



Progress Report Guide










for

Masters, Doctoral and Extension Support Scholarships 2025

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Summary of System Controls

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Upload functionality: Click on the + icon to upload documents. Where the control then shows an  icon, click this to finalise the upload.</p> |
|  | <p>Toggle: Move the slider to the right for a positive response and left for a negative one.</p> |
|  | <p>Click to expand a pane.</p> |
|  | <p>Click to hide a pane.</p> |
|  | <p>Click to edit a record/item.</p> |
|  | <p>Click to delete a record/item.</p> |
|  | <p>Expand sub-menu items.</p> |
|  | <p>Hide sub-menu items.</p> |

1. Background

This document serves as a guideline on how to complete progress reports on the NRF Connect system.

2. Who should submit a progress report?

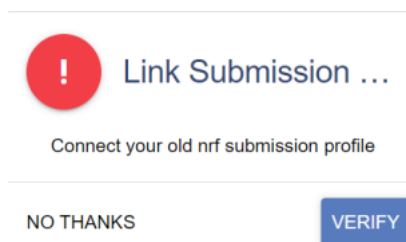
All Masters, Doctoral and Extension Support Students who received NRF funding in the 2025 grant year **must** complete a progress report on the NRF Connect system. The honours students are not required to submit a Progress Report, they must notify the university postgraduate office upon completion of the honours studies and submit the proof of completion (full academic transcript or graduation certificate)

3. How to submit your Progress Report

Progress Reports must be submitted electronically on the *NRF Connect* system at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za> unless otherwise indicated.

Instructions to Grantholders:

- Go to <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Login using your ORCID credentials.
- If your CV has not been updated, you can sync it from the previous system. Click 'Verify' to link to the relevant account on the NRF Online Submission System.



- Provide the ID/Passport number and password used on the NRF Online Submission System.

Enter your Old Nrf Submission Details

ID Number *

ID/Passport

Password *

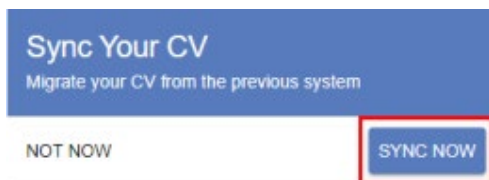
Your Old Password

CANCEL SUBMIT

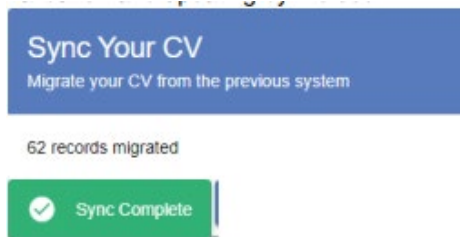
- Once the verification of the two accounts has been completed, confirmation will be shown at the bottom of the screen.



- The user now has the option to sync/migrate their CV from the NRF Online Submission System to the NRF Connect System. Click Sync Now to do this.



- Once this is done, the relevant information will be copied over to NRF Connect and be available for validation and updating by the user.

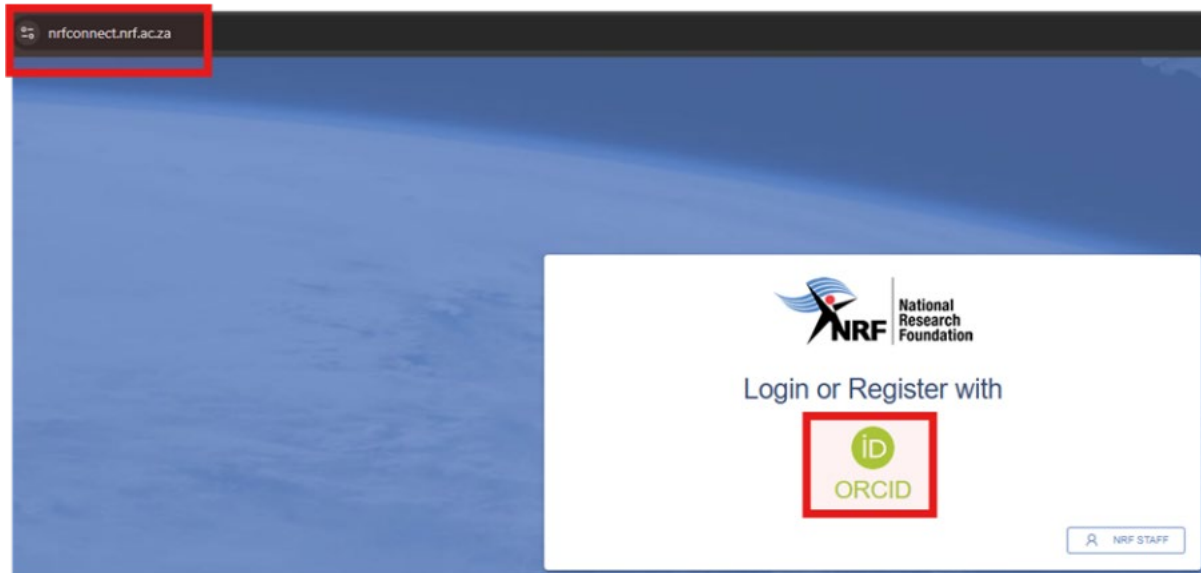


- **Please ensure that the CV is updated before completing the progress report.**
- **After logging in, the grantholder must click on the Profile button to update their details.**

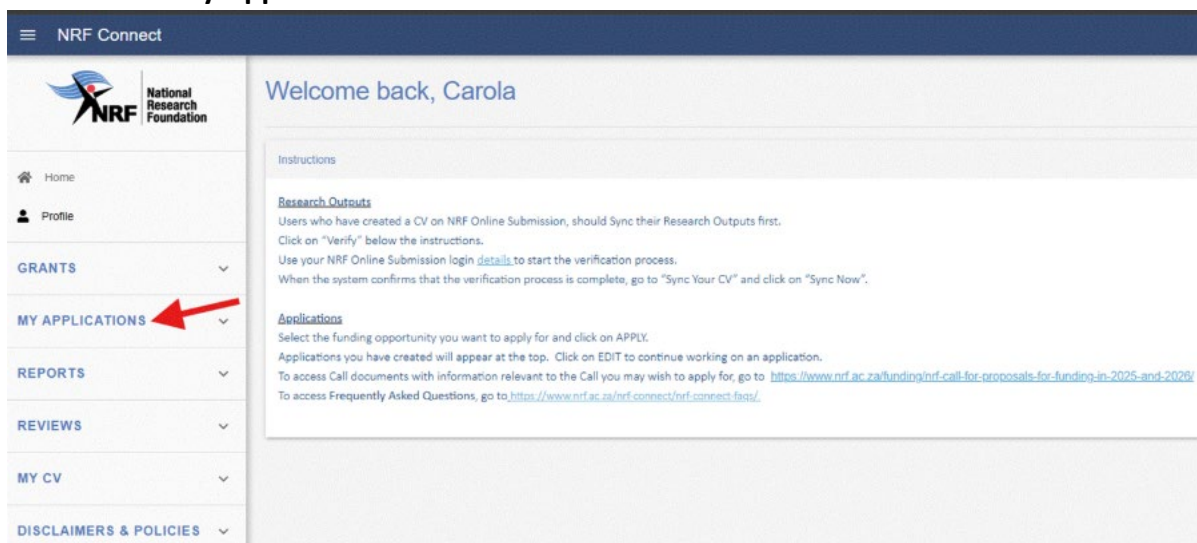
4. How to access your Progress Report

To access a progress report, go to:

- Login to **NRF Connect**.



- Go to - **My Applications**.



- Select - **Applications.**

NRF Connect

NRF National Research Foundation

Home
Profile

GRANTS ▾

MY APPLICATIONS ▴

Applications ←

REPORTS ▾

REVIEWS ▾

MY CV ▾

DISCLAIMERS & POLICIES ▾

Sign Out

My Applications

Instructions

- Please consult relevant Call documents at: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/nrf-call-for-proposals-for-funding-in-2025-and-2026/>
- Application Guides for SARAO Bachelor in Engineering Technology, Diploma in Engineering Technology, BSc and BEng Undergraduate, website: <https://www.sarao.ac.za/researchandstudy/funding/>
- Acceptance of Award guide: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-documents/>

The 2025 NRF Next Generation and Emerging Researchers Symposium
Upcoming!

List of Applications

| Category |
|---|
| + Concept Notes |
| + Infrastructure Grants |
| + Institutional Grants 2025 PR Available |
| + NRF Postgraduate Scholarships |
| + Postdoctoral Grants |

- Under the list of applications, you will see the category(ies) in which you have active applications and those currently open for submission. Click the plus (+) icon next to the category that has “**2025 PR Available**” displayed.

My Applications


Instructions

- Please consult relevant Call documents at: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/nrf-call-for-proposals-for-funding-in-2025-and-2026/>
- Application Guides for SARAQ Bachelor in Engineering Technology; Diploma in Engineering Technology; BSc and BEng Undergraduate; website: <https://www.sarao.ac.za/researchandstudy/funding/>
- Acceptance of Award guide: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-documents/>

The 2025 NRF Next Generation and Emerging Researchers Symposium
Upcoming!

List of Applications

| Category |
|---|
| + Concept Notes |
| + Infrastructure Grants |
| + Institutional Grants + 2025 PR Available |
| + NRF Postgraduate Scholarships |
| + Postdoctoral Grants |



- You will see your **application reference number**, and next to it you will find the option to **“Create Progress Report”**.

My Applications

Instructions

- Please consult relevant Call documents at: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/nrf-call-for-proposals-for-funding-in-2025-and-2026/>
- Application Guides for SARAQ Bachelor in Engineering Technology; Diploma in Engineering Technology; BSc and BEng Undergraduate; website: <https://www.sarao.ac.za/researchandstudy/funding/>
- Acceptance of Award guide: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-documents/>

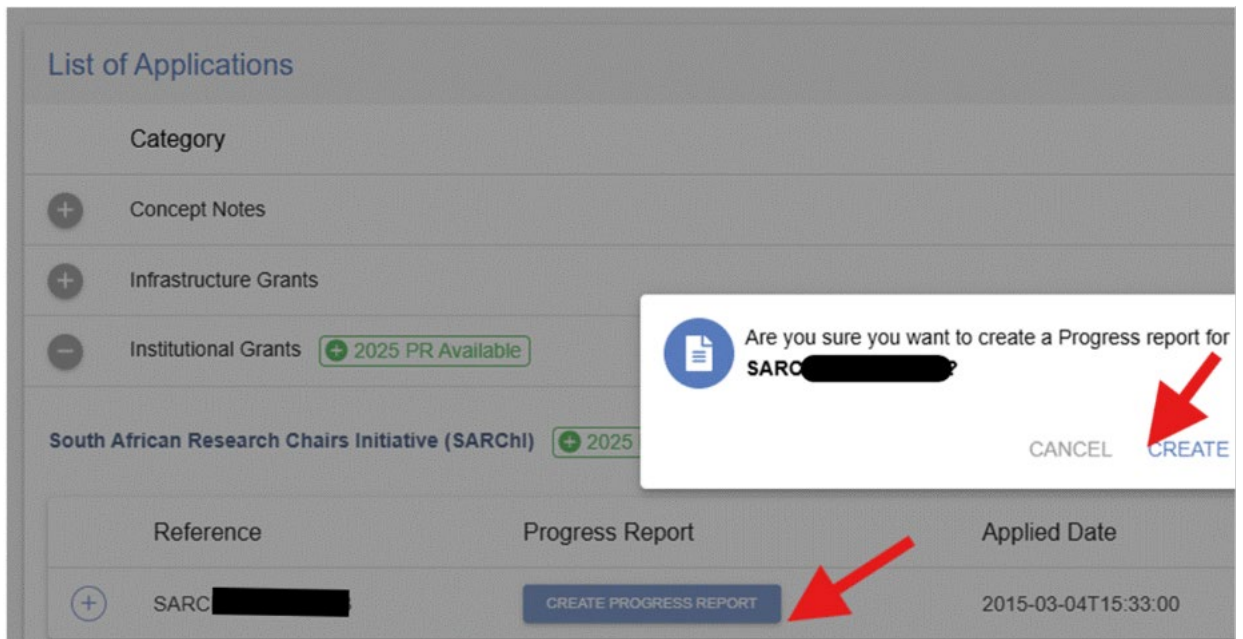
The 2025 NRF Next Generation and Emerging Researchers Symposium
Upcoming!

List of Applications

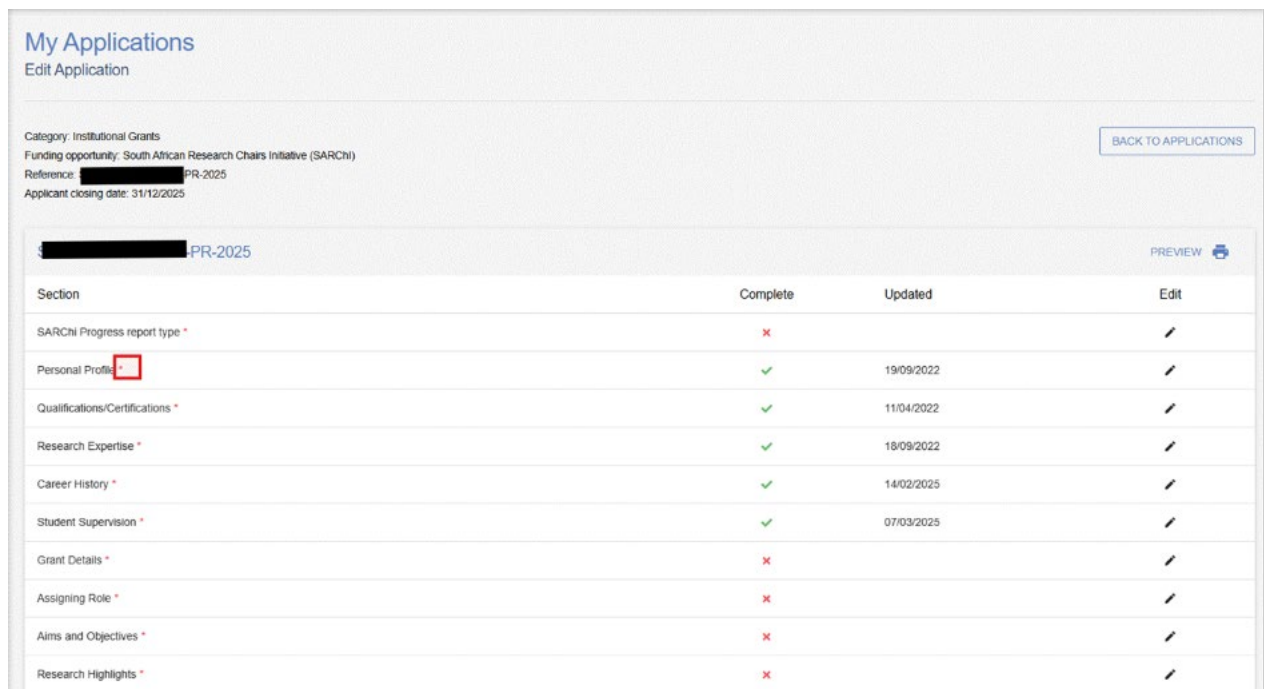
Category

- + Concept Notes
- + Infrastructure Grants
- + Institutional Grants + 2025 PR Available
- + NRF Postgraduate Scholarships
- + Postdoctoral Grants


- Click create progress report. You will be asked to confirm whether you want to create a new progress report for your application. Click **Create**.



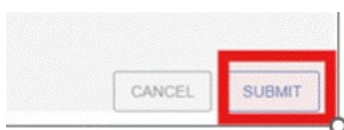
- Complete all compulsory and, where applicable, non-compulsory sections of the Progress Report (PR) form. Please note that all compulsory fields (*) must be completed before the system will allow you to proceed to the next step.



- If you need to edit the report before the final submit – click on the edit button.

| NARC20140101-091230 | | 2014-06-01T09:27:00 | Migrated Submission | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---|--------|
| Progress Report Reference | Created Date | Status | Complete | Edit | Delete |
| NARC20140101-091230-PR-2023 | 12/02/2024 | Progress Report in Progress | ✓ |  | |

- Click on the **Submit** button (**Note: Once the Report is submitted it cannot be edited**)



5. Progress Report Template Sections

5.1 All the compulsory sections must be completed before the final submit button can be activated. Once the sections are completed, please ensure that you submit the report by clicking on the 'Submit' icon.

| Sections | Compulsory |
|---|------------|
| Personal Profile | Yes |
| Qualifications/Certifications | Yes |
| Research Expertise | Yes |
| Career History | Yes |
| Grant Details | Yes |
| Aims and Objectives | Yes |
| Research Highlights | Yes |
| Impact of the Research | Yes |
| Challenges Related to Research/Project | Yes |
| Proposed Research Plan Towards Completion | Yes |
| Application Support Input | Yes |
| Research Output | Yes |
| Alignment to National Imperative | Yes |
| Collaboration | Yes |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Science Engagement | Yes |
| Geographical Area | Yes |
| National Infrastructure Platform | Yes |
| Proposed Research Plan Towards Completion | Yes |
| Challenges Related to Research | Yes |
| Travel Grant Feedback | No |
| Attachments | No |

6. Screenshots of Progress Report Sections

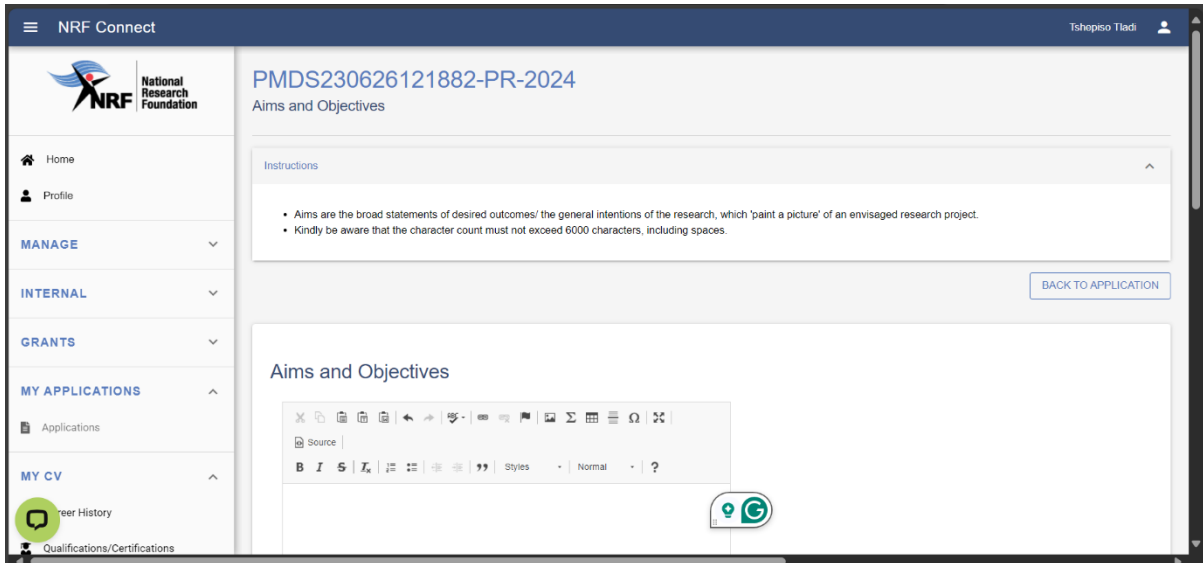
6.1 Grant Details:

Year of Award: The 'Year of Award' refers to the year in which the grant was first awarded and paid to the grantholder.

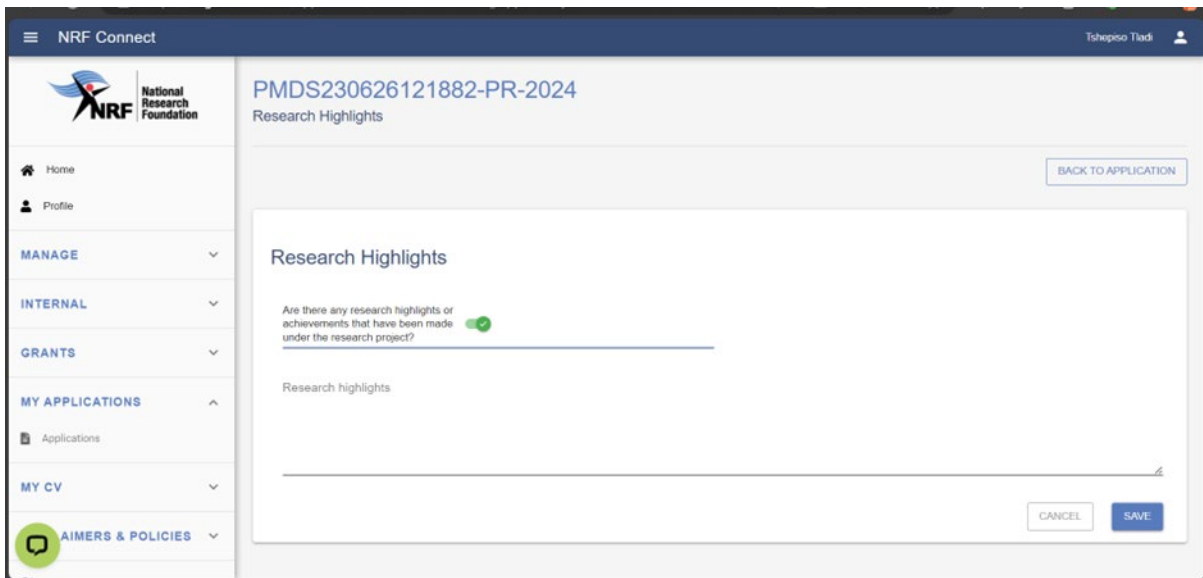
Title in Original Application: Grantholders who have changed the Research Project Title from the one indicated in the original scholarship application, must first update the title under the Grants Management module of their NRF Connect Profile, before they can complete this section of the Progress Report. The steps for updating the title can be found in Annexure 1 of this Guide.

6.2 Aims and Objectives: The aims and objectives are pulled from the original scholarship application and displayed in this section. Therefore, it is important to update the Grant Details section first, before this section is completed.

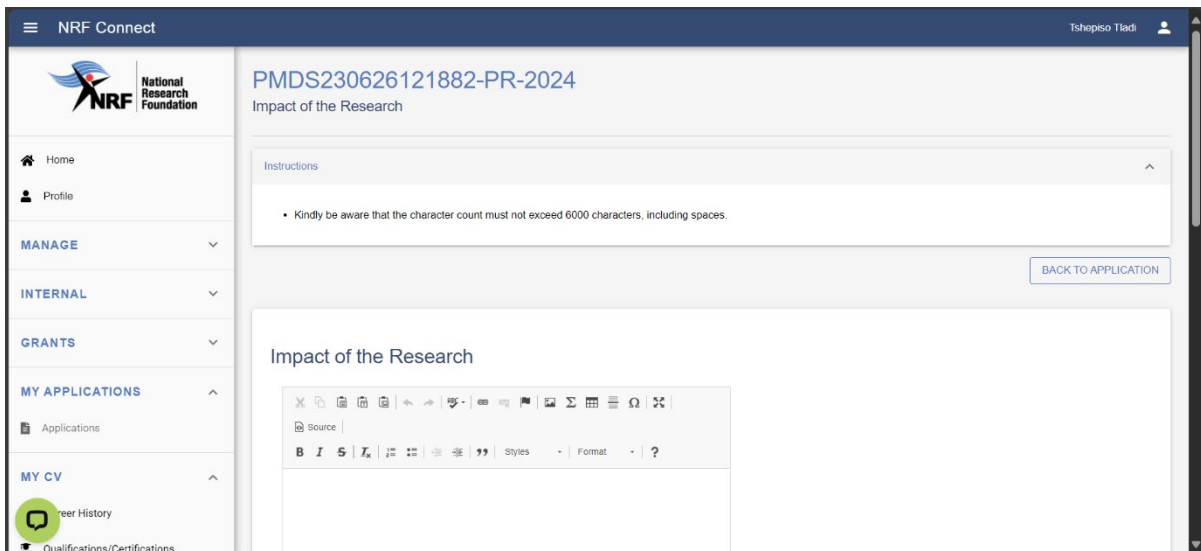
If there are any changes to the original aims and objectives, use the toggle button to make amendments.



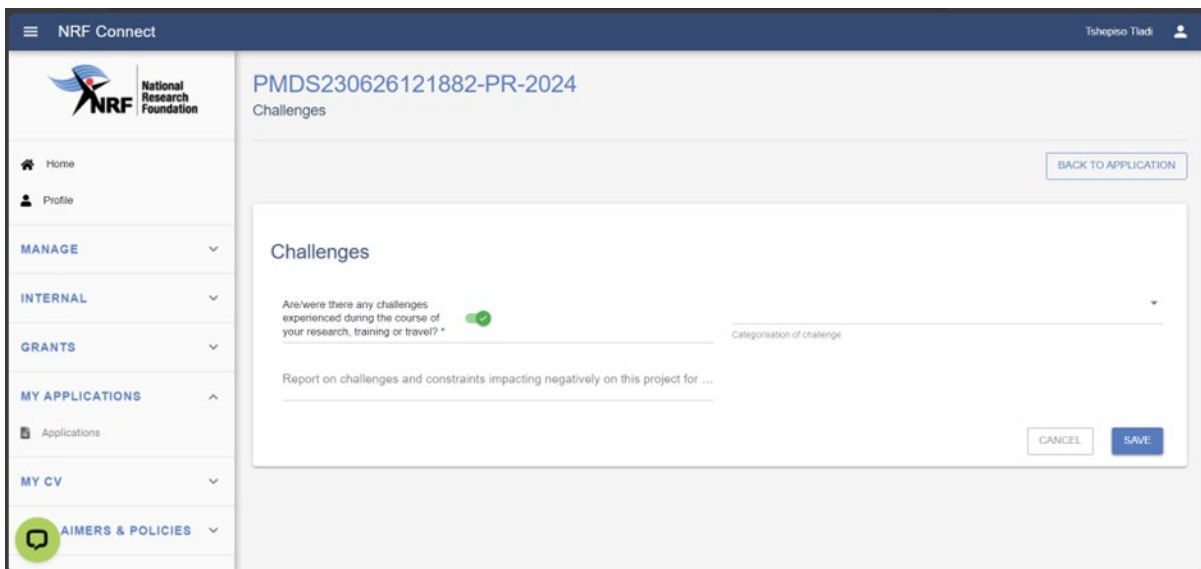
6.3 Research Highlights: Add information related to the highlights of your research. Research highlights are the most important and exciting results or advancements you've made in your research over the last year.



6.4 Impact of the Research: Indicate if any aspects of the research impact (as indicated in the original application) have been achieved.

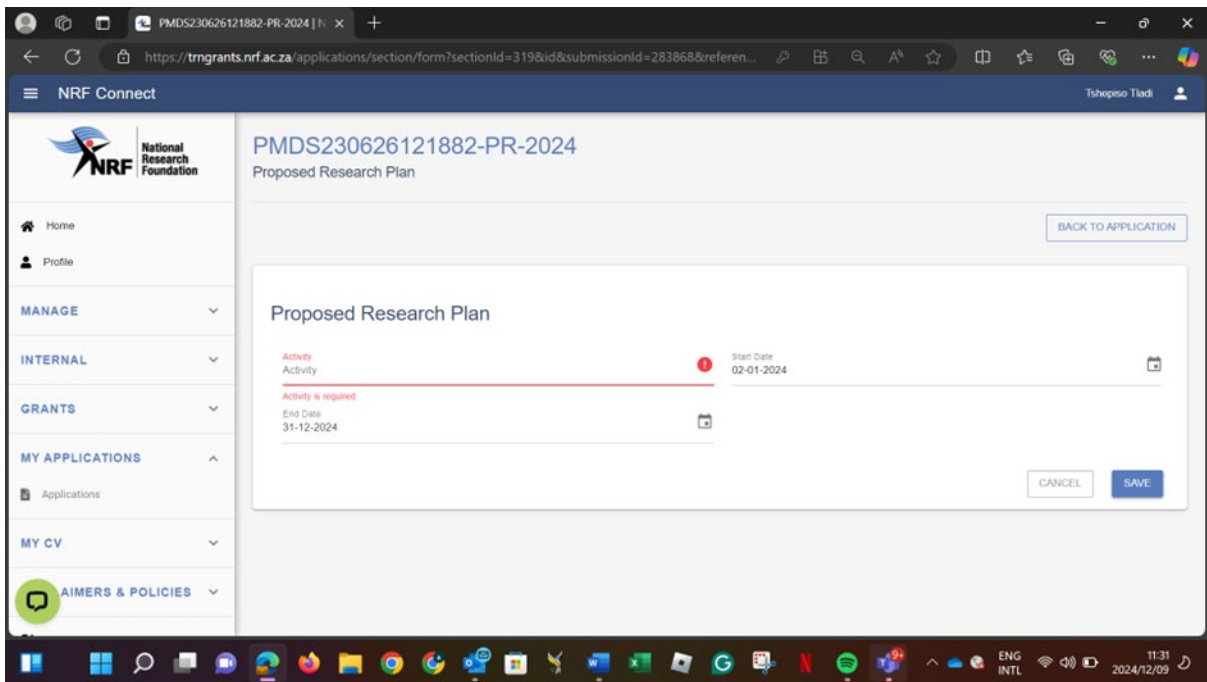


6.5 Challenges Related to Research or Project: Report on any challenges and constraints impacting negatively during the course of this research.



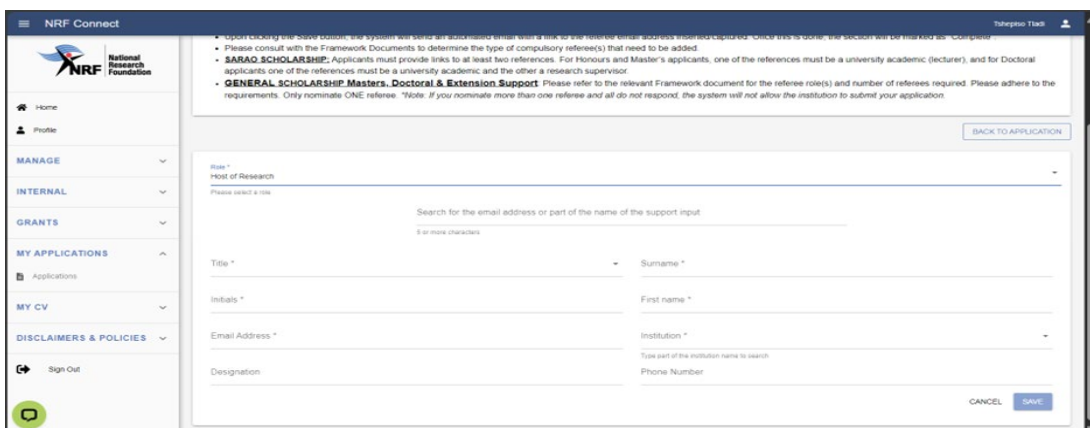
6.6 Proposed Research Plan Towards Completion:

If the research is still ongoing, provide a detailed workplan on how you intend to complete the project within the required timeframe.



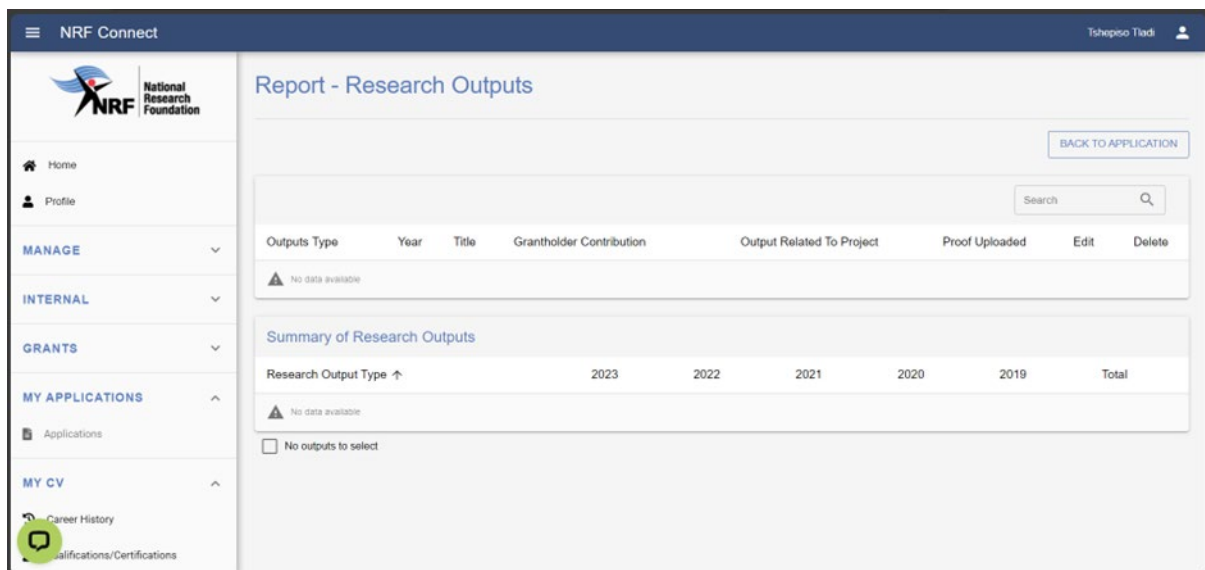
6.7 Application Support Input: Students must add details of their supervisor to this section. Once the details have been captured, a report will become available on the supervisor's NRF Connect profile for them to complete. **Please ensure that you capture the supervisor's email address linked to their NRF Connect profile.** Should you capture a different email address, the supervisor will only access your report by clicking on the link sent via email.

Alternatively, the student can upload a signed letter on a university letterhead, from their supervisor to the attachments section, however, they must still capture the supervisor's details for this section to mark as complete. The supervisor letter must outline progress made by the students and indicate whether continuation of funding is recommended or not. **Continued funding will not be released for 2026 without the supervisor report.**



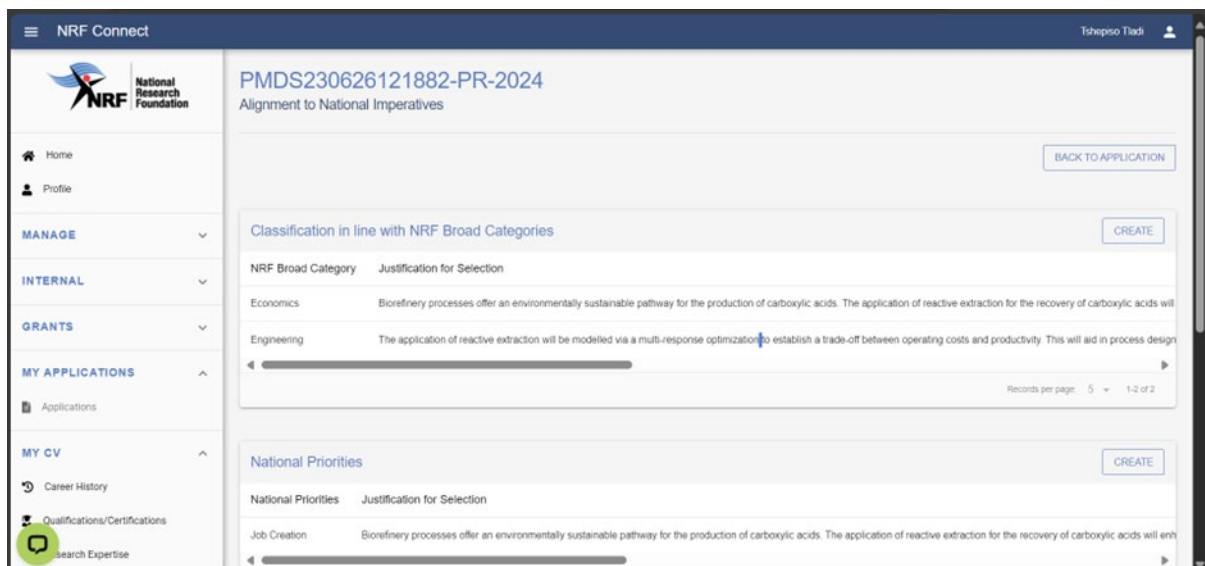
6.8 Research Outputs: Please update the research outputs in the 'My CV' section for the information to reflect on the report. Research outputs refer to the actual products or tangible

results of a research project. These include publications, datasets, software, patents, conference presentations, and any other measurable results from the research process.

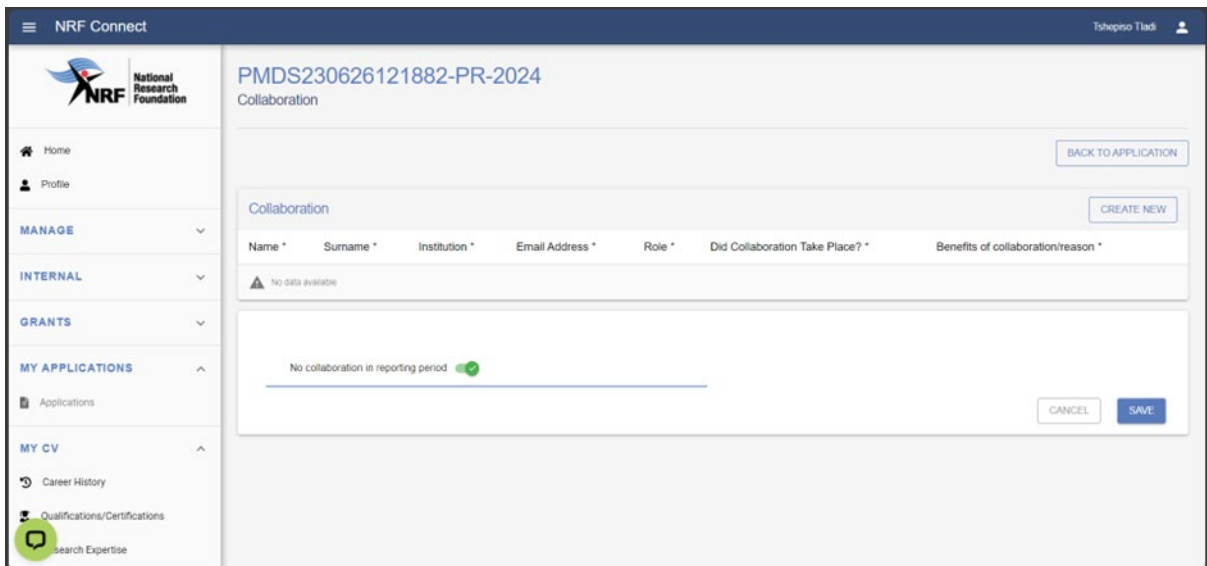


6.9 Alignment to National Imperative: Grantholders must complete the “Comments” sub-section before this section can be saved and marked as complete.

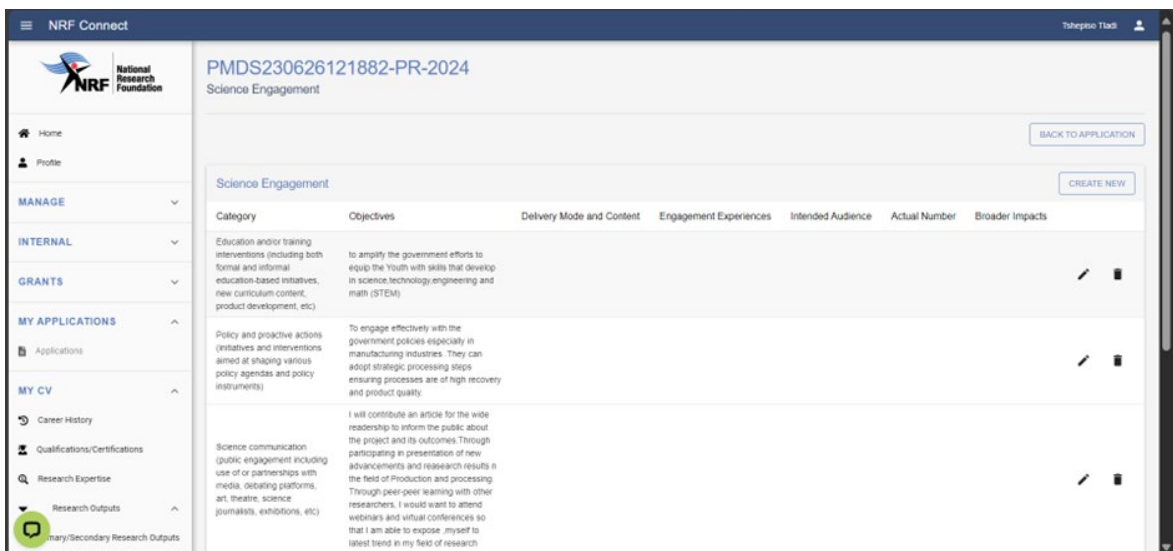
There is a character limitation of 500 for the justification section. If the number of characters exceeds 500, the section will not save/mark as complete.



6.10 Collaboration: Add details of any research collaboration that took place during the reporting period.

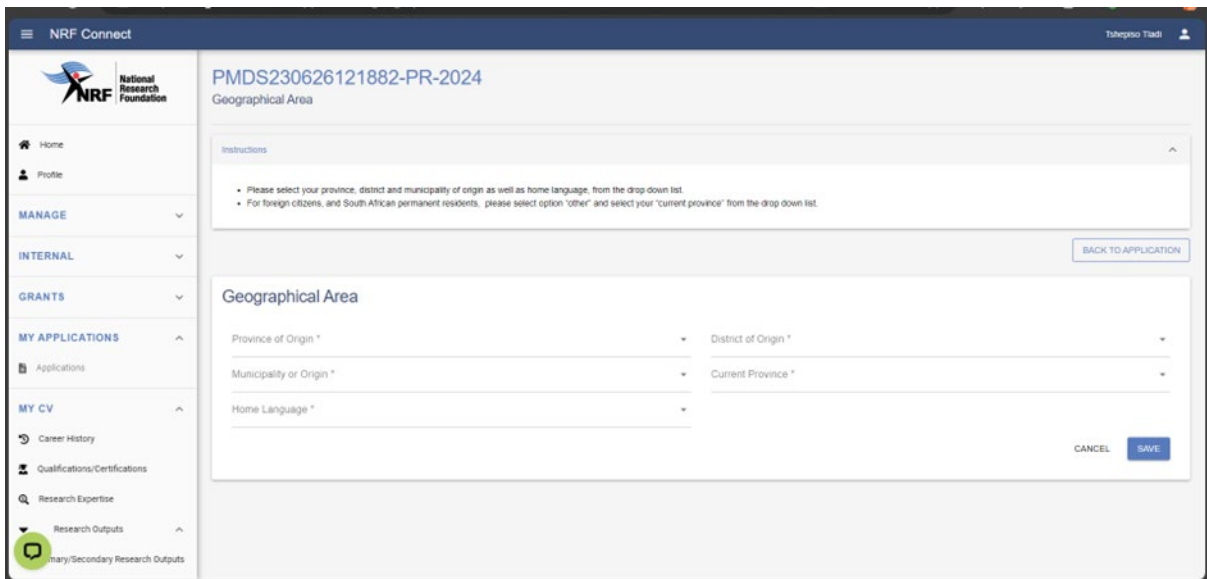


6.11 Science Engagement: Provide details of any science engagement activities related to your research that took place during the reporting period.

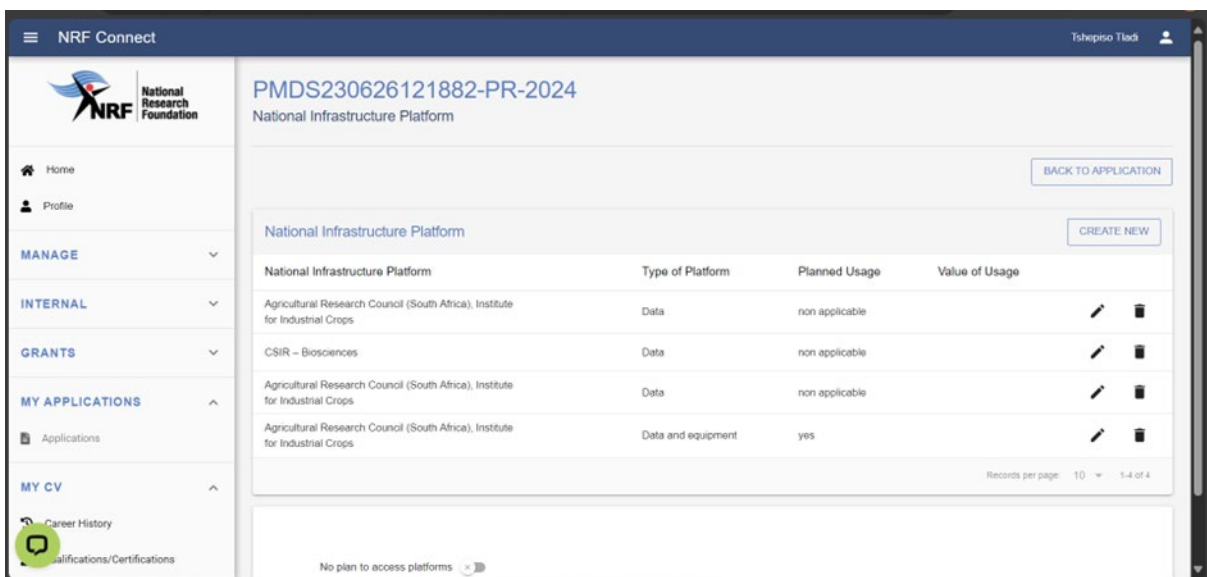


6.12 Geographical Area: Please select your province, district and municipality of origin as well as home language, from the drop-down list.

For Non-South Africans and South African permanent residents, please select option “Other” and select your “current province” from the drop-down list.



6.13 National Infrastructure Platform: Add information regarding any national infrastructure platforms that were utilized during the course of your research. Move the toggle if there are no platforms accessed.



6.14 Travel Grant Feedback: This section must be completed by doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows who received travel or mobility grants in addition to their scholarship or fellowship.

The screenshot shows the 'Travel Grant Feedback' form in the NRF Connect system. The form is divided into two columns. The left column contains the following fields: 'Was the travel funding accessed *' (with a green checkmark icon), 'Utilisation of NRF funding', 'Duration - from' (with a calendar icon), 'Title of event', 'City', and 'Highlights (e.g. workshops, field trips, special interest meetings) *'. The right column contains: 'Total cost of travel received from the NRF', 'Category *' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Duration - to' (with a calendar icon), 'Name of research host', 'Country *' (with a dropdown arrow), and 'Outcomes of travel (e.g. publications, articles, etc.) *'. A sidebar on the left shows navigation options like Home, Profile, MANAGE, INTERNAL, GRANTS, MY APPLICATIONS, MY CV, and Career History.

6.15 Attachments: Continuing students should attach proof of registration for the 2026 academic year in order for continuing funds to be released.

- If the proof of registration is not available at the time of submission of the report, the grantholder can upload the proof of registration later, under the attachment section of their grant profile on the NRF Connect System.
- Final year students should attach proof of completion (Academic Transcript or Graduation Certificate) if available. If not available at the time of report submission, the proof of completion must be attached under the 'Qualifications' section of their NRF Connect profile.

The screenshot shows the 'Attachments' page for application PMDS230626121882-PR-2024. It features an 'Instructions' section with a list of requirements:

- Please read the Framework Documents of the Call you are applying for to determine what attachments are compulsory.
- Please do not upload a copy of your ID document or passport in this section. This is compulsory in the 'Personal Details' section of your Profile.
- Upload documents in the appropriate sections described. Use the + button to add relevant documents in the same document description.
- Do not upload documents larger than 4MB. Should any of the documents exceed this size, please compress them before uploading. You may use this [link](#) to do so.
- Students applying for a SARAO Honours, Master's or Doctoral scholarship MUST read the 'Attachments' section of the SARAO POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE: SARAO Postgraduate Scholarships Application Guide for the 2024 Academic Year
- SARAO will NOT consider any applications where the required documents are not attached.

 Below the instructions, a note states: 'Masters and doctoral applicants must upload a letter from their supervisor. Please refer to the DSI-NRF Master's and Doctoral Application and Funding Guide for 2025 for further details related to: (1) the scholarships that this requirements relevant to and (2) the information that should be included in the supervisor's letter.' A 'BACK TO APPLICATION' button is located to the right. At the bottom, there are two document upload slots: 'Supporting Documents' (0/05 / 0.00%) and 'Supervisor Recommendation' (0/05 / 0.00%). The sidebar on the left is identical to the previous screenshot.

7. Instructions to Research/Postgraduate Officers (or equivalent)

Please ensure that you prepare adequately for the published cut-off dates.

Designated Authorities (DAs) are the gatekeepers of quality progress reports to safeguard the reputation of institutions in accessing funds. As such they should:

- Provide guidance and advice to researchers, grantholders, and students in completing their progress reports;
- Review progress reports for completeness, validity, reliability and correctness before submission to the NRF. This includes ensuring that any required attachments are uploaded and are correct;
- Open progress reports for amendment if/when required and indicate where revisions are required.

Institutional Finance Officers are responsible for the processing of carry forward requests as part of the progress report.

8. Closing Dates

The closing dates for submission of progress reports are as follows:

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Closing Date for Masters and Doctoral Students: | 16 February 2026 |
| Closing Date for Designated Authorities: | 02 March 2026 |

9. FAQ

Click on the link below to access the FAQ:

<https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-faqs/>

10. Contact Details

Grantholders are encouraged to contact the Designated Authority at the University's Postgraduate Office for information and guidance.

For queries related to the scholarships:

- Email: postgraduatequeries@risa.nrf.ac.za

The subject line of your email must contain the following:

- Level i.e. Master's Progress Report or Doctoral Progress Report
- Funding opportunity e.g. General, SARChI, NRF-MINDS etc.
- Your grant (application) reference number starting with prefix PMDS25

For technical assistance or queries related to the NRF Connect System:

- Email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za
- Tel: 012 481 4202
- Chat function on the NRF Connect system.

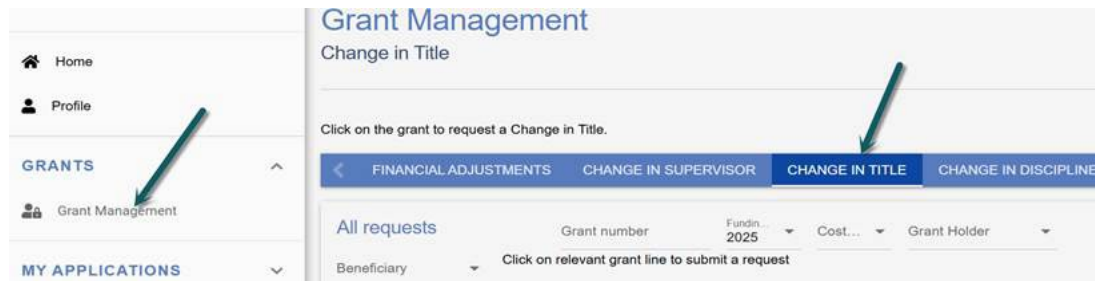
Appendix 1

Change in Title

Navigate to nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za and click the ORCID logo to login.

1. Scenario 1 – Grant Holder

The grant holder must navigate to the screen shown below to access the **Change in Title** module.



All grants belonging to the grant holder will appear once they click on **Change in Title**. The grant holder must then select the specific grant for which they wish to submit a request by clicking on the grant line.

This is a close-up of the 'All requests' section from the previous screenshot. It shows a table with the following data:

| Grant Holder | Grant Number | Year | Funding Opportunity | Status | Cost Centre |
|-----------------|------------------|------|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| Th [REDACTED] e | TTK22 [REDACTED] | 2025 | Thuthuka | No Request | TTTK |

Searching and selecting a supervisor

Change In Short Title Request Detail

New Title
New Title

1. Copy and paste the email address of the Supervisor. This must be the same email address they used to register on NRF Connect

2. Click on the Search tab to locate the Supervisor.

Student Supervisor

Thabo [REDACTED]@gmail.com]

3. Then click on the drop down to select the supervisor

Is ethical clearance required? No Yes

The details of the grant are displayed under the **Grant Details** heading. The original application and award PDFs can be viewed under **Documents and PDF's**.

Grant Details

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Reference TTK2 [REDACTED] | Grant Holder [REDACTED] |
| Beneficiary University of Johannesburg | Title The application [REDACTED] |
| Funding Opportunity Thuthuka | Funding Year 2025 |
| Support Start Date January 2, 2023 | Support End Date December 31, 2025 |

The grant holder must complete the fields shown below and submit the request. The **Upload** tab is optional. Grant holders may attach any supporting documents for the request.

Change In Short Title Request Detail

New Title
New Title

Motivation
Test

Student Supervisor
Thabo [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@gmail.com

Is ethical clearance required? No Yes

Enter a minimum 3 characters to trigger searching ...

Upload files
0.0B / 0.00%

SUBMIT CANCEL

2. Scenario 2 – Supervisor

The Supervisor must navigate to the screen shown below to access the **Change in Title** module. They can filter the results by Beneficiary, Reference Number, Funding Year, Cost Centre, or Grant Holder Name. Once the grant(s) appears, the Supervisor should select the relevant grant they intend to process by clicking on it.

Click on the grant to request a Change in Title.

CHANGE IN TITLE

All requests

Grant number Fundin 2025 Cost... Grant Holder

Beneficiary Click on relevant grant line to process a request

| Grant Holder | Grant Number | Year | Funding Opportunity | Status | Cost Centre |
|------------------|-----------------|------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Thabo [REDACTED] | TTK2 [REDACTED] | 2025 | Thuthuka | Change In Title Supervisor Review | TTTK |

The Supervisor will be able to view the original title as well as other details including the application and award PDFs under the **Grant Details** heading. The requested title change as well as all other relevant information related to the request is shown under the **Change in Short Title Request Detail** heading.

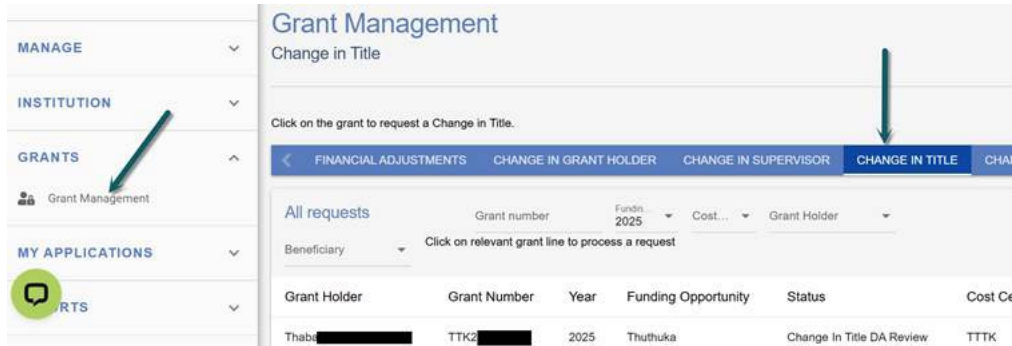
The screenshot shows two main sections. The top section, titled "Grant Details", contains a table with the following information: Reference (TTK: [redacted]), Beneficiary (University of Johannesburg), Funding Opportunity (Thuthuka), Support Start Date (January 2, 2023), Grant Holder ([redacted]), Title (The application [redacted]), Funding Year (2025), and Support End Date (December 31, 2025). Below this table is a button labeled "DOCUMENTS AND PDF'S" with a dropdown arrow. The bottom section, titled "Change in Short Title Request Detail", contains a table with the following information: New Title ([redacted]), Motivation (Test), Is Ethical Clearance Required? (YES), and Assigned Supervisor ([redacted]@gmail.com). Below this table is a button labeled "CLICK HERE TO VIEW SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S)" with a red notification icon.

The Supervisor can then approve or reject the request and submit it. When a request is approved, a non-compulsory comment can be captured. When a request is rejected, a compulsory reason must be captured.

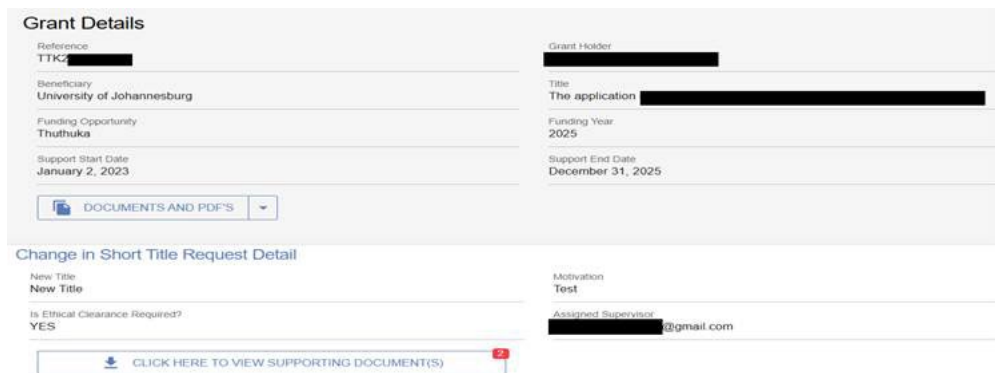
The screenshot shows two main sections. The top section, titled "Change in Short Title Status", contains a list of two items: "The Change in Short Title Request created by the Grant Holder" with a green checkmark icon, and "Pending Approval by Supervisor" with a red X icon. The bottom section, titled "Process Request", contains a toggle switch for "Reject" and "Approve", with "Approve" selected. Below the toggle is a text input field containing "Test" and a character count "4 / 250". At the bottom right are two buttons: "SUBMIT" and "CANCEL".

3. Scenario 3 – Designated Authority

The Designated Authority must navigate to the screen shown below to access the **Change in Title** module. They can filter the results by Beneficiary, Reference Number, Funding Year, Cost Centre or Grant Holder Name. Once the grant(s) appears, the Supervisor should select the relevant grant they intend to process by clicking on it.



The Designated Authority will be able to view the original title as well as other details including the application and award PDFs under the Grant Details heading. The requested title change as well as other relevant information related to the request is shown under the **Change in Short Title Request Detail** heading.



The Designated Authority can then approve or reject the request and submit it. When a request is approved, a non-compulsory comment can be captured. When a request is rejected, a compulsory reason must be captured.

✕ Pending Approval by Designated Authority

Process Request Reject Approve

Test

4 / 250


SUBMIT CANCEL

4. Scenario 4 - NRF Internal Process

The NRF will process the request. Once the request has been approved, the new short title will appear on the grant and on the progress report under **Grant Details**. The grant holder will be able to view the updated title as shown below.

Change in Short Title

Grant Details

| | |
|---|--|
| Reference TTK2 | Grant Holder [Redacted] |
| Beneficiary University of Johannesburg | Title New Title  |
| Funding Opportunity Thuthuka | Funding Year 2025 |
| Support Start Date January 2, 2023 | Support End Date December 31, 2025 |