COMMUNIQUÉ
DST-NRF COLLABORATIVE POSTGRADUATE TRAINING
05 February 2016

The next call for applications for the Collaborative Postgraduate Training Grants will be open from 03 March to 15 April 2016. This communiqué provides information relating to the pending call to enable applicants to prepare for submission of an application on the NRF Online application system.

The funding instrument is aimed at multi-institutional collaborative training of a cohort of postgraduate students in a specific scarce skill discipline or priority research area. This training must involve a collaborative network of postgraduate students and supervisors led by the lead applicant.

1. Scope of the Collaborative Postgraduate Training funding instrument

The NRF will invite lead applicants from public universities in South Africa to submit applications for funding support for a three-year grant broken down as follows:

**Postgraduate scholarships:** No less than 60% of grant costs may be requested for Honours, Master’s and Doctoral bursaries; and

**Institutional Capacity:** No more than 40% of the grant costs may be requested for institutional support comprising of small equipment costing less than R200 000; specialised software for research purposes; training workshops; international guest lecturers; technical staff in selected disciplines such as curators and artists in training and science communication and outreach activities that may include programmes for supporting research exposure to undergraduate students.
2. Objectives

The objectives of this funding instrument are:

- To train a cohort of students in a specified scarce skill discipline or emerging research area spanning the physical, natural, social and human sciences, engineering and technology fields;
- To facilitate postgraduate training within a collaborative multi-institutional network; and
- To improve institutional capacity in order to enhance postgraduate training programmes at public universities in South Africa.

3. Allocation Principles

The grant supports well-structured Collaborative Postgraduate Training programmes with achievable objectives that support Human Capital Development (HCD) in priority disciplines. The programme funding decisions will be guided by the following principles:

**Equity and redress:** In keeping with the equity and redress objectives the grant is based on a preferential funding model. In terms of this model, targets for supporting individuals from designated groups will be set.

**Institutional capacity development:** historically disadvantaged universities are encouraged to use this funding to improve institutional infrastructure e.g. computer software in order to enhance postgraduate training programmes and to attract students in the chosen fields.

**Support for part-time postgraduate studies:** support for part-time postgraduate students will only be considered in scarce and priority disciplines and/or disciplines where the majority of postgraduate students are registered for part-time studies. The target for the funding instrument is to support 90% full-time students and 10% part-time students. In improving efficiencies, the time for completion of postgraduate students must be monitored;

**Developmental:** even though the programme has a developmental focus, only quality proposals that are scientifically sound in terms of research and training, will be considered for funding;

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

**Partnerships:** to ensure the alignment of human capital development with the needs of the country, proposals that involve inter-university partnerships and preferably include relevant industry partnership(s) and/or public research institutions; all working together toward a
common objective to produce and sustain a growing stream of well-rounded postgraduate students in the discipline.

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1. Eligibility criteria for applicants

Eligibility criteria for the lead applicant hosting the Collaborative Postgraduate Training grant are listed below. The applicant must:

- hold an academic position at a South African public university for the full duration of the awarded grant;
- hold a doctoral degree and have proven postgraduate supervision experience to host and supervise postgraduate students;
- demonstrate existing collaborations with national and international research institutions and universities for research and postgraduate training;
- demonstrate access to research funding by the applicant and consortium members to cover the research costs for the projects to be undertaken by the postgraduate students; and
- include at least two Historically Disadvantaged Higher Education Institutions, one of which may be the lead institution, in the Collaborative Postgraduate Training Initiative.

4.2. Eligibility for students nominated for scholarships

Following the award of a Collaborative Postgraduate Training grant to the applicant, postgraduate students must be nominated in keeping with the following eligibility criteria:

- Students must be either South African citizens or in possession of South African permanent residency (87%) or international students that will be limited to 13% of awards;
- Honours and fourth-year students must be registered for a postgraduate degree at any South African public university;
- Students enrolling for Masters studies must hold a Honours, B. Tech or four-year degree;
- Students enrolling for Doctoral studies must hold a Master’s level qualification;
• Postgraduate student beneficiaries may not concurrently hold the study support with another NRF scholarship or any other funding support from a South African government source; and
• Individuals that already hold a degree at the level for which they are nominated, are not eligible for support.

Student scholarships (60% of the budget) will be released on the basis of student nominations and by the lead applicant’s institution. *All* funds will be released to the lead applicant’s (i.e. grantholder’s) institution. Scholarships not taken up within six (6) months of the grant award to the lead applicant will be cancelled for reallocation unless otherwise approved by the NRF.

5. Application Requirements

The lead applicant will apply for the Collaborative Postgraduate Training grant indicating the following:

• Details of lead applicant and university;
• Objectives of the Collaborative Postgraduate Training initiative;
• Motivation indicating alignment with national priorities, scarce skill area and/or a vulnerable discipline;
• Expected outputs and outcomes in advancing HCD in the given discipline;
• Collaborating partners;
• Partner universities where students will be registered for postgraduate studies;
• Postgraduate supervisors and research projects for training of postgraduate training;
• Availability of research running costs;
• Requested number of scholarships at Honours, Masters and Doctoral levels; institutional capacity and mobility; and
• Motivation for part-time student support where applicable.

Applicants must attach the *Curriculum Vitae* of all supervisors listed in the application.

5.1. Proposal review criteria

• Supervisory capacity of the lead applicant and supervisors at the collaborating partner institutions;
• Alignment with national priorities, scarce skill area and/or a vulnerable discipline;
• Expected outputs and outcomes in advancing HCD in the given discipline;
• Collaborative partnerships for HCD training;
• Access to research running costs; and
• Requested budget.

6. **Types of financial support**

The budget allocation must take into consideration the targets for the programme viz. sixty percent (60%) for postgraduate scholarships and forty percent (40%) for institutional capacity and mobility. Each application shall indicate projected costs, for years one (1), two (2) and three (3). The total requested budget (Human Capital Development, Infrastructure and Operational cost) under this programme cannot exceed R1 500 000 per annum.

6.1. **Postgraduate scholarships**

The duration and value for postgraduate scholarships is listed in the table that follows. These values will be reviewed annually to maintain alignment with the Innovation Bursaries for Honours, Master’s and Doctoral students.

**Table 1: Scholarship values and maximum periods of support**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Level</th>
<th>Scholarship Value for 2016/17 (Rand per annum)</th>
<th>Maximum Funding Period (Years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honours full-time</td>
<td>50 000</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours part-time</td>
<td>20 000</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters full-time</td>
<td>80 000</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters part-time</td>
<td>30 000</td>
<td>Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral full-time</td>
<td>110 000</td>
<td>Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral part-time</td>
<td>40 000</td>
<td>Five</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The period of support is calculated from the first year of registration for the study or research regardless of NRF funding.

6.2. **Demographics targets for postgraduate students**

Student nominations shall be made as follows:

• 87% to South African citizens and permanent residents;
• 5% to students from the South African Development Community (SADC) region; and
• 4% to students from the rest of Africa; and
• 4% to students from non-African countries.
The overall student composition shall comprise of 55% women, 80% Black (African, Coloured and Indian) and 4% students with disabilities.

6.3. Institutional capacity and mobility
The following budget items may be included in the application and all requests must be fully motivated for in the application.
- Small to medium-sized equipment costing no more than R200 000 (two hundred thousand rand);
- Specialised computer software required for postgraduate training;
- Postgraduate training workshops;
- Travel and Subsistence for International guest lecturers;
- Technical staff in selected disciplines such as curators and artists in training; and
- Science communication and outreach activities that may include programmes for supporting research exposure to undergraduate students.

7. Application Process
The NRF will invite applications, for a three-year grant, from applicants at public universities in South Africa. The call for applications will be open from 03 March 2016 to 15 April 2016. Applications will be submitted via the NRF Online Submission System https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za. Further instructions on the application process will be made available in the DST-NRF - Collaborative Postgraduate Training 2016 Application Guide.

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