

POSTGRADUATE FUNDING

2026

Stellenbosch University
www.sun.ac.za/postgradfunding



forward together
sonke siya phambili
saam vorentoe

Contact

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Postgraduate Funding Booklet brought to you by the Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO) at Stellenbosch University!

This booklet is packed with the latest and most important information regarding funding opportunities available to postgraduate students at our esteemed university.

We understand that securing funding for your postgraduate studies can be quite challenging, especially in today's rapidly changing economic landscape. That is why it is even more crucial to apply for available scholarship opportunities in a timely manner. This booklet is designed to help you navigate the various funding opportunities available as a postgraduate student.

In this booklet, you will find a comprehensive breakdown of funding options administered internally by SU through structures such as the Postgraduate Funding Office. You will also find information on funding administered independently or via external sources such as bursaries from external companies or organizations.

It is essential to note that while this booklet provides information on all University-administered bursaries for postgraduate students, **it is not an exhaustive list** of all funding opportunities available. To ensure that you don't miss out on any other funding opportunities, we encourage you to engage in your own research and reach out to funding organisations independently.

Towards the end of the booklet, you will also find more information on other sources of funding, as well as external resources that may be useful in your funding search.

Good luck with your funding applications, and we look forward to seeing you achieve your academic and career goals!

Contact us



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MEET THE TEAM

The Postgraduate Funding team deals with a range of internal, external, private, company and statutory funding instruments. The team is also responsible for administering all departmental bursaries via all of our 10 faculties to all postgraduate scholarship recipients.

Jongisizwe Ndlebe

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Administrative Officer:

Information and Communication, Departmental Bursaries, Coordinator: HB & MJ Thom Bursary

Betina van der Merwe

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NRF, CSIR, SARAO

Rhodene Amos

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Coordinator: Institutional Scholarships
(Postgraduate Scholarship Programme)

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Head: Postgraduate Funding



#SUpostgrad

NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS



The National Research Foundation (NRF) is the main funder of postgraduate studies in South Africa. The NRF offers partial and full-cost scholarships to Honours, Master's, and Doctoral students. Please visit www.nrf.ac.za for more information.

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The National Research Foundation invites all prospective 2026 postgraduate full-time students not in salaried employment (contractual or permanent) while studying, to apply for funding support. You should apply for this funding opportunity even if you are not sure if you are going to be offered admission to your chosen degree programme.

The NRF minimum academic requirement for postgraduate funding is 65%. Successful applicants will be funded at either Full Cost of Study (FCS) or Partial Cost of Study (PCS). The FCS funding will be awarded to South African citizens and permanent residents only who are either financially needy (i.e., those with a combined household family income of less than or equal to R350 000 per annum), living with a disability or who are exceptional academic achievers. The PCS funding will be awarded to 5% of international students, including South African citizens and permanent residents who could not be funded under FCS but meet other minimum requirements for the NRF scholarship funding criteria.

Scholarship Values:

Scholarships are available at partial or full cost of study.

Closing Dates:

Honours Financial Means Test: 25 August 2025
Honours General scholarships: 21 November 2025
First-time Master's scholarships: 11 July 2025
First-time Doctoral scholarships: 11 July 2025
Master's/Doctoral Extension Support: 15 August 2025

NRF applications must be completed online at:
<https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>

DAAD-NRF

All fields are funded as per the NRF Postgraduate Scholarship Framework. Applicants must be SA citizens or permanent residents. The programme targets candidates who are working towards a Master's or Doctoral degree and who will be registered for full-time degree studies.

For more information, visit <https://www.nrf.ac.za>

Scholarship Values:

Scholarships are available at full cost of study.

Closing Dates:

Master's scholarships: 11 July 2025
Doctoral scholarships: 11 July 2025

NRF-MINDS

Applicants must be nationals of an African country and reside in any African country other than South Africa. SA citizens are not eligible. The priority research fields are Water-Energy-Food Nexus; Smart Economy; African Heritage (People, Spaces and Settlements); Information and Communication Technologies; Artificial Intelligence and Robotics; and Health and Well-being.

Applicants must produce evidence of demonstrated leadership abilities or potential related to the priority research fields.

For more information, visit www.nrf.ac.za

Scholarship Values:

Scholarships are available at partial cost of study.

Closing Date:

Doctoral scholarships: 4 July 2025



SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY (SARAO)

Applications for the SARAO Honours, Master's and Doctoral scholarships must be completed online on the NRF Connect system: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>

Honours Scholarships

South African citizens and permanent residents, AND citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. BSc Honours in Astronomy/Astrophysics or Computer Science with Mathematics/Applied Mathematics. A minimum of 65% for the major subjects in the final year of undergraduate studies.

Master's Scholarships

South African citizens and permanent residents, AND citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Studies must be relevant to the scientific and technical goals of the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes. A minimum of 65% at Honours (or equivalent qualification) level. Students must have selected a research project that has been approved by SARAO for Master's research in 2026; AND have received written support from the relevant supervisor of the pre-approved research project.

Doctoral Scholarships

South African citizens and permanent residents, AND citizens of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Studies must be relevant to the scientific and technical goals of the SKA and MeerKAT radio telescopes. A minimum of 65% for Masters studies. Students must have selected a research project that has been approved by SARAO for Doctoral research in 2026; AND have received written support from the relevant supervisor of the pre-approved research project.

For more information, visit www.nrf.ac.za

Scholarship Values: Scholarships are available at full cost of study.

Closing Dates:

Honours scholarships: 31 August 2025

Master's scholarships: 11 July 2025

Doctoral scholarships: 11 July 2025



CSIR BURSARY PROGRAMME

The CSIR bursary programme financially supports full-time, unemployed students in obtaining qualifications in areas that are deemed a priority by the CSIR. This programme is intended for students who will register for full-time Honours, Master's or PhD degrees at any South African public university. The focus areas for the bursary support are restricted to the following research areas:

Areas for Honours Bursary

- Computer Science
- Information Technology
- Information System
- Geospatial Information Systems
- Software Engineering
- Electronic Engineering
- Computer Engineering
- Chemical Engineering

Areas for Masters and Doctoral Bursary

- Computer Science
- Information Systems
- Computer Engineering
- Electronic Engineering
- Biochemistry
- Biotechnology
- Microbiology
- Biomedical Engineering
- Physics
- Analytical Chemistry
- Chemical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering

Useful Tips

All applications must include the following supporting documents:

- Official and certified South African Identity Document (ID) for SA citizens or Passport and official proof of Permanent Residency for international students.
- Official, certified university degree certificates.
- Official and certified transcript(s) of full academic record indicating the minimum required academic achievement in the previous degree.
- Recommendation letter by Supervisor (compulsory for Masters and Doctoral applicants)
- Reference letters and Admission letter indicating full-time registration (if available) - required if application is successful.

Scholarship Values: Scholarships are available at full cost of study.

For more information, visit

www.sun.ac.za/postgradfunding

Closing Dates: TBC

DSTI-CSIR Inter-Bursary Support (IBS) Programme

The DSTI-CSIR IBS bursary programme is intended to fund students approved or registered for full-time studies for Honours/Postgraduate Diploma, Master's or Doctoral degrees at any South African public university. The focus areas for bursary support are restricted to the following research areas:

Aerospace | Composites | Modelling and Digital Sciences | Microsystems Technology| Titanium (Manufacturing Elements | Photonics | Biotechnology | Biopharming | Bioprocessing | Biocatalysis | Information and Communications Technology | IKS (Indigenous Knowledge Systems | Health | Water Research

For more information, visit <https://www.csir.co.za/dsi-csir-inter-bursary-support-programme>

Scholarship Values: Scholarships are available at full cost of study.

Closing Dates: 4 August 2025



HB & MJ THOM SCHOLARSHIPS

The HB & MJ Thom Scholarship programme is designed to recognise and reward outstanding post-matric leadership in various fields such as sports, culture, academics, religion, and more. The scholarship is open to students who have completed an undergraduate qualification and now would like to proceed to complete a postgraduate qualification at SU.

While a good academic record is not mandatory for eligibility, the University prefers applicants who have excelled in their previous academic pursuits. In addition to meeting the stipulated criteria, candidates must also submit two testimonials and a comprehensive CV along with their completed application form.

To qualify for the scholarship, applicants must demonstrate exceptional achievements in at least two of the following categories: participation in SU student leadership structures, engagement in sports, involvement in cultural activities or community service, or leadership roles in religious organizations. The applicant must provide specific examples of their leadership accomplishments, highlighting three exceptional achievements in these areas.

The scholarship committee will evaluate the applications and select the most deserving candidates based on their leadership abilities, academic achievements, and overall potential to make a positive impact in their chosen field.

Scholarship recipients will receive financial assistance towards their tuition and living expenses.

Qualifying Criteria

- South African citizens only
- Full-time Honours, Master's, and Doctoral studies
- All fields of study are considered

Scholarship values: Partial scholarships offered at Honours, Master's, and Doctoral level

Deadline

30 September 2025; and outcomes will be available by December of each year.

www.sun.ac.za/postgradfunding



Next Generation South African Leaders

HARRY CROSSLEY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Harry Crossley Foundation is a private funding organisation operating in Cape Town, with their main focus being on tertiary education and research.

Qualifying Criteria

The **Harry Crossley Scholarship Programme** at Stellenbosch University is a prestigious scholarship that provides financial assistance to exceptional students who demonstrate academic excellence (an average of 70% or higher in previous degree studies).

The Harry Crossley Scholarship Programme covers tuition fees, accommodation, and living expenses. In addition to financial support, recipients of the scholarship also benefit from a range of personal development opportunities.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must have completed their undergraduate studies with outstanding academic results. If your research component is less than 50% of the total credits for the degree programme, then you are not eligible.

All fields are funded (excluding Theology and Political Science).

For more information, visit www.sun.ac.za/postgradfunding

Scholarship Values:

- Master's: R150 000
- Doctoral: R160 000

Timelines:

Applications will open on **1 July 2025**

Closing Date:

Applications will close on **30 September 2025**



VARIOUS PRIVATE BURSARIES

SASOL - STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY BURSARY

Full-time Master's and Doctoral studies in Chemistry and Process Engineering.
SA Citizens only.

Closing Date: **15 March 2026**

Outcome: **end of May/June 2026**

Enquiries: **postgradfunding@sun.ac.za**

ERNST ETHEL AND ERIKSEN TRUST

Full time Master's and Doctoral studies (financial need considered).

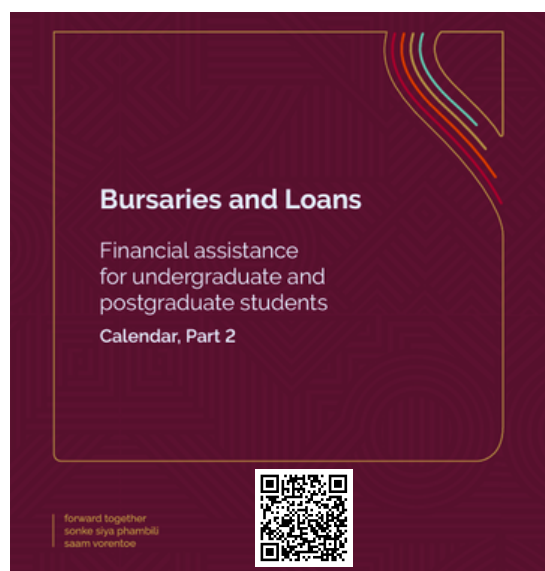
Apply on **<http://eriksentrust.co.za>**

SA Citizens only for study at a SA university, must have completed Honours to apply.

Opening around **August 2025**

Closing Date: **30 September 2025**

Consult the SU Bursary and Loans Calendar for more opportunities: **www.sun.ac.za/calendar**



LIST OF PRIVATE BURSARIES ON THE SU BURSARY SYSTEM (MY.SUN)

- Opening date: **01 July 2025**
- Closing Date: **First Friday in December**

Applications must be completed online at **<http://my.sun.ac.za>**

Afrikaans: de Jager, CJ / de Villiers, Anna / Hymne Weiss / Hertzog, JBM General / Smith, JJ

Anthropology: Uys, Dirkie

Arts: de Klerk, DP

Botany: de Villiers, OT / Boonstra

Drama: Engelen, Fred

Education: La Grange, AJ / Pauw, DAA

Engineering: La Grange, Phillip (for Electronic Engineering) / Louw, Tienie (for Astronautical Engineering)

English: Victoria League (Honours students who would like to focus on teaching of the English language)

Economics: Uys, Dirkie

History: Blommaert / Dekker, HP / Conradie, GD

Mathematics: Cillié

Political Science: Uys, Dirkie

Psychology: La Grange, AJ

Viticulture and Oenology: Theron, CJ

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME (PSP)

The Stellenbosch University Postgraduate Scholarship Programme is designed as a collaborative initiative to support, foster and strengthen our postgraduate talent, enhance student access and promote research excellence. This programme offers various scholarships to postgraduate students across all faculties, including Honours, Master's, and Doctoral degrees. The scholarships are awarded based on academic merit, financial need, or both. The values of the scholarships vary depending on the availability of funding, with some offering partial funding and others offering full funding. The application process is open from August to October each year, and successful applicants are notified from December to March.

Qualifying Criteria

- Each faculty determines its academic requirement(s); typically a minimum of 65% average in your previous degree (or your major) is required.
- Students must intend to register for full-time studies (no part-time programmes are supported unless stated otherwise).
- Honours, Master's and Doctoral degrees are supported (excluding postgraduate diplomas, certificates or advanced bachelor's degrees).
- Applicants may not be employed for more than 20 hours per week.
- Focus on further developing research excellence at our institution.

Scholarship Values

- Scholarships vary depending on the availability of funding.
- Partial and full scholarships are available based on academic performance/financial need.

Timelines

Call announcement **01 September 2025** on www.sun.ac.za/postgradfunding
Closing date: **31 October 2025**

Outcomes are available from December to February of each year.



PSP 2026

Supporting research excellence and student access

Although encouraged to do so, admission confirmation to your relevant degree programme is not required to apply for the PSP.

ResearchConnect

<https://myresearchconnect.com/>

Welcome to the ResearchConnect platform for the identification of international research funding opportunities.

The ResearchConnect repository houses thousands of funding opportunities from around the world. Postgraduate students (with an @sun.ac.za email address) can easily filter and search, using keywords, and narrow down opportunities to cover the costs of their studies, conference attendance and other budgetary expenses.

Visit the website for more information: <https://myresearchconnect.com/>

Navigating the ResearchConnect platform

(For each option, click the corresponding tab at the top of or further down the Home page)

- Use the "Funding opportunities" option to explore current research funding opportunities
- For the latest research funding opportunities highlighted by Open4Research, refer to "News & Insights - News"
- Refer to "Complementary services" to connect with support services to help you access funding
- For general enquiries, please contact research@sun.ac.za

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