



Catalyst Fund for Science

BURSARY SUPPORT

to postgraduate students at
Stellenbosch University

Context

Research has become a powerful tool in the global economy. Worldwide developments in science, technology and innovation are fundamentally altering the way people live, communicate and transact, with profound effects on economic growth and development. South Africa's National Development Plan has prioritised an increase in doctoral output from 1 876 in 2012 to 5 000 by 2030 in order to improve the country's research and innovation capacity and to create much-needed jobs over the next years. The majority of South Africa's new knowledge is developed within universities and research councils.

Unique value proposition – The Faculty of Science

At Stellenbosch University (SU), the Faculty of Science offers a first-class research environment and a wide range of institutional support and expertise to ensure the success of its postgraduate students.

SU is committed to developing the next generation of South African scientists - a group of innovative and critical thinking men and women who can play an active role in the development of our society and who will be catalysts to creating the knowledge-intensive economy that is so crucial to South Africa's growth and development. Against this background and in light of severe funding cuts to higher education institutions in South Africa, the Faculty of Science has launched the Catalyst Fund for Science to support qualifying and deserving postgraduate students.

Request for support

In order to be able to offer bursaries to its postgraduate students, the Faculty requires approximately R11 million per year. Our request to you is to consider funding a full bursary or a make contribution towards this Fund. Contributions can be paid into the following bank account:

ORGANISATION NAME	Stellenbosch University
BANK	Standard Bank
BRANCH	Stellenbosch
BRANCH CODE	05 06 10
ACCOUNT NAME	University of Stellenbosch
ACCOUNT NUMBER	073006955
Reference	Catalyst fund FoS

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“It was love at first sight. There was never any other option. In some way, shape or form I was going to have a career that involved mathematics.”

Dr Ronalda Benjamin

Mathematics Lecturer, Stellenbosch University

I came from Worcester with a bursary to study to become a mathematics teacher. Without a bursary, tertiary studies would not even have been an option, because my family was in no position to contribute to my studies at all. My late father was a glass cutter and my mom took care of the household.

My high school did not attend university open days, so when I first set foot on campus, it took me a really long time to get used to the quietness all around me. The utopia of my university surroundings was in total contrast to the hustle and bustle of the Riverview Flats I grew up in. Street corner gang activity and stray bullets have always been the norm on the Flats so to come here to Stellenbosch was an absolute shock to my system.

Bursaries played a critical role in my upbringing since my primary school days. When I was at school, the African Scholars Fund in those days helped me to buy more mathematics books which enabled me to expand my frame of reference beyond what was being taught in the classroom. When I came to Stellenbosch, my mathematics teaching bursary was my ticket to study towards a BComm degree in Mathematical Sciences. When I reached postgraduate studies I was assisted by various funds and that meant that I could focus solely on my studies without the constant fear of where my next meal was going to come from.

No one in my family or that I knew well had been to university and could not tell me about the journey I was about to undertake. What I had to learn quickly was how to make sure that I did not run out of bursary funds before the end of the academic year. Managing your bursary money is really really important. It teaches you about responsibility and to be accountable for when things go wrong.

The financial support I received throughout my university studies allowed me the freedom to pursue what I loved most. I have this organic passion for mathematics that has been there ever since I can remember. Today I am living my dream and could not imagine it being any other way.