



science and technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



NRF
National Research
Foundation

RISA

Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2018 Postdoctoral Fellowships

Application and Funding Guide:

NRF Free-standing (Local and Abroad)

DST-NRF Innovation

DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills

Grants Management and Systems Administration

Contents

Contact Details	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Granting Rules.....	5
2.1. Conditions of the DST- NRF Free-standing (Local and Abroad), DST-NRF Innovation and DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills Postdoctoral Fellowships	5
2.2. Values of Postdoctoral Fellowships.....	5
3. Application Process	7
4. How to Submit Applications.....	8
5. Screening and Review Processes.....	22
5.1. Overview of the Screening Process	22
5.2. Overview of the Review Process	22
6. Ranking of Applications.....	23
7. Application Feedback and Disputes.....	25
8. Change Requests.....	25
8.1. Prior Approval Requests	25
8.2. Changes in Project Scope, Supervisor or Institution	25
9. Scientific Compliance	25
9.1. Methodology.....	25
9.2. Intellectual Property Rights.....	26
9.3. Ethics.....	26
10. References	26

List of Acronyms

APR	Annual Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training

Contact Details

When making an enquiry, please use “NRF Free-standing, Innovation and Scarce Skills Postdoctoral Fellowship Call” as the email subject line.

For NRF Online application and grants management related enquiries, please contact:

Ms Bongiwe Ndamane

NRF and Departmental Scholarship Awards Manager: Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO)

Telephone: 021 650 3926

E-mail: Bongiwe.Ndamane@uct.ac.za

Ms Desne Jodamus

Temp: Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO)

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours from 08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday.

Telephone: 012-481 4034

E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

Application and funding guidelines are explained in this document. Candidates must read this document together with the following document: **DST-NRF Innovation, DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills Development Fund and the DST-NRF Free-standing Postdoctoral Framework** which highlight the eligibility criteria and requirements of each funding instrument.

1. Introduction

This Guide provides an overview of the application process and funding guidelines for the DST-NRF Free-standing (Local and Abroad), DST-NRF Innovation and the DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills Postdoctoral Fellowships funding instruments. It should be read in conjunction with the above-mentioned **Framework**, which can be accessed at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. The Framework provides detailed information with respect to objectives of the funding instruments, eligibility criteria etc. This document does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

2. Granting Rules

2.1. Conditions of the DST- NRF Free-standing (Local and Abroad), DST-NRF Innovation and DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills Postdoctoral Fellowships

- The fellowship shall be held as the primary funding for the Postdoctoral research training;
- Fellowships may not be held simultaneously with a another fellowship from any other government or NRF source or NRF administered source;
- Postdoctoral Fellows are permitted to spend a maximum of 20% of their time undertaking lecturing and student supervision;
- Postdoctoral Fellows may not concurrently hold the fellowship with any full-time salaried employment position; and
- Postdoctoral Fellows may hold non-binding supplementary grants or emoluments to the institutional capped value.

2.2. Values of Postdoctoral Fellowships

2.2.1. Local Awards

Successful applicants will receive funding for a maximum period of two (2) years based on the initial commencement date of the project. Female Postdoctoral Fellows that take maternity leave during the tenure of the fellowship, are eligible for an additional four (4) months of support beyond the two year period.

The local Postdoctoral Fellowship packages for 2018 are broken down as follows:

Value (per annum)	Item
DST-NRF Free-standing (local)	
R155 000	non-taxable stipend
R45 000	contribution towards research costs
R15 000	compulsory institutional contribution
DST-NRF Innovation	
R255 000	non-taxable stipend
R50 000	contribution towards research costs
R15 000	compulsory institutional contribution
DST-NRF-DHET Scarce skills	
R255 000	non-taxable stipend
R50 000	contribution towards research costs
R15 000	compulsory institutional contribution

Host institutions will be expected to supplement the fellowship with a minimum of R15 000.00 per annum as part of the institutional commitment. In addition, the host institutions will ensure the provision of an enabling environment for Fellows' research training and skills development.

Successful candidates are also eligible for travel grants for local and international travel. The travel grants may be used to contribute towards the costs of attending local or international conferences; workshops; visiting a laboratory or; any other activity that supports the beneficiaries' research training. Please refer to the Frameworks for the maximum amount permitted over the tenure of the fellowship.

Postdoctoral Fellows who wish to access the travel grant must complete a travel grant application form for submission and approval by the institution and the NRF. The travel application form can be accessed on NRF Online Submissions (<https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>) and should be submitted 3 months prior to travelling.

2.2.1. DST-NRF Free-standing Postdoctoral Abroad Awards

The value of the award will be calculated as the equivalent of the United States Dollar (USD) of 26 000 per annum, for a maximum of two (2) years, and will be paid out in the currency of the country in which the postdoctoral research will be undertaken.

In addition, the NRF will cover the cost of:

- A single economy airfare for travel to the country in which the postdoctoral research will be undertaken; and
- A single economy airfare to return to South Africa upon completion of the postdoctoral research abroad.

The NRF **will not** cover any costs for accompanying family members or any other related costs associated with the postdoctoral research. The applicant will be responsible for securing additional funding to cover any shortfall in funding required to undertake his/her postdoctoral research abroad.

3. Application Process

The NRF is issuing this pooled call for DST-NRF Free-standing (Local and Abroad), DST-NRF Innovation and DST-NRF-DHET Scarce Skills Postdoctoral Fellowship applications that is published on the NRF website and is accessible online at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. Each applicant is limited to only one (1) application per year for this pooled Postdoctoral Fellowship. Once an applicant submits an application, it will be duly authorised and approved by the Designated Authority (DA) of the research administration at the prospective South African host institution where the applicant intends to undertake the postdoctoral research. Applications will be automatically routed to the institutional DA of the submitting institution for validation at the deadline date determined by individual institutions. Applicants have to enquire with their institutions regarding internal closing dates. *Abroad applications will be routed directly to the NRF. The processing of a successful grant application takes approximately five (5) months from the closing date for applications until the commencement of funding.

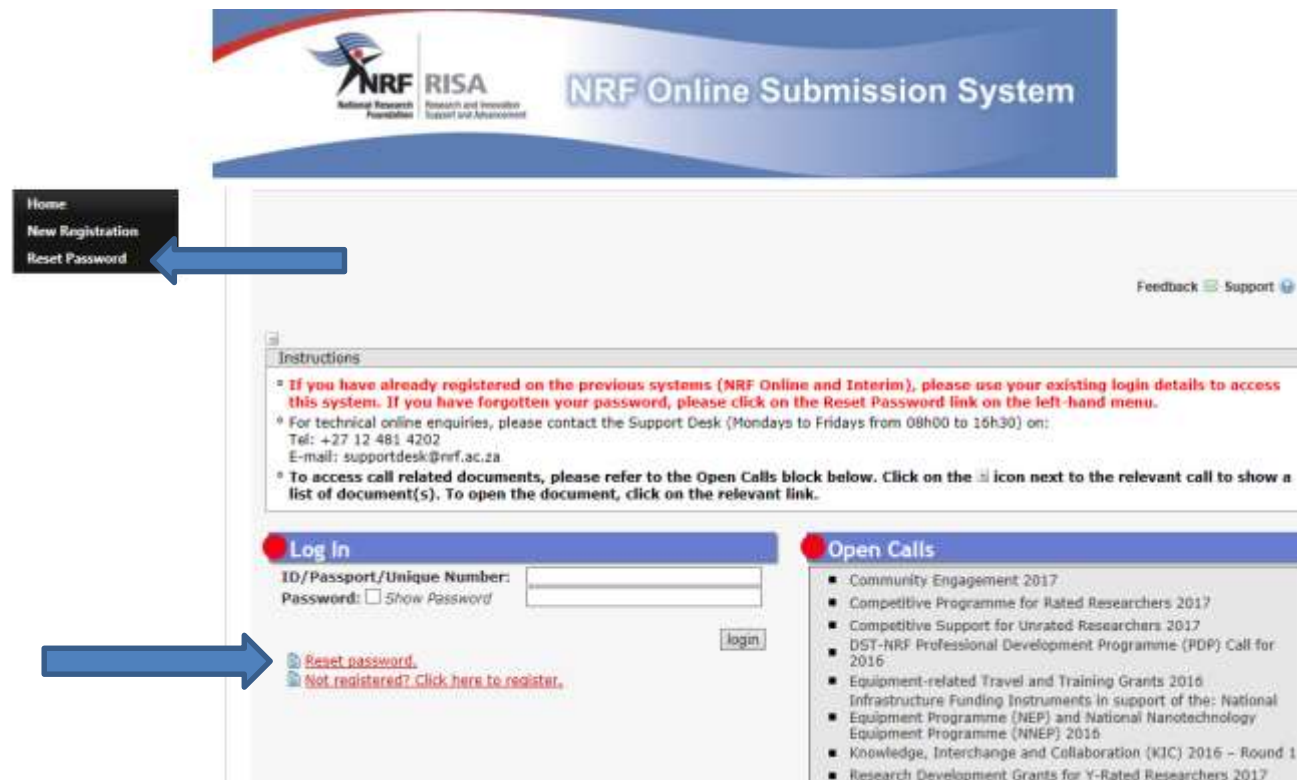
4. How to Submit Applications

Applications may be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call is open to prevent IT system overload nearer the **closing date of 06 July 2017**.

Applicants must ensure that they adhere to their institution's internal closing date for submission of their application to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The internal closing date will be determined by the respective research offices or Post Graduate Office and is usually at least two weeks prior to the NRF's closing date.

Step 1: This is an electronic submission system and applicants must be registered on the system in order to create and complete an application. If you had previously registered and submitted an application on the NRF Online System (<http://nrfonline.nrf.ac.za>) before February 2012 and your application was not successful, your details would have been migrated to the new NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>). If you experience problems accessing the system with your NRF Online password, use the Reset Password button. If you are not yet registered on the NRF Online Submission System, you must register to access the application form.

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



Step 2: Once you have logged onto the NRF Online Submission System, you will get to the 'landing page' where you will find a menu at the top left side of your screen (tab indicated with blue arrow). To create a new application, click on My Applications>Create Application.

NRF National Research Foundation | **RISA** Research and Innovation Support and Advancement | **NRF Online Submission System**

Welcome Mrs Melissa Govender
Feedback Support

My Profile
My Applications
Tools
My Progress Reports
Reports
Logout

My Applications
Create Application
List of Applications

Quick Links

- Grantholder Tools
- Institution Facilities
- Panel Meetings
- Application and Output History (NRF Online)
- Application History (NRF Interim)
- SKA SA Grants

Landing Page

Information

- PLEASE NOTE: The summary below only lists output records that were migrated from the previous NRF Online system. New records that are added on this system will not form part of this summary.
- Applicants must ensure that their CV is updated/completed before creating an application.
- In order for your migrated research outputs to show on the CV or be accessible for selection on applications that require your publication record, you **must** verify (review) the outputs listed in the **Research Outputs Summary** table below. In order to do this, click on the output type that still has outputs to be verified (see the To be Reviewed column). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and a heading saying cleaned-up research output records from NRF Online will be displayed. Click on the little black arrow. This will display the output(s) that needs to be verified. Then click on the View icon, it will open a screen with the data for the output. Please fill in the missing information and save the page. If you have more than one output per output type, click on View for the next output. Do this for all the outputs, the output type on the landing page should now say 0. Move on to the next output type and repeat the process. Should you wish to delete an output, then click on the Feedback box, fill in the **Feedback to the NRF box** (e.g. output duplicated, please delete) and in the **Status** field, please select Delete.
- In some cases, researchers' outputs don't show at all. The reason for this is
 - The ID/passport number which the cleaned data was linked to when the clean-up exercise was undertaken differs from the ID/passport number you have just used to login to the NRF Online Submission System.
 - No outputs were added on the old NRF Online system so there was nothing to migrate. If there were outputs on the old NRF Online system but they do not show in the summary below, you need to ensure that the ID/passport numbers used on both the old NRF Online and this system (NRF Online Submission System) are the same. Please contact the NRF should your outputs not show so that this can be rectified.

Step 3: Select the funding call for which you are applying on the create application screen and a new application will open to complete. Please note that this must be selected only once. To continue working on an application, go to My Applications- List of Applications

Create Application

Instructions

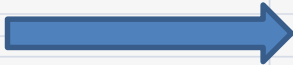
- Check your intended institution's internal closing date as it will be prior to the closing date listed for applications.
- A timeout will appear when there is no activity on the system for 25 minutes. Click on the refresh button (in the popup box) as this will enable the continuation/completion of the application. When clicking on the close button the system will close.

Call	Open Date	Closing Date	Apply
Blue Skies Concept Notes 2018	03 April 2017	12 May 2017	
Blue Skies Concept Notes 2018	03 April 2017	12 May 2017	
CSIR National Laser Centre Rental Pool Programme 2016	19 April 2017	28 February 2018	
DST-NRF Collaborative Postgraduate Training Call for 2018	28 February 2017	28 April 2017	
DST-NRF Professional Development Programme (PDP) Call for 2016	08 February 2016	29 April 2017	
Extension Bursary Support for Masters and Doctoral Studies 2015	01 January 2015	26 December 2017	
Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) - Small Grants 2017	29 March 2017	07 June 2017	
Indigenous Knowledge Systems Call 2015	18 June 2014	01 August 2214	
Infrastructure Funding Instruments in support of the National Equipment Programme (NEP) 2017	08 March 2016	30 September 2017	
Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) 2017 – Round 1	24 March 2017	21 April 2017	
National Research Foundation / European Research Council 2017 Call	20 March 2017	12 May 2017	
Nominations of Academic Staff: Sabbatical Grants for Completion of Doctoral Degrees 2018	03 April 2017	10 May 2017	
Oman/South Africa Research Cooperation Programme 2018	27 February 2017	28 April 2017	
South Africa – Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (SA-JINR) – Mobility Grants for Researchers and Postgraduate Students 2017	11 April 2017	30 April 2017	
South African National Antarctic Programme (SANAP) 2018	03 April 2017	26 May 2017	
Testing BW	26 March 2017	22 April 2017	
Thuthuka 2018	03 April 2017	19 May 2017	
Thuthuka 2018	03 April 2017	24 May 2017	
Travel Grants Setup Testing	10 April 2017	30 April 2017	
UAT of Postdoc application	19 April 2017	24 April 2017	

*Applicants are urged to complete or update ALL screens of the CV, including the Research Profile and Research Outputs as this information is evaluated in the review process and will impact on the overall assessment of your application.

Step 4: All sections marked with a red asterisk are compulsory sections in the application. These sections must be completed in order for the final submit button to appear. The sections without asterisks are non-compulsory sections. You may enter information in these sections, if you have information to enter, such as research outputs. Completed sections will be indicated by a green tick on the main menu, while incomplete sections will have a yellow cross. Please ensure that once you complete information in a section, press the “save” button before returning to the main menu.

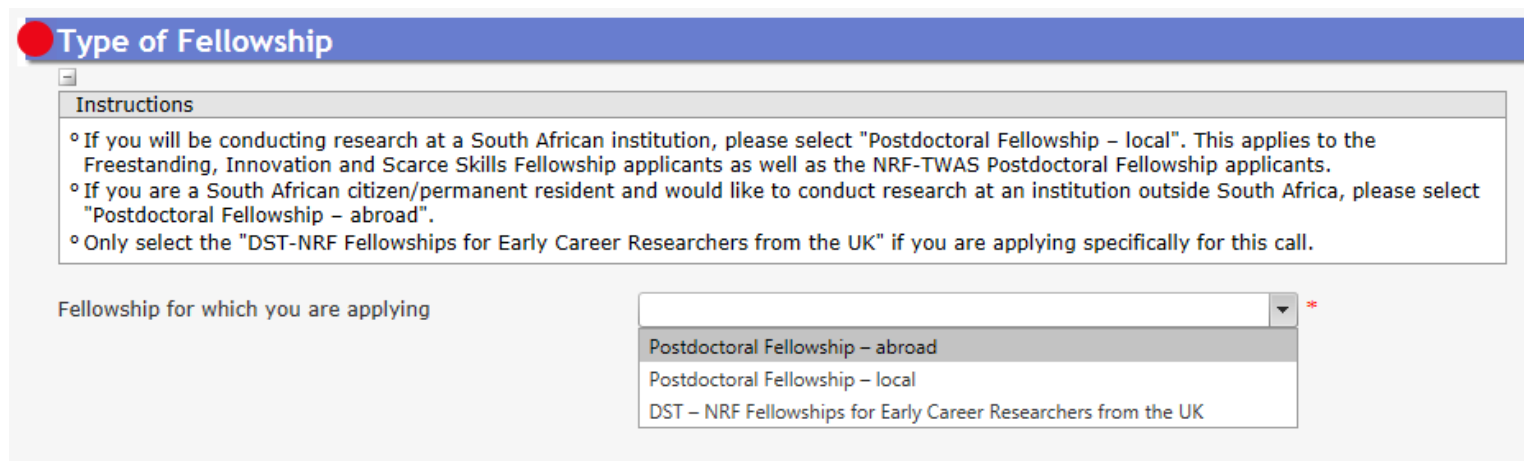
Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
NRF Call Information Documents (Please read before starting this application)	!	19 Apr 2017	
Registration Details *	✓	13 Feb 2017	
Contact Details *	✓	13 Feb 2017	
Qualifications *	✓	14 Mar 2017	
Career Profile *	✓	22 Jun 2016	
Research Expertise *	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Student Supervision Record	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Absence from Research	✗	19 Apr 2017	
Personal Profile *	✓	19 Aug 2015	
Disability *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Research Outputs	✗	19 Apr 2017	
Books	✗	19 Apr 2017	
Chapters in Books	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Articles in Refereed/Peer-reviewed Journals	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Refereed/Peer-reviewed Conference Outputs	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Patents	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Keynote/Plenary Addresses	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Articles in Non-refereed/Non-peer Reviewed Journals	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Other Significant Conference Outputs	✓	19 Aug 2015	
Technical/Policy Reports	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Products	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Artefacts	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Prototypes	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Other Recognised Research Outputs	✓	10 Jun 2015	
Type of Fellowship *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Fellowship to be Funded *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Research Project Information *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Academic Achievements *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Details of Research *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Science Engagement *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
References *	✗	19 Apr 2017	
Possible Reviewers *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Preferred Panel *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Person History *	✗	19 Apr 2017	
Attachments	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Print Preview	!	19 Apr 2017	



All compulsory sections will guide you with error messages at the top of the screen. Please follow these messages to help you complete the section correctly.

Step 5: The *Type of Fellowship* section is a compulsory section. Please follow the instructions below:

- If you will be conducting research at a South African institution, please select “Postdoctoral Fellowship – local”.
- If you are a South African citizen/permanent resident and would like to conduct research at an institution outside South Africa, please select “Postdoctoral Fellowship – abroad”.
- Please **do not** select “DST-NRF Fellowships for Early Career Researchers from the UK”.



Type of Fellowship

Instructions

- If you will be conducting research at a South African institution, please select "Postdoctoral Fellowship – local". This applies to the Freestanding, Innovation and Scarce Skills Fellowship applicants as well as the NRF-TWAS Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants.
- If you are a South African citizen/permanent resident and would like to conduct research at an institution outside South Africa, please select "Postdoctoral Fellowship – abroad".
- Only select the "DST-NRF Fellowships for Early Career Researchers from the UK" if you are applying specifically for this call.

Fellowship for which you are applying

Postdoctoral Fellowship – abroad
Postdoctoral Fellowship – local
DST – NRF Fellowships for Early Career Researchers from the UK

Step 6: The *Fellowship to be Funded* section is a compulsory section. The dropdown list for *Fellowship for which you are applying*, will have three options: (1) Postdoctoral research – local; (2) Postdoctoral research – abroad; (3) DST-NRF Fellowships for Early Career Researchers from the UK. Please select the relevant option (*see Step 5).

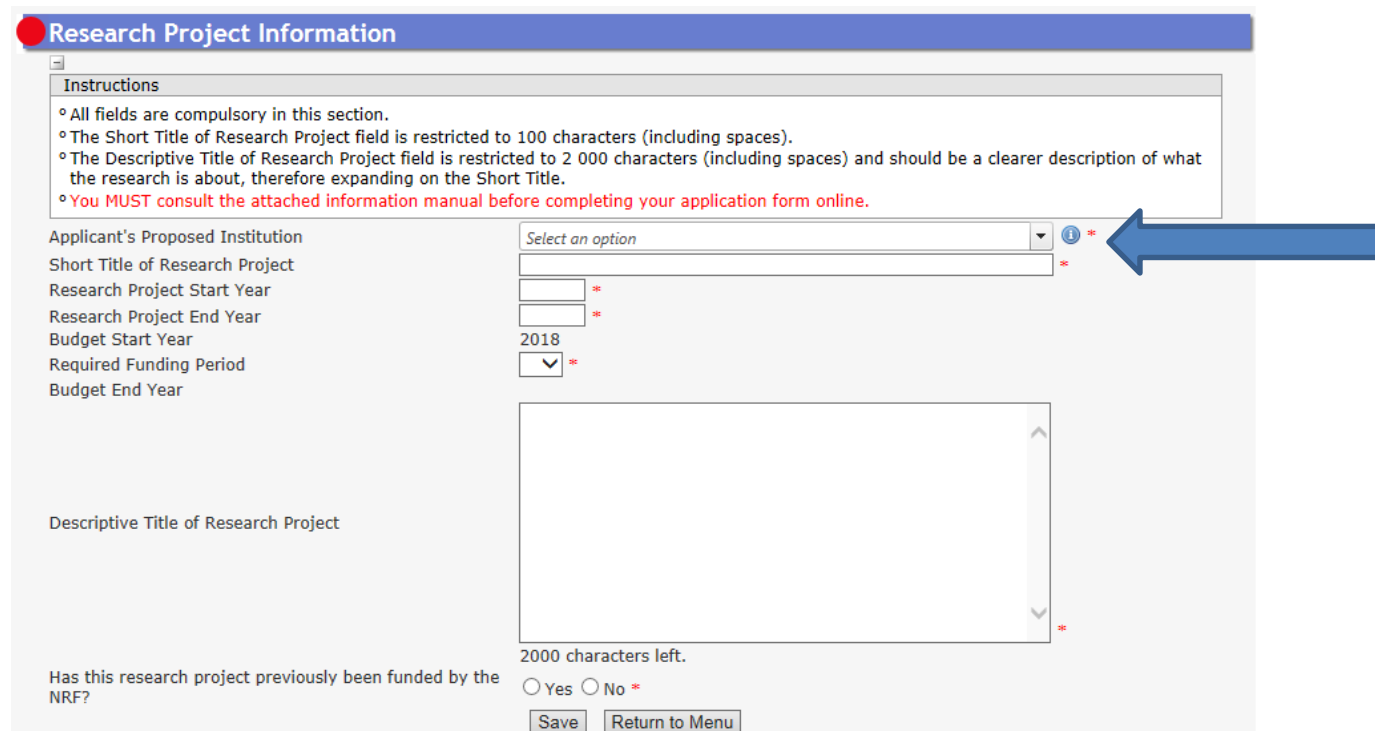
Please complete the section accurately and keep the following in mind: (1) Applicants must undertake full-time Postdoctoral research. The Fellowship cannot be held concurrently with any salaried employment (2) Applicants must note that the starting date of the research must be before the deadline of 30 June 2018. Any awards not taken up by this date will be cancelled automatically.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Degree to be Funded" with a blue header. Below the header is a grey box labeled "Instructions" containing the text "Fields marked with a * are compulsory". The form fields are as follows:

- Fellowship for which you are applying:** A dropdown menu with "Select an option" and a red asterisk.
- Provide a short description of current and previous research study:** A text area with a red asterisk.
- Date of commencement of postdoctoral research:** A date input field with "DD/MM/CCYY" placeholder, a calendar icon, and a red asterisk.
- Full-time:** Radio buttons for "Yes" and "No", both with red asterisks.
- Was your Masters degree upgraded to Doctoral?:** Radio buttons for "Yes" and "No", both with red asterisks.
- Does any financial support received for previous studies bind you to a service contract?:** Radio buttons for "Yes" and "No", both with red asterisks.
- Student Number (if applicable):** A text input field.
- Discipline of postdoctoral research:** A dropdown menu with "Select an option" and a red asterisk.
- Department/School for postdoctoral research:** A text input field.
- Faculty for postdoctoral research:** A text input field.
- Indicate what you are doing presently:** A text area with a red asterisk.

At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Save" and "Return to Menu".

Step 7: The *Research Project Information* section requires you to select the proposed institution. If you have selected the “Postdoctoral research - local” option in the previous section, then the institutions that you can select from the dropdown list will be limited to South African institutions (including SA national facilities). Likewise, if you have selected the “Postdoctoral research - abroad” option, you will be given a list of international institutions to choose from. Should your institution not be on the list, please request it by selecting the support tab on the far right at the top of the screen. Please note that it is the applicant’s responsibility to find an institution and supervisor/mentor in South Africa that is willing to host them for the duration of the fellowship.



Research Project Information

Instructions

- All fields are compulsory in this section.
- The Short Title of Research Project field is restricted to 100 characters (including spaces).
- The Descriptive Title of Research Project field is restricted to 2 000 characters (including spaces) and should be a clearer description of what the research is about, therefore expanding on the Short Title.
- You **MUST** consult the attached information manual before completing your application form online.

Applicant's Proposed Institution ⓘ *

Short Title of Research Project *

Research Project Start Year *

Research Project End Year *

Budget Start Year 2018

Required Funding Period *

Budget End Year

Descriptive Title of Research Project

2000 characters left.









Has this research project previously been funded by the NRF? Yes No *

Step 8: The *Details of Research* section is one of the most important sections in the application. The section has specific instructions related to each screen. Follow the instructions to complete the section. You are required to give a concise overview about your proposed research in this section as the input is taken into consideration during the assessment of your application. Appropriate literature references must also be included. The Scorecard that will be used to assess your application can be viewed in Section 6 of this document.

Details of Research

Instructions

° Please note that all fields in this section are compulsory and unless fully completed your application cannot be submitted.

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
Problem Statement *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Rationale and Literature Review *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Aims and Objectives *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Methodology and Proposed Research Plan *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Anticipated Outputs *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Potential Impact *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Alignment to National Strategies *	✓	19 Apr 2017	
Infrastructure Required	✓	19 Apr 2017	

***Please note that the Details of Research section will only mark as complete when all the sub-sections are completed.**

Step 9: The Science Engagement section is compulsory section. If you will not be running any science engagement activities, you will still have to select “add” but you can indicate “N/A” under “activity” and category”.

Science Engagement

Instructions

◦ Indicate how you intend to communicate and engage with the wider community on the significance of your research in an effort to bridge the gap between science and society.

Activity	Category	Edit	Delete
----------	----------	------	--------

[Add](#) [Return to Menu](#)

Step 10: The *Reference* section allows applicants to include academic referees who can comment on the applicants' academic abilities. On final submission of the application the emails containing a reference form are sent automatically to the nominated referees to provide a report on the academic and research capabilities of the applicant. ***The applicant will have to select one Doctoral Supervisor, one Reference, one Proposed Supervisor/Host and one Previous Supervisor/Host (if applicable).**

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the referee email is correct and that the referees have responded by the closing date of 06 July 2017 as this category is assessed in the application. The applicant must view the application PDF to check if a referee has responded to the request for reference. A "yes" indicates a response and a "no" indicates no response from the referee.

References

Title	Prof
Initials	Z
Surname	Mahlangu
Name	Zodwa
Department	dfjkjdjfkds
Institution	CAPE ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTRE
Email Address	melissa.govender@nrf.ac.za
Role	Supervisor/Host of research
Responded	No

Step 11: The *Possible Reviewers* section is compulsory in this Call. The section requires that you add the names of possible reviewers in your field of research that you have interacted with through conferences or other academic fora, to provide a neutral review of your proposed research project. A minimum of six (6) and a maximum of ten (10) possible reviewers are required.

Possible Reviewers

Instructions

- Please suggest suitable reviewers for this proposal.
- Please be frank as to your relationship with the reviewer: acquaintance, collaborator, ex-colleague, etc.
- A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 reviewers have to be added for this section to mark as complete.
- Reviewers from the same institution as the applicant should not be selected.

Surname	Initials	Email Address	Priority	Priority Up	Priority Down	Edit	Delete
No records to display.							

Step 12: *Person History* section is a section required for statistical purposes by the NRF and it allows us to ascertain who previously received NSFAS (South African National Student Financial Aid Scheme) funding.

Person History

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

Previous studies funded by

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

Current degree funding

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

Are you currently a DST-NRF intern
 Yes No *

Step 13: Attachments section - please print, certify and then scan all of the required documentation and submit as a single PDF file; then upload to the section as one document. The following documents are compulsory:

- Copy of ID or passport
- Proof of Masters and Doctoral qualifications (if Masters was upgraded to Doctoral this needs to be stated clearly in your application)
- If your Doctoral degree is still “in progress” a formal letter of confirmation from your institution must be attached
- If the institution and/or supervisor remain the same as your Doctoral or first postdoctoral placement, a motivation letter must be attached
- Official acceptance letter from the host institution (signed, stamped and on an official letterhead). The letter should include details of the availability of specialised equipment, infrastructure and resources to enable the fellow to conduct their research.
- If you are a fellow with a disability, you must also upload a medical certificate in support of your disability
- Proof of NSFAS or University financial aid scheme funding (if applicable)

Attachments

Instructions

- Please consult with the Call documents to determine what attachments are compulsory. Please note that if they are not attached, the application will not be processed for reviewing.
- Capture an appropriate Description for the document to be uploaded.
- Select the Document Type to be uploaded.
- Click the Browse button below to select the file on your local machine.
- Click on the Upload button to save.
- Upload pages individually if document is larger than 4MB.
- Please do not upload zip files. Acrobat reader has built-in security to prevent the opening of zip files by default (please read the article at <http://forums.adobe.com/thread/520515> for more information).

Description	Type	File Name	Edit	View	Delete
-------------	------	-----------	------	------	--------

***Please note that should any of the required documents not be uploaded to the application, the application will be rejected without review.**

Step 14: Applicants must ensure that they adhere to their institution's internal closing date for submission of their application to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The internal closing date will be determined by the respective Postgraduate Funding Office and is usually at least two weeks prior to the NRF's closing date

Designated Authorities (DAs) at institutions ensure that all proposals are screened and approved through internal institutional processes **before** submitting applications to the NRF. The NRF assumes that the respective DAs are satisfied with the standard of all proposals validated and submitted, and that the institution approves and supports the proposed research.

Step 15: The final submit button will appear only if all compulsory sections are complete. Press OK to submit your application. If all the compulsory sections are complete and the final submit button does not appear, select any section and resave to refresh the application; you will then see the final submit button. A submitted application is automatically routed to the DA in the Postgraduate Funding Office of the institution that you selected, for internal review and validation. Late applications, additional supporting documentation or information received after the closing date will not be accepted or considered.

The NRF will not process applications that are incomplete, contain insufficient or incorrect detail, or fail to comply with instruction. Such applications will be rejected. The application must be completed in sufficient detail to allow for a comprehensive review and evaluation by external reviewers. In addition to the electronic application and required attachments, the NRF may request additional information or documentation to support an application if required. Failure to supply such information or documentation upon request may result in the rejection of the application.

5. Screening and Review Processes

5.1. Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated by institutions and submitted to the NRF are screened by the NRF for compliance with the eligibility criteria of the Call for applications, as well as the requirements for completing the NRF Online Submission application. Applications that fail to meet the stipulated requirements will be rejected.

5.2. Overview of the Review Process

The NRF's peer review policy requires that all applications be subjected to a review process. Applications submitted to this funding instrument will go through a panel review process.

Panel members are selected from the NRF database and other sources, which is updated on a continuous basis. When selecting the review panel, the expertise and experience of individuals in application

adjudication are taken into account. In assessing the application, agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard (please refer to Section 6).

The Review Panel provides recommendations to the NRF and the final funding decision is made by the NRF taking strategic and policy objectives into consideration. In awarding grants in this funding instrument, the NRF takes into account the recommendations of the peer review panel, the objectives and targets of the funding instrument, and the available funds.

6. Ranking of Applications

The purpose of the scoring system is to evaluate applications, based on funding instrument criteria, in order to determine applications that are most deserving of the limited funds available. All research proposals submitted to the NRF for funding are evaluated according to a number of predetermined criteria. Applications are assessed and ranked on the basis of criteria as listed in the table below. Each area may be given a weight to indicate its relative importance. Kindly consult the table below for details on the criteria used.

Scorecard for the Assessment of Proposals for Postdoctoral fellowships

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Weight (Total = 100%)
Track Record of Applicant	Applicant expertise/training that will enable the applicant to successfully undertake the proposed research.	10%
	The applicant's research track record which could include peer reviewed publications, conference proceedings, research prizes and awards.	10%
Scientific and Technical quality of proposed research	Literature review with citations, significance of the research in terms of the problem statement, aims and objectives. Scientific contribution; originality and new knowledge to be generated.	20%
	Research design, methodology developed to address aims of the research. Provision of workplan and feasible timelines and milestones for the research.	20%
	Alignment with national and institutional research priorities.	5%
Institutional Support	Institutional support for the Postdoctoral fellowship through infrastructure and facilities for an enabling environment.	10%
Potential Research Outputs and Impact of the research	Details of envisaged realistic outputs of the research such as publications, conference proceedings, toolkits, policy documents.	5%
	Contribution to Postdoctoral research skills development in a priority research area (human capacity development of the applicant)	10%
	Potential for socio-economic impact of the research in South Africa	10%
		100%

7. Application Feedback and Disputes

Once the review and assessment processes have been completed and the recommended funding decision has been approved by the NRF, the NRF will publish a list of successful applications on the NRF website, www.nrf.ac.za/bursaries/calls. Thereafter, successful applicants will receive a letter of award. The application status online will not indicate whether or not the application has been approved for funding. **This funding instrument does not provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants**; if your name does not appear on the published list of successful applications it means that your application was unsuccessful.

An unsuccessful applicant who requires feedback is advised to contact their institutional office to request feedback from the NRF. The NRF does not provide feedback to all unsuccessful applicants due to the high volume of applicants within this funding instrument.

8. Change Requests

8.1. Prior Approval Requests

Applicants must submit all change requests in writing to the NRF for approval before effecting any changes. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Postgraduate Funding Office for approval prior to the change.

8.2. Changes in Project Scope, Supervisor or Institution

Changes may occur where a project scope, host or institution needs to be changed from the original research proposal, host or institution respectively. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Postgraduate Funding Office. Such requests must be forwarded to the NRF 30 days before the change is intended to take place.

*This does not apply when the fellow has completed their research at the institution and wishes to change the project/supervisor/institutions. In this case, the fellow has to complete an exit report and any remaining funds will have to be returned to the NRF.

9. Scientific Compliance

9.1. Methodology

The fellow takes scientific responsibility for the research to be undertaken, including its objectives and the methodology outlined in the project proposal. The student is required to devote the necessary time to the

research project in compliance with the work-plan for the research proposal approved by the NRF so as to achieve the project's stated aims and objectives.

9.2. Intellectual Property Rights

The intellectual capital generated by NRF funded research must be appropriately protected and exploited for the benefit of South Africa. This condition should not interfere with the Intellectual Property Rights arrangements already made, on condition that the majority of the benefits arising from the intellectual capital accrue to South Africa and its citizens. This condition is aligned with the *Intellectual Property Rights Act, 1* which will override this condition of grant.

9.3. Ethics

The fellow is required to maintain the highest ethical and safety standards in conducting the research, particularly when human and animal subjects are involved. It remains the responsibility of the project leader to comply with all relevant regulations in this regard, including those of the institution at which the research is carried out. An ethical clearance certificate (where applicable) must be submitted to the NRF in respect of successful applications before funding can be released.

10. References

RSA (2008). Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act 51 of 2008. *Government Gazette*, 22 Dec 2008. Vol 522, No 31745