

# NRF increases funding for postdoctoral fellows

The National Research Foundation (NRF) announced on Tuesday, 19 December, its decision to increase the annual value of grants awarded to postdoctoral fellows.



Image source: Anna Ivanova – [123RF.com](https://123RF.com)

The new cohort that will start their Freestanding, Innovation and Scarce Skills (FISS) and grant holder-linked postdoctoral fellowships in 2024 will receive increased grants.

The NRF's postdoctoral fellowship programmes provide funding for young scientists and professionals of the highest calibre to receive postdoctoral research training and international exposure to strengthen their research profiles and career advancement.

These are individuals who have completed their doctoral degree studies and are working towards developing their careers as academic researchers.

Currently, the NRF-funded postdoctoral fellows receive non-taxable stipends ranging between R200,000 and R255,000

annually and an annual R50,000 research grant.

The new adjustments will move non-taxable stipends to R320,000 per annum while keeping research grants at R50,000.

“Continuing postdoctoral fellowships that started in 2023 and are in their second or third year of funding will still utilise the old values and their original conditions of grant will still apply.”



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11 Jul 2023



The implementation of the new Department of Science and Innovation-NRF Postgraduate Student Funding policy in 2023 resulted in a significant increase in the funding value of honours, masters and doctoral students to R180,735, R202,004 and R223,273 at the full cost of study, respectively.

“The postdoctoral fellowships grants remained stagnant at the same time. This informed the NRF’s review of its postdoctoral fellowship values. The adjustment of grant values is intended to make postdoctoral fellowships competitive and increase their uptake, particularly by South African citizens.”

NRF CEO, Dr Fulufhelo Nelwamondo, said the agency supports postdoctoral fellowships to promote research and research capacity development in all fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH).

“The NRF recognises the importance of these fellowships which are aimed at providing a comprehensive training, development and mentorship programme for the establishment of an independent researcher involved in engaged research.

“We trust that the increased values of the FISS postdoctoral fellowships and grant holder-linked will make an added contribution in increasing the number and quality of postdoctoral research fellows in South Africa in all fields of research.”

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