



science and technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Grants Management and Systems Administration

Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants Manual 2016



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List of Acronyms

APR	Annual Progress Report
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation
TWAS	The World Academy of Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation



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Application guidelines are explained in this document. Candidates must read this document together with the call or framework document of the funding instrument that highlights the funding instrument eligibility criteria and requirements.

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours from 08:00 to 16:30 Monday to Friday.

Tel: 012-481 4202

E-mail: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za



1. Introduction

This Manual provides an overview of the NRF-TWAS (The World Academy of Science) postdoctoral fellowship funding instrument, its application funding guidelines and processes. It should be read in conjunction with the funding instrument call or framework document, which can be accessed at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. This document does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

2. Application Process

The NRF is issuing this call for NRF-TWAS postdoctoral fellowship applications that is published on the NRF website and is accessible online at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. The NRF-TWAS postdoctoral fellowship funding instrument will not accept more than one application per applicant per year. All applications must be duly authorised and approved by the Designated Authority (DA) of the research administration at the institution that submits the application. Applications will be automatically routed to the institutional DA of the submitting institution for validation at the deadline date determined by individual institutions. Applicants have to enquire with their institutions regarding internal closing dates. The processing of a successful grant application takes approximately five (5) months from the time of submission until the commencement of funding.

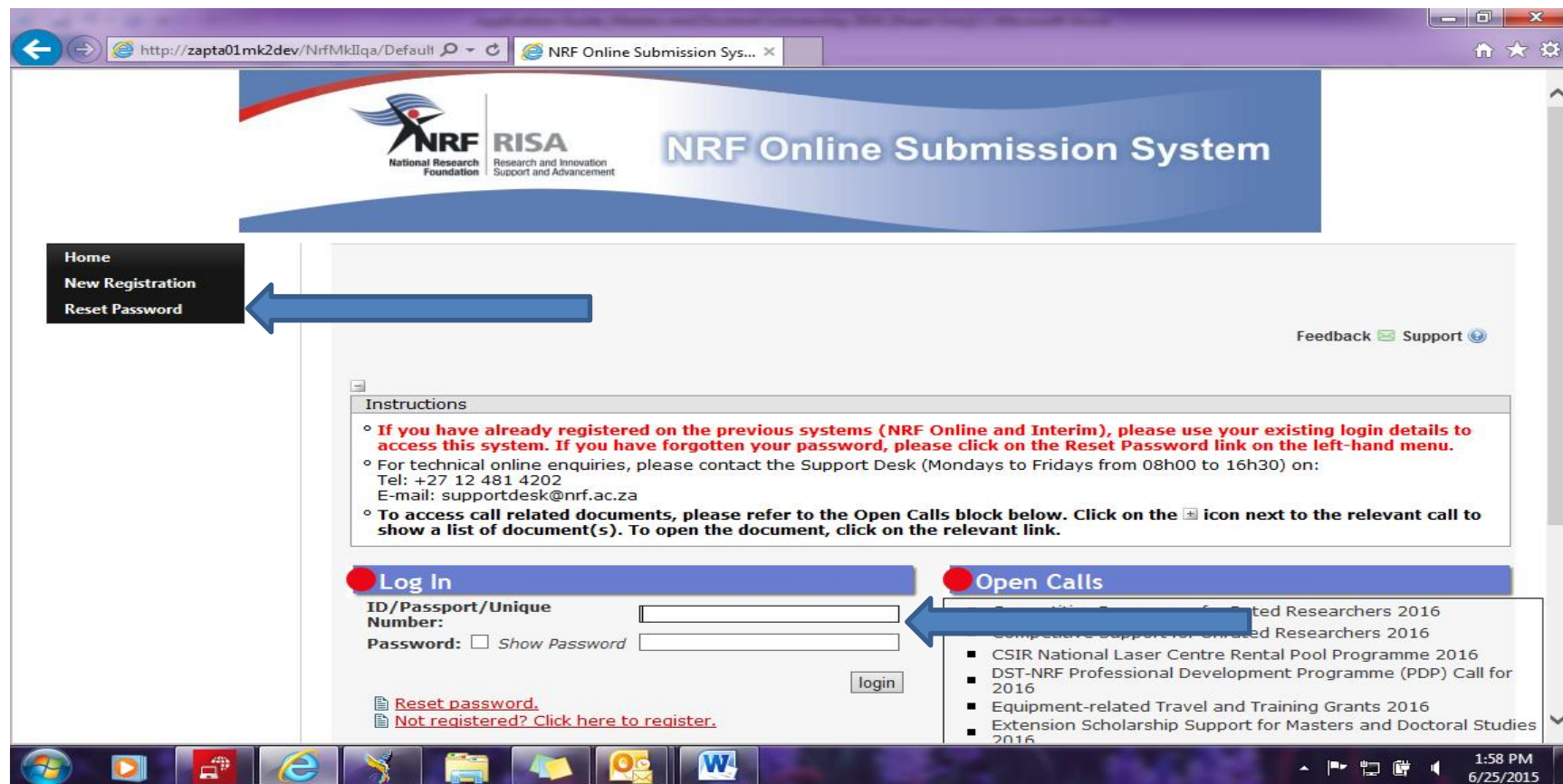
3. How to Submit Applications

Applications may be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za> from Wednesday, 05 August 2015. Applicants are advised to complete their applications soon after the call is open to prevent IT system overload nearer the **closing date of 02 October 2015**.



Step 1: This is an electronic submission system and applicants must be registered on the system in order to create and complete an application. Only applicants from the developing countries listed in the Call document, and who will be studying in South Africa for the first time will be considered.

Should you have registered on the NRF Online System (<http://nrfonline.nrf.ac.za>) before February 2012 and your application was not successful, your details would have been migrated to the new NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>). If you experience problems accessing the system with your NRF Online password, use the Reset Password button. If you are not yet registered on the NRF Online Submission System, you must register to access the application form.



Step 2: Once you have logged onto the NRF Online Submission System, you will get to the 'landing page' where you will find a menu at the top left side of your screen (tab indicated with blue arrow). To create a new application, click on My Applications>Create Application.

My Profile
My Applications
Tools
Designated Authority
View Roll-out
Reports
Logout

Welcome Ms Thashni maistry
Feedback Support

Landing Page

Information

- PLEASE NOTE: The summary below only lists output records that were migrated from the previous NRF Online system. New records that are added on this system will not form part of this summary.
- Applicants must ensure that their CV is updated/completed before creating an application.
- In order for your migrated research outputs to show on the CV or be accessible for selection on applications that require your publication record, you **must** verify (review) the outputs listed in the **Research Outputs Summary** table below. In order to do this, click on the output type that still has outputs to be verified (see the To be Reviewed column). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and a heading saying cleaned-up research output records from NRF Online will be displayed. Click on the little black arrow. This will display the output(s) that needs to be verified. Then click on the View icon, it will open a screen with the data for the output. Please fill in the missing information and save the page. If you have more than one output per output type, click on View for the next output. Do this for all the outputs, the output type on the landing page should now say 0. Move on to the next output type and repeat the process. Should you wish to delete an output, then click on the Feedback box, fill in the **Feedback to the NRF box** (e.g. output duplicated, please delete) and in the **Status** field, please select Delete.
- In some cases, researchers' outputs don't show at all. The reason for this is
 - The ID/passport number which the cleaned data was linked to when the clean-up exercise was undertaken differs from the ID/passport number you have just used to login to the NRF Online Submission System.
 - No outputs were added on the old NRF Online system so there was nothing to migrate. If there were outputs on the old NRF Online system but they do not show in the summary below, you need to ensure that the ID/passport numbers used on both the

Step 3: Select the funding call for which you are applying on the create application screen and a new application will open to complete. Please note that this must be selected only once. To continue working on an application, go to My Applications- List of Applications.

My Profile
My Applications
Tools
Reports
Logout

Welcome Mrs Zikhona Losi
Feedback Support

[Landing](#) / [My Applications](#) / [Create Application](#)

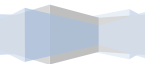
Create Application

Instructions

- Check your intended institution's internal closing date as it will be prior to the closing date listed for applications.
- A timeout will appear when there is no activity on the system for 25 minutes. Click on the refresh button (in the popup box) as this will enable the continuation/completion of the application. When clicking on the close button the system will close.

Call	Open Date	Closing Date	Apply
DST-NRF Professional Development Programme (PDP) Call for 2016	05 June 2015	31 August 2015	
Extension Scholarship Support for Masters and Doctoral Studies 2016	01 June 2015	31 July 2015	
Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) 2016	06 July 2015	31 July 2015	
Infrastructure Funding Instruments in support of the: National Equipment Programme (NEP) and National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme (NNEP) 2016	01 March 2015	31 July 2015	
Internship Programme - Host Institution 2016	28 July 2015	31 August 2015	
NRF Free-standing-Scarce Skills-Innovation Postdoctoral Fellowship Call for 2016	08 June 2015	31 August 2015	
NRF-TWAS Postdoctoral Fellowship Call for 2016	01 September 2015	31 August 2015	
SA-UK SS&H Research Chairs 2015	16 July 2015	31 August 2015	

Step 4: Applicants are urged to complete or update ALL screens of the CV, including the Research Profile and Research Outputs as this information is evaluated in the review process and will impact on the overall assessment of your application.



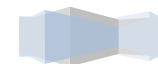
Step 5: All sections marked with a red asterisk are compulsory sections in the application. These sections must be completed in order for the final submit button to appear. The sections without asterisks are non-compulsory sections. You may enter information in these sections, if you have information to enter, such as research outputs. Completed sections will be indicated by a green tick on the main menu, while incomplete sections will have a yellow cross.

- A section marked with a cross (✘) in the 'Complete' column indicates that the section is incomplete or needs to be checked for completeness/correctness of information. Should the section be compulsory this will be indicated by an asterisk (*) at the end of a section. click on the Edit icon (✎) and check/complete the section and then 'Save'. The ✘ will change to a ✓ to indicate that the section is complete/has been updated. The date in the 'Date Updated' column will change to the date the update was made.
- Please update all incomplete records in CV sections marked as incomplete, for example, Qualifications and Career Profile: For Qualifications, check that a highest qualification has been selected, that no date field defaults to 1945, and that there is a Field of Study specified. For Career Profile, check that no date field defaults to 1945.

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
NRF Call Information Documents (Please read before starting this application)		29 Jul 2015	
Registration Details *		29 Jul 2015	
Contact Details *		19 Jun 2015	
Qualifications *		31 Jul 2015	
Research Expertise *		29 Jul 2015	
Personal Profile *		25 Jun 2015	
Career Profile *		19 Jun 2013	
Books		29 Jul 2015	
Chapters in Books		25 Jun 2014	
Refereed/Peer-reviewed Conference Outputs		25 Jun 2015	
Articles in Refereed/Peer-reviewed Journals		04 Mar 2014	
Patents		02 Jun 2014	
Keynote/Plenary Addresses		25 Jun 2014	
Articles in Non-refereed/Non-peer Reviewed Journals		25 Jun 2014	
Other Significant Conference Outputs		29 Jun 2015	
Technical/Policy Reports		29 Jun 2015	
Products		25 Jun 2015	
Artefacts		11 Jun 2015	
Prototypes		12 Jun 2015	
Other Recognised Research Outputs		29 Jul 2015	
Disability *		29 Jul 2015	
Degree to be Funded *		29 Jul 2015	
Research Project Information *		29 Jul 2015	

All compulsory sections will guide you with error messages at the top of the screen. Please follow these messages to help you complete the section correctly.

Step 6: Most application screens have screen and application specific instructions to help you work through the section. Please read the instruction carefully before completing the section.



Step 7: The Research Project Information section requires you to select a South African proposed institution, which includes SA national facilities from a drop down list. Should your institution not be on the list, please request it by selecting the support tab on the far right at the top of the screen.

Research Project Information

Instructions

- All fields are compulsory in this section.
- The Short Title of Research Project field is restricted to 100 characters (including spaces).
- The Descriptive Title of Research Project field is restricted to 2 000 characters (including spaces) and should be a clearer description of what the research is about, therefore expanding on the Short Title.
- **You MUST consult the attached information manual before completing your application form online.**
- If Master's by course-work, please enter "Course-work Master's" in the Short and descriptive title sections of the application.

NRF Free-standing-Scarce Skills-Innovation Postdoctoral Fellowship Call for 2016

- Please select the feedback link and enter your request to add an institution abroad that does not appear on the list by stating the name of the institution to be added to the list.

Applicant's Proposed Institution ⓘ *

Short Title of Research Project *

Research Project Start Year *

Research Project End Year *

Budget Start Year 2016

Required Funding Period *

Budget End Year

Descriptive Title of Research Project

2000 characters left.

Has this research project previously been funded by the NRF? *

Step 8: The *Details of Research* section is one of the most important sections in the application. The section has specific instructions related to each screen. Follow the instructions to complete the section. You are required to give an overview, yet succinct information about your proposed research in this section as the input is taken into consideration during the assessment of your application. Appropriate literature references must also be included.

The screenshot displays the 'Details of Research' section of the NRF Online Submission System. The page includes a navigation menu on the left with options like 'My Profile', 'My Applications', and 'Tools'. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: 'Landing / My Applications / Edit Application - SFP15062519394 / Details of Research'. A welcome message for 'Ms Thashni maistry' is visible in the top right. The central focus is the 'Details of Research' section, which contains instructions and a table of sub-sections. A blue arrow points to the 'Edit' icon in the 'Research Rationale and Motivation' row.

Section	Complete	Date Updated	Edit
Research Rationale and Motivation *	✘	25 Jun 2015	
Problem Identification *	✘	25 Jun 2015	
Research Aims and Objectives *	✘	25 Jun 2015	
Research Activities/Plan which include(s) the research approach/methods/techniques *	✘	25 Jun 2015	

Step 9: The attachment section provides specific instructions with respect to the documents required and for uploading attachments to the application. Please print, certify and then scan all of them and submit as a single PDF file; then upload the section as one document. If you are a fellow with a disability, you may also upload a medical certificate in support of your disability.

Feedback Support

Attachments

Instructions

- Select the Document Type to be uploaded.
- Capture an appropriate Description.
- Click the Browse button below to select the file on your local machine.
- Click on the Upload button to save.
- Upload pages individually if document is larger than 4MB. **(For rating applications, please see specific instructions in this section of the rating application.)**
- Please do not upload zip files. Acrobat reader has built-in security to prevent the opening of zip files by default (please read the article at <http://forums.adobe.com/thread/520515> for more information).

NRF-TWAS Postdoctoral Fellowship Call for 2016

- Please attach the necessary documents in one PDF file in the following order for this call: Passport, certified academic transcripts, certified Masters and Doctoral certificate/SAQA Evaluation Certificate, English Language proficiency test, HR letter, acceptance letter from institution (signed stamped on official letter head)
- These are all required for application completeness.
- The acceptance letter from institution (signed stamped on official letter head) must include details on availability of specialised equipment, infrastructure and resources for enabling fellow to do research.

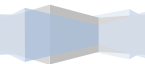
Description	Type	File Name	Edit	View	Delete
ID	PDF Format	Call for funding_Innovation Postdoctoral Fellowship 2015.pdf			

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SAQA and English Proficiency certificates

Applicants who have already obtained their SAQA Evaluation and English Language Proficiency certificates must include them in the PDF file. If not already available, the two certificates can be submitted by successful applicants before taking up the awards.

Applicants are advised to start this process early to allow time for processing. Information on the process can be accessed by logging on to www.saqa.org.za. On the SAQA website, navigate to Service - Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications - General Information. Applicants must strictly adhere to all the instructions and provide all applicable documents to avoid delays and rejection of applications. Applicants are advised to courier all application documents to SAQA directly.



The following requirements of the English Language Proficiency Academic test: IELTS 6.5 (no band less than 6.0); or TOEFL (paper) 575 (TWE 4.5); or TOEFL iBIT (min. 20); or Cambridge minimum 58. Information on the IELTS tests can be obtained from the British Council in home country or accessed on: www.ielts.org. Further information on the TOEFL test can be accessed on: www.toefl.com. Consult the British Council in the home country for assistance.

Step 10: The reference section allows applicants to include academic referees who can comment on applicants' academic abilities. On final submission of the application the reference emails are sent to referees to provide a report on these academic abilities. **It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the referee email is correct and that the referees have responded as this category is assessed in the application. The applicant must view the application PDF to check if a referee has responded to the request for reference.**

Reference Record

Instructions
Please complete the reference section below.

Title *

Surname

Initials *

First Name

Department

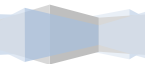
Faculty

Organisation where based ⓘ *

Email Address

Role

Please enter a keyword or two in the field below (for example 'Cape Town or Johannesburg or Stellenbosch') to return a list of all organisations that contain the word(s).



Step 11: The *Possible Reviewers* section is not compulsory in this Call. The section requires that you add the names of possible reviewers in your field of research that you have interacted with through conferences or other academic fora, to provide a neutral review of your proposed research project.

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Quick Links

- [Grantholder Tools](#)
- [Institution Facilities](#)
- [Panel Meetings](#)
- [Application and Output History \(NRF Online\)](#)
- [Application History \(NRF Interim\)](#)
- [SKA SA Grants](#)

Landing / My Applications / Edit Application - SFP15072919484 / Possible Reviewers

Welcome Ms Nompumelelo Nombongo Thwala
[Feedback](#) [Support](#)

Possible Reviewers

Instructions

- Reviewers should be nominated from both South Africa and abroad.
- Reviewers need not be restricted to researchers in the higher education sector. In each case provide a motivation for selection (e.g. reviewer is top researcher in the field). This will provide Specialist Committees with additional information in the selection of reviewers. The association that you have with the reviewer should be clearly articulated (e.g. previous PhD supervisor, co-worker etc.). Provide information that is accurate, current and complete. It is especially important that email addresses are correct.
- First load complete records of possible reviewers in the grid below before sorting them in order of priority. To sort the records in order of priority click on the up arrow in the Priority Up column or the down arrow in the Priority Down column.
- The information icon (i) indicates that a tooltip is associated with the relevant field. When hovering over this icon, additional information will show.

NRF-TWAS Postdoctoral Fellowship Call for 2016

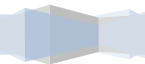
- Please do not list yourself, your supervisor or any student or post-doctoral fellow.
- Reviewers from the same institution as the applicant should not be selected and, where possible, refrain from nominating more than one reviewer from the same institution.

Surname	Initials	Email Address	Priority	Priority Up	Priority Down	Edit	Delete
No records to display.							

[Add](#) [Return to Menu](#)

©NRF Online Submission System

[Disclaimer](#)



Step 12: Applicants must ensure that they adhere to their institution's internal closing date for submission of their application to allow for internal institutional screening and review. The internal closing date will be determined by the respective research offices or Post Graduate Office and is usually at least two weeks prior to the NRF's closing date.

DAs ensure that all proposals are screened and approved through internal institutional processes **before** submitting applications to the NRF. The NRF assumes that the respective DAs are satisfied with the standard of all proposals validated and submitted, and that the institution approves and supports the proposed research.

Step 13: The final submit button will appear only if all compulsory sections are complete. Press OK to submit your application. If all the compulsory sections are complete and the final submit button does not appear, select any section and resave to refresh the application; you will then see the final submit button. A submitted application is automatically routed to the DA in the Research Office of the institution that you selected, for internal review and validation. Late applications, additional supporting documentation or information received after the closing date will not be accepted or considered.

The NRF will not process applications that are incomplete, contain insufficient or incorrect detail, or fail to comply with instruction as such applications will be rejected. The application must be completed in sufficient detail to allow for a comprehensive review and evaluation by external reviewers. In addition to the electronic application and required attachments, the NRF may request additional information or documentation to support an application if required. Failure to supply such information or documentation upon request may result in the rejection of the application.

4. Screening and Review Processes

4.1 Overview of the Screening Process

All applications validated by institutions and submitted to the NRF are screened by the NRF for compliance with the eligibility criteria of the Call for applications, as well as the requirements for completing the NRF Online Submission application. Applications that fail to meet the stipulated requirements will be rejected.

4.2 Overview of the Screening Process

The NRF's peer review policy requires that all applications be subjected to a review process. Applications submitted to this funding instrument will go through a panel review process.

Panel members are selected from the NRF database and other sources, which is updated on a continuous basis. When selecting the review panel, the expertise and experience of individuals in



application adjudication are taken into account. In assessing the application, agreed assessment criteria are applied in the form of a scorecard.

The Review Panel provides recommendations to the NRF and the final funding decision is made by the NRF taking strategic and policy objectives into consideration. In awarding grants in this funding instrument, the NRF takes into account the recommendations of the peer review panel, the objectives and targets of the funding instrument, and the available funds.

5. Ranking of Applications

The purpose of the scoring system is to evaluate applications, based on funding instrument criteria, in order to determine applications that are most deserving of the limited funds available. All research proposals submitted to the NRF for funding are evaluated according to a number of predetermined criteria. Applications are assessed and ranked on the basis of criteria as listed in the table below. Each area may be given a weight to indicate its relative importance. Kindly consult the table below for details on the criteria used.



Scorecard for the Assessment of Proposals for NRF-TWAS Postdoctoral Fellowships

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Weight (Total = 100%)
Track Record of Applicant	Applicant expertise/training that will enable the applicant to successfully undertake the proposed research.	10%
	The applicant's research track record which could include peer reviewed publications, conference proceedings, research prizes and awards.	10%
Scientific and Technical quality of proposed research	Literature review with citations, significance of the research in terms of the problem statement, aims and objectives. Scientific contribution, originality and new knowledge to be generated.	20%
	Research design, methodology developed to address aims of the research. Provision of workplan and feasible timelines and milestones for the research.	20%
	Alignment with national and institutional research priorities.	5%
Institutional Support	Institutional support for the postdoctoral fellowship through infrastructure and facilities for an enabling environment.	10%
Potential Research Outputs and Impact of the research	Details of envisaged realistic outputs of the research such as publications, conference proceedings, toolkits, policy documents.	5%
	Contribution to postdoctoral research skills development in a priority research area (human capacity development of the applicant)	10%
	Potential for socio-economic impact of the research in South Africa	10%
		100%



6. Application Feedback and Disputes

Once the review and assessment processes have been completed and the recommended funding decision has been approved by the NRF, the NRF will publish a list of successful applications on the NRF website, www.nrf.ac.za. Thereafter, successful applicants will receive a letter of award. The application status online will not indicate whether or not the application has been approved for funding. **This funding instrument does not provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants**; if your name does not appear on the published list of successful applications it means that your application was unsuccessful.

An unsuccessful applicant who requires feedback is advised to contact their institutional office to request feedback from the NRF. The NRF does not provide feedback to all unsuccessful applicants due to the high volume of applicants within this funding instrument.

Unsuccessful applicants that wish to appeal the funding decision taken by the NRF must follow the appropriate Appeals Process of the NRF. Appeals will only be considered for this funding instrument within a 3 month period after the official date of publishing of the results on the NRF website.

7. Change Requests

7.1 Prior Approval Requests

Applicants must submit all change requests in writing to the NRF for approval before effecting any changes. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Research Office for approval prior to the change.

7.2 Changes in Project Scope, Supervisor or Institution

Changes may occur where a project scope, host or institution needs to be changed from the original research proposal, host or institution respectively. The request must have institutional DA endorsement and be submitted to the NRF *via* the Research Office. Such requests must be forwarded to the NRF 30 days before the change is intended to take place.

8. Scientific Compliance

8.1 Methodology

The fellow 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.

8.2 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.

8.3 Ethics

The fellow is required to maintain the highest ethical and safety standards in conducting the research, particularly when human and animal subjects are involved. It remains the responsibility of the project leader to comply with all relevant regulations in this regard, including those of the institution at which the research is carried out. An ethical clearance certificate (where applicable) must be submitted to the NRF in respect of successful applications before funding can be released.

9. List of References

RSA (2008). Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act 51 of 2008. *Government Gazette*, 22 Dec 2008. Vol 522, No 31745

