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Postgraduate Funding

*Frequently asked
questions*

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GENERAL POSTGRADUATE FUNDING ENQUIRIES

1. How do I contact the Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO) staff?

The Stellenbosch University (SU) Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO) assists postgraduate students remotely via MS Teams and, if required, are available for in-person consultation. Please send an email to postgradfunding@sun.ac.za or visit our website [by clicking on this link](#) for more information on the funding instruments that we manage.

See below Postgraduate Funding Office staff contact details for specific funding opportunities:

Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO)– Contact Details		
Jongi Ndlebe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postgraduate Funding Information• HB & MJ Thom Bursary• Departmental Bursaries	postgradfunding@sun.ac.za
Rhodene Amos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harry Crossley• Wilhelm Frank• Private Bursaries	ramos@sun.ac.za
Micah Dyer	<u>Institutional Scholarships:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Postgraduate Scholarship Programme (PSP)	psp@sun.ac.za
Betina van der Merwe	<u>Statutory Scholarships:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NRF Honours, Masters, Doctoral• SKA/SARAO enquiries	betina@sun.ac.za
Rozelle Petersen	<u>Postgraduate Funding Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NRF Masters and Doctoral• SKA/SARAO and CSIR enquiries	rnp@sun.ac.za
Nugent Lewis	<u>Postgraduate Funding Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FirstRand• Mandela Rhodes• Fulbright• Overseas Conference Grants• Discretionary	nugent@sun.ac.za

2. Where do I find more information on 2026 postgraduate scholarships?

Information and procedures on submitting applications for postgraduate bursaries for 2026 that are administered by the Postgraduate Funding Office can be found on our website [by clicking here](#). Take care to apply in time as late applications will not be considered.

3. Is funding provided for part-time postgraduate studies at Stellenbosch University?

No, funding is not provided for part-time postgraduate studies at Stellenbosch University by the Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO).

4. When will my scholarship stipends be paid for 2026?

The Postgraduate Funding Office will process the relevant bursary payments to recipients once ALL the required documents (including official proof of registration for the degree/year to be funded) are submitted and verified per funding instrument. Please check your award letter(s) and ensure that all documents are submitted, to receive your stipends or living allowances. Students must ensure that their banking details are correctly captured on the University (SunStudent) system. Please contact info@sun.ac.za / studentaccounts@sun.ac.za for assistance with verifying / updating your account details.

5. Will my scholarship stipends be paid via Intellimali for 2026?

Yes, the Postgraduate Funding Office will process all bursary payments via the Intellimali portal once ALL required documents are submitted and verified. Please review the Intellimali instruction [here](#) for more information.

6. Does the Postgraduate Funding Office offer loans to postgraduate students?

Kindly note that Stellenbosch University does not offer a loan scheme at postgraduate level. You may contact the relevant persons [by clicking on this link](#) for more information on external loan offers and service providers.

7. Does the Postgraduate Funding Office fund Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) students?

No, the Postgraduate Funding Office (PGFO) does not fund PGCE studies as this is an undergraduate qualification. You may contact the University's Centre for Undergraduate Bursaries and Loans, or Client Service Desk for more information on funding options for this qualification (info@sun.ac.za / 021 808 9111).

8. When should I apply for postgraduate funding opportunities?

You should apply for funding support in the year prior to the year in which you wish to be funded, to allow for relevant review and funding decisions to take place. The available funding opportunities usually open from May annually. It is advisable to apply for as many funding options before the application deadline, regardless if you started the SU admission application yet.

9. I'm an international student. Do I qualify for postgraduate funding at Stellenbosch University?

Yes, limited bursaries are available for registered international students, especially those who do not have a previous degree from a South African institution. Students are advised to read the guidelines on our website [by clicking on this link](#) for more information. We advise international students to firstly source funding first from their countries of origin for their intended study period at Stellenbosch University.

10. How do I request a quotation or invoice for my proposed/current programme of study?

The Postgraduate Funding Office does not provide invoices/quotations. Students may generate a provisional quotation of fees online by clicking on [this link](#). Select the correct modules for your proposed programme of study, to generate the quotation. Information on the degree programmes, with module information, offered by the University are available at the following link: [SU Faculty Yearbooks](#). Select the correct Faculty yearbook for Faculty and degree programme information.

11. I am currently receiving a scholarship from an external funder – what is required of me?

We urge all bursary/scholarship-holders to read and familiarise themselves with their (signed) scholarship/bursary agreement or contract document for specific obligations that must be adhered to/complied with, including submission of required progress reports, where relevant (i.e. the National Research Foundation requires submission of an Annual Progress Report).

12. How do I request my official academic record?

The Postgraduate Funding Office does not issue official academic records to students, Please contact records@sun.ac.za, quoting your student number, to request your SU academic record.

13. Does the Postgraduate Funding Office award Merit Bursaries at postgraduate level?

The Postgraduate Funding Office currently does not administer or provide merit bursaries to postgraduate students. Postgraduate students may apply for the SU Postgraduate Scholarship Programme (PSP), that considers the academic performance. More information on this funding opportunity can be found on the Postgraduate Funding Office website, by clicking on [this link](#).

14. What is the institutional maximum for postgraduate bursary/scholarship funding for 2026?

The SU Institutional Maximum is the maximum amount of scholarship/bursary funding (in total) that a postgraduate student may receive per year. Students are urged to inform the Postgraduate Funding Office of all bursaries received and share the conditions of each bursary, to ascertain their eligibility to receive the multiple bursaries.

2026 Institutional Maximum amount of scholarship funding allowed per student

Honours	R 220,000.00
Master's	R 320,000.00
PhD	R 376,000.00

PRIVATE AND PRESTIGE BURSARY ENQUIRIES

- 15. When will the outcomes of the Private Bursaries applications for funding in 2026 be available?**

Private bursary application outcomes will be available around April – May 2026.

- 16. When will the outcomes of the HB & MJ Thom Bursary applications for funding in 2026 be available?**

The HB & MJ bursary application outcomes will be communicated to applicants in December 2025. Please note that outcomes will be shared with successful applicants only. Should you not receive feedback on your application after 3 months from the deadline for submission of the bursary application, you may consider your application unsuccessful.

- 17. When will the outcomes of the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary applications for funding in 2026 be available?**

Outcomes of the Harry Crossley Foundation bursary applications will be available from the middle of December 2025.

- **Value/amount of the Harry Crossley Bursary Foundation for 2026**

Postgraduate Level	Years of support for Full-time studies	Value of funding per annum
Masters	2 years Funding period starts from first year of Master's registration. <i>* E.g. if awarded from 2026 and registered for second year of Master's study, student will receive <u>one</u> year of funding.</i>	R150 000
Doctoral	3 years Funding period starts from first year of Doctoral registration. <i>* E.g. if awarded from 2026 and registered for second/third year of Doctoral study, student will receive <u>one/two</u> year(s) of funding.</i>	R160 000

- **How will Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary payments be processed in 2026?**

The Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary is processed for payment in two (2) instalments. The first instalment will be made in the first semester (50% of scholarship value) once all required documents are received (including official proof of registration). The second instalment will be made in the second semester (50% of scholarship value), after receipt of a satisfactory progress report from your supervisor.

- **What happens if I accept a work opportunity while receiving the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary?**

The bursary coordinator, Mrs Amos (ramos@sun.ac.za). must be informed in writing of any change in terms of any information on your application.

- **What happens if a student receives other funding during the same year of receiving the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary?**

If a bursary recipient receives additional bursaries during the same year of receiving the Harry Crossley Bursary, and if the total amount for both/all bursaries (together) results in the Institutional (University) Maximum for postgraduate scholarships receivable being exceeded, then the student must inform the bursary coordinator if the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary must be cancelled.

- **Am I eligible to hold the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary together with the PSP Scholarship?**

Please refer to the PSP maximum scholarship amounts per degree level.

- **If I am a renewal applicant for the following year, how do I apply for the renewal funding?**

The bursary coordinator will send renewal applications to all students who qualify for renewal of the bursary for the following year.

- **What if I deregister in the year that I receive the Harry Crossley Foundation Bursary (e.g. second semester of that year)?**

If a student that receives the Harry Crossley Bursary deregisters from the degree that is funded, the bursary will be cancelled, and the student will be personally liable to pay back the full amount received. Please contact the bursary coordinator for more information.

SU POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME (PSP) ENQUIRIES

18. When will I receive the outcomes for the 2026 SU Postgraduate Scholarship Programme (PSP)?

The outcomes of applications submitted for the 2026 PSP scholarship (notice of scholarship) will be shared with successful students between mid-December 2025 and end January 2026. Outcomes will be communicated to the email address provided in the PSP application.

NB: Students employed on full-time or part-time contracts exceeding 20-hours per week are not eligible to receive the PSP funding.

19. What is the value/amount of the SU Postgraduate Scholarship Programme (PSP) Scholarship per postgraduate level for funding in 2026?

Postgraduate Level	Years of support for Full-time studies	Maximum value of funding per annum
Honours	1 year	R140 000
Masters	2 years Funding period starts from first year of Master's registration, <i>* E.g. if awarded from 2026 and registered for second year of Master's study, student will receive <u>one</u> year of funding.</i>	R150 000
Doctoral	3 years Funding period starts from first year of PhD registration, <i>* E.g. if awarded from 2026 and registered for second/third year of Doctoral study, student will receive <u>one/two</u> year(s) of funding.</i>	R170 000

20. What is the maximum funding period of the SU Postgraduate Scholarship Programme (PSP) Scholarship per postgraduate level?

Postgraduate Level	Years of support for Full-time studies
Honours	1 year
Masters	2 years Funding period starts from first year of Master's registration,
Doctoral	3 years Funding period starts from first year of PhD registration,
Special registrations (Preparatory Doctoral Students/ Special registrations)	Any special registrations (preparatory doctoral students/special registrations) will be counted as year 1 of the doctoral degree. Kindly note that preparatory doctoral students/special registrations will be limited to a maximum of one year of funding and the maximum term of support will be up to 3 years as per other PhD candidates.
Conversion from Master's to PhD	Master's students who are approved for a conversion to PhD will only be funded with one additional year of funding at the PhD level, or in total 4 years of registration inclusive of the number of registrations at Master's level.

21. If I am eligible for PSP Scholarship renewal funding for the following year, what is the process for applying for the renewal funding?

Scholarship recipients are required to submit an annual student and supervisor progress report, which opens in November annually.

The link to the report that must be completed and submitted will be shared with eligible PSP bursary recipients and will be open from 01 November 2025 to 30 November 2025.

Eligibility to receive the PSP Scholarship renewal funding is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory progress reports from both the student and supervisor. Master's students can be funded up to 2 registered years and PhD students can be funded up to 3 registered years.

22. How will the PSP Scholarship payments be processed in 2026?

The PSP scholarship pays out in two instalments. The first instalment is processed in the first semester (60% of scholarship value). The second instalment is processed in the second semester (remaining 40% of scholarship value), after receipt of a satisfactory bi-annual progress report from both the student and supervisor.

- **What if I receive other funding during the same year of receiving the PSP scholarship?**

If a scholarship-holder receives other bursaries during the same year of receiving the PSP scholarship, and if the total amount for both/all bursaries (together) results in the PSP funding maximum limit being exceeded, then the student must inform the bursary coordinator if the PSP scholarship must be cancelled.

- **What if I accept a work opportunity or choose to decline the PSP award?**

The scholarship coordinator, Ms Dyeres (micah@sun.ac.za), must be informed in writing of any change in terms of any information on your application.

- **May I receive an advance on my PSP funding?**

Requests for advances on PSP Scholarship funds will be accepted from 15 January only. Please note the following conditions for applying for an advance on the PSP scholarship funds.

→ **CONTINUING/RENEWAL PSP 2026 SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS:**

NB: Requests for advances on the PSP scholarship funds will only be considered after an approved annual progress report is submitted as follows (including):

- A complete satisfactory Annual student progress report.
- A complete satisfactory Annual supervisor report and recommendation for continued funding.
- The submission of your 2026 PSP Scholarship contract and proof of registration.

The sooner the complete progress report with required documents is submitted, the sooner the report can be approved, and the requested stipend may be advanced to you.

→ **NEW PSP 2026 AWARDEES:**

NB: Requests for advances on the PSP scholarship funds will only be considered after the following documentation is received and approved:

- You MUST be registered for the degree indicated in the PSP application submitted,
- Submission of the complete 2026 PSP scholarship contract and official proof of registration. (**NB: Acceptance of the PSP award, including relevant terms and conditions, is confirmed upon submission of the completed 2026 PSP scholarship contract**).

Click on the following link to apply for an advance on your 2026 PSP Scholarship Funds:

[Request for Advance of 2026 Postgraduate Scholarship Funding – Fill in form](#)

NATIONAL RESEARCH FUND (NRF) ENQUIRIES

23. When will the 2026 NRF Honours Scholarship application outcomes be available?

The provisional awards for the 2025 NRF Honours Scholarship will be communicated to all applicants by the end of February 2026.

24. When will the 2026 NRF Masters and Doctoral Scholarship application outcomes be available?

The NRF has undertaken to announce the outcomes of the NRF Masters and Doctoral Scholarship applications before the end of December annually. These outcomes will be emailed to all applicants (whose applications were submitted to the NRF for review) by the Designated Authority (DA) from Stellenbosch University, and will also be published on the NRF's website: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-for-post-graduate-students/bursaries-scholarships/application-outcomes/>.

25. I was awarded the NRF Postgraduate (Honours/Masters/Doctoral) Scholarship for 2026 – Who may I contact for assistance?

Please email the NRF Institutional Designated Authority (DA), Mrs Betina van der Merwe (betina@sun.ac.za), for assistance.

26. When will I receive the NRF Scholarship Outcome/Award letter and Conditions of Grant?

The email sent by the DA with the application outcomes will include instructions to provisionally successful applicants on where to access and download the NRF Scholarship Outcome/Award letter and Conditions of Grant.

27. How do I accept the NRF scholarship?

The email sent by the DA with the application outcomes will include instructions to provisionally successful applicants on where and how to accept the scholarship, as well as a guideline document, explaining how the scholarship will be administered by the Postgraduate Funding Office (and how to receive the monthly stipends via Intellimali – if applicable).

28. May I accept the NRF Honours scholarship if I am not registered for the degree as per my NRF application?

No. You must officially register for the degree as per the NRF application submitted.

29. May I accept the NRF Masters or Doctoral scholarship if I am not registered for the degree as per my NRF application?

No. You must officially register for the degree as per the NRF application submitted. **NB:** If you decide to enroll for a different degree, you must submit a Request for Change in Project Details (endorsed by your former and prospective supervisor) by email to betina@sun.ac.za **before accepting the award on NRF Connect.**

PLEASE NOTE:

- All correspondence must be addressed to the NRF and include the application reference number.
- Students that are awarded funds linked to an existing NRF-funded grant (Grantholder-linked scholarship) cannot change the degree to be funded without prior consultation with the Grantholder/Supervisor.

30. I was awarded the NRF scholarship for Masters study and applied with my final year undergraduate degree average. I have completed my Honours degree and obtained an average mark that is lower than 65% - can I accept the NRF scholarship?

No. The university is required to verify the mark obtained in the previous degree. If an academic mark of lower than 65% was obtained, the applicant is not eligible to accept the NRF scholarship.

31. I was awarded the NRF scholarship for Doctoral study and applied with my Honours degree average. I have completed my Masters degree and obtained an average mark that is lower than 65% - can I accept the NRF scholarship?

No. The university is required to verify the mark obtained in the previous degree. If an academic mark of lower than 65% was obtained, the applicant is not eligible to accept the NRF scholarship.

32. I was awarded the NRF Partial Cost of Study (PCS) scholarship based on the academic mark of my previous degree (65-74%); but I have now completed my degree and obtained an average mark of 75% (or higher) for the degree that qualifies me for admission to the degree to be funded. Can I be considered for receiving the NRF Full Cost of Study (FCS) scholarship?

Yes, if a student was provisionally approved for the PCS award, yet is eligible to receive the FCS scholarship based on academic merit, a formal letter of request for consideration of adjusting the PCS award to FCS, together with proof of academic merit (an official final academic record showing completion of the previous degree with an average mark of 75% or higher achieved for the previous degree), must be emailed to the DA (betina@sun.ac.za) for submission to the NRF.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Approval of such request is not guaranteed as this is subject to the availability of funds.
- All correspondence must be addressed to the NRF and include the application reference number.
- No requests for changes to the NRF Honours scholarship will be allowed.

33. I was awarded the NRF PCS scholarship, but I applied to be considered under the Financial Need category as I am/was a NSFAS or ISFAP recipient. Can I be considered for receiving the FCS scholarship?

Yes, if a student was provisionally approved for the PCS award, yet is eligible to receive the FCS scholarship based on financial need, a formal letter of request for consideration of adjusting the PCS award to FCS, together with proof of financial need (official proof of NSFAS/ISFAP funding received or confirmation of financial need by ISFAP/NSFAS), must be emailed to the DA (betina@sun.ac.za) for submission to the NRF.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Approval of such request is not guaranteed as this is subject to the availability of funds.
- All correspondence must be addressed to the NRF and include the application reference number.
- No requests for changes to the NRF Honours scholarship will be allowed.

34. I am an international student – am I eligible to receive the NRF FCS scholarship for Masters or Doctoral study?

No, all international students will be eligible to receive the NRF PCS scholarship only, regardless of the academic mark achieved. Only South African citizens and permanent residents are eligible for FCS based on financial need / academic merit / living with a disability (subject to the availability of funds).

35. My NRF Outcome/Award letter shows that I will receive an equipment grant and/or assistive device.

- The **once-off equipment (electronic device) grant** is payable with the FCS scholarship only.
- The **assistive device grant** is payable to persons living with a disability only.

36. I cannot accept the NRF scholarship for my Masters or Doctoral study by the deadline indicated in the outcomes email as my previous degree is incomplete. Can my scholarship be deferred?

Yes, an award can be deferred to the second semester of the year of award. A formal letter from the student requesting deferment of the award, including the reason for deferment and intended date of registration for the degree to be funded, together with an official letter of support from the proposed Supervisor confirming the intended date of registration for the degree to be funded and confirmation of the reason for the request for deferment of the award, must be emailed to the DA (betina@sun.ac.za) for submission to the NRF.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Deferment of the NRF Masters or Doctoral scholarship to the next year will not be allowed.
- All correspondence must be addressed to the NRF and include the application reference number.

37. Do I have to pay registration / tuition / study fees if I was awarded and remain eligible to receive the NRF scholarship?

No. You may use the NRF Outcome/Award Letter as proof of bursary, to register for the degree to be funded.

38. I have been awarded the NRF scholarship, but my project has changed, my supervisor has changed and I need to transfer my scholarship to / from another institution.

Please email the DA (betina@sun.ac.za) with your application reference number, Outcome/Award Letter, proof of registration and final academic transcript to confirm eligibility to receive the scholarship at Stellenbosch University. If verified, the DA will email instructions on submitting a Request for Change in Institution (Beneficiary) / Project / Supervisor to the NRF.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Students that are awarded funds linked to an existing NRF-funded grant (Grantholder linked scholarship) cannot change their project details/supervisor without prior consultation with the Grantholder/Supervisor.
- Changes to Doctoral projects may only be submitted for approval once the change is approved by Senate (after having been approved at the Faculty Board). Official proof of confirmation of the acceptance of the amended/updated Doctoral (thesis) project or title must be submitted with the request for approval from the NRF.

39. May I hold other bursaries with the NRF scholarship?

Students who are awarded the NRF PCS or FCS scholarship are allowed to receive top-ups from any other source of funding up to the University Maximum (see amounts below), however the NRF Full Cost of Study (FCS) Scholarship may not be held together with a Full Cost scholarship from another Government source. Please refer to Clause 18.1 / 15.1 in the Conditions of Grant.

40. What is the duration of NRF funding support that I will receive?

The period of funding support is calculated from the date of first registration for the Honours, Masters or Doctoral degree, regardless of when the student first receives the NRF funding.

Postgraduate Level	Years of support for Full-time studies
Honours	1 year
Masters	2 years
Doctoral	3 years
Masters converted/upgraded to Doctoral	4 years
Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral	6 or 12 months

PLEASE NOTE:

- If a student was already registered (for the first year of Masters/second or third year of Doctoral degree study) when awarded the NRF funding, the funds will only be received for/from the year in which funding is awarded, and not for the period registered for the degree prior to receiving the award.

41. Am I required to submit a Progress Report when I receive NRF funding?

Yes. You are required to submit an Annual Progress Report for each year that funding is received from the NRF. (**Submission deadline:** usually the last week of January of the year following the year that funding is received).

PLEASE NOTE:

- Failure to submit a progress report on time will result in the cancellation of the NRF Scholarship for subsequent years of the funding period and the Scholarship-holder will not be eligible to reapply for funding of postgraduate studies from the NRF again. Your supervisor is required to recommend whether the funding should be renewed for the new academic year.

42. If I am eligible to receive NRF funding for the next academic year, how do I apply for the renewal of the scholarship?

Scholarship recipients are required to submit an Annual Progress Report for each year that NRF funding is received, to remain eligible to receive the renewal scholarship funds. (**Submission deadline:** usually the last week of January of the year to be funded).

43. May I receive an advance on my NRF funding?

Requests for advances on (available) NRF funds will be accepted from 15 January 2026 only.

CONTINUING/RENEWAL SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS:

Approval of the annual progress report is required – therefore, advances on the scholarship funds can only be considered after this report has been submitted by the scholarship holder on NRF Connect as follows:

- completed with sufficient detail;
- official proof of registration for 2026 attached;
- completed recommendation for further support submitted by Main Supervisor; and
- approved by the NRF.

NEW NRF AWARDEES:

You must be registered for the degree as per your NRF application, and have Accepted the Award and Conditions of Grant (with all required documents attached) on NRF Connect.

Click on the following link to apply for an advance on your NRF Scholarship Funds:

[Request for Advance of 2026 Postgraduate Scholarship Funding – Fill in form](#)

44. How do I Acknowledge the NRF on my thesis, publications, poster presentations, etc. for funding support received?

The scholarship-holder will acknowledge the financial assistance received from the NRF as follows on the Title page of the mini-thesis/dissertation as well as in all papers and publications that emanate from the research study funded by the NRF:

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

Note: If statements concerning the research are made to the media, it should be stated explicitly that the scholarship-holder initiated the research and that it should under no circumstances be regarded as research done on behalf of or commissioned by the NRF.

45. Contact Details for the Stellenbosch University NRF Institutional Designated Authority (DA)

Honours/Masters/Doctoral ---- Betina van der Merwe ---- betina@sun.ac.za

Masters/Doctoral ---- Rozelle Petersen ---- rnp@sun.ac.za