



2025 PART-TIME SCHOLARSHIP FOR MASTERS AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS

CALL FRAMEWORK

OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

OCTOBER 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Nelson Mandela University Part-time Scholarship is aimed at funding students enrolled for masters and doctoral studies which are only offered part-time. This document provides guidelines on all aspects of the part-time scholarship and should be read in conjunction with the policy on masters and doctoral degrees (IRC 403.01).

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2.1. General Eligibility Criteria

This funding is open to South African citizens, permanent residents and international candidates who intend to undertake **masters and doctoral studies which are only offered part-time** at Nelson Mandela University in the 2025 academic year.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Meet the academic benchmark for admission into a masters or doctoral programme at Nelson Mandela University which is only offered part-time.
- Have applied for admission or been admitted into masters and doctoral programmes at Nelson Mandela University which are only offered part-time. **Masters and doctoral students with z-registration (i.e. register after April) are eligible to apply.**

2.2. Additional Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated in section 2.1:

- The eligibility period for applicants who took **abeyance** due to exceptional circumstances such as ill-health or bereavement leave will be calculated from the date of initial registration which will exclude the period of abeyance. These applicants must attach an official letter of approval for the period of abeyance.

2.3. Students not Eligible for Funding

The following categories of individuals are not eligible to apply:

- **Students who enrol part-time in programmes that are offered full-time.**
- Students who registered for part-time masters studies before 2023.
- Students who registered for part-time doctoral studies before 2021.
- Individuals who already hold a degree for the same level at which they intend studying, are not eligible to apply, e.g., individuals who already hold honours or masters qualification may not apply for funding for honours or masters studies.

- Students who de-registered from a degree and are applying for funding for the same level may apply. However, the first date of registration for the original degree will be considered when determining the eligible funding period.
- Students who intend to study towards a Postgraduate Diploma, Advance Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate, BTech or Postgraduate Certificate in Education. These students should contact the Financial Aid Office at FinancialAid@mandela.ac.za.
- Employees and their dependents who receive formal study benefits (e.g. waiving of class fees or staff discount) must apply for the staff related financial incentive.
- Individuals who have not applied for admission into a postgraduate programme at Nelson Mandela University for the 2025 academic year. These individuals must first identify the postgraduate programme they want to be enrolled in for their postgraduate degree and apply for admission before applying for funding. The procedure to apply for admission is available [here](#).
- Students pursuing an undergraduate degree irrespective of the degree for which they are enrolled. This includes students in the final year of a four-year degree.

3. APPLICATION, REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESSES

Students must first identify the honours, masters or doctoral programme they want to be enrolled in for their postgraduate degree and apply for admission *before* applying for funding. Students who meet the eligibility criteria are invited to complete and submit (via email) the attached funding application form and accompanying documents to Ms Welma van Heerden (Welma.VanHeerden@mandela.ac.za) by **Thursday 31 October 2024**.

NB: Applications that do not have the required attachments, contain insufficient or incorrect information or fail to comply with instructions are incomplete and will be rejected. Unfortunately, late applications cannot be considered.

The following attachments should be submitted with the application:

- Legible and valid certified ID/passport (not older than 6 months)
- An official academic record on the University letterhead.
- Proof of admission or application for admission into either masters or doctoral programmes at Nelson Mandela University.
- Applicants with outstanding fees are required to attach their stamped University account statement reflecting outstanding fees.
- First-time applicants who were previously supported by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) must attach a letter from NSFAS or proof in the form of an official stamped University financial statement clearly showing that the funds originated from

NSFAS.

- Applicants with disabilities must attach an official and legible medical certificate in support of the disability.
- Applicants who took **abeyance** during their masters or doctoral studies must attach an official letter of approval for the period of abeyance.

Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be subject to review by an internal panel constituted by the Office of Research Development. The panel will consider among other things, academic performance, financial need and alignment of the proposed research to Nelson Mandela University's [institutional research themes](#). Based on the outcomes of the review process, applications will either be recommended for funding or not. Final awards will be based on the recommendations from the review process and the availability of funds. The Office of Research Development cannot guarantee funding for all eligible applicants; therefore, students are encouraged to apply to multiply funders. Once the review process has been completed and the Office of Research Development has approved the recommended funding decision, the outcome will be communicated to applicants.

Appeals relating to the review process may be submitted to Ms Welma van Heerden (Welma.VanHeerden@mandela.ac.za). **Only those applicants who met the eligibility criteria but were not recommended for funding are eligible to appeal. Appeals may not be lodged against the funding decision taken such as not being awarded funding due to budget constraints.** An appeal must be justified and must be endorsed by the supervisor to be considered. It is worth noting that a successful appeal does not automatically constitute an award, rather the application will be moved to the list of applications recommended for funding but may not be awarded due to budget constraints.

IMPORTANT: The Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPI Act) has been promulgated and was implemented on 01 July 2020. All personal identifiable information provided by applicants shall be treated in accordance with this statute and be used only for academic and academic administration purposes, as indicated by the Nelson Mandela University [Privacy Policy Statement](#). By applying for the scholarship, applicants provide consent to use all their personal identifiable information provided to the University for the aforesaid purposes.

4. FUNDING PRINCIPLES

This part-time scholarship programme will be allocated in line with the following transformation targets:

- 90% South African citizens and permanent residents
- 10% students from SADC countries and beyond

- 55% women

The South African Citizens and permanent residents' targets are further disaggregated in terms of race and disability as follows:

- 75% Black (African, Coloured, and Indian)
- 24% White
- 1% students living with a disability

When scholarship awards are made, consideration will be given to ensuring the need to strengthen research capacity in national priority research areas and the institutional research themes, as well as to accelerate demographic transformation. Allocation of funding will be determined by recommendation by the internal review panel; historic trends in scholarship uptake; postgraduate enrolment; financial need based on previous NSFAS funding and availability of budget.

4.1. Scholarship Value and Scholarship Value and Maximum Funding Period

The maximum period of support for part-time masters and doctoral degrees is indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Maximum funding period for part-time masters and doctoral degrees

Degree Level	Scholarship Value (ZAR)	Maximum Funding period
Masters	26 000	Three years
Doctoral	30 000	Five years

The period of support for part-time postgraduate funding is calculated from the first year of registration for the degree, regardless of the years of funding. **Masters and doctoral students with z-registration (i.e. register after April) are eligible to apply**, but the awarded amount may be adjusted according to the time of registration e.g. first semester or second semester. All Grantholders with disabilities may apply for additional funding for an assistive technology device or human support of up to **R20 000**. This is the maximum amount permitted during the tenure of the scholarship.

4.2. Additional information

- Successful applicants who receive a **provisional** letter of award for a part-time scholarship are required to **read and accept** the Conditions of Grant (CoG), which will be forwarded at the time of the award and register as the registration block will be lifted.
- The student-supervisor Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) clarifying expectations and

preferences in managing the masters or doctoral research project, must be signed by both the student and supervisor and submitted to the Office of Research Development.

- Part-time scholarships awarded for the 2025 academic year, that are **not taken up by 15 March 2025 will be cancelled for reallocation** unless otherwise approved by the Office of Research Development.
- All successful candidates will be expected to obtain the degree within one year after the scholarship has ended and notify the Office of Research Development in writing. Grantholders who fail to complete the degree will have to pay back the amount equal to all the funding they have received.
- Grantholders may also hold funding from private-sector source or South African government source, or any other source (e.g., merit award). The combined value of scholarships held by each student may not exceed R180 000, R240 000 and R300 000 for honours, masters and doctoral students respectively. In such cases the part-time scholarship value will be adjusted accordingly.
- The part-time scholarship awarded for masters and doctoral degrees may not be used to settle historic debt.

5. REPORTING

For continuous funding and monitoring of the part-time scholarship programme, masters and doctoral Grantholders will be required to submit a progress report at the end of each semester using a template provided by the Office of Research Development. Funds for continuing students will only be released after submission of the progress report.

6. CONTACT DETAILS

All queries may be directed to Ms Welma van Heerden (Welma.VanHeerden@mandela.ac.za).