



**Funding Instrument: DSI-NRF Research Development Grants for
*New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) Scholars***

**Functional Domain: Grants Management & Systems
Administration**

Document: Application and 2021 Funding Guide

Date: February 2021

1. Background

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) have agreed to make available Research Development Grants for nGAP scholars in the first and second year of appointment to enable these young academics to develop and submit applications in funding instruments such as the Thuthuka PhD and Post-PhD tracks.

Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars have been made available from the 2016 academic year and a maximum of 250 nGAP scholars will be supported in any given academic year.

2. Objectives

In light of the above, the objectives of the grant are to:

- Accelerate the doctoral level training of nGAP scholars in the PhD track at public universities;
- Effect transformation in the demographic profile of the emerging researcher community with respect to gender, race and persons with disabilities through support for nGAP scholars in the Post-PhD track;
- Provide Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars in their first and second year of appointment to assist these scholars to develop and submit research grant applications aligned to the Thuthuka PhD and Post-PhD tracks.
- To support nGAP scholars, in the first and second year of appointment, that have a university approved research project, with start-up research funding while they apply for competitive research grants to the NRF and other agencies.

3. Target group

The DSI-NRF research development grants are intended for nGAP scholars (academic staff appointed by the DHET at their respective universities) who are in their first and second year of appointment **ONLY**. Once appointed as an nGAP scholar, incumbents will be eligible for consideration for a *Research Development Grant for nGAP Scholars*.

The grant is intended to fund research costs and/or research proposal development in order to prepare the nGAP scholar to apply to the NRF for a competitive research grant that will be subjected to merit review.

4. Grant details

The *Research Development Grants* are designed for applicants who are already appointed as nGAP Scholars by the SSAUF initiative; across the Higher Education (HE) sector. The grant may be used to cover the following costs:

- Proposal development;
- Research running expenses; and
- Small research equipment.

Two types of awards will be provided based on the level of the nGAP scholar, namely:

- An award of R30 000 per annum for two years for nGAP scholars in the PhD track; and
- An award of R50 000 per annum for two years for nGAP scholars in the Post-PhD track.

The grant will not be transferable to another grantholder or to another institution.

Grantholders are not permitted to change to any other NRF funding streams during the tenure of the award. However, it is expected that the nGAP scholars will focus on developing their research proposal in year one and in year two will submit to the NRF a Thuthuka grant proposal for research funding. These proposals will be subjected to merit review and grants will be awarded on a competitive basis.

nGAP scholars whose proposal has been approved by the university must submit to the Thuthuka Funding Instrument Call.

The *Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars* **may not** be used to cover the costs provided for by the DHET *viz.:*

- Salary costs for nGAP scholars;
- Registration and tuition fees;
- Mentoring costs;
- Participation in the SSAU Development Programme;
- Equipment e.g. laptops; and
- International conference / mobility participation costs.

This grant will be awarded for a maximum of two years. Additional research funds and International travel expenses for conference attendance are not covered by this grant.

5. Eligibility criteria

To qualify for the grant, applicants must comply with the following eligibility criteria:

- Applicants must be in their first or second year of appointment as nGAP scholars at a public university in South Africa;
- Applicants must be South African citizens or Permanent Residents;
- Applicants applying in the PhD track must hold a minimum qualification of a Master's degree and applicants in the Post PhD track must hold a minimum of a Doctoral degree.
- Applicants in the PhD track must be registered at a public university in South Africa;
- Applicants that hold a valid NRF rating are not eligible to apply;
- Applicants that are currently NRF research grant holders are not eligible to apply; and
- Applicants applying in the PhD track that have received three years of Freestanding or Grant holder-linked Doctoral funding do not qualify to apply for nGAP funding.
- Applicants must ensure that CV's are fully completed on the NRF Online Submission System and the nGAP appointment must be indicated under the Career Profile.

6. Application documents

The following documents will be required in the application attachment section.

- A letter from a South African public university confirming the appointment of the applicant as an nGAP scholar; or
- A signed acceptance, by the applicant, of an offer of appointment as an nGAP scholar at a South African public university.

Note: The Proof of South African Identity or proof of Permanent Residency (SA ID Document) must be uploaded in the Registration Details section.

Qualifications must be uploaded in the CV section on the NRF Online Submission System.

7. Application procedure

Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the NRF.

(NB: This will be a closed call)

Only applicants selected by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) can apply for the DSI-NRF *Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars* by accessing this link:

<https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/>

- **Login using your ID number and password.**
- Go to my applications.
- Select “Create Application”.
- Select the call **DSI-NRF *Research Development Grants for New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) Scholars***.
- Complete all compulsory sections of the application form and the non-compulsory sections applicable to you. Once the application is complete the **Final Submit** button appears. Click on Final Submit.
- Please follow the guidelines with respect to attaching the necessary documents for your application to be considered.
- Completed applications will be routed to your university’s Designated Authority (DA), for verification, before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing.
- Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will be rejected.
- Please contact the university Postgraduate or Research Office, should you have any queries.
- Once your application is verified by the DA at your institution, it is submitted to the NRF for assessment and selection through a *Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars* Selection Panel.
- Outcomes will be communicated by April 2021.

8. Review Criteria

Applications submitted to the NRF will undergo a technical review only, to ensure accountability and appropriate utilization of funds that are released. Approval of grants will be in accordance with standard NRF grant approvals by Senior Management.

The Review Criteria for the technical review is tabulated below:

Review Criteria/Weight	Description
1. Budget Motivation (PhD track - 50%) (Post-PhD track - 50%)	Itemised budget breakdown and justification for request budget amounts
2. Project Plan (PhD track - 50%) (Post-PhD track - 50%)	Project plan with activities, timelines and deliverables

The demographic targets will be in alignment with the approved targets for the nGAP, i.e. 80% of the awards must be to black South Africans and/or women.

9. Post Awarding Process

Successful candidates will be notified by the NRF regarding the *DSI-NRF Research Development Grants for nGAP scholars'* award. All successful candidates should complete all the necessary documents / conditions of grant related to the acceptance of the award. Ethical Clearance, where applicable, must be submitted with the Conditions of Grant.

A Progress Report (PR) must be submitted to the NRF by the grantholder and a recommendation by the supervisor in order for the grant to be renewed for the second year. The supervisor's details must be inserted on the Progress Report.

No Carry-over of unspent funds will be permitted under this funding instrument, except under extenuating circumstances, e.g., ill-health, and must be motivated for in writing. The grant will not be transferable to another grantholder.

10. Renewal of Grant

The NRF will monitor and evaluate the progress of nGAP grantholders at an individual, institutional and funding instrument level as follows:

Continued funding for year two will be subject to the following:

- All grantholders are required to submit a Progress Report (PR) by 15 February 2022, covering performance and financials for the funded period.
- In cases of continuing grantholders, the NRF will utilize these reports to assess project performance against timeframes and deliverables as indicated in the application.
- Continued funding for year two will be subject to the submission of a PR for the first year of funding and meeting the deliverables for year one.
- A new application will not be accepted if a grantholder has 2021 funding for a previously funded 2 year project.

11. Enquiries

For any further assistance and information around the *DSI-NRF Research Development Grants for nGAP Scholars*, please contact the Research, Financial Aid / Bursary / Postgraduate Office at your institution before contacting the following GMSA staff.

Mrs Sushie Pillay Professional Officer: Emerging Researchers Tel: (012) 481-4178 e-mail: ppillay@nrf.ac.za	Ms Malebo Mohlala Liaison Officer : Emerging Researchers Tel: (012) 481- 4121 e-mail: malebo.mohlala@nrf.ac.za
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