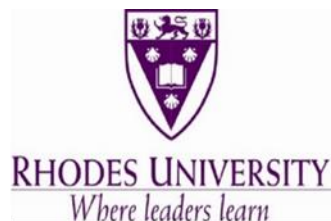




higher education
& training
Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Rhodes University BANKSETA M&E Chair Research Plan: Project 6

TITLE OF RESEARCH	<i>Project 6: Develop a Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of the Discretionary Grant</i>
CONTRACT NUMBER	<i>475.4710.644</i>
START DATE	<i>23 July 2018</i>
END DATE	<i>30 October 2019</i>
CONTACT DETAILS (PROGRAMME MANAGER):	<i>Prof Eureka Rosenberg (Research Chair)</i> <i><u>E.Rosenberg@ru.ac.za</u></i>

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

“The absence of effective monitoring and evaluation has created a situation where the SETAs and DHET are unable to answer... very serious criticisms. This is partly because of the focus on numerical targets ...and partly because of the [lack of] effective monitoring and measurement.” (DHET, 2015, p.19)

This project will develop a specific framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Discretionary Grant, for all SETAs. It will be aligned with the high level M&E framework for SETAs (Project 1), which will in turn align with other relevant M&E frameworks including DHET’s. It aims to support the goals of the Post-School Education & Training (PSET) system, i.e. to contribute to **social development** and **economic participation**.

This framework must support SETAs in evaluating the impact of the Discretionary Grant, which is particularly difficult because it has such a wide scope, including (*DHET Guidelines on SETA Regulations 2015, p.17*):

- PIVOTAL (professional, vocational, occupational and academic learning) programmes
- Career guidance
- High school math and science programmes
- Research
- SMME development
- Rural development
- Institutional support to providers including universities and colleges
- Programmes to reskills retrenched workers
- Youth programmes not covered by any of the above
- Stakeholder support and capacity development not covered by any of the above.

While the high level M&E framework (Project 1) and the Performance Standards (Project 3) will address more general evaluation foci and monitoring, this specific framework for the Discretionary Grant will assist SETAs and their stakeholders to zoom in on specific aspects of the DG implementation as outlined above, in particular, beyond the achievement of numerical targets.

The purpose is to develop more effective and innovative *methodological approaches* for evaluating DG implementation. These approaches can be used between SETAs (i.e. some SETAs can evaluate some aspects and others can evaluate other aspects) and over time (evaluating some aspects one year and other aspects the following year). This will allow SETAs to collectively (systemically and systematically) build up a comprehensive understanding of *what works, in what context and why*; as well as *what has not worked, and why?* (the focus of realist evaluation approaches) to inform future improvements in the system. The expansive learning – activity system approach is a form of participatory evaluation/evaluative stakeholder engagement that allows for immediate learning and improvements in particular contexts.

The M&E framework must enable SETAs to be accountable to their stakeholders and in equal measure, to learn from M&E. This project is an opportunity to develop an aligned, implementable M&E framework that sees PSET as a system and supports systemic and institutional learning as much as organisational accountability. The proposed framework should be broad enough to be also used in a future PSET landscape.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

High Level Research Questions

1. How should the implementation of the DG be monitored?
2. How should the implementation of the DG be evaluated?
3. What innovative approaches to evaluation can be realistically integrated? (focus on realist evaluation and expansive learning – activity system approaches)

Sub-Questions

1. What is the intended role and functioning of the Discretionary Grant (DG)?
2. How is the DG currently being monitored and evaluated, and what are the associated challenges? (include data, processes, resources, focus, workflow, policy and framework alignment, among others)
3. How are M&E findings on the DG currently being used to improve SETA effectiveness and impact?
4. How can realist evaluation be used to evaluate selected aspects of DG implementation more deeply?
 - to evaluate PIVOTAL programmes?
 - to evaluate career guidance?
 - to evaluating research impact?
5. How can an expansive learning – activity system approach to be used to evaluate selected DG implementation more deeply?
 - to evaluating youth programmes?
 - to evaluate SMME development?
 - to evaluate institutional support to providers?
6. Given the above, how should the implementation of the DG be monitored?
7. How should the implementation of the DG be evaluated?

LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

This project has a very limited budget, which puts limitations on the scope of what can be achieved. It does not allow for extensive interviews, for an extensive exploration of implementation requirements, or for any change management process to see a new framework being put into practice. Furthermore, the prevailing systems may put limitations on the extent to which an innovative system, such as an expansive learning systems, or a system which addresses fundamental issues, can be proposed.

HIGH LEVEL RISKS

Risk	Risk level	Risk Management Strategy/Mitigation	Responsible person
Availability of data	H	Ensure that data availability is not a critical factor in the success of the development of the framework, i.e. build on available data and work around what is not available.	ER with SETAs and DHET
Access to respondents, data sources	H	Work through senior contacts in DHET; set up meetings long in advance; identify opportunities such as conferences and colloquia attended by key stakeholders and arrangement attendant meetings.	ER with SETAs and DHET
Proliferation of similar initiatives	H	Identify reasons why other similar attempts have not been entirely successful, and use the information to benefit the current study	ER with SETAs and DHET
Buy-in from stakeholders	H	Work through senior contacts in DHET as well as the SETAs' Collaborative Research Working Group.	ER with SETAs and DHET
Budget too small for the task in hand	H	Be realistic in the scope of what can be achieved; identify the requirements of key role players and manage their expectations through regular communications; supplement where possible with the budget for the overall framework.	ER with SETAs and DHET

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND METHODS

METHODS	INSTRUMENTS	DATA SOURCES	LOCATION
Desk top research: Literature (will be conducted throughout the study but particularly in the early stages)	Literature will be sourced from the university and DHET library and archives, own publications, online resources.	Will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daniels, H., Edwards, A., Engeström, Y., Gallagher, Ludvigsen, S.R. 2019. <i>Activity Theory in Practice. Promoting learning across boundaries and agencies</i>. Routledge, London. Funnel, S. and Rogers, P. 2011. <i>Purposeful program theory: Effective use of theories of change and logic models</i>. Wiley Online. Patton, M.Q., 2010. <i>Developmental evaluation. Applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use</i>. Guilford, NY. Pawson, R. and Tilley, 1997. <i>Realistic evaluation</i>. Sage, London. Sayer, A. 2002. <i>Method in Social Science: A realist approach</i>. Routledge, London. 	Rhodes University, Grahamstown
Desk top research: Policies (conducted early in the study to inform the Scoping Report)	Policies will be sourced in the first instance through the SETA Collaborative Research Working Group and DHET	Existing M&E frameworks, Regulations and Guidelines including: <i>Guidelines on SETA Grant Regulations 2015</i> , DHET National Development Plan 2030, Presidency <i>White Paper on PSET</i> , DHET, 2013 <i>National Plan for the Post-School System</i> , DHET, 2017	Rhodes
Interviews with key informants	Semi-structured interview guides; to map the MG and its	Face to face and remote interviews with Treasury, DPME, DHET, NSA, SETAs. BankSETA and DHET will be required to assist in opening these doors.	Gauteng

(conducted throughout)	M&E system and practices and seek to understand what works well, issues, challenges, and past proposals and efforts to address them		
Focus groups (conducted throughout the study; facilitated by the project lead with support, and recorded)	Used for ongoing SETA engagement and an expansive learning process; data gathering on what is, what is absent, what should be there and how it could be achieved, member checking (of interpretations) and review of products (draft framework)	Relevant representatives from the organisations listed above; in particular research and M&E staff; to deliberate how best to overcome issues and challenges; what changes would be feasible and appropriate; and how to drive them; what tools and resources as well as capacity building would be needed. Arranged with support from the BANKSETA and the SETA Collaborative Research Working Group. A regular slot in the monthly SETAs Collaborative Research Working Group is proposed.	Gauteng Dates of WG meetings: 31 August (Wits), 28 Sept, 26 October, 30 Nov 2018; 2019 to be decided
Discourse analysis	To trace the transformational intent in the SA policy and M&E frameworks	Will draw on methodology used by Harris, J. 2000. <i>RPL: Power, Pedagogy and Possibility</i> . HSRC Press, Cape Town; and the analysis of bureaucratic systems in Graeber, D. 2015 <i>The Utopia of Rules</i> . Melville House, London.	Rhodes
Analytic review and framework development	Using a critical realist framework of what is there, what is absent, what should be and how could it be achieved.	Based on all above sources. A think tank will be established to ensure that the thinking is innovative yet grounded in the realities on the ground.	Rhodes and Gauteng

SAMPLE AND POPULATION:

The sample will be based on key informants and to snowballing; where one key informant may identify another for further interviewing. The sample will include the research managers and M&E representatives of SETAs, SETA CEOs and representatives from the auditing entities (AG). Around 50% of the SETA research managers (i.e. 10) and M&E coordinators (10) will be interviewed. One or two researchers who have previously evaluated or developed M&E frameworks in the SETA environment will be interviewed, in particular those involved in the recent evaluation of the implementation of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS, III). Given that the DG involves roleplayers like skills researchers and training providers, a sample of these roleplayers, who have either accessed or attempted to access the DG, will be interviewed.

Contact list of Possible Respondents

Organisation	Name of Respondent	Contact Number	Contact Email Address
DHET Directorate: Planning, Policy and Strategy	Dr Hersheela Narsee Acting Deputy Director General	012 312 5657	Narsee.H@dhet.gov.za

DHET Directorate: Policy, Research and Evaluation	Rakal Govender Acting Director	012 312 5657	Govender.R@dhet.gov.za
National Skills Authority	Dr Thabo Mabogoane; Ms Olwethu Nyewe	c/o DHET	Mabogoane.T@dhet.gov.za nyewe.o@dhet.gov.za
National Skills Fund	Dr Gideon Sauls	083 660 0766	Sauls.g@dhet.gov.za
BANKSETA CEO and COO	Ms Caroline King Ms Christine Fritz Ms Angie Naidoo (R) Mr Sifiso Mnguni	011 805 9661	caroline@bankseta.org.za , christine@bankseta.org.za naidooangie@gmail.com sifisom@bankseta.org.za
CATHSSETA	Trevor Rammitlwa Leonard Strong (R)		trevorr@cathsseta.org.za
CETA	Madibeng Thapelo; Phumudzo Nethengwe		MadibengT@ceta.co.za ; PhumudzoN@ceta.co.za
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FASSET	Ms Lauren Derman, Director: Research	011 476 8570	Lauren.Derman@fasset.org.za
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MERSETA	Ms Laura Crosby Tebogo Mmonwa		LCrosby@merseta.org.za TMmonwa@merseta.org.za
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MQA	Mr Leasen Sewnath		leasens@mqa.org.za

	Mr Francis Lamola		francisl@mqa.org.za
PSETA	Ms Andrica Letsoalo, Skills Planning Researcher, Mr Godfrey Chooka, Mr Lucky Mkhonza	012 423 5741 076 315 1672 012 423 5774	andrical@pseta.org.za godfreyc@pseta.org.za luckym@pseta.org.za
SASSETA	Mr Lubabalo Ngxola		lngxola@sasseta.org.za
ServiceSETA	Dr Tsiliso Tamasane Sibusiso Dhladhla Ms Lisl Kostlich (r)	011 276 9698, 081 499 5497 011 276 9600	TsilisoT@serviceseta.org.za sibusisoD@serviceseta.org.za
TETA	Messrs Nkosinathi Gumbi, Tshepo Mlangeni; Matsemela Moloi; Mantlwane Kgobe	012 943 3173	nkosinathi@teta.org.za , tshepo@teta.org.za matsemelam@teta.org.za MantlwaneK@teta.org.za
W&RSETA	Ms Tsakani Mabasa		
NSFAS	Ms Amanda Miselo	021 763 3200, 073 128 5288	MiseloA@dhet.gov.za , AmandaM@dhet.gov.za ?
Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)	Ms Blondie Chabani		Chabani.b@dhet.gov.za
Wits, UCT and consulting researchers	Dr Presha Ramsarup Carmel Marock Dr Jeanne Gamble		Presha.ramsarup@wits.ac.za carmelmarok@singizi.co.za gamble@mweb.co.za
Council on Higher Education and Training (CH)	Mr Ntokozi Bhengu	082 528 5882	Bhengu.n@che.ac.za

RESEARCH REPORT OUTLINE:

Title: ***A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Implementation of the Discretionary Grant***

Executive Summary

Acknowledgements and Citations

Chapter 1: Background to the Study

Chapter 2: Research Process

Chapter 3: The Purpose and Practices of the Discretionary Grant (including theory of change and guidelines)

Chapter 4: Key Challenges in the Implementation of the Discretionary Grant (existing research and new data)

Chapter 5: Realist evaluation methodology for key aspects of Discretionary Grant Implementation

Chapter 6: Monitoring Discretionary Grant Implementation

Chapter 7: Recommendations for Evaluating the Implementation of the Discretionary Grant

Bibliography/References

OTHER DELIVERABLES

- **Masters Research Plan** – This document will guide the research; details will be added and from time to time be revised in consultation with BANKSETA.
- **Scoping Report** – details of what will be included in and excluded from the study, and further details of the organisations, employers, providers and individuals to be included in the study; overview of existing policy frameworks and guidelines; and a visual map of the Grant, its implementation and all relevant roleplayers.
- **Draft Report** – Will include details of focus group discussions and a draft M&E Framework
- **Final Framework** – this will be included in the research (close-out) report, but also summarised in a shorter, user friendly ‘pull-out’ document with diagrammatic outlines.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Tranche	Deliverables	Invoice Date	Amount	Amount inclusive of VAT
1 (25%)	Master Research Plan Approved	23 July 2018		R 55 000.00
2 (25%)	Scoping Report	30 Oct 2018		R 55 000.00
3 (20%)	Draft Report	30 April 2019		R 44 000.00
4 (20%)	Final Framework	31 August 2019		R 44 000.00
5 (10%)	Close out Report	30 Oct 2019		R 22 000.00
	Total Amount			R220 000.00

DETAILED RESEARCH PLAN

Stage of Research	Activities	Outputs/ Deliverables	Timeframe		Resources Required
			Start	Finish	
1	Finalise Research Plan	Master Research Plan Approved	July 2018	July 2018	Budget for travel during set-up

2	Conduct desk top studies and key informant interviews; plan further sampling	Scoping Report	1 August 2018	30 Oct 2018	Access to documents and contacts; travel budget; research time
3	Further desk top studies, first focus groups with SETAs, analysis of selected DG activities, fieldwork and mapping of methodology	Draft Report	1 Nov 2018	30 April 2019	Access to documents and contacts; travel and meeting budget (venues, catering); research time
4	Focus groups with key stakeholders, analysis and framework finalisation	Final Framework	1 May 2019	31 Aug 2019	Travel and meeting budgets (venues, catering); research time
5	Produce and present final report	Close out Report	1 Nov 2019	30 Oct 2019	Writing time; travel budget; feedback on draft report; presentation opportunity