



Terms for Participation on the NRF's Social Media Platforms

The National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa makes use of the social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn to enhance communication with the public. This is done in line with the policies/terms and conditions of each social media platform.

The NRF welcomes and encourages discussions on its social media platforms. The aim is to create an inclusive community where participants can safely interact with one another and the NRF, and in a manner that is respectful and civil. The NRF reserves the right to remove comments or posts containing any of the following:

- Hate speech. The United Nations define hate speech as “any kind of communication that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor.”
- Vulgar or inappropriate language or suggestions.
- Encouragement of violence or any illegal activity.
- Spam. This includes the promotion or endorsement of services and products, duplicate posts, and comments that are clearly “off-topic.”
- Privileged or contractual-based information that is not intended for public disclosure.

Social media users are urged to keep in mind that posts/comments made on the NRF's social media platforms are publically visible. This implies that social media users could be held accountable for inappropriate or harmful online behaviour by, for example, their current or future institutions, employers or funders.

It should be noted that the NRF has a limited budget for scholarships and grants (funding), thus NRF funding is, unfortunately, not guaranteed. There are official procedures for students and researchers who wish to appeal against the NRF's funding and rating decisions, and the NRF will gladly assist social media users seeking information/assistance in this regard. The NRF also welcomes critique of its operations and procedures.

However, comments, posts and messages that are slanderous, threatening or contain unsupported accusations against the NRF won't be allowed.

The NRF reserves the right to block/ban offenders, whether temporarily or permanently, on its social media platforms without prior notice or warning.

South Africa's Social Media Charter

The South African Human Rights Commission has developed and launched a Social Media Charter in 2023 that aims to assist social media users in differentiating between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour online. It is recommended that social media users consult the charter in order to be aware of concepts such as harmful expression, defamation, right to privacy, *crimen injuria*, harassment and bullying etc. It also provides steps that social media users can take if their rights or the rights of others are violated.

The document (Edition 1) is available via this link:

<https://www.sahrc.org.za/home/21/files/SAHRC%20Social%20Media%20Charter%20FINAL.pdf>

Funding-related information and queries

Supporting information about NRF funding, rating and progress report calls can be found on the NRF's website at www.nrf.ac.za. Online documents accompany all calls and contain detailed information about call requirements and application procedures, as well as the contact details of the NRF Officers who are dealing directly with these particular calls.

The NRF's social media administrators do not have access to students' or researchers' profiles/applications on the NRF system as this is privileged (and protected) information. When inquiring about the progress of applications, progress reports, funding payouts and transfers, followers should make use of the NRF's official channels.

The following are official NRF channels for seeking assistance:

- **NRF Designated Authorities (DAs)** are stationed at public universities across South Africa to assist students with their funding applications and queries. It is recommended that students get in touch with their DAs BEFORE contacting the NRF directly, as the DAs have access to both information from the NRF and the respective universities/institutions, enabling them to assist students timeously.
- **The NRF Support Desk** normally deals with technical queries involving the NRF Connect system and also acts as a central hub for directing call-related queries to the relevant NRF Officers. They can be reached at 012 481 4202 or email supportdesk@nrf.ac.za.
- **Direct contact details for NRF Officers** are available on the NRF's website under the sections "NRF for Researchers" and "NRF for Students". For students, the details of NRF Officers dealing with scholarship-related queries are in the Framework document while the details for NRF officers dealing with grant management (i.e. payouts and progress reports) are in the respective "Funding and Application Guides".

A chat function is also available on the NRF Connect system at www.nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za where applicants can obtain additional information or assistance.

Operating hours

The NRF's operating hours are Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 16:30. The NRF is closed on public holidays. Any comments or queries made on our social media platforms or sent to the support desk outside of these hours will only be attended to when normal operation resumes.

It is noted that delays in responses can occur during times when the NRF receives a high volume of queries.

Content Disclaimer

The NRF regularly shares third-party content (i.e. content not produced or owned by the NRF) such as blogs, research articles, opinion pieces, and general news that are deemed to be of interest to the NRF's social media community. The publication as well as the retweeting/re-sharing of third-party content on our social media platforms does not constitute an endorsement of the content and does not necessarily reflect the views of the NRF. The NRF makes every effort to source content from trusted publication sources, however, this is done in good faith and any onus of responsibility ultimately rests with the original source/publisher.

Official NRF Social Media Platforms

The NRF, as well as the National Research Facilities (also known as Business Units) managed by the NRF, have a limited number of official social media profiles. In particular, the NRF has only one Facebook page and it is not associated with any Facebook groups or pages claiming to provide information or support.

The following are official NRF social media profiles:

Twitter: @NRF_News | Facebook: @NRFSouthAfrica | LinkedIn: The National Research Foundation of South Africa | YouTube: @NationalResearchFoundation and @NRFAwards

The following are the official social media profiles of the NRF's Research Facilities/ Business Units:

- SAASTA

Twitter: @NRF_SAASTA | Facebook: @NRFSAASTA | LinkedIn: South Africa Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) | YouTube: @SAHumangenome

- SAEON

Twitter: @Saeonnews | LinkedIn: SAEON

- SARAO

Twitter: @SKA_Africa | Facebook: @SKASOUTHAFRICA | LinkedIn: South African Radio Astronomy Observatory | YouTube: @saraoweb5581 | Instagram: Saraoweb

- SAIAB

Twitter: @NRF_SAIAB | Facebook: @NRFSAIAB | Instagram: @NRF_SAIAB | YouTube: @South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity

- SAAO

Twitter: @SAAO | Facebook: @SAAOnews | LinkedIn: South African Astronomical Observatory | YouTube: @saltsaao | Instagram: saao_astro

- iThemba LABS

Twitter: @iThembaLABSCape | Facebook: @iThembaLABSCape | LinkedIn: iThemba LABS | YouTube: @ithembalabs1750 | Instagram: ithembalabs