



October 2021 RFA 2022 Enrollment

Bongani Mayosi

NATIONAL HEALTH SCHOLARS PROGRAMME

A partnership between the NDoH, PHEF and the SAMRC

A National Health Research Committee Initiative

Request for Applications

(2022 enrolment)

About BM-NHSP

The Bongani Mayosi National Health Scholars Programme (BM-NHSP) is an initiative by the National Health Research Committee (NHRC) and a partnership between the National Department of Health (NDoH), the Public Health Enhancement Fund (PHEF) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC). The objective of the BM-NHSP is to fund the training of 1000 PhDs in health and clinical research over the next 10 years. Applications are invited for PhD scholarships tenable in South African universities. Funding is towards the completion of the degree and funding is made available for a full degree period (i.e. prescribed time for a PhD) as a tax-free scholarship for full-time study. The value of the scholarship is equivalent to the after-tax take-home salary of the applicant, in terms of the public service professional scales applicable to the qualification(s) of the candidate (excluding overtime pay). Applicants to note that once the benchmarking process has been completed (based on the criteria at the time) and a scholarship amount has been awarded, it will remain fixed for the full duration of the studies irrespective of a change criteria e.g. additional qualifications/credentials obtained or an increase in Occupation Specific Dispensation scales.

The BM-NHSP aims to contribute positively towards efforts to strengthen and accelerate progress towards equity in research capacity development within the National Department of Health Human Capital across South Africa. Priority will be given to hitherto under-represented designated groups, Universities, and or under researched priority research niches.

The purpose of this particular request for applications (RFA) is to build capacity in CoVID-19 research areas and its impact on the following diseases namely: (i) Maternal Neonatal and Child Health (ii) Communicable Disease (iii) Non-Communicable Disease (iv) Health System Preparedness and Resilience to Pandemic Response (not restricted to CoVID-19). The current funding opportunity is targeting the following health professionals: Professional nurses, Dentists and other oral health specialists, Pharmacists, Dieticians, Medical scientists, Occupational therapists, Optometrists and opticians, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Speech therapists and audiologists, Biomedical engineers., who are in their first year of PhD study within the specialized research fields of Biostatistics, Data Science, Digital Health, Demography, Epidemiology, , Health Economics, Genomics/Bioinformatics, Microbiology/Virology and Immunology.

The closing date for applications is **15 November 2021**, and the outcome of this application will be made **before end March 2022** barring unforeseen circumstances. The scholarship will commence on 1 April 2022.

Requirements for application (Check your eligibility before starting your application).

- 1) Must be South African citizen/permanent resident
- 2) Applicants must hold MBChB or a master's degree
- 3) A fully developed research proposal which has been accepted by the University for PhD study
- 4) Current registration at the university in which the degree will be awarded.
- 5) Research project must fall within the above listed priority research areas and fields
- 6) Written commitment of participation by an experienced research supervisor at the University of registration who is willing to train the student till degree completion.

- 7) Availability of research funding, infrastructure and environment for the project to effectively conduct the PhD research project

Selection Criteria (Use this list to make sure your application is complete)	Attached check (v)
<p>1. Suitability of the candidate: 1-page only: motivation demonstrating candidate’s suitability and describing how success in the BH-NHSP application will impact candidate’s career. It should be accompanied by an abridged curriculum vitae containing a full list of research outputs in the last five years and other meritorious achievements.</p>	
<p>2. Quality of the science: ≤2 pages only: abstract of the PhD proposal outlining the rationale, design, feasibility, plans for research translation and information dissemination as well as potential impact of the proposed research project. NB: Proposed research project should be aligned with the priority research areas for this specific call. Attach official approval letter of research proposal</p>	
<p>3. Supervisor’s abridged track record and signed commitment form: ≤3 pages only: an abridged outline of publications, grants and number of graduated PhD students and a signed commitment form (Annexure A)</p>	
<p>4. Research environment: ≤ 1-page letter from the host institution outlining the career plan of the applicant upon completion of the PhD.</p>	
<p>5. Signed application form: please sign below and submit this form with your application.</p>	
<p>6. Certified copy of South African identity document is attached (must be certified by a Commissioner of Oath)</p>	
<p>7. An official letter confirming date of first registration for the degree to be funded is attached</p>	
<p>8. An official approval letter of the candidate's final version of their research proposal</p>	
<p>9. Evidence of ethics approval (where this applies) is attached</p>	
<p>10. Support letter detailing the availability of research funding/running cost is Attached</p>	
<p>11. Confirm that 10 pages have not been exceeded (excluding official documents; 5,6, 7 and 8)</p>	

Above is a table showing selection criteria and documents that must be submitted with the application (not more than 10 pages). It is important that you check (v) the right column to confirm completeness of application before submitting.

Scholarship Conditions

- The Scholarship Holder shall not hold full time employment during the duration of the Scholarship but shall be entitled to undertake teaching or other related duties at the University for a maximum of nine (9) hours per week and shall be entitled to be remunerated for that work provided that the level of remuneration is in line with the normal University rates.
- In the event that the Scholarship Holder is registered as a part-time student after the award of the Scholarship, the Scholarship Holder will have three (3) months, from the Commencement Date of this Agreement, within which to furnish the SAMRC with proof that the Scholarship Holder is registered as a full-time student at the University.
- Teaching and clinical activities may not take up more than 10% of the time of the scholar.
- Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with this scholarship, other bursaries, grants or remuneration which bind them to enter the service of any organization without prior engagement towards agreement with the Division of Research Capacity Development SA Medical Research Council (SAMRC).
- Candidates may not hold a bursary from more than one South African Government statutory entity at any given time.
- Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with this scholarship, other non-binding remuneration/fellowships and grants without engaging with the Division of Research Capacity Development of the SAMRC.
- Scholarship holders may not, without seeking approval from the Division of Research Capacity Development of the SAMRC's, register at a university other than that through which the application has been submitted.
- Once the scholarship has been awarded, the scholarship holder may not change his/her supervisor without informing the Division of Research Capacity Development of the SAMRC.
- Supervisors will be expected to submit 6-monthly progress reports.
- Application for renewal of funding will be considered on an annual basis, success thereto will be subject to satisfactory progress being made.
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement with the SAMRC to complete their studies within the specified time period.

Full applications must be completed online and all additional documents requested emailed to Dr Lindokuhle Ndlandla on or before **15 November 2021** at Lindokuhle.Ndlandla@mrc.ac.za / Tel 021 938 0442. For enquiries, please contact Dr Lindokuhle Ndlandla.

The South African Medical Research Council reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, change the conditions of the award, extend the closing date or make no awards at all. Please note that only successful candidates will be contacted within 30 days

after the closing date. Applicants who are receiving funding through a different RCD scholarship programme will not be considered.

Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)

As of the 1st of July 2021, the new Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) came into full effect. The law is designed to protect how all juristic persons use, store and process data. You can read the full details on the act here:

The SAMRC as a responsible statutory science council will comply with POPIA. The SAMRC will receive personal information through applications submitted to the SAMRC for the purposes of applying for funding. The personal information requested on the application template is necessary for the SAMRC to fully evaluate the applications for funding. This information will be shared with members of Scholarship Selection Committees of the SAMRC and external funders and/or stakeholders where applicable as well as the SAMRC management for the purposes of processing the applications. The SAMRC will process this personal information strictly in accordance with POPIA. The SAMRC undertakes specifically to process the personal information on the basis that (a) it was provided voluntarily and (b) the information will be processed only as far may be necessary and within the limitation and ambit of the purpose of evaluating the application for funding (i.e., the purpose with which the personal information was received). The SAMRC confirms that it is lawfully processing the information since the purpose of processing is to seek quality research proposals for funding which the SAMRC is mandated to do in terms of Section 4 of the SAMRC Act 58 of 1991, thus the SAMRC is fulfilling its legislated and lawful mandate, and strategic objectives as provided for in the SAMRC Act.

Application Form

Personal details:

Title (Ms, Mr, Dr)	First name:				
Surname:					
Gender:	Female			Male	
Population group:	African	Colored	Indian	Asian	White
ID number	Attach certified copy of South African identity document				
Postal address:	Physical address:				
Work telephone no: <i>(where Applicable)</i>	Mobile no:				
University e-mail address:	Personal e-mail address:				

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Academic Information:

Highest qualification			
Profession	Biomedical engineer	Professional nurse	Dentist OR oral health specialist
	Pharmacist	Biostatistician	Dietician
	Medical scientist	Occupational therapist	Optometrist OR optician
	Physiotherapist	Psychologist	Speech therapist OR audiologist
	Other (specify)		
Years of experience in the profession			
Current position (where applicable)			
Employer (where applicable)			
Income per annum (pre-tax, where applicable)	Attach recent payslip (not older than three months)		
Are you registered for a PhD? <i>Please Mark the correct box</i>	Yes	No	
Year of PhD Study in 2022	First Year	Second Year	
	Third Year	Fourth Year	
Current degree funded by:			
University at which you are currently registered:	Attach evidence		
First date of registration			
Faculty			
Department			
PhD title of research project			
Research area (COVID-19 related) <i>Please Mark the correct box</i>	Maternal Neonatal and Child Health	Communicable Disease	
	Non-Communicable Disease	Health System Preparedness	
	Health System Preparedness	Resilience to Pandemic Response (not restricted to COVID-19)	
Speciality	Biostatistics	Data/Computer Science	
	Demography	Epidemiology	
	Genomics	Health Economics	
	Immunology	Microbiology/Virology	
	Social science	None of the above	
Potential societal impact of the proposed			

research		
Science engagement activities: State how you intend to communicate and engage with the wider community on the significance of your research in an effort to bridge the gap between science and society		
PhD supervisor (full name)		
E-mail address of supervisor		
Details of PhD co-supervisor (where applicable)	Full name	
	Institution	
	Email address	
My research project has ethics clearance <i>Please Mark the correct box</i>	Yes	No
The post graduate office or equivalent office has accepted the project title <i>Please Mark the correct box</i>	Yes	No

I, _____ (full names), hereby submit my application for a full-time PhD Scholarship and am cognisant of the conditions under which this scholarship is awarded.

Signature:	Date:
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Annexure A

Main supervisor's commitment form (To be filled in and signed by the main supervisor)

Title		
Supervisor's full name		
Institution name		
Department		
E-mail address		
Contact number		
Are you the main supervisor of the applicant?	Yes	No
Has the candidate's research proposal been approved by the Postgraduate office / or <u>relevant authorised</u> office at the Institution?	Yes	No
Does the proposed project require ethical approval?	Yes	No
Has the ethics committee approved the research proposal?	Yes Attach evidence	No NA <i>State reason</i>
Is the area proposed for the research in your research field?	Yes	No

Does the institution have the internal facilities, infrastructure (laboratories or as appropriate) and research funding that will be required for the research to be conducted?	Yes Attach support letter	No
Are there any concerns (if any please provide details)		
Comment on the feasibility of the proposed research		
Will this research project (degree) be completed at the prescribed degree duration years; PhD = 3 Years)	Yes	No <i>State reasons</i>
Comment on the applicant's ability to conduct the proposed research project		
Comment on the applicant's progress to date		

I _____ (supervisor's full names), hereby support the scholar's application for the SAMRC scholarship and commit to undertake the supervision of the applicant _____

(applicant's full name).

Signature:	
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4th year PhD candidates to provide a PhD completion plan in a form of a Gantt chart signed by both supervisor and applicant