



science and technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE WORLD ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
for the advancement of science in developing countries



RISA

Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement

NRF - TWAS Doctoral Scholarships

NRF - TWAS African Renaissance Doctoral Scholarships

Framework document

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1. Background

The core mandate of the National Research Foundation of South Africa (NRF) is to promote and support research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary facilities in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of research. In order to realise this mandate, the NRF has made great commitment and investment towards supporting “next generation” researchers and to intensify and strengthen African and global networks. This is in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, and the national priorities as set out in the Medium term Strategic Framework (MTSF). The continuous improvement in research and innovation sets South Africa on a competitive global platform globally to leverage effective partnerships and funding.

The NRF and The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) partnered to pursue this goal through the establishment of two Doctoral Scholarships namely; the NRF - TWAS Doctoral Scholarship and the NRF - TWAS African Renaissance Doctoral Scholarship. TWAS is based in Italy and operates as a programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the advancement of science in developing countries. The parties entered into a contractual agreement to support Doctoral scholars from Africa and developing countries who will be funded per annum for a maximum of three (3) years to pursue full-time research training in South Africa. There will be an intake of 70 doctoral scholars each year for three (3) years, starting in 2017.

The doctoral scholarships will be awarded under two funding instruments annually as follows:

- **NRF - TWAS Doctoral Scholarship funding instrument:** 20 scholars from developing countries outside Africa; and
- **NRF - TWAS African Renaissance Doctoral Scholarships funding instrument:** 50 scholars from Africa.

2. Rationale

International strategic partnerships remain the vehicle for development within the context of the advancement of research and human capacity development. Through this funding instrument, South Africa will contribute to effective science collaboration on the African continent and globally. In particular, ensuring capacity development of promising next generation and emerging researchers in developing countries will make headways towards exchange of knowledge and improving the quality of research, leading to innovative ideas for socio-economic development.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the doctoral scholarship funding instruments are to:

- Increase the number and quality of doctoral scholars in Africa and in other developing countries;
- Foster scientific and technological cooperation by facilitating brain circulation between countries;
- Attract young scientists and professionals of the highest calibre from developing countries to access world class strategic and applied research opportunities in order to advance their professional competitiveness; and
- Support human capacity needs and thus position the developing countries for global competitiveness in scientific and technological fields.

4. Areas of Support

The successful candidates will undertake full-time doctoral studies in South Africa and may be based at any South African public research institution including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Science Councils and National Research Facilities.

For details of Recognised HEIs [click here](#) and for other Public Research Institutions [click here](#).

Applicants who wish to pursue research under Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines will be supported through the Scholarship.

5. Eligibility

In selecting applicants for consideration for the doctoral scholarships, the following criteria will apply:

- The NRF-TWAS Doctoral Scholarship funding Instrument is open to **citizens and permanent residents from developing countries outside Africa**. Refer to Appendix 1 for the list of eligible developing countries or [click here](#);
- The NRF-TWAS African Renaissance Doctoral Scholarship funding instrument is open to citizens and permanent residents from **Africa except South Africa**. Refer to Appendix 1 for TWAS endorsed countries;

- The following individuals are **not eligible** to apply under either funding instrument:
 - South African citizens;
 - Foreign citizens who hold permanent residency permits of South Africa;
 - Foreign citizens who are already resident in South Africa or in any developed country and hold temporary residence permits (this includes study permits);
 - Citizens and permanent residents of any developed country; and
 - Foreign citizens who were previously employed or studying towards a degree or undertaking research in South Africa, and have returned to their country of origin but have been in their country of origin for less than two (2) years.
- Applicants must be thirty five (35) years of age on 31 December of the year of application for the doctoral scholarship ;
- Applicants must hold a university degree that will satisfy requirements for admission to doctoral studies at a South African public university, which is generally a Master's Degree; and
- Visa and immigration laws of the applicant's home country and South Africa must be met by the applicant.

6. Application Requirements

- Applicants must provide an official letter from their host South African institution, department or laboratory and motivation from the applicant's host. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the respective institution to apply for acceptance. In addition, it is also the responsibility of the applicant to secure a supervisor for the study;**
- The research project must be registered and approved by the host institution (a letter of support from the prospective supervisor must be attached to the application.; and
- Applicants must have all foreign qualifications (obtained from non-South Africa universities) evaluated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). A SAQA evaluation certificate must be submitted with the application, failing which the application will be rejected. Further information on the process can be accessed by logging on to www.saga.org.za.
- The applicant must secure their own visa's or study permits under the programme for study in South Africa. The NRF will not be responsible for assisting with visa requirements.

7. Selection Criteria

Applications that meet the eligibility criteria and are completed appropriately will be subjected to a competitive merit review process. If any information that should have been submitted as attachments is not included in the application, it will be rendered incomplete resulting in a rejection without review. The reviewers are selected by the NRF from existing reviewer databases and other sources and may include reviewers suggested by the applicant. TWAS may also submit names of potential reviewers to the NRF.

The feasibility and merit of the research projects will be assessed in line with the scorecard published together with the call documents on the NRF website.

In assessing the proposals, the reviewers' reports are referred to, and agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard during the panel review process.

Scorecard for the Assessment of Proposals for Doctoral 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 work plan 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%

8. Awarding Principle

- Priority will be given to applicants from the 81 states endorsed by TWAS as priority in capacity development in Science and Technology. Refer to Appendix 2 for the list of TWAS endorsed developing countries or [click here](#);
- Priority will be given to female applicants and the target is to award 50% of scholarships to female scholars; and
- 50 scholars will be from countries in Africa; and 20 scholars will be from developing countries outside Africa in accordance with the two types of scholarships.

9. Conditions of Scholarship

- The scholarship shall be held as the primary funding for the doctoral Scholarships;
- Scholarships may not be held simultaneously with a scholar from any other TWAS, South African government or NRF administered source;
- Doctoral scholars may not concurrently hold the scholarship with any full-time employment position;
- Doctoral scholars hold non-binding supplementary grants or emoluments to the institutional capped value;
- Successful applicants will be required to give a written undertaking that they will return to their home country upon completion of the scholarship; and
- Candidates must meet the following requirements of the English Language Proficiency Academic test:

IELTS 6.5 (no band less than 6.0); or TOEFL (paper) 575 (TWE 4.5); or TOEFL iBT (min. 20); or Cambridge minimum 58. Information on the IELTS tests can be obtained from the British Council in home country or accessed on: www.ielts.org. Further information on the TOEFL test can be accessed on: www.toefl.com. Applicants may consult the British Council in the home country for assistance.

10. Value of Scholarship

The NRF - TWAS African Renaissance doctoral scholarship will be granted for the duration of three (3) years renewable annually subject to satisfactory performance.

The breakdown of the award will be as follows:

Category of support	Value (Rand)	Duration
Stipend	120 000	Per Annum
Local travel	25 000	Maximum allowed during the funding period based on need
International travel	50 000	Maximum allowed during the funding period based on need
Cost towards mobility of the scholar	15 000	Once off travel (from home country to South Africa and from South Africa to home country)

The costs for the mobility of the scholar will include the following:

- Travel visa and study visa; subject to submission of proof of expenditure.
- A single economy airfare for travel from the scholar's home country to South Africa; to the maximum of 15 000.
- A single economy airfare from South Africa to the scholar's home country, upon completion of the doctoral degree to the value of 15 000.

Successful candidates are also eligible for a once-off travel grant of up to R25 000, for local travel, and up to R50 000, for 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. This is the maximum amount permitted over the tenure of the scholarship. Scholars who wish to access the travel grant must complete a travel grant application form available on the NRF Online Submission System <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>.

11. Responsibilities of Scholars

It is the responsibility of the scholar to:

- Obtain appropriate Visas;
- Secure a supervisor at a South African Institution who is willing to host them for the duration of scholarship
- Arrange own accommodation in South Africa for the duration of the scholarship

The scholarship **does not** cover the following:

- All financial expenses of accompanying family members must be carried out by the individuals. Scholars must also ensure that accompanying family members have the correct documentation for entry and stay in South Africa; and
- Comprehensive medical insurance for the period of the scholar's or family member's stay to meet any untoward incidents and major ailments during travel and stay in South Africa.

12. Application Process

The NRF will invite applications from scholars who wish to pursue Doctoral degrees at any South African public research institution including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Science Councils and National Research Facilities. Applications will be submitted *via* the NRF Online Submission System. Further instructions on the application process will be made available in the **NRF-TWAS Doctoral/NRF-TWAS African Renaissance Doctoral Scholarships 2017 Guide for Applications**.

13. Reporting

For continuous monitoring of the funding instrument, the scholars will be required to submit Annual Progress Reports (APR) in a format provided by the NRF, against deliverables as outlined in the application form and the signed Conditions of Grant. The NRF may in consultation with the grant holder's research office, request interim progress report for the purpose of implementing corrective measures timeously to ensure that stated objectives are met within the stipulated timeframes. All scholars will be requested, to submit an exit report to the NRF-TWAS, upon completion of their Doctoral studies, on their overall experience, achievements and outputs.

Scholarships for qualifying continuing scholars will be released upon submission of an Annual Progress Report in accordance with the NRF Scholarship Agreement.

14. Financial control

These awards 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 to the relevant institutions' cost centres. The institutions will in turn administer the funds on behalf of the successful grant holder to the value of the full sum awarded by the NRF.

Additionally, the scholarship-holder must obtain the degree for which the scholarship was awarded by the contractual date which is within one (1) year after NRF funding has ceased and notify the

NRF via the university authority. Should the scholarship-holder not complete the degree for which the scholarship was awarded, the funds will have to be returned to the NRF plus interest at the prevailing prime rate charged by the NRF bankers.

Scholarships not taken up within six (6) months of the grant award will be cancelled by 1 July for reallocation unless otherwise approved by the NRF.

15. NRF Contact Persons

For funding instrument related enquiries, please contact:

Ms Fulufhelo Malamatsho

Professional Officer: Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development (HICD)

Telephone: 012 481 4166. E-mail: fulufhelo.malamatsho@nrf.ac.za

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

Ms Zikhona Lose

Professional Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

Telephone: 012 481 4365. E-mail: .zikhona.lose@nrf.ac.za

Ms Thandeka Mthethwa

Liaison Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

Telephone: 012 481 4163. E-mail: thandeka.mthethwa@nrf.ac.za

Eligible developing countries

151 ELIGIBLE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES		
1 Afghanistan	52 Guatemala	103 Palau
2 Albania	53 Guinea	104 Palestine, State of
3 Algeria	54 Guinea-Bissau	105 Papua New Guinea
4 Angola	55 Guyana	106 Paraguay
5 Antigua and Barbuda	56 Haiti	107 Peru
6 Argentina	57 Honduras	108 Philippines
7 Armenia	58 Hong Kong, SAR	109 Qatar
8 Aruba	59 India	110 Romania
9 Azerbaijan	60 Indonesia	111 Rwanda
10 Bangladesh	61 Iran, Islamic Rep.	112 Samoa
11 Bahamas	62 Iraq	113 São Tomé and Príncipe
12 Bahrain	63 Jamaica	114 Saudi Arabia
13 Barbados	64 Jordan	115 Senegal
14 Belarus	65 Kazakhstan	116 Serbia
15 Belize	66 Kenya	117 Seychelles (Transitional)
16 Benin	67 Kiribati	118 Sierra Leone
17 Bhutan	68 Korea, Dem Rep.	119 Solomon Islands
18 Bolivia	69 Kosovo	120 Somalia
19 Bosnia and Herzegovina	70 Kuwait	121 South Sudan
20 Brunei	71 Kyrgyz Republic	122 Sri Lanka
21 Brazil	72 Lebanon	123 St. Vincent and the Grenadines
22 Bulgaria	73 Lesotho	124 Sudan
23 Burkina Faso	74 Liberia	125 Suriname
24 Burundi	75 Libya	126 Swaziland
25 Cabo Verde	76 Macedonia, FYR	127 Syrian Arab Republic
26 Cambodia	77 Macau	128 Taiwan, China
27 Cameroon	78 Madagascar	129 Tajikistan
28 Central African Republic	79 Malawi	130 Tanzania
29 Chad	80 Malaysia	131 Thailand
30 Chile	81 Maldives	132 Timor-Leste

151 ELIGIBLE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

31 China	82 Mali	133 Trinidad and Tobago
32 Colombia	83 Marshall Islands	134 Togo
33 Comoros	84 Madagascar	135 Tonga
34 Congo, Dem. Rep	85 Mauritania	136 Tunisia
35 Congo, Rep.	86 Mauritius	137 Turkey
36 Costa Rica	87 Mayotte	138 Turkmenistan
37 Côte d'Ivoire	88 Mexico	139 Tuvalu
38 Cuba	89 Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	140 Uganda
39 Djibouti	90 Moldova	141 Ukraine
40 Dominica	91 Mongolia	142 United Arab Emirates
41 Dominican Republic	92 Montenegro	143 Uruguay
42 Ecuador	93 Morocco	144 Uzbekistan
43 Egypt, Arab Rep.	94 Mozambique	145 Vanuatu
44 El Salvador	95 Myanmar	146 Venezuela
45 Eritrea	96 Namibia	147 Vietnam
46 Ethiopia	97 Nepal	148 Western Samoa
47 Fiji	98 Nicaragua	149 Yemen, Rep.
48 Gabon	99 Niger	150 Zambia
49 Gambia, The	100 Nigeria	151 Zimbabwe
50 Georgia	101 Oman	
51 Ghana	102 Pakistan	

TWAS Endorsed Countries

LIST OF 81 TWAS ENDORSED COUNTRIES		
1. Afghanistan	28. Gambia	55. Niger
2. Angola	29. Ghana	56. Nigeria
3. Azerbaijan	30. Guatemala	57. Papua New Guinea
4. Bangladesh	31. Guinea-Bissau	58. Paraguay
5. Belize	32. Guinea	59. Peru
6. Benin	33. Guyana	60. Rwanda
7. Bhutan	34. Haiti	61. Samoa
8. Botswana	35. Honduras	62. São Tome and Principe
9. Burkina Faso	36. Indonesia	63. Senegal
10. Burundi	37. Jamaica	64. Sierra Leone
11. Cambodia	38. Kenya	65. Solomon Islands
12. Cameroon	39. Kiribati	66. Somalia
13. Cape Verde	40. Korea DPR	67. South Sudan
14. Central African Republic	41. Kyrgyzstan	68. Sudan
15. Chad	42. Lao PDR	69. Suriname
16. Comoros Islands	43. Lesotho	70. Tajikistan
17. Congo, Dem. Rep.	44. Liberia	71. Tanzania
18. Congo, Rep.	45. Madagascar	72. Timor-Leste
19. Côte d'Ivoire	46. Malawi	73. Togo
20. Djibouti	47. Maldives	74. Tuvalu
21. Dominican Republic	48. Mali	75. Uganda
22. Ecuador	49. Mauritania	76. Uzbekistan
23. El Salvador	50. Mongolia	77. Vanuatu
24. Equatorial Guinea	51. Mozambique	78. Vietnam
25. Eritrea	52. Myanmar	79. Yemen
26. Ethiopia	53. Nepal	80. Zambia
27. Gabon	54. Nicaragua	81. Zimbabwe

TWAS has identified 81 developing countries whose capacity in science and technology is still lagging. For this reason, TWAS is focusing special attention on capacity-building efforts in these countries.