



# The Department of Science & Technology (DST) Renewable & Sustainable Energy Scholarships (RSES)

Call for applications for 2015

## Information Manual

Read this manual carefully before completing the online application form.

*This manual has been compiled based on the relevant DST renewable energy research programmes. All applications that are in the renewable energy strategic focus areas within South Africa will be considered.*

Your application will only be considered if you comply with the requirements as set out in this manual

**Complete the application form which can be found on the NRF**

**Online submission system: <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>**

## 1. Background and introduction

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) provides funding to support human capital development for the renewable energy sector through the National Research Foundation (NRF).

This funding support is called the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Scholarships (RSES). The primary focus is to provide scholarship grants at master's and doctoral levels focusing on research studies that will support and facilitate the shift towards a sustainable energy sector.

RSES is a component intervention of the Energy Human Capital and Knowledge Generation Programme (E-HCD&KG), of which its **current undergraduate students in the energy human capital development pipeline at honours and fourth year level of studies are strongly encouraged to apply and will be given preference.**

In line with the draft DST energy research focal areas, the scholarships are offered to candidates that do or want to do research on the following focus areas:

- Cleaner fossil fuel development, including clean coal technologies;
- Renewable energy (bioenergy including bio-fuels, solar energy, wind energy, etc.);
- Energy impact on the environment;
- Energy for socio-economic development;
- Energy system planning and modelling; and
- Energy policy research.

RSES are meant to support students that are in the DST-driven initiatives like the Renewable Energy Research Chairs, Renewable Energy Hub and Spokes that are listed below, as well as those who may be studying towards the relevant qualifications in other universities within South Africa, particularly in the renewable and sustainable energy field. Consideration will be given to applicants from these research platforms who meet the stipulated criteria.

The current DST energy research programmes are herewith mentioned below:

- Energy Research Chairs:
  - Research Chair in Biofuels and other clean alternative fuels (ligno-cellulose) at Stellenbosch University;



- Research Chair in Clean Coal technologies at the University of the Witwatersrand;
- Associate Research Chair in Biofuels and other clean alternative fuels at North West University
- The Renewable Energy Hub at the Stellenbosch University;
- Energy Spokes Programme comprising:
  - Wind energy spoke at Stellenbosch University and the University of Cape Town;
  - Solar photovoltaic (PV) spoke at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and University of Fort Hare;
  - Solar thermal spoke at Stellenbosch University and the University of Pretoria.

Funding is therefore made available for masters and doctoral postgraduate studies in 2015 at universities across South Africa which offer studies that will further the objectives of the renewable energy sector.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1 South African citizens and permanent residents of South Africa who wish to complete Master's or doctoral degrees at a South African university. Please note that preference will be given to candidates from the designated groups including female students.
- 2.2 These scholarships are available to university graduates with degrees in Engineering, Natural Science, AgriScience, Management Science, Law, Economics, and other related and relevant disciplines.
- 2.3 The relevant qualifications for eligibility are BSc Hons, BSc Eng, BEng or MTech to apply for a master's degree and MSc or MSc Eng for doctoral degrees.
- 2.4 Scholarships are available for successful candidates studying on a full-time basis in the field of Renewable and Sustainable Energy.

## 3. Research proposals and supervision

- 3.1 All master's and doctoral scholarship applicants applying for a research based degree **MUST** submit a research proposal.
- 3.2 It is recommended that supervisors/hosts proof-read the student's application and proposal content before submission.

- 3.3 Applications for a research-based degree which are submitted without a research proposal will **NOT** be considered for a scholarship.
- 3.4 **The research proposals must be written by the student, and NOT by the supervisor of the research.**
- 3.5 All applications are to be submitted online, if an application has not been submitted online it will not be considered outside the call process.
- 3.6 All applications, once submitted, are routed through the university designated office for validation before being sent to the NRF for consideration.
- 3.7 Supervisors/hosts of the study are expected to respond to the referee reports sent to them online for input and support of the student's application.

#### 4. **Value and Duration of the RSES Postgraduate Scholarships**

Description	Value and Duration
<b>Doctoral Scholarship</b>	R 100 000.00 per annum 3 years (subject to satisfactory progress) R15,000 Local travel (once-off) R45,000 Overseas travel (once-off)
<b>Masters Scholarship</b>	R 85 000.00 per annum 2 years (subject to satisfactory progress) R15,000 Local travel (once-off) R40,000 Overseas travel (once-off)

#### **NOTE:**

- All funds are paid by the NRF to the respective university for disbursement to the student between January and March of each year.
- The respective universities are expected to distribute funding under the same guidelines as stipulated with free-standing NRF scholarships.

### **Additional discretionary items (Masters and Doctoral):**

- The programme has a limited budget for travel grants for both masters and doctoral students which may be paid for approved travel related to studies. This grant is focused on national and international conferences where the student is invited to participate as opposed to just attending. The grant includes subsistence, accommodation, conference-registration and travel expenses. A motivation for travel must be provided at least two months before any trip is undertaken and a written report must be provided to the E-HCD&KG Programme (which includes RSES) via the National Research Foundation (NRF) two weeks after returning from the trip.
- Please note that students must apply for these items separately, with supporting documentation and endorsements as required. The NRF may support these depending on the feasibility and strength of the application and available funding.

### **5. Conditions of Renewable & Sustainable Energy Scholarship Awards**

*The following conditions are extracted from the RSES Agreement to be signed by all successful applicant students and of which the full document shall represent the legal conditions of the award*

- 5.1 The award of a RSES scholarship to a student will be based on past, current and potential academic performance. Selection criteria will include equity targets of the programme, academic merit, promise of research ability, leadership qualities and previous awards of various prizes and honours.
- 5.2 In addition to the above criteria, the award of the RSES scholarship will be based on feasibility and applicability of the applicant's research project proposal to national priorities.
- 5.3 Once an RSES scholarship is awarded, a change in course of study, an institution where the studies are to be undertaken, or a change of supervision, requires prior approval.
- 5.4 Continued funding is dependent on satisfactory performance determined through the submission of annual progress reports, as well as compliance with the overall conditions of the award.
- 5.5 Based on the assessment of progress, the E-HCD&KG Programme, in its sole discretion may extend the scholarship for a period not exceeding one further year for masters studies, and two further years for doctoral studies (beyond the standard duration stipulated herein).  
**The standard period is two years for a Masters and three years for a Doctoral degree.**



- 5.6 Students who do not obtain the degree for which the scholarship was awarded, who relinquish studies or leave the tertiary institution during the period for which the scholarship was awarded, will have to refund all payments already received for the RSES. The E- HCD&KG Programme may waive this condition at its sole discretion.
- 5.7 Students may be required to present their work at national or international conferences and/or symposia at the request of the E-HCD&KG Programme.
- 5.8 Students will be required to present their work at the Bi-Annual Energy Postgraduate Scholarship Conference as organised by the E-HCD&KG Programme.
- 5.9 Students are compelled to attend all developmental activities as arranged by the E-HCD&KG Programme. These include (but are not limited to):
- Biennial Energy Postgraduate Scholarship Conference (every second year)
  - Annual Life-skills Workshop
  - Other activities will be communicated to students, of which most are held over weekends or during vacations.
- 5.10 On completion of the studies supported by means of a RSES, students are required to submit proof of obtaining the degree concerned.
- 5.11 Funding provided through the RSES funding instrument is intended to develop people capable and qualified to work in the renewable energy sector. Whilst graduates are not offered jobs directly by the DST or NRF, there is an expectation that they will be proactive in finding employment within the energy sector and for a period aligned to the duration of the scholarship funding.
- 5.12 Successful students who are offered the RSES by the NRF are required to complete and sign the RSES agreement which will be communicated at the time of the award.
- 5.13 A list of successful candidates will be published on the NRF website as soon as internal NRF approval processes for the award are finalised.
- 5.14 Students that are unsuccessful may enquire with the NRF through their postgraduate/research or financial aid office on how to improve their application in the next round.
- 5.15 Appeals, in the case of unsuccessful applicants, will only be considered in extremely exceptional cases that are motivated strongly and in detail and are considered warranted for appeal.



## 6. How to apply for funding

- 6.1 Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the National Research Foundation (NRF): <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/NrfMkII/>
- 6.2 Register/Login using your email address and password.
- 6.3 Select 'create new application' from the list of existing calls.
- 6.4 Select the call you are applying for: RSES – Masters and Doctoral Scholarship Call for 2015
- 6.5 Select 'Apply Now'.
- 6.6 Complete all screens and sub-screens online for application summary, application and biographic information, research project information, supervisor and referees and outputs.
- 6.7 Once complete, click on the submit form tab.
- 6.8 Your application will be directed to the university designated office for further processing and then to the NRF for assessment and selection through a panel review process.
- 6.9 Successful applicants will be notified through the university research office no later than 30 November 2014.
- 6.10 **Please consult the university with regard to its internal closing dates, which will be prior to 15 August 2014.**

**Deadline for applications is 15 August 2014**

## 7. Contacts

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