit a detailed PR to the NRF by 15 February of each subsequent year. The PR will be used to assess project performance against timeframes and deliverables as indicated in the project work plans, institutional financial contribution and expenditure of project funding. Approved funding for continuing grantholders will only be released upon submission of the DA approved PR to the NRF.

At the end of the three-year funding period, a PR must be submitted detailing the outputs and expenditure of the previous years, as well as containing a final assessment of progress made in relation to project objectives.

## 9 Financial control

Thuthuka grants will be managed in terms of standard NRF financial policies and procedures. The payment of the grant by the NRF to successful applicants will be administered by the Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Directorate. The institution will in turn administer the funds on behalf of the successful grantholder to the value of the full sum awarded by the NRF.

### 9.1 Funding Exclusions

The Thuthuka Funding instrument does not consider applications for:

- Research infrastructure for which the Infrastructure Funding instruments make provision;
- Budgets requesting funding only for equipment or conference attendance;
- Grant applications for less than three years, unless the applicant is in the process of completing a doctoral study (applying in the PhD Track);
- Lecturer replacement, external supervisory support, study/training visit local/abroad and sabbatical support;
- Researchers that have received 6 years of funding in the Post-PhD or NRF Rating Track do not qualify for further Thuthuka funding as this is the maximum number of years a researcher may be funded by the Thuthuka Funding instrument; and
- Researchers that have received 3 years Doctoral full-time funding from any NRF Freestanding Scholarship Programme or Grantholder-linked bursaries do not qualify for further funding at the same level.

### 9.2 Multiple Grants

Applicants **may not** hold more than one Thuthuka grant simultaneously.

A grantholder may not hold a Thuthuka grant concurrently with any of the following:

- a grant as a Director of an NRF Centre of Excellence (CoE), Institute or Centre;
- a South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) grant;
- any NRF Knowledge Advancement and Support (KAS) grants;
- NRF postgraduate student bursary;
- New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) Research Development Grant;
- Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) grant;
- Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR);
- Any Established Researcher grant.

For further details refer to the NRF *Overview of Funding Opportunities* document or the *Multiple Grant Eligibility* rubric (available on the NRF Website).

### 9.3 Carry Forward of Grant Funding

The Carry Forward (CF) of unspent/unclaimed funds to the next grant year is not automatic and will only be considered according to the regulations provided in the '*Guidelines for the Carry Forward of Unspent/claimed Grant Allocations*'. A Carry Forward (CF) motivation must be submitted with the PR by grantholders who must consult the NRF's Carry Forward Guidelines, sent to the Institutions in September each year, where exceptions and detailed rules to be adhered to, are included. The NRF reserves the right to refuse such a request.

At the end of the stipulated grant period, all unspent funds will revert to the NRF unless a well-motivated request has been approved by the NRF for funds not claimed. Approved carried forward amounts that are not claimed by June, will revert to the NRF without notification to the grantholder or the Institution's Research Office.

## 10 Financial Categories of Support

When completing the project budget, applicants need to consider all costs that could impact on undertaking the research, such as the direct, indirect and human capacity development costs. **Budget approvals by the NRF are subject to the availability of funds in any given financial year.**

The amounts allowed per item, by the NRF as indicated below, need to be considered in the budget request.

## 10.1 Human Capacity Development Support

Postgraduate students to be supervised by Thuthuka grantholders must apply for NRF postgraduate funding independently in the open competitive Call for Applications for Postgraduate Scholarships. Only students intending to pursue full-time postgraduate studies will be eligible for NRF postgraduate student funding.

**All postgraduate students will be expected to apply on the NRF Online Submission System by accessing the link: <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>.**

For further details on the NRF Postgraduate Funding policy, kindly refer to the framework document which will be available on [www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za) when the Call for Applications for Postgraduate Scholarships opens on 01 April 2021.

Postgraduate students who have been recruited by a supervisor to be part of a research project that is **currently funded by the NRF** should provide the NRF with the supervisor's five- or six-digit grant UID (unique identification number) or supervisor's application reference number. Alternatively, postgraduate students who have been recruited by a supervisor to be part of a research project application that has been **submitted to the NRF for review** should provide the supervisor's NRF application reference number.

## 10.2 Support for Running Expenses

The eight (8) financial sub-categories supported by the NRF and the maximum amount that will be awarded per sub-category is indicated in Table 3. Running expenses are capped at a maximum amount of R100 000.00 (one hundred thousand rand) per annum. **The applicant's institution must match the NRF awarded amount in a 1:1 ratio.**

**Table 1: Financial Sub-categories supported and maximum amounts funded.**

No.	Category of Support	Maximum amount (NRF contribution)
Equipment		
1.	Research equipment	R50 000 maximum per annum
Running Expenses		
2.	International conference	R20 000 per annum
3.	Local conference	R10 000 per annum
4.	Local Travel	R10 000 per annum
5.	Materials and Supplies	R70 000 per annum

6.	Research / technical / ad hoc Assistants	R20 000 per annum
7.	Visiting Scientists	R50 000 per annum
8.	Science Engagement	R10 000 per annum

**Note:**

In order to realistically gauge the full extent of the proposed research, details of other sources of financial support for the research must be submitted in the application budget. This in no way compromises or disadvantages the proposal; instead, knowledge of the commitment and contribution of other contributors (where applicable) serves to better understand the feasibility of the proposed research project.

**All grants allocated are subject to compliance with the NRF Conditions of Grant (CoG) as specified in attachments to the Letter of Award to successful applicants.**

The following six (6) financial sub-categories are NOT supported by the NRF.

**Table 2: Financial categories NOT supported under the Thuthuka Grant**

Category of support	NOT supported under Thuthuka Grant
A. Running Expenses	
Accommodation	Not Funded (to be included where applicable under International conference, Local conference or Local Travel)
Airfare	Not Funded (to be included where applicable under International conference, Local conference or Local travel)
Costs for joint conferences and workshops	Not Funded
International travel	Not Funded
Subsistence	Not Funded (to be included where applicable under International conference, Local conference or Local travel)
B. Sabbatical	
Lecturer Replacement	Not Funded

**Note:**

Applicants must include a detailed and well-motivated budget for each of the three (3) years in the three-year grant application. The budget for each of the three (3) years will be approved at the time of the award.

Budget requests and motivations that **are not consistent** with the permissible funding categories **will not be considered** in the Funding Decision process. Budget requests must be well-motivated according to the requirements of the Thuthuka Funding instrument. Budget requests that are not

motivated in detail according to the requirements of the Thuthuka funding instrument will not be approved for funding.

The following eight (8) financial sub-categories are supported by the NRF.

## **A. Equipment**

### **10.2.1 Research Equipment**

#### **Goal**

The goal is to provide support to applicants for the **purchase** of small research equipment, contributing to the purchase of large equipment, covering the **maintenance, service or upgrade** costs for equipment or **hiring** of equipment.

#### **Eligibility**

Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks.

#### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- Details of laboratory equipment to be purchased, e.g. water bath, autoclave, water purification system or gel dryer.
- Details of the contribution to the purchase of large equipment, e.g. shipping and customs.
- If the funds are not used to purchase equipment, but to cover equipment maintenance / service / upgrade costs, to enable research to be carried out on the Thuthuka project, provide the following:
  - Detailed description of the equipment, e.g. (camera or tape recorder for data capturing purposes);
  - Description of how the equipment will be used in the Thuthuka project; and
  - Details of the specific maintenance or service or upgrade.
- A motivation for specialised hardware, e.g. audio-visual equipment, and specialised software.
- If more than one item of a particular piece of equipment is purchased, a motivation per application should be provided.
- Maintenance costs, for new equipment that is purchased with NRF funding, must be budgeted for (if not requested in this application).
- Equipment must be purchased in accordance with the institutional procurement policies.

#### **Exclusions**

- Personal laptops, notepads, hand-held notebooks, and personal digital assistant (PDA) devices.
- Licence fees or renewals of licences of non-specialised software (e.g. MS Office).

#### **Maximum Funding**



The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R50 000 per year per grant.

**Requests for funding for equipment valued between R1 000 000 and R10 000 000 should be directed to the Infrastructure Funding instruments for support.**

**Note:**

Information is available at [http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding\\_overview.php](http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding_overview.php).

## **B. Running Expenses**

### **10.2.2 International Conferences**

#### **Goal**

The goal is to provide support to an applicant who intends to participate (not just attend) at internationally-held conferences, as a mechanism to further the goals of their projects.

**NB:** Workshop attendance will only qualify for support if this is attached to the conference.

#### **Eligibility**

- Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks who are **presenting a paper or poster** at a conference in the field of the research project funded by the NRF.
- Applies only if a conference has been identified.
- In addition, preference will be for conferences where applicants can demonstrate:
  - networking opportunities;
  - launch of collaboration; and/or
  - Professional society/association meetings.
- Attendance of international conferences in subsequent years will be considered only if the grantholder's paper at the previous international conference, for which funding was awarded, has been published in a peer-reviewed journal or proceedings, or if evidence of acceptance for publication is supplied. Such evidence must be included in the Progress Report submitted to the NRF in February each year.

#### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- The **name** and **place** of the conference.
- Indicate whether a paper or poster will be **presented**.

#### **Exclusions**

- Visa and permit fees;
- Events not attached to the conference;
- Presentation of the same work at multiple conferences; or
- Attendance of more than one conference abroad per year.

- Travel costs to maintain any equipment (this needs to be requested under the correct category).

### **Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R20 000 per year for conferences held abroad.

### **10.2.3 Local Conferences**

#### **Goal**

The goal is to provide support to an applicant and/or postgraduate student/s (directly working on the Thuthuka project) who intends to participate (not just attend) at locally-held conferences, as a mechanism to further the goals of their projects. This includes national and/or international conferences held **in** South Africa.

**NB:** Workshop attendance will only qualify for support if this is attached to the conference.

#### **Eligibility**

- Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks who are **presenting a paper or poster** at a conference in the field of the research project funded by the NRF.
- Applies only where a conference has been identified.
- In addition, preference will be for conferences where applicants can demonstrate:
  - networking opportunities;
  - launch of collaboration; and/or
  - Professional society/association meetings.
- Grantholders should motivate how the presenting of a paper or poster by their postgraduate students working on the Thuthuka project at **reputable local events** (conferences, seminars and workshops) will benefit the research project.

#### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- The **name** and **place** of the conference.
- Indicate that a paper or poster will be **presented**.

#### **Exclusions**

Visa and permit fees;

- Events not attached to the conference; or
- Presentation of the same work at multiple conferences.

### **Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R10 000 per year for local conferences held in South Africa.

## 10.2.4 Local Travel

### Goal

The goal is to provide support to applicants, or students of the grant holder (only those directly working on the project), to cover travel for **research** and **fieldwork** that is related to the research project. When determining the cost pertaining to local travel, researchers must ensure that the most economical and safe transport is utilised in compliance with university policy and/or South African Revenue Services (SARS) rates for travel and subsistence.

### Eligibility

Applies to applicants and their students directly working on the project for application in all the funding Tracks.

### Applicants are required to submit the following:

- A motivation and purpose (why) and place (where to) of the travel that is related to the project objectives and methodology.
- Detailed budget breakdown including:
  - Cost for economy air travel.
  - For travel by road, the number of kilometres to be travelled and costs based on the applicant's institutional rates.
  - Type and cost of accommodation and duration of stay.
  - Subsistence allowance based on the applicant's institutional rates.

### Exclusions

Meetings, workshops, networking, writing retreats and collaboration events.

### Maximum Funding

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R10 000 per year per applicant.

## 10.2.5 Materials and Supplies

### Goal

The goal is to provide support for materials and supplies that are required for the approved Thuthuka research project. Materials and Supplies refer to the daily running expenses/costs of the research project. This is a compulsory category of funding to be completed in the application form. However, should your research not require materials and supplies, please substantiate this in the application.

**Materials and Supplies** are any items with a life expectancy of generally less than a year, and which are consumed in the normal course of operations in all fields of research. Equipment with a value of less than R3 000 should be captured under Materials and Supplies even if not consumed in the normal course of operations e.g. automatic pipettes.

### **Eligibility**

- Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks.
- Only project-related direct costs are covered.
- Every type of purchase must be clearly identified individually and be well-motivated in the budget submission.
- Funding may be considered for the applicant/team members with disabilities and other special needs as specified in the *Code of Good Practice on Employment of People with Disabilities*, as stated in the *Employment Equity Act* (No. 55 of 1998). **A clear motivation should be provided.**

### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- A detailed description of items, e.g. description of the consumable, quantity, reagent grade and cost per unit;
- Survey-related costs, e.g. number of questionnaires, stationery, photocopies, etc.; and
- Details of singular items above R3 000.

### **Exclusions**

- Indirect costs (overheads);
- Registration fees for enrolment, tuition fees, membership fees of any sort;
- Basic office equipment;
- General stationery, photocopying and printing costs;
- Journal publications, journal subscription costs and textbooks;
- Telephone, fax and internet costs;
- Personal laptops, computer hardware, and purchase or renewal of software licenses unless for specialised equipment and software licences.
- Any funding line that is listed as: "miscellaneous" or "other"

### **Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R70 000 per year.

## **10.2.6 Research/Technical Assistants**

### **Goal**

The goal is to provide support for **specialised technical skills** essential to the completion of the project, if a skills gap exists in the research team.

### **Eligibility**

Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks. Appointees as Temporary Support Staff must have a minimum qualification of a B Tech or Honours degree. Technical Assistance Support (e.g. services of a statistician) includes using statistical software packages (e.g. Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), Statistical Analysis System (SAS), etc.) to analyse data.

### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- Details on research assistance required, e.g. consulting and legal services, editing and proofreading, data capturing, survey fees, forums facilitator fees or assistant, e.g. Statistician, Technician, Transcriber, Translator, Field worker.
- Identified skills gap in the research team;
- Expected skills transfer, if applicable; and
- Detailed cost breakdown, e.g. technical assistant work for three hours per day for a total period of three months, at a rate of R80 rand per hour.

### **Exclusion**

Administrative and/or secretarial support.

### **Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R20 000 per year.

## **10.2.7 Visiting Scientist**

### **Goal**

The goal is to provide support to applicants to invite (a) visitor/s to the applicant's employing institution, whose specialised skills add value to the project on a technical, scientific, strategic and/or human capacity building level. Visiting scientists must be individuals of good standing in their research fields and may be drawn from institutions in South Africa or abroad. Capacity development activities associated with such visits are a requirement for funding under this funding category.

### **Eligibility**

Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks.

The visiting scientist should make a contribution to the research project in the following categories:

- Technical skills or knowledge transfer.
- Human capacity building: Student interaction (faculty interaction, seminars and lectures).

### **Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- The **name** of the person visiting.
- The **purpose** of the visit (at the minimum a preliminary plan that must have been discussed with the visiting scientist).
- The **period** of the visit.
- A detailed cost breakdown with regards to the:
  - Accommodation,
  - Airfare,
  - Ground travel,
  - Incidentals, e.g. tollgate, parking costs and subsistence.
- Information on other sources of funding available.
- An outline of the outcomes that will be achieved including:
  - Skills or knowledge transfer; and
  - Contribution to the research at a strategic level.

There are no limits on the number of visitors, e.g. the visiting scientist. Repeat visits by the same scientists will only be considered if active research collaboration exists.

### **Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R50 000 per year per Thuthuka grant.

## **10.2.8 Science Engagement**

### **Goal**

The goal of Science engagement activities are:

- To popularise science, engineering, technology and innovation as attractive, relevant and accessible in order to enhance scientific literacy and awaken interest in relevant careers;
- To develop a critical public that actively engages and participates in the national discourse of science and technology to the benefit of society;
- To promote science communication that will enhance science engagement in South Africa; and
- Engagement between researchers and scholars with broader society, funders, industry and policy-makers, in undertaking research, to improve the social, economic impact of the research.

### **Eligibility**

Applies to applicants in all funding Tracks.

**Applicants are required to submit the following:**

- Why is the engagement being undertaken, and what is the desired outcome of the engagement activity/project?
- Who are the people/audiences with whom you want to engage?
- How do you intend to engage the various audiences you have identified?
- How do you plan to assess the broader impact(s) of science engagement initiatives?

**Exclusions**

- Publication costs for journal articles
- Local and international conference attendance

**Maximum Funding**

The NRF contribution will be limited to a maximum of R10 000 per year.

## 11 Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated by institutions and submitted to the NRF are screened by the NRF for compliance with the requirements of the Framework, the stipulations set out in the Application and Funding Guide, and the content requirements indicated in the online application screens. Applications that fail to meet the requirements and stipulations will be rejected.

## 12 Overview of the Review Process

Following institutional and NRF screening, proposals that meet the eligibility criteria and application requirements will be subjected to a merit review by peers to assess substantive issues such as scientific merit and any other pre-determined content criteria. The NRF's peer-review policy requires that all Thuthuka applications be subjected to a two-tiered review process, firstly for remote review and secondly for panel review.

### 12.1 Remote Peer Review

After the closing date for the submission of applications, all eligible applications are subjected to remote peer review. The reviewers are selected from the list of suggested reviewers provided by the applicant, as well as additional reviewers selected by the Reviews and Evaluations (RE) directorate of the NRF, from existing databases and other sources. Applicants are encouraged to suggest reviewers from abroad. A minimum of six (6) written reviews per application are solicited,

with the ultimate aim of eliciting at least three (3) well-substantiated remote review reports per application for submission to the panel review process.

Applications are sent for review to researchers with research knowledge and insight in relevant disciplines, after which written online review reports are submitted to the NRF. The remote review reports, together with the proposals and supporting documentation are then deliberated upon in the Panel Review Process.

## **12.2 Panel Review**

Following the remote review process, applications are subjected to panel review. The remote reviewers' reports serve as the basis for discussion and review by the panel members. Panel members are selected from the NRF database, which is updated on a continuous basis, as well as other sources. In making the selection, the expertise and experience of individuals in funding proposal adjudication are taken into account. In assessing the proposals, the remote reviewers' reports are referred to, and agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard.

The panel provides recommendations to the NRF. The final funding decision is made by the NRF. When awarding Thuthuka grants, the NRF takes into account the recommendations of the review panels, budget motivations by the applicant, the objectives and equity targets of the funding instrument, as well as the available budget.

## **13 Ranking of Proposals**

### **13.1 Scoring Proposals**

The purpose of the scoring system is to evaluate proposals, based on the Thuthuka research grant criteria, in order to identify applicants that are most deserving of the limited funds available. All research proposals submitted to the NRF for funding, irrespective of the Funding Track, are evaluated according to a number of predetermined criteria. Proposals are assessed and ranked on the basis of qualifiers as listed in Table 4. Each area is given a weight to indicate its relative importance. Kindly consult Table 4 for details on the criteria used per Funding Track as well as the relative weighting.

### **13.2 Review Outcome**

Based on the outcomes of the review process, projects will either be eligible for funding or not.



**Table 4: NRF Scorecard for the Assessment of Proposals for Thuthuka Funding**

Criteria	Description	% Weighting		
		<i>PhD Track</i>	<i>Post-PhD Track</i>	<i>NRF-rating Track</i>
<b>Track Record of Applicant</b>	<p>This refers to past research outputs recognised by the NRF. This refers to outputs such as the professional development of the applicant; journal articles; conference presentations and proceedings; books and chapters in books; and patents.</p> <p>Reviewers will be required to comment on whether the standing and research record of the researcher suggest that the applicant has the appropriate research experience to undertake the proposed research.</p>	5	5	5
<b>Research Proposal</b>	<p>This refers to scientific contribution; originality and new knowledge; interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary aspects; match between the research question and the proposed research methodology and alignment with the applicant's institutional strategy and/or any national research strategy.</p> <p>Scientific and Technical Quality – Reviewers will evaluate whether the project will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* make a contribution to new knowledge and new methodologies in the field;</li> <li>* apply existing knowledge and methodologies in the field;</li> <li>* involve unique application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field;</li> <li>* or utilise the application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.</li> </ul> <p>Interdisciplinary or Multidisciplinary aspects – Reviewers will assess whether Interdisciplinary or Multidisciplinary aspects have been fully-, partially or not explored in the research proposal.</p>	35	25	25

Criteria	Description	% Weighting		
		PhD Track	Post-PhD Track	NRF-rating Track
<b>Human Capital Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student involvement</b></li> <li>• <b>Representation from designated / under-represented groups</b></li> </ul>	<p>Greater emphasis is placed on the number of students trained and the participation of researchers and/or students from under-represented groups (i.e. black, female and disabled) in research projects must be indicated in the proposal.</p>	10	20	20
<b>Project Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project organisation</b></li> <li>• <b>Project scheduling</b></li> <li>• <b>Budget</b></li> </ul>	<p>Project organisation refers to how project teams and human resources are composed; the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of team members; the proposed research activities; and the supervision.</p> <p>Project scheduling refers to the work breakdown of the project to ensure that specific outcomes are achieved; as well as the objectives and associated timelines in place to divide the scope of work into manageable activities.</p> <p>Project budgeting refers to effective planning and budgeting of resources.</p>	25	20	20
<b>Collaboration on Research Project</b>	<p>In order to address historical imbalances, research collaboration between researchers at various institutions is encouraged, especially between institutions with limited research infrastructure and research activity, and research-intensive institutions with varied capabilities.</p> <p>Reviewers will be required to comment on whether research collaborations are required to meet the study objectives and have been considered, and to also comment on whether the research collaborations are appropriate to meet objectives of the study and have been fully addressed; are appropriate but only partially meet the study objectives; or are not appropriate to meet the study objectives.</p>	5	10	10

Criteria	Description	% Weighting		
		<i>PhD Track</i>	<i>Post-PhD Track</i>	<i>NRF-rating Track</i>
<b>Supervision / Mentorship</b>	The applicant has supervised postgraduate students in the past, is currently supervising students and/or plans to supervise students in the future.	5	5	5
<b>Expected Outputs</b>	This refers to NRF recognised research outputs such as the professional development of the applicant; journal articles; conference presentations and proceedings; books and book chapters; and patents. Successful applicants will be expected to deliver on all anticipated outputs or risk suspension of their funding. Reviewers will be required to assess whether the proposed outputs are fully-, partially- or not achievable within the given timeframe.	10	10	10
<b>Potential Impact</b>	Particular attention is paid to proposals with the potential to contribute to the strategic goals of the knowledge economy.	5	5	5

## 14 Supervision

In the PhD Track, the **grantholder and the appointed supervisor** have a commitment to the grantholder's students working on the NRF-funded project. All Thuthuka grantholders must ensure that students receive adequate supervisory support to undertake project-related research that contributes towards the degree for which the students are registered. Grantholders are required to submit a PR on the NRF Online Submission System detailing both project- and student-related progress during the given funding year. Failure to comply with this requirement, or submission of a report that the NRF considers inadequate, may lead to the suspension or termination of the research grant.

## 15 Change Requests during the Project Life Cycle

Changes may occur during the project life cycle due to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Please adhere to the following on how to manage the award and subsequent changes (planned or not anticipated) should they arise during the project life cycle.

### 15.1 Prior Approval Requests

All change requests must be preceded by prior NRF approval submitted in writing to the GMSA at least five (5) days before the proposed change. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Research Office.

### 15.2 Grantholder Change

The Thuthuka funding instrument does not allow for a change of grantholder. Should the institution desire to continue the research project with a new primary investigator, he/she must submit a new Thuthuka application subject to meeting all the Thuthuka eligibility criteria.

### 15.3 Changes in Project Scope

Changes may occur where a project scope needs to be modified from the original research proposal/project design. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Research Office. Grantholders should notify the GMSA in writing of the proposed changes at least five (5) working days before the proposed change.

## 16 Contact Details

For NRF Online Submission and Grants Management-related queries contact:

**Professional Officer: GMSA**

Ms Thandeka Mthethwa

Tel: (012) 481-4163

E-mail: [thandeka.mthethwa@nrf.ac.za](mailto:thandeka.mthethwa@nrf.ac.za)

For Thuthuka funding instrument-related queries contact:

**Professional Officer: HICD**

Ms Maphuti Madiga

Tel: (012) 481-4150

E-mail: [maphuti.madiga@nrf.ac.za](mailto:maphuti.madiga@nrf.ac.za)

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours (08:00- 16:30) on:

E-mail: [Supportdesk@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Supportdesk@nrf.ac.za)