
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM-NRF DESMOND TUTU DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2016

1. Background

The Desmond Tutu Training Programme (DTTP) was established in honour of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu's lifetime struggle against inequality and his quest for reconciliation. The National Research Foundation (NRF) and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VUA) entered into a partnership in 2009 to co-fund South African students carrying out doctoral studies in a Joint Degree (split-site) mode.

The rationale of the DTTP is that VUA joins forces with its South African partners, to build human capital in selected research fields that are of mutual interest. The DTTP also aims to strengthen co-operation between VUA and South African partner universities through joint supervision of South African doctoral candidates. At VUA, the supervision is carried out by the Desmond Tutu Chairs as well as other Faculty staff whose research interests are aligned with the objectives and the themes outlined below. In South Africa, an effort will be made to increase the cohort of supervisors by also leveraging on well-established NRF funding instruments such as the DST-NRF Centres of Excellence (CoEs), the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChi) as well as bilateral initiatives that include the Netherlands.

The format of the DTTP is a sandwich programme in which students will:

- Register and obtain their research doctoral degrees in the form of a Joint Degree between VU Amsterdam and a partner South African Higher Education Institution;
- Be jointly supervised by academic researchers at VUA and a South African Higher Education Institution;

- If required, complete required course work for doctoral studies both in South Africa and in the Netherlands;
- Spend between one (1) and two (2) months per year over a period of four (4) years at VU Amsterdam to undertake course and thesis related work, if necessary with an additional stay of six (6) months maximum in Amsterdam in the final year of their studies; and
- Carry out their research in South Africa, with a restricted amount of teaching obligations (where applicable) on the basis of an agreement between the NRF and the employing South African Higher Education Institution.

2. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible in the DTTP candidates must:

- Be in possession of a research Master's degree, or be in the process of completing requirements for such a degree (which must be completed before the DTTP award can be taken up);
- Be South African citizens or permanent residents.
- An applicant may not concurrently hold a DTTP scholarship with another NRF scholarship or any other scholarship from a South African government source.
- The NRF scholarship should be held as the primary funding source in all cases of supplementary funding.

Prior to the award of the scholarship the following must be confirmed by the institution:

- Supervisory capacity both at VUA and the SA partner institution;
- The availability of research running costs for the PhD candidate's project.

3. Fields of study

The DTTP Joint Degree PhD training programme will have '*Bridging Diversities for Academic Advancement*' as its overarching theme.

The aim is to contribute to a more equal world by integral thinking in which diversities are considered enriching rather than threatening. *Bridging diversities* means making connections: the programme stands for dialogue and engaged scholarship. Research undertaken in this programme aims to provide a safe space for thinking through the ambiguities and paradoxes of diversities. The theme is conceptualised with an aspiration to make a difference to society and ‘*academic advancement*’ is understood as relevant to, and serving the improvement of society. Following a transdisciplinary, multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach will bring together diverse knowledge partners and beneficiaries.

The following two themes will be key areas for research projects:

- **Prosperous Societies:**

Research themes: food industry; HIV; identities; reconciliation; security; service delivery; development of high potentials; culture and communication; corporate social responsibility.

- **Sustainable Energy:**

Research themes: environment; sustainability; climate change; natural resource management; energy provision.

Priority will be given to the above-mentioned themes or any combination of themes, in such a way that ‘pockets’ of research will emerge.

Applications from candidates intending to pursue doctoral studies in the following specific areas (**linked to the themes outlined above**) will be considered:

- Economics
- Theology
- Human Movement Sciences
- Social Sciences/Sport Sciences
- Medicine

- Earth & Life Sciences
- Health Sciences
- Law

A list of available doctoral projects and their confirmed supervisors appear below (Table 1). Applicants are encouraged to make contact with the potential supervisors during the development of the project proposal, which is a critical component of this application. It should be noted that the project outlines are provided by the supervisors and it is the applicant's ability to expand on the project outline and develop it into a full proposal that will be assessed.

More detailed project synopses are also attached and must be read in conjunction with this call document.

4. Funding Breakdown

The VUA-NRF Desmond Tutu Training Programme provides funding for up to four (4) years of study, depending on satisfactory progress each year. The award will amount to the value of approximately **R240 000** each year toward doctoral study costs in South Africa and Amsterdam. This amount will cover, among other things, flights to and from Amsterdam, accommodation, living costs, and a scholarship. The DST-NRF component of the scholarship is R120 000 and will cover:

- A bursary to the value of R70 000 each year toward living costs (full-time scholars) or sabbatical costs (part-time scholars) in South Africa;
- Required visa and residence permit costs (R38 000);
- Course and tuition fees in South Africa (R12 000);
- Two economy return flights from South Africa to Amsterdam per year;
- A contribution toward doctoral dissertation defense costs.

The VUA component of the scholarship is approximately R120 000 and will cover

- Accommodation and living allowance in Amsterdam (for two one-month visits each year);
- Course fees at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and;
- A contribution toward doctoral dissertation defense costs.

5. Commencement of studies

Successful applicants in this cycle may commence with their doctoral studies from September 2016, at the start of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam 2016/17 academic year, or later as specified in the conditions of grant document.

6. Dependants

The NRF and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam will not be responsible for costs relating to dependents accompanying a scholarship holder to Amsterdam.

7. Application process

To complete the application:

- Applicants must login to <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>
- Register/login using your Identity/Passport number and password
- Select the call for which you are applying: **Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam – NRF Desmond Tutu Doctoral Scholarship** under the list of existing calls
- Remember to complete all sections of the application.
- Attach the necessary documents as specified in the online application form
- Ensure that the application is submitted on completion.
- After the complete applications are submitted online, they will automatically be directed to the South African host University for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered.

- Ensure that the contact details of at least two (2) referees, including at least one (1) who has supervised the applicant, are included in the application. The second set of contact details should be for the South African supervisor who will submit a letter of support confirming the availability of research running costs and other necessary resources for the completion of the project.

Please contact the university postgraduate office or research office if you have any queries relating to institutional processes and deadlines. The closing date for applications is **Friday 22 April 2016**.

Please take note of your institutional internal closing dates as these may be set before the actual NRF call closing date.

8. Selection procedure

An independent and external review committee will consider all applications and recommend applications for awards to the NRF.

9. Conditions of award for the DTTP scholarship

The award of the DTTP scholarship will be based on past, current and potential academic performance. Selection criteria will include academic merit, research ability, leadership qualities (as articulated in the applicant's personal profile), previous awards, prizes and honours.

In addition to the above criteria the award will be based on the feasibility and merit of the applicant's research project proposal.

The scorecard to be used in the assessment of all applications is attached at the end of this document (Table 2).

Applications must have the support of a South African supervisor.

A list of successful candidates will be published on the NRF website as soon as the internal NRF approval processes have been finalized.

NRF CONTACT PERSONS

For funding instrument related queries:

Ms Gugu Dube, Professional Officer: Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development,
Telephone: 012 481 4169, Email: gugu.dube@nrf.ac.za

For Grant Management Systems and Administration related queries:

Ms Onicca Motsepe, Professional Officer: Scholarships and Fellowships, Telephone: 012 418 4112, Email: onicca@nrf.ac.za

For Reviews and Evaluation related queries:

Mr Sam Sibiyi, Professional Officer: Reviews and Evaluations, Telephone: 012 481 4307,
Email: sam.sibiyi@nrf.ac.za

Table 1. PhD positions available under the DTTP for 2016

No	Faculty	Project Title	VU Supervisor	SA Supervisor
1	Faculty of Theology	'Towards a theology of Forgiveness 2.0'	Prof. Dr. Eddy van der Borgh	Not specified yet
2	Faculty of Economy and Business Administration	'Local Economic Inequality in South Africa'	Prof. Dr. Chris Elbers	Prof. Murray Leibbrandt, UCT
3	Faculty of Social Sciences	'Sex on the move: mobile and migrant clients of sex workers in South Africa'	Dr Lorraine Nencel	Prof. Jo Vearey, WITS
4	Faculty of Social Sciences	'Decentralization of disaster response in South Africa: towards strengthening local resilience'	Dr. Kees Boersma, Dr. Julie Ferguson, Prof. Dr. Peter Groenewegen	Prof. Andries Jordaan, UFS
5	Faculty of Social Sciences	'Hostile media perceptions? Understanding the mass Media's role on polarization and group conflict in South Africa'	Prof. Dr. Tilo Hartmann	Prof. Kitty Dumont, UNISA
6	Faculty of Medicine	'Giving children a chance to live'	Prof. Dr. Marceline van Furth	Prof. Dr. Linda Gail-Bekker, UCT
7	Faculty of Sciences	'Energy and charge transfer processes in photosynthesis'	Prof. Dr. Rienk van Grondelle	Prof. Dr. Francesco Petruccione, UKZN
8	Faculty of Sciences	'Creating Web and Voice Services in Multiple Languages for Rural Development in Africa'	Prof. Dr. Hans Akkermans	Prof. Dr. Etienne Barnard, NWU



9	Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences	'Attachment, self-concept and exploration, can they be enhanced in at-risk families with young children'	Dr. Paula Sterkenburg	Prof. van Rensburg and Dr. Spies, NWU
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**Table 2. Scorecard for the selection of Doctoral Candidates for 2016 Funding
(Hurdles: 1.Promoter support; 2. Required supporting documents)**

Review Criteria/ Weight	Description	Five Point Rating Scale, Weight and Descriptor				
		5 = Excellent	4 = Above average	3= Average	2 = Below average	1 = Poor
1. Academic merit (15%)	Cumulative percentage from the previous degree	Above 80%	75-80%	65-74%	60-64%	Below 60%
2. Applicant's Track Record (5%)	Awards, bursaries and Past Research Outputs (e.g. Journal articles, conference presentations /proceedings, Book Chapters, Patents)	At least 2 awards /bursaries, 1 international peer reviewed publication, 1 International oral presentation.	At least one award /bursary and 1 national peer reviewed article or 1 national oral presentation or 1 book chapter.	At least one award/bursary or 1 International poster presentation or 2 national poster presentations.	No awards/ bursaries; 1 national poster presentation.	No information
3. Scientific Merit of the proposal (45%)	Novelty and Scientific contribution to new knowledge;	<p>The proposal is exceptionally strong and well-constructed.</p> <p>A novel project idea that will contribute to the generation of both new methodologies and new knowledge in the field.</p> <p>The research question/ problem statement is clear and the rationale of the study is well advocated.</p> <p>The study is well conceptualized;</p> <p>Literature is thoroughly reviewed, relevant, cited, referenced and addresses the existing gaps in literature.</p>	<p>The proposal is well constructed;</p> <p>The project idea will generate new knowledge with the application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.</p> <p>The research question/problem statement is clear, but the rationale of the study could be refined.</p> <p>The study is reasonably conceptualized;</p> <p>the literature is relevant, cited, referenced and addresses the existing gap in extant literature, but some important</p>	<p>The proposal is fairly constructed.</p> <p>The study involves unique application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.</p> <p>The research question/problem statement and the rationale could be refined.</p> <p>Conceptualization could be strengthened;</p> <p>The literature is relevant, cited, referenced but it is</p>	<p>The proposal structure is reasonable but the study will mainly utilise the application of existing knowledge and methodologies in the field.</p> <p>The research question/ problem statement and the rationale are not clear.</p> <p>Conceptualization is weak;</p> <p>The literature is not relevant and is out dated. It is unclear</p>	<p>The proposal structure is poorly formulated</p> <p>The problem statement and the rationale are not included in the proposal.</p> <p>Conceptualization is weak;</p> <p>The literature is not relevant and is out dated.</p>

			references are not included.	unclear which gaps in the extant literature are being addressed.	which gaps in the extant literature are being addressed.
			The research objectives are sound but have some inconsistencies and can be refined to appropriately meet the aims of the study.	The research objectives are appropriate but only partially address the aims of the study.	The research objectives are not aligned with the aims of the study.
		The objectives are clearly stated and are appropriate to meet the aims of the study.	The research methodology is sound but has inconsistencies and can be refined;	The methodology fairly addresses the study objectives.	The research objectives are not aligned with the aims of the study. The methodology is vaguely articulated to assess the feasibility of the study.
		The methodology is aligned with the objectives of study.	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects have been reasonably addressed.	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects have been partially addressed.	The project does not address multi-disciplinary aspects.
	multidisciplinary aspects; alignment of the research question with the methodology.	The project is multidisciplinary and the different aspects thereof have been fully addressed.			The project barely addresses multi-disciplinary aspects.
4. Feasibility (30%)		A thoroughly formulated project workplan;	The project work plan is reasonable but is not outstanding;	The project work plan can at best be described as average; some of the project timelines are problematic.	The project workplan towards study completion is poorly formulated with unspecific timelines.
		Explicit and feasible project activities with realistic project timelines.	Feasible project activities with realistic project timelines.		The role of the candidate in the project is not defined
	Work plan, project organisation, project scheduling and timelines.	The role of the candidate in the project is clearly defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is clearly defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is defined.	The role of the candidate in the project is vaguely defined.
					Timelines and project

		<p>The infrastructure at the institution/in the research group is adequate to ensure successful project completion.</p>	<p>The infrastructure at the institution/in the research group is could be strengthened to ensure successful project completion, but the proposal indicates how the gaps will be addressed.</p>	<p>The infrastructure at the institution could be strengthened to ensure successful project completion but the proposal does not indicate how the gaps will be addressed</p>	<p>The infrastructure to support the project is lacking but the proposal does not indicate how the gaps will be addressed.</p>	<p>activities are not documented.</p>
<p>5. Potential Impact (5%)</p>	<p>Potential to contribute national research strategies and the strategic goals of the knowledge economy.</p>	<p>The candidate has clearly defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p> <p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant both in the national and international context.</p> <p>Therefore, the potential impact of the study is high based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The candidate has defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p> <p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant in the national context.</p> <p>Therefore, the potential impact of the study is high based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The candidate has defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p> <p>The envisaged impact is feasible and relevant in the national context.</p> <p>However, the potential impact of the study is moderate based on the information provided.</p>	<p>The candidate has vaguely defined the significance and the merits of the research.</p>	<p>The candidate has not defined the significance and the merit of the research.</p>