



## **Application and Funding Guide for Extension Support for Master's and Doctoral Scholarships 2024**

Directorate: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

Date: April 2023

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## List of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Infrastructure Capacity Development
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation
PR	Progress Report
SARChI	South African Research Chairs Initiative
CoE	Centre of Excellence
NASSP	National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme
SARAO	<i>South African Radio Astronomy Observatory</i>

## **Contact Details:**

### **For Technical NRF Connect Enquiries**

For NRF Connect Technical Enquiries, please contact the **NRF Support Desk** on weekdays, during office hours (08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday):

E-mail: [supportdesk@nrf.ac.za](mailto:supportdesk@nrf.ac.za)

### **For enquiries about the Application Process**

Ms Nozine Nqeketo

Telephone: (012) 481 4184

E-mail address: [N.Nqeketo@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:N.Nqeketo@risa.nrf.ac.za)

### **For enquiries about the Extension Support Funding Programme:**

Ms Nontokoza Kunene

Telephone: (012) 481 4105

E-mail address: [NS.Kunene@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:NS.Kunene@risa.nrf.ac.za)

## 1. Introduction

- This Application and Funding Guide provides an overview of the application process and funding guidelines for the extension support for master's and doctoral scholarships for the 2024 academic year.
- It should be read in conjunction with the **DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Framework for Funding in 2024 Academic Year (accessible on the NRF website under call documents)**. The framework document provides detailed information with respect to objectives of each funding opportunity, eligibility criteria, etc. This document does not, however, constitute a complete set of policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

## 2. Application Process

- The call for Extension Support for master's and doctoral scholarships for full-time studies in 2024 is published on the NRF website.
- The application form is accessible online at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Applicants may only submit **ONE** application.
- Once the applicant submits an application, the application will automatically be routed to the institution where the applicant is applying to study.
- The applications will be screened for eligibility, reviewed, and scored by the institutions.
- Applications that meet the scholarship requirements will be submitted to the NRF by the institution.
- Applications close on 18 August 2023.
- All applications are processed by an NRF Designated Authority (DA) who is based at the University Research/Postgraduate office. Should a DA contact you regarding your application, before your application is submitted to the NRF, please make sure you respond as soon as possible or within the timeline given in the communication. Failure to do so may result in the application being rejected at the institutional-review stage.

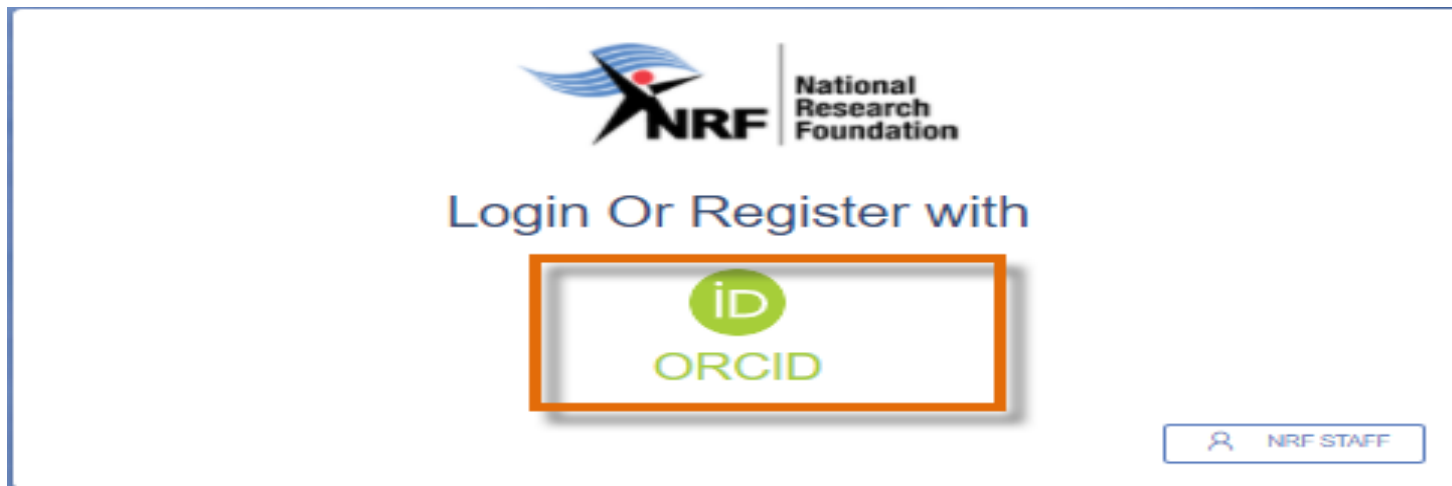
### 3. How to Submit an Application

- The extension support scholarship application is available on the NRF Connect System at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call opens, to prevent IT system overload, which may occur close to the cut-off dates.

#### Step 1: Login or Register

- When accessing NRF Connect (<https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>), the applicant will be directed to a Login (for registered users) and Register (for new users) page.
- All applicants are required to be registered on the NRF Connect system to make use of the relevant functionality.

Applicants must click the **ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID)** icon to login or register.



## Step 2: Signing in with ORCID iD

Applicants already registered on ORCID, must sign in using one of the following options:

- ORCID iD
- Email address linked with your ORCID profile
- GMAIL account linked with your ORCID
- Facebook account linked with ORCID

When clicking on **Sign In**, the system will redirect you to the NRF Connect login page and automatically log you in.

Sign in

Email or 16-digit ORCID iD


example@email.com or 0000-0001-2345-6789


Password

**SIGN IN**

**Forgot your password or ORCID ID?**  
Don't have an ORCID iD yet? [Register now](#)

or

 **Access through your institution**

 **Sign in with Google**

### Step 3: Creating the ORCID iD

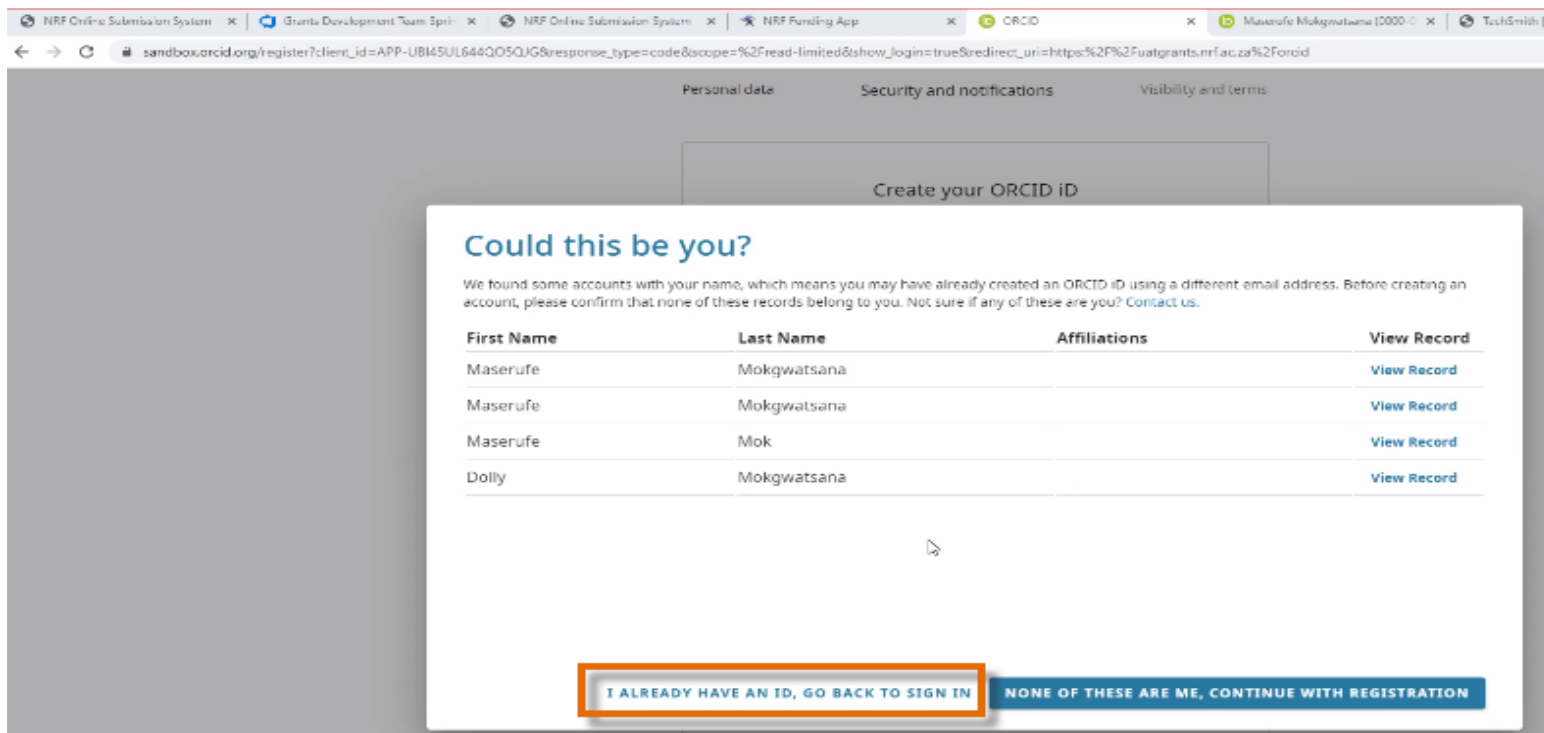
Applicants that are not registered on ORCID, must click “**Register now**” and follow the steps to create an ORCID profile.

The image shows a sign-in page for ORCID. At the top, it says "Sign in". Below this are two input fields: "Email or 16-digit ORCID iD" with the example "example@email.com or 0000-0001-2345-6789" and "Password". A blue button labeled "SIGN IN" is below the fields. Underneath is the text "Forgot your password or ORCID ID?" and a link "Don't have an ORCID iD yet? Register now" which is highlighted with a red box. Below this is the word "or" and three alternative sign-in options: "Access through your institution" (with a building icon), "Sign in with Google" (with the Google logo), and "Sign in with Facebook" (with the Facebook logo).



## Step 4: Existing ORCID Profiles

- On clicking **'Register Now'**, the system will return the following message: “We found some accounts with your name, which means you may have already created an ORCID iD using a different email address. Before creating an account, please confirm that none of these records belong to you. Not sure if any of these are you?”
- If any of the listed profile(s) belong to you, click “I already have an ID, go back to sign in”
- If none of the profiles are yours, click “None of these are me, continue with registration”



The screenshot shows the ORCID registration interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Personal data', 'Security and notifications', and 'Visibility and terms'. Below these is a 'Create your ORCID iD' button. A modal dialog titled 'Could this be you?' is displayed, containing the following text: 'We found some accounts with your name, which means you may have already created an ORCID iD using a different email address. Before creating an account, please confirm that none of these records belong to you. Not sure if any of these are you? [Contact us.](#)'

First Name	Last Name	Affiliations	View Record
Maserufe	Mokgwatsana		<a href="#">View Record</a>
Maserufe	Mokgwatsana		<a href="#">View Record</a>
Maserufe	Mok		<a href="#">View Record</a>
Dolly	Mokgwatsana		<a href="#">View Record</a>

At the bottom of the dialog, there are two buttons: 'I ALREADY HAVE AN ID, GO BACK TO SIGN IN' (highlighted with an orange box) and 'NONE OF THESE ARE ME, CONTINUE WITH REGISTRATION'.

## Step 5: Visibility of ORCID iD

Please select one of the options for the visibility of the ORCID records.

- Should you choose the first or second option, the ORCID records will be visible on NRF Connect
- Should you choose the third option; the records will not be visible on NRF Connect

**Create your ORCID ID**  
This is step 3 of 3

**Visibility settings**  
Your ORCID ID connects with your ORCID record that can contain links to your research activities, affiliations, awards, other versions of your name, and more. You control this content and who can see it.

By default, what visibility should be given to new items added to your ORCID Record?

- Everyone (87% of users choose this)
- Trusted Organizations (5% of users choose this)
- Only me (8% of users choose this)

**Terms of Use**

- I consent to the privacy policy and terms of use and agree to my data being publicly accessible where marked as "visible to Everyone".
- I consent to my data being processed in the United States.

**I'm not a robot**

[GO BACK](#) [REGISTER](#)

## Step 6: Authorize Access

Continue with the ORCID registration as prompted.

**ORCID** Authorize access

You are currently signed in as:

**Maserufe**  
https://sandbox.orcid.org/0000-0002-8226-4561  
[Sign out](#)

**NRF Connect** has asked for the following access to your ORCID record:

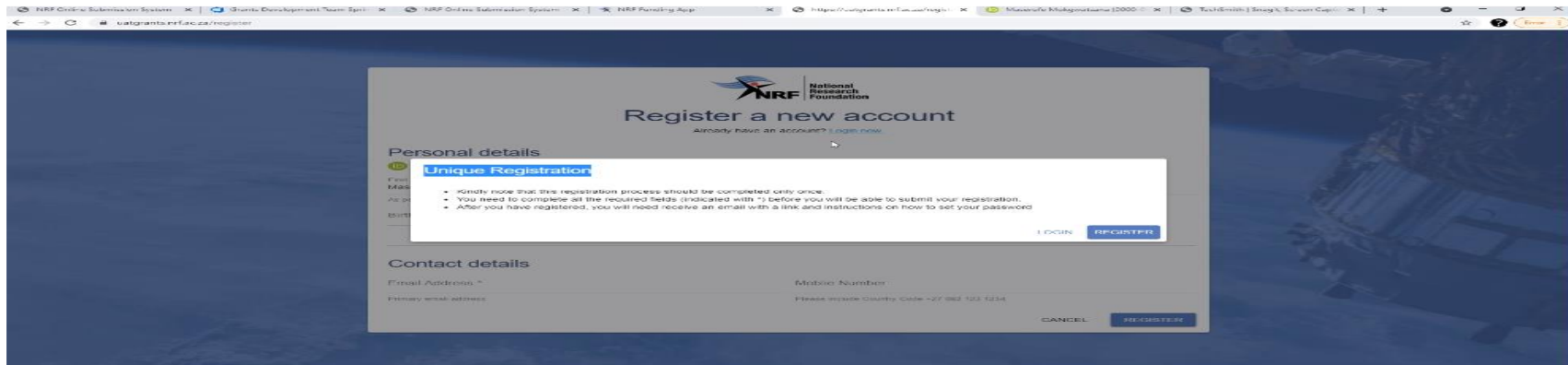
- Read your information with visibility set to Trusted Organizations

[Authorize access](#) [Deny access](#)

If authorized, this organization will have access to your ORCID record, as outlined above and described in further detail in ORCID's privacy policy. You can manage access permissions for this and other Trusted Organizations in your account settings.

## Step 7: Register on NRF Connect

When the ORCID registration process is complete, you will be redirected to NRF Connect login screen to register on the system.



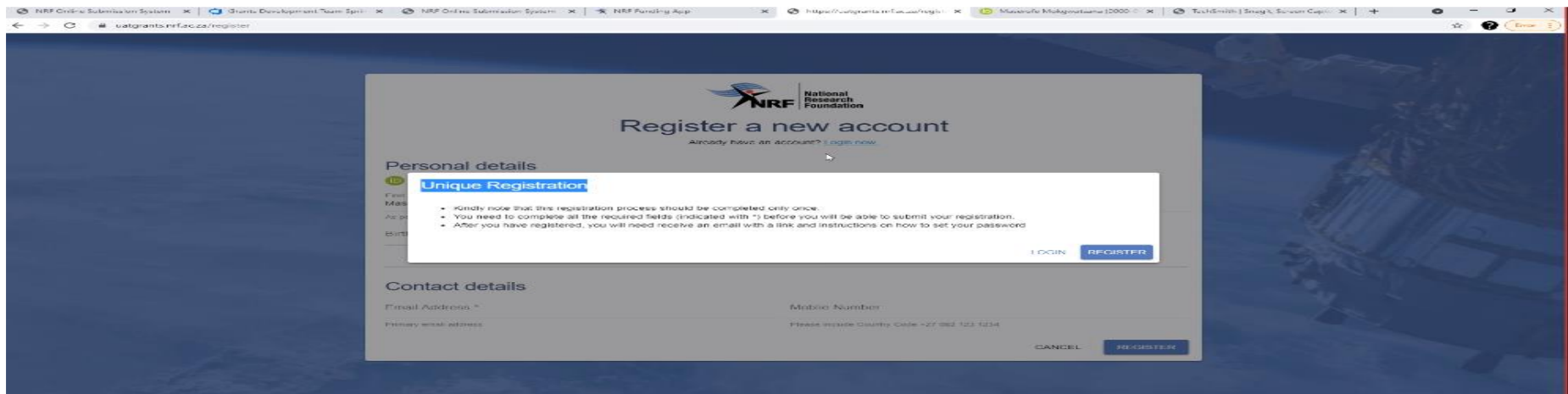
The screenshot shows the NRF Connect registration page. The title is "Register a new account" with the NRF logo and "National Research Foundation" text. Below the title, there is a link "Already have an account? Login now". The form is divided into "Personal details" and "Contact details". The "Personal details" section has a "Unique Registration" box with the following text:

- Kindly note that this registration process should be completed only once.
- You need to complete all the required fields (indicated with \*) before you will be able to submit your registration.
- After you have registered, you will need receive an email with a link and instructions on how to set your password

There are "LOGIN" and "REGISTER" buttons at the bottom right of the form. The "Contact details" section includes fields for "Email Address" and "Mobile Number".

## Step 8: Applicants with NRF Online Submission Profile

Applicants who are currently registered on the NRF Online Submission System, will be automatically logged in to NRF Connect with the ORCID profile.



This screenshot is identical to the one above, showing the NRF Connect registration page with the "Unique Registration" box and "REGISTER" button.

## Step 9: Applicants without NRF Online Submission Profile

If you're not registered on NRF Online Submission system, click '**Register**' to register and create a profile on the new NRF Connect system.

**Register a new account**  
Already have an account? [Login now](#)

**Personal details**

**Unique Registration**

- Kindly note that this registration process should be completed only once.
- You need to complete all the required fields (indicated with \*) before you will be able to submit your registration.
- After you have registered, you will need receive an email with a link and instructions on how to set your password.

LOGIN REGISTER

**Contact details**

Email Address \*  
Primary email address

Mobile Number  
Please include Country Code +27 962 123 1234

CANCEL REGISTER

## Step 10: Login on NRF Connect

Complete the missing fields and click **Register** to complete the process and the system will automatically log you in.

**Register a new account**  
Already have an account? [Login now](#)

**Personal details**

<https://sandbox.orcid.org/0000-0002-8026-4881>

First Name \*  
Maserufe

As per your birth certificate

Surname \*  
As per your birth certificate

Birth Date \*  
As per your birth certificate

**Contact details**

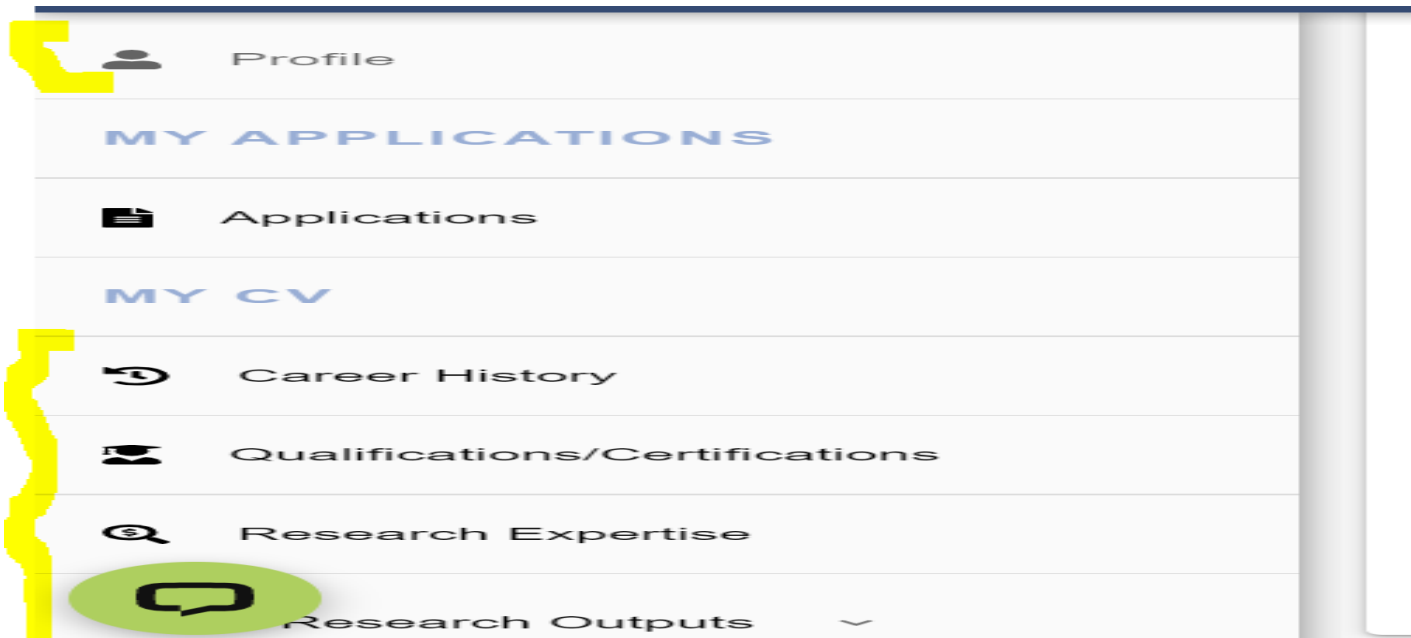
Email Address \*  
Primary email address

Mobile Number  
Please include Country Code +27 962 123 1234

CANCEL REGISTER

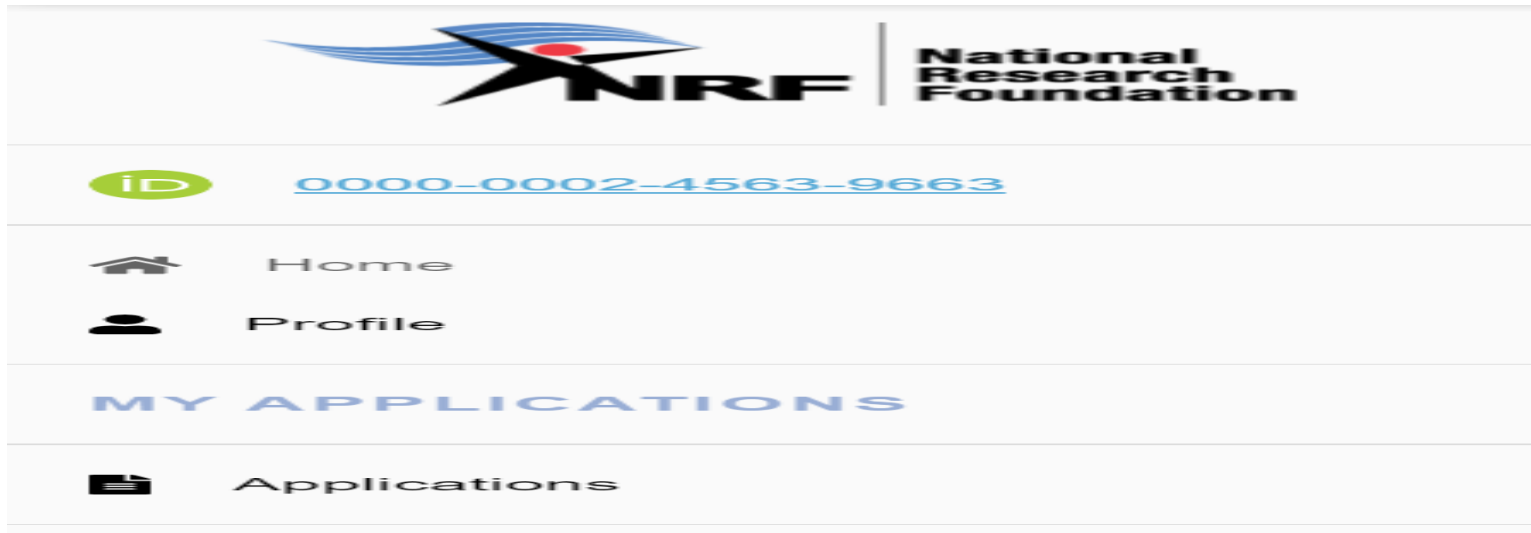
## Step 11: Complete the “My Profile” and CV sections

- Applicants must first complete or update the section ‘**My Profile**’ together with the CV section on the left side of the NRF Connect screen before they can complete the application.
- All fields with an asterisk \* are compulsory.



## Step 12: Accessing the application

To create an application, go to “MY APPLICATIONS” and select “Applications”



### Step 13: Postgraduate Scholarship Level

Click on the plus sign on NRF Postgraduate Scholarships to view the postgraduate scholarship levels

Instructions

#### List of Applications

Category

Rectangular Snip



Concept Notes



NRF Postgraduate Scholarships



Postdoctoral Grants



Rectangular Snip



Research Grants





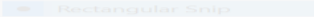



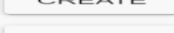
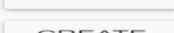

Rectangular Snip



Travel, Training and Conference Grants

## Step 14: Creating the application

- Click on **'Create'** to complete the extension support scholarship application.
- Please note that the application can only be created once. To continue working on the created application, you must click on the **'Edit'** button.

List of Applications	
Category	
 Concept Notes	
 NRF Postgraduate Scholarships	
<b>SARAO Doctoral</b>	 
<b>SARAO Honours</b>	
<b>SARAO Masters</b>	
<b>Masters</b>	
<b>Doctoral</b>	
<b>Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships</b>	

## Step 15: Application Sections

- After creating the application, you will be taken to the landing page below.
- All sections marked with an asterisk \* are compulsory. These sections must be completed in order for the final submit button to be activated.
- Completed sections will be indicated by a green tick, while incomplete sections will have a red cross.
- Applicants may complete the non-compulsory sections, if relevant.




## My Applications

### Edit Application

Category: NRF Postgraduate Scholarships  
Funding opportunity: Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships  
Reference: PMDS23041191176  
Applicant closing date: 18/08/2023

[BACK TO APPLICATIONS](#)

Section	Complete	Updated	Edit
Personal Profile *	✓	01/06/2022	
Qualifications/Certifications *	✓	06/04/2023	
Research Expertise *	✓	11/04/2023	
Student Supervision	✓	11/04/2023	
Career History	✓	06/04/2023	
Research Outputs	✗		
Patents	✗		
Application Category - Extension Support *	✗		
Geographical Area *	✗		
Details of Extension *	✗		
Original Problem Statement *	✗		
Original Research Plan *	✗		
Progress to Date *	✗		

### Step 16: Application Category - Extension Support

- The **Application Category** section is a very important section as the applicant is required to select the level of study to be funded for.
- Only full time applicants can apply for extension support.
- Note that extensions will only be granted under exceptional circumstances, and will be for either six (6) or twelve (12) months.


Application Category - Extension Support

Are you/will you be registered as a full-time student? \*

Type of scholarship \*  Extension requested for \*

### Step 17: Application Support Input

The **Application Support Input** section allows an applicant to include the names and email addresses of academic referees who can comment on the applicant's academic abilities. On final submission of the application, emails requesting a referee's response, are sent automatically to the nominated referees to provide a report on the academic and research capabilities of the applicant.

Application Support Input						<input type="button" value="CREATE NEW"/>
Role	Surname	First Name	Institution	Email	Delete	
 No data available						

**\*Note** For extension support applicants - either Doctoral or Masters Supervisor who can comment on the progress of the studies. If there is no response from the supervisor, the application will be rejected without review. **Only current supervisor(s)** required.

## Step 18: Details of extension

- The **Details of Extension** section requires the applicants to indicate which institution they will be registered with. If the applicant is an NRF grantholder in 2023, the grant details will pull into this section. If your grant details do not pull into the section, it means that the NRF system does not recognise you as a grantholder. Please call the NRF contact person for assistance.
- NB: **Block grant** and grantholder-linked students will have to have been nominated on the system in 2023 for your information to pull through.
- **For applicants funded under the PDP programme**, the applicant's institution must be the university you will be registered with (**not the Science Council or Research facility**).

### Details of Extension

Application/grant reference number	Value of grant
Application's proposed institution *	Date of first registration for the degree
Student number (if currently registered at a university)	Discipline
Faculty (of degree to be funded)	Department/School (of degree to be funded)

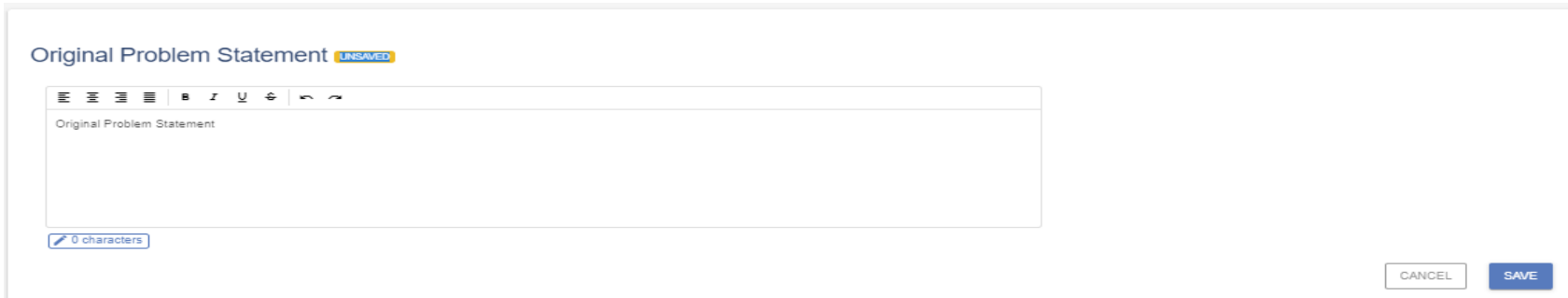
CANCEL SAVE

The form displays the following fields and validation messages:

- Application's proposed institution \***: Required field. Validation message: "Application's proposed institution is required".
- Date of first registration for the degree**: Required field. Validation message: "Date of first registration for the degree is Required".
- Discipline**: Required field. Validation message: "Discipline is Required".
- Department/School (of degree to be funded)**: Field with a "Rectangular Snip" watermark.

## Step 19: Original Problem Statement and Research Plan

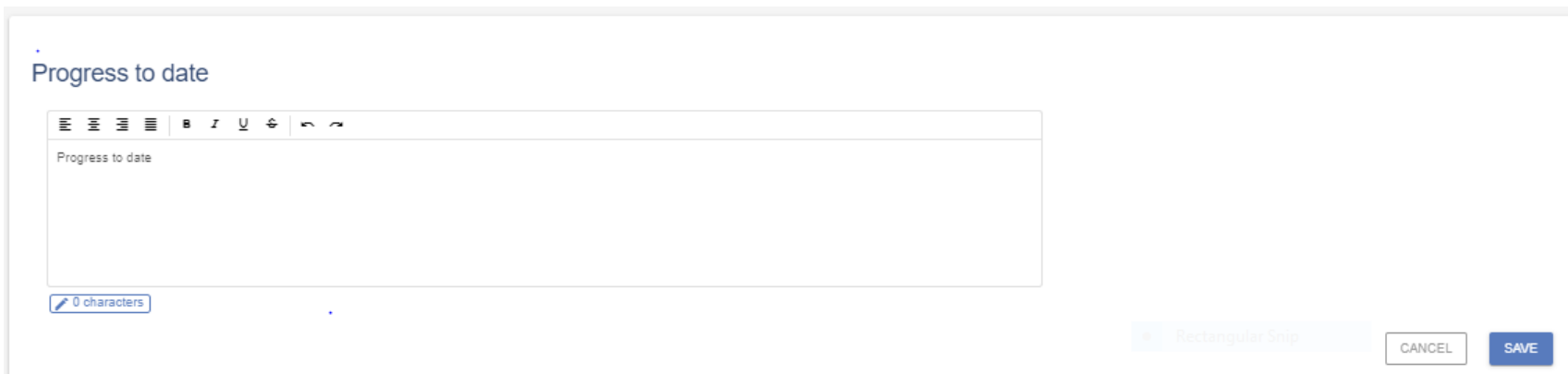
The **Original Problem statement** and the **Original research plan** sections are compulsory sections because the reviewer might not have the applicant's original application, so the information is very important to determine what was originally proposed prior to progress to date.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Original Problem Statement" with a yellow "UNSAVED" indicator. The form contains a rich text editor with a toolbar at the top featuring icons for bold, italic, underline, link, and unlink. The text area is currently empty and contains the placeholder text "Original Problem Statement". Below the text area, there is a character count that reads "0 characters". At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "CANCEL" and "SAVE".

## Step 20: Progress to Date

The **Progress to Date** section requires applicants to indicate the work done so far under the Research Project.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Progress to date". The form contains a rich text editor with a toolbar at the top featuring icons for bold, italic, underline, link, and unlink. The text area is currently empty and contains the placeholder text "Progress to date". Below the text area, there is a character count that reads "0 characters". At the bottom right of the form, there are three buttons: "Rectangular Snip" (disabled), "CANCEL", and "SAVE".

## Step 21: Reasons why the study could not be completed

The **Reason why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period** section requires an explanation as to why the study could not be completed within the NRF maximum funding period time.

Reasons why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period



A screenshot of a web form. At the top, the title 'Reasons why the study could not be completed in the NRF maximum funding period' is displayed in a blue font. Below the title is a rich text editor with a toolbar containing icons for bold, italic, underline, link, and unlink. The text area is currently empty, showing only a cursor. At the bottom left of the text area, there is a small blue box with a pencil icon and the text '0 characters'. At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: a white 'CANCEL' button and a blue 'SAVE' button.

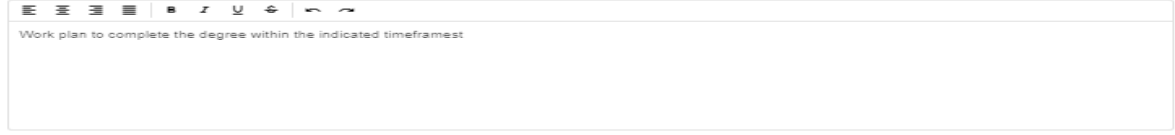
0 characters

CANCEL SAVE

## Step 22: Work Plan

The **Work plan to complete the degree within the defined timeframes** section requires the applicant to provide a work plan to complete the degree within the requested period of extension. Clear timelines of activities to take place during the period of extension should be provided.

Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframes



A screenshot of a web form. At the top, the title 'Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframes' is displayed in a blue font. Below the title is a rich text editor with a toolbar containing icons for bold, italic, underline, link, and unlink. The text area contains the placeholder text 'Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframe'. At the bottom left of the text area, there is a small blue box with a pencil icon and the text '0 characters'. At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: a white 'CANCEL' button and a blue 'SAVE' button.

Work plan to complete the degree within the indicated timeframe

0 characters

CANCEL SAVE

## 4. Tracking the application

This section explains different application statuses to assist the applicant track the application. The status of your application will determine the stage the application is at.

Applicants should direct queries to the University Research/Postgraduate office if the application is still at the university.

<p><b>Application in progress</b> Applicant still busy completing the application</p>	<p><b>Submitted to Institution</b> Application has been submitted by the applicant</p>	<p><b>Application under designated authority review</b> Application being screened and scored by university DA</p>	<p><b>Application rejected by DA</b> The application has been rejected at the institutional stage</p>	<p><b>Open for amendment</b> DA has opened the application for applicant to effect changes</p>
<p><b>Call closed</b> Application process closed and application not submitted to NRF</p>	<p><b>Submitted to NRF for review</b> Eligible applications submitted to the NRF</p>	<p><b>Declined for review by NRF</b> Application rescreened and rejected by NRF due to non-eligibility</p>	<p><b>External Evaluation</b> Application being considered for funding</p>	<p><b>Successful</b> Successful application</p>
	<p><b>Unsuccessful due to constraints</b> Application deemed fundable, but unsuccessful due to Budgetary constraints</p>	<p><b>Unsuccessful due to review outcome</b> Application deemed unfundable during the review process</p>	<p><b>Withdrawn</b> The applicant has withdrawn the application</p>	

## **5. Screening Processes**

### **5.1 Overview of the Screening Process**

All submitted applications validated and reviewed by South African public institutions and submitted to the NRF, are further screened by the NRF for compliance with the eligibility criteria and requirements of the Call for applications. Applications that fail to meet the stipulated requirements will be rejected.

## **6. Applications Feedback and Disputes**

Once the assessment processes have been completed and the recommended funding decision has been approved by the NRF, the NRF will publish a list of successful applicants on the NRF website at [www.nrf.ac.za/bursaries/calls](http://www.nrf.ac.za/bursaries/calls). The application status online will indicate whether or not the application has been approved for funding. If your name does not appear on the published list of successful applications it means that your application was unsuccessful.

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000) give effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action as contemplated in section 33 of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The NRF and the universities are expected to provide feedback to all applicants on the status of their application.

### **Feedback from the University:**

- Universities must provide feedback to applicants who were screened at the universities for eligibility and deemed not eligible for funding.
- Universities must provide feedback to applicants who were reviewed at the universities and were recommended not eligible for funding by the panel of reviewers.

### **Feedback from the NRF**

- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants whose applications were recommended for funding but were not awarded funding due to budget constraints. In this instance, the NRF will send a regret letter directly to the affected applicants.
- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants whose applications were recommended for funding and approved for funding. In this instance, the NRF will publish a list of the

successful applicants on the NRF website and share the list with the Research/Postgraduate Offices at respective universities.

**The NRF will conduct an Appeals Process two (2) months after the official publication date of the results on the NRF website. Only those applicants who were not recommended by the institutional review panel or where a system issue was encountered with the submission of an application to the NRF, are eligible to appeal. An appeal must be justified and must be supported by the supervisor in order to be considered.**

**Note: A successful appeal does not automatically constitute an award, rather the application will be moved to the list of applications recommended for funding but not awarded due to budgetary constraints.**

## **7. Scientific Compliance**

### **7.1 Methodology**

The student takes scientific responsibility for the research to be undertaken, including its objectives and the methodology outlined in the project proposal. The student is required to devote the necessary time to the research project in compliance with the work-plan for the research proposal approved by the NRF so as to achieve the project's stated aims and objectives.

### **7.2 Intellectual Property Rights**

The intellectual capital generated by NRF funded research must be appropriately protected and exploited for the benefit of South Africa. This condition should not interfere with the Intellectual Property Rights arrangements already made, on condition that the majority of the benefits arising from the intellectual capital accrue to South Africa and its citizens. This condition is aligned with the Intellectual Property Rights Act, 1 which will override this condition of grant.

1 RSA (2008). Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act 51 of 2008. Government Gazette, 22 Dec 2008. Vol 522, No 3174

-END-