



Application and Funding Guide for NRF Honours Scholarships 2024

Directorate: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
DA	Designated Authority
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
NRF	National Research Foundation
NASSP	National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme

Contact Details:

For Technical NRF Connect Enquiries:

For Online Submission 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

For enquiries about the Funding Opportunity and Application Process:

Ms Zodwa Mahlangu

Telephone: (012) 481 4114

E--mail address: JZ.Mahlangu@risa.nrf.ac.za

1. Introduction

- This Application and Funding Guide provides an overview of the funding guidelines and application process for the honours scholarships for the 2024 academic year.
- The guide should be read in conjunction with the **DSI-NRF Postgraduate Student Application and Funding Framework for Funding in 2024 Academic Year**. The framework document provides detailed information with respect to objectives of the 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 honours 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 is automatically routed to the proposed institution for a screening and scoring process. Applications that meet the scholarship requirements are then submitted to the NRF by the proposed institution.
- The closing date for applicants to submit applications to their proposed institution is **24 November 2023**.
- Applicants who wish to undergo the ISFAP assessment, must ensure that their application is submitted to the proposed institution earlier than September 2023, as the proposed institution must screen and submit these applications to the NRF by **01 September 2023**.
- Applicants who don't have final year examination results at the time of application, can submit their applications without the marks. However, as soon as the exam results are made available by the university, the applicant must ensure that they send the marks to the Postgraduate Office of their proposed institution for the screening and scoring process.
- The closing date for the proposed institution to submit eligible applications to the NRF is **22 December 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-screening stage.

3. How to Submit an Application

- The honours scholarship application is available on the NRF Connect system (<https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>)
- This application and funding guide consists of two steps of the application process:
 - A. Profile Registration on the NRF Connect system.**
 - B. Completing the honours scholarship application.**

A. Profile Registration on the NRF Connect system:

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

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

SIGN IN

Forgot your password or ORCID ID?

Don't have an ORCID iD yet? **Register now**

or



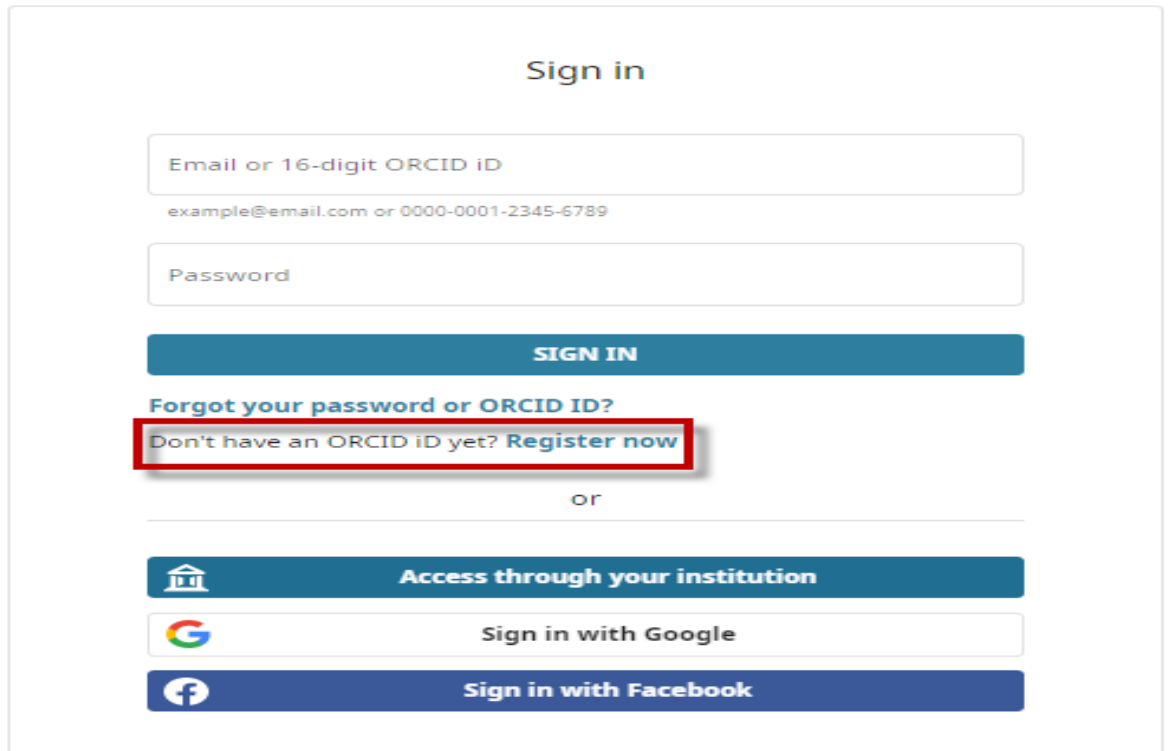
Access through your institution



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.



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

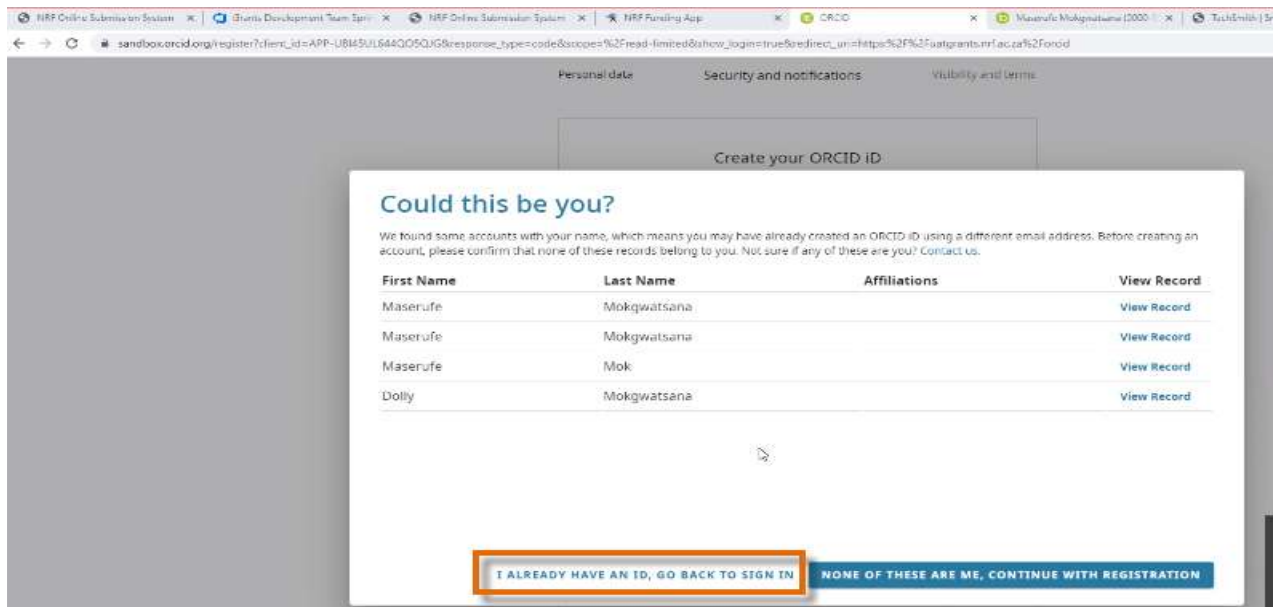
 **Access through your institution**

 **Sign in with Google**

 **Sign in with Facebook**

Step 4: Existing ORCID Profiles

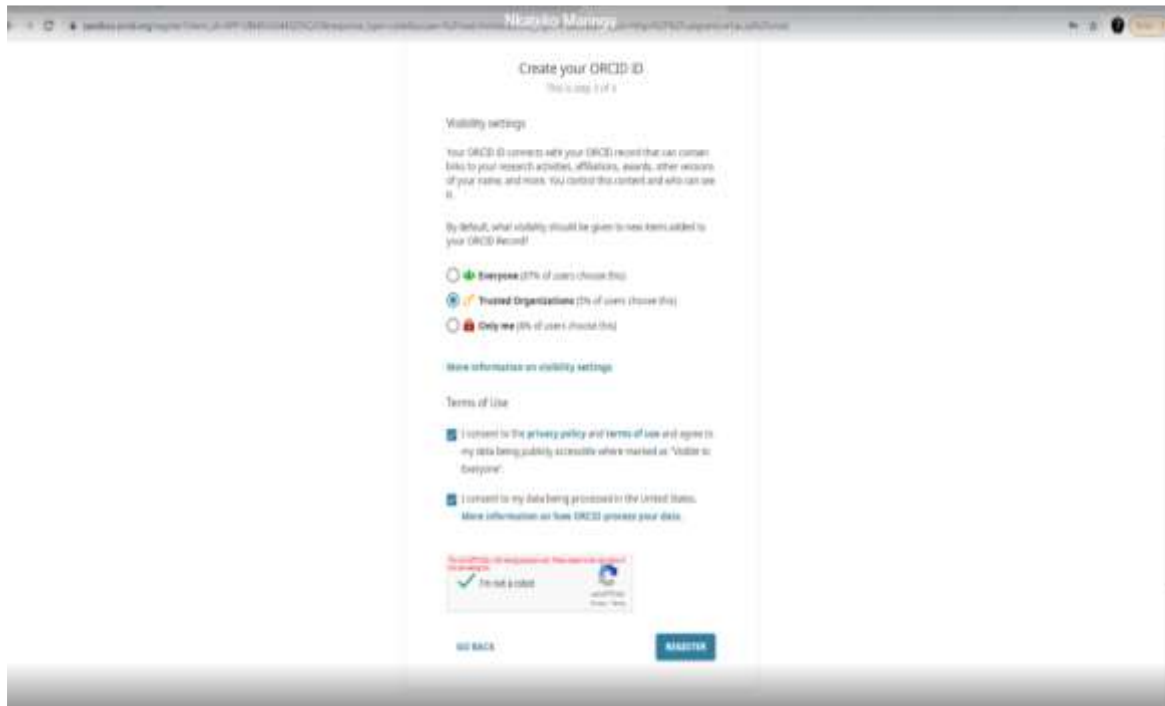
- On clicking 'Register Now', the system will return the following message: *“We found some accounts with your name, which means you may have already created an ORCID iD using a different email address. Before creating an account, please confirm that none of these records belong to you. Not sure if any 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”*



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.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://orcid.org/register/visibility>. The page title is "Create your ORCID iD" and it is labeled as "This is step 5 of 5".

Visibility settings

Your ORCID iD connects with your ORCID record that can connect links to your research activities, affiliations, awards, other evidence of your name, and more. You control the content and who can see it.

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

- Everyone** (27% of users choose this)
- Trusted Organizations** (7% of users choose this)
- Only me** (6% of users choose this)

[More information on visibility settings](#)

Terms of Use

- I consent to the [privacy policy](#) and [terms of use](#) and agree to my data being publicly accessible when marked as "Visible to Everyone".
- I consent to my data being processed in the United States. [More information on how ORCID processes your data.](#)

Final step confirmation:

I've read & agree

Buttons: [GO BACK](#) and [REGISTER](#)

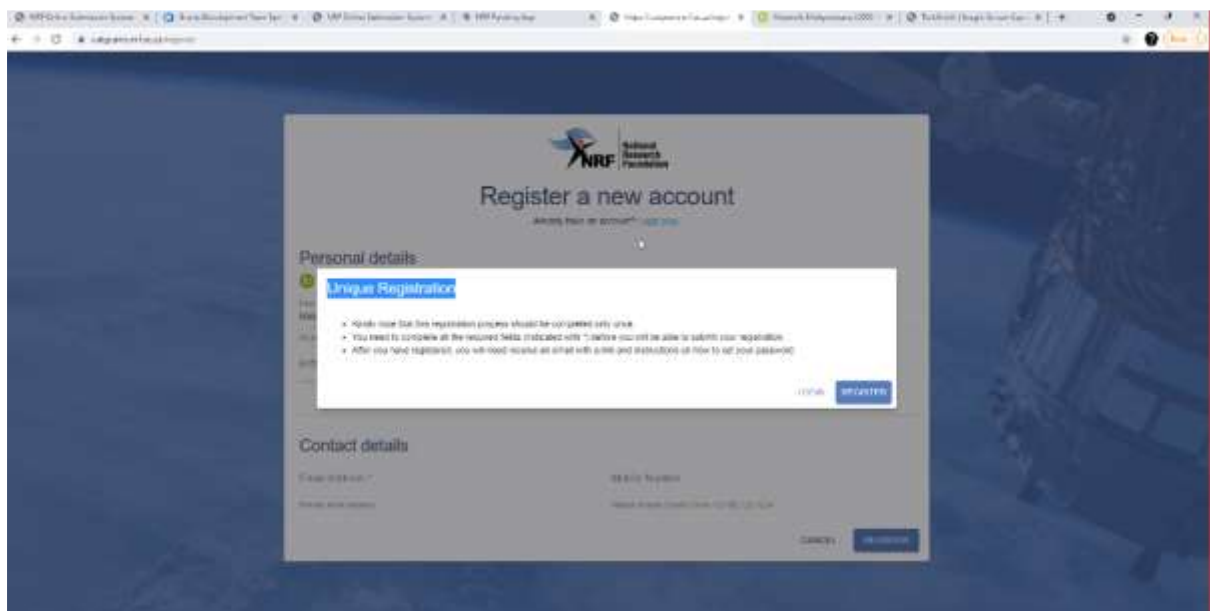
Step 6: Authorize Access

Continue with the ORCID registration as prompted.



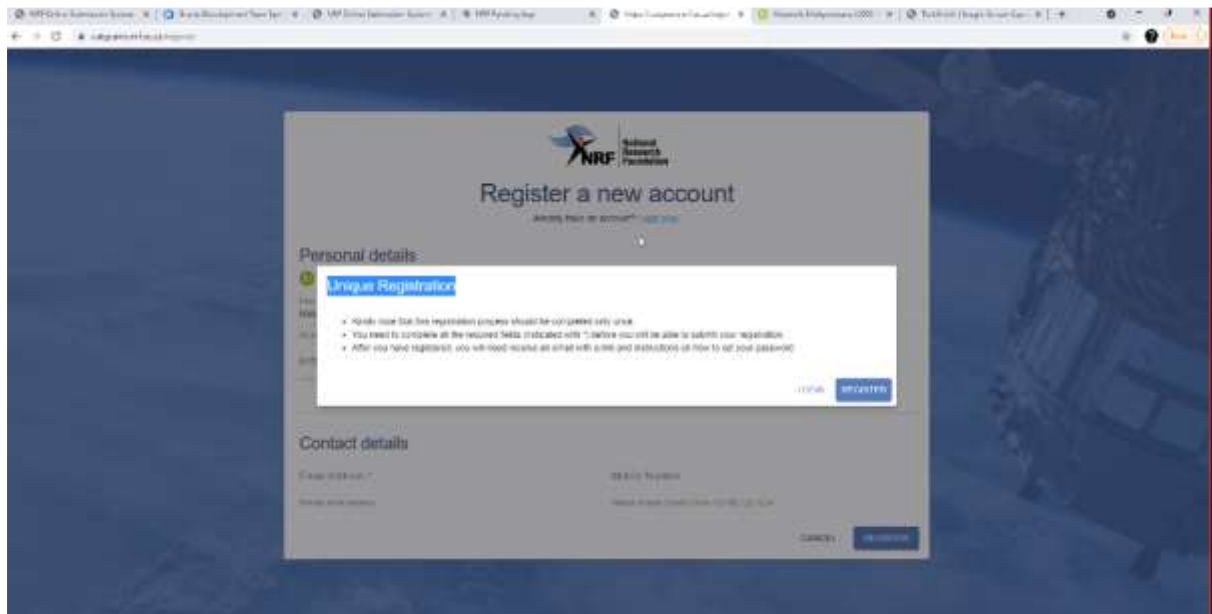
Step 7: Register on NRF Connect

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



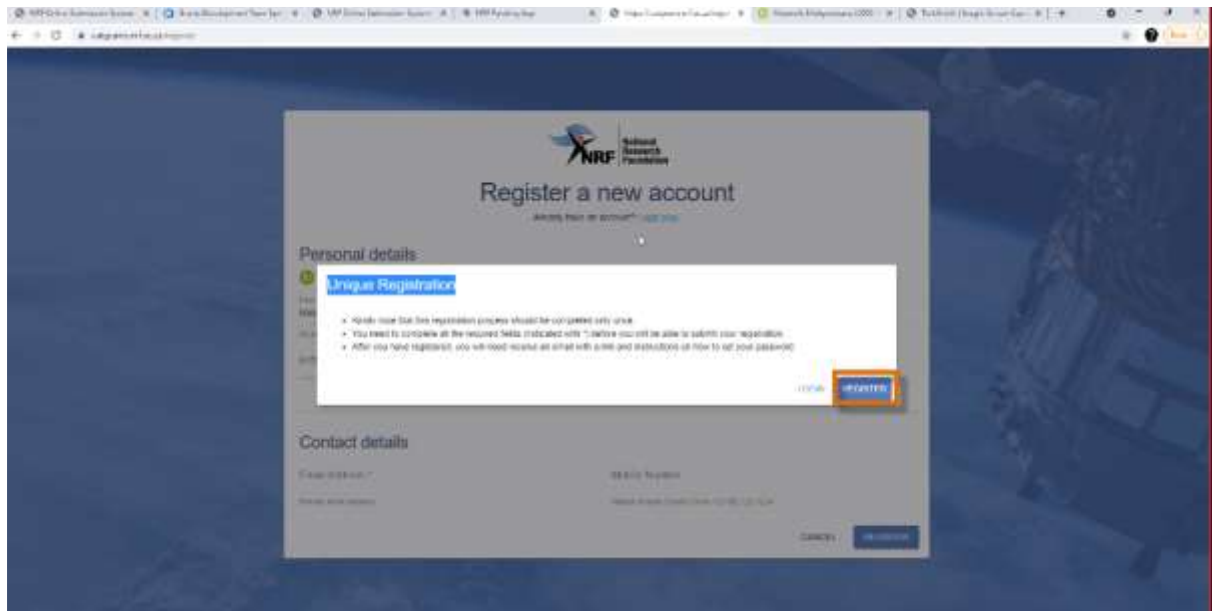
Step 8: Applicants with NRF Online Submission Profile

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




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.



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.

 National Research Foundation

Register a new account

[Already have an account? Login now](#)

Personal details

 <https://namiboa.orcad.org/00002-0002-8226-4961>

First Name *
Maserufe

Surname *
I

As per your birth certificate

Birth Date **
[Calendar icon]

Contact details

Email Address *
Primary email address

Mobile Number
Please include Country Code +27 082 123 1234

[CANCEL](#) [REGISTER](#)

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

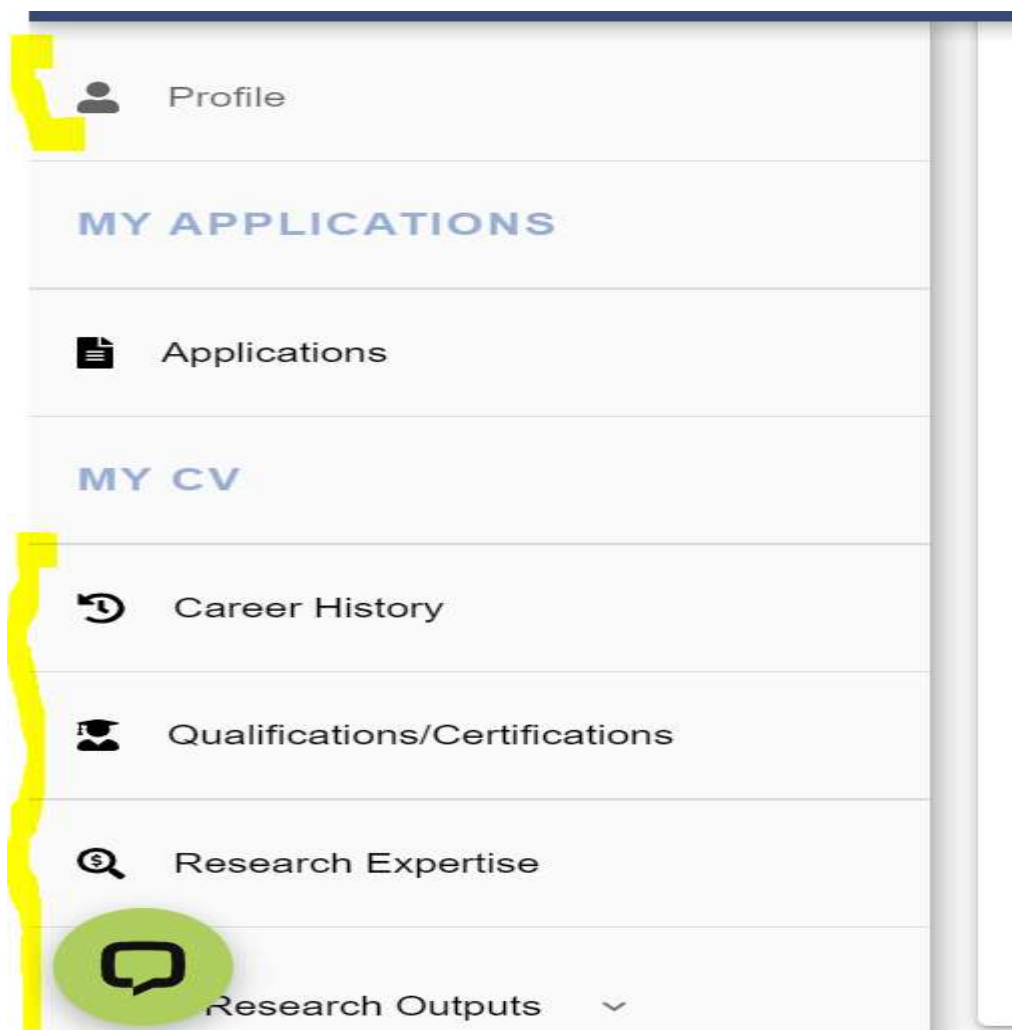
- Applicants must first complete or update the section ‘My Profile’ together with the CV sections on the left side of the NRF Connect screen before they can complete the application.
- All fields with an asterisk * are compulsory.
- Toggle to indicate No.

Are you disabled in any way?

- Toggle to indicate Yes.

Are you disabled in any way?

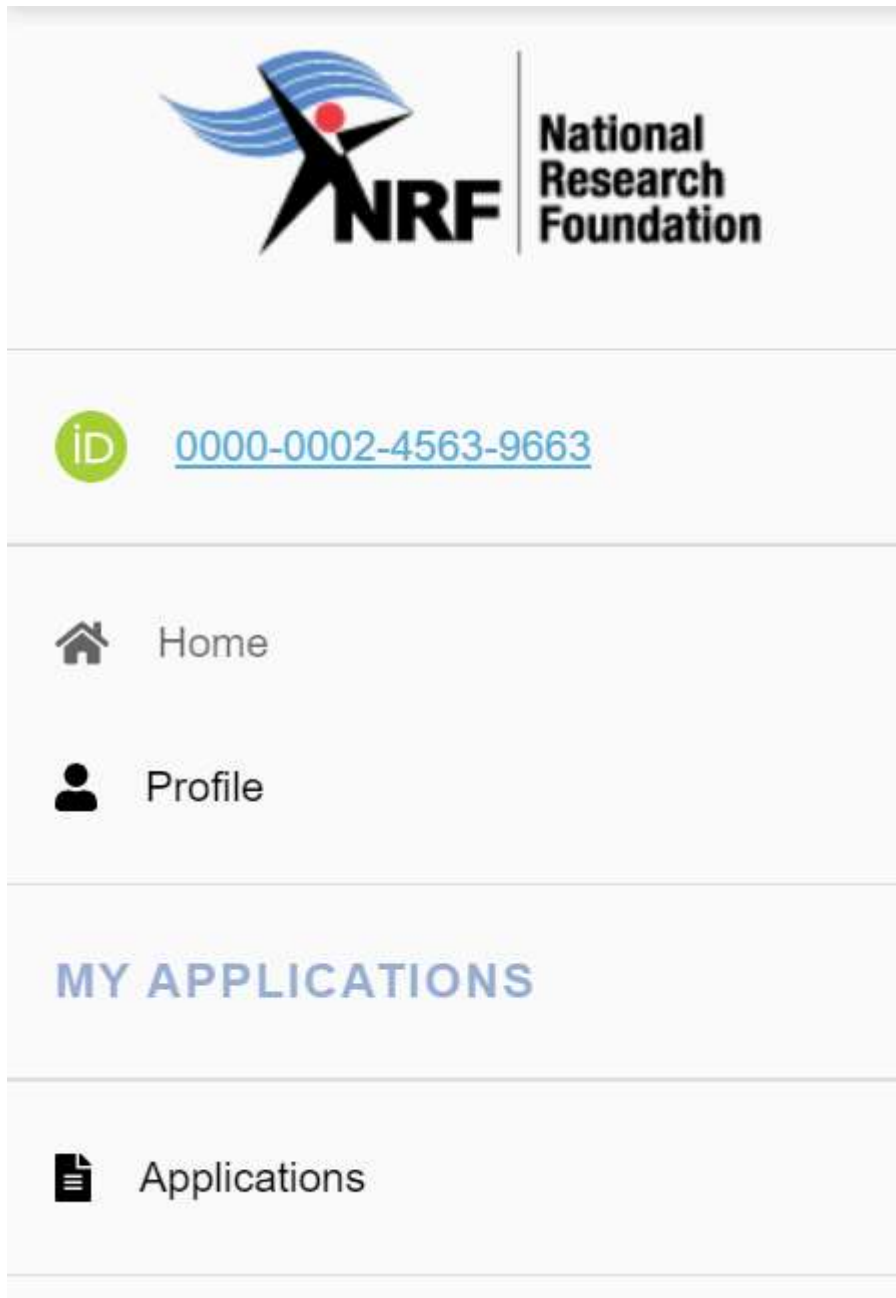
- If tertiary qualification is completed, upload proof of completion by clicking on “*Click here to upload the relevant document*” field which will redirect to your list of files.



B. Completing the Honours Scholarship application:

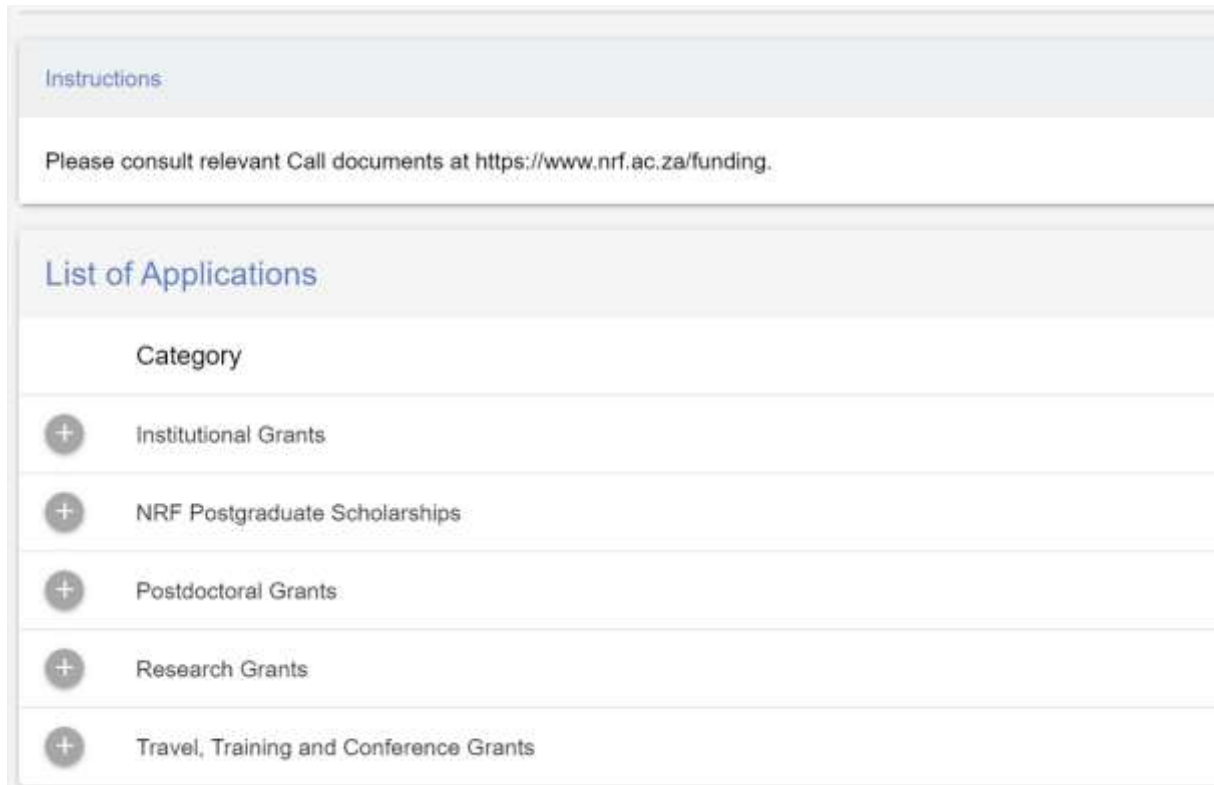
Step 12: Accessing the application

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.



The screenshot shows a web interface with a light blue header containing the word "Instructions" in a smaller font. Below the header, a text box contains the instruction: "Please consult relevant Call documents at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding>." Below this is a section titled "List of Applications" in a larger blue font. Underneath, there is a table with a single column labeled "Category". The table lists five categories, each preceded by a circular plus sign icon: "Institutional Grants", "NRF Postgraduate Scholarships", "Postdoctoral Grants", "Research Grants", and "Travel, Training and Conference Grants".

Step 14: Creating the application

- Click on 'Create' to complete the honours 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.



The screenshot shows a web interface with a light blue header containing a minus sign icon and the text "NRF Postgraduate Scholarships". Below the header, there is a table with four rows. The first row is labeled "Honours" and has a "CREATE" button to its right. The second row is labeled "Masters" and has a "CREATE" button to its right. The third row is labeled "Doctoral" and has a "CREATE" button to its right. The fourth row is labeled "Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Scholarships" and has a "CREATE" button to its right.

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.

*Note that the grey cross Toggle indicates “No”, and the blue tick indicates “Yes”, see example below:

Are you disabled in any way?

Are you disabled in any way?

My Applications

Edit Application

Category: NRF Postgraduate Scholarships
Funding opportunity: Honours
Reference: PMDS2204274252

[BACK TO APPLICATIONS](#)

PMDS2204274252 [PREVIEW](#)

Section	Complete	Updated	Edit
Personal Profile *	✓	27/04/2022	
Qualifications/Certifications *	✓	26/04/2022	
Research Expertise	✓	26/04/2022	
Career History	✓	26/04/2022	
Research Outputs	✗		
Patents	✗		
Application Category - Honours *	✗		
Details of Degree *	✗		
Geographical Area *	✗		
Person History *	✗		
Financial Need - Proof Of NASFAS/ISFAP Funding *	✗		
Financial Need *	✗		
Attachments	✗		

Step 16: Application Category

- The Application Category section is a very important section, as the applicant selects the Scholarship they're applying for.
- **Scholarship applying for** = there are different types of honours scholarships offered.
- Only one option can be selected.
- **Please refer to the *DSI-NRF Postgraduate Scholarship Framework (pages 3 - 8)* for detailed eligibility criteria for each scholarship.**
- Note that a change of the Scholarship you're applying for, will not be permitted if the application has already been submitted to the NRF.

General NRF Scholarship:

- The scholarship is intended to support candidates at South African public universities, in all areas of Science, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences and Humanities, including Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Scholarship linked to NRF-funded researcher:

- Applicants who have been recruited to work with a NRF funded researcher, e.g. SARChI, CoE, Thuthuka, NASSP, General Research Grants etc., **MUST** choose '**Scholarship linked to NRF-funded researcher**' on '*Scholarship Applying For*'. The applicants must also provide the reference or grant number of the NRF researcher and select the Funding Opportunity of the researcher.

NRF-SASOL Scholarship:

- Only South African citizens are eligible.
- Only applicants registered in chemistry and related disciplines with specific focus on the green economy will be considered.
- Only applicants who intend registering at one of the following South African public universities *viz.* University of Fort Hare, University of Limpopo, University of Venda, University of Free State (Qwaqwa Campus), and North-West University (Mahikeng Campus), will be considered.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Application Category". At the top right, there is a button labeled "BACK TO APPLICATION". The form contains several fields:

- A radio button field: "Are you/will you be registered as a full-time student?" with a radio button.
- A dropdown menu: "Scholarship applying for *".
- A dropdown menu: "Type of NRF-SARAO Scholar...".
- A dropdown menu: "NRF-funded researcher's applicati...".
- A dropdown menu: "Funding Opportunity".

At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "CANCEL" and "SAVE".

Step 17: Details of Degree

- **Applicant's proposed institution** = this is the South African institution where you intend to register for your honours degree. Once your application is submitted, it will be routed to the postgraduate/research office at the selected institution for the screening and scoring processes.
- Applicants will not be permitted to change the proposed institution once the application is submitted to the NRF. Should the application be successfully awarded, the student will be allowed to move the scholarship to another university.
- Applicants must capture the **final year major subjects** of the **undergraduate study** and the **mark obtained** for each subject.
- Applicants that don't have the final year results at time of application, may proceed to submit the application, however, as the final examination marks are released, they must ensure that they send the results to the proposed institution's postgraduate office for capturing on the scorecard.
- Applicants with the average examination mark that is **below 65%** for **major subjects in the final year** of the **undergraduate study**, are not eligible for the honours scholarship and will be rejected by the proposed university.
- Applicants who are full-time employed, cannot hold the NRF scholarship unless they're willing to resign if they're successfully awarded.

Details of Degree

[BACK TO APPLICATION](#)

Major Subject and First Result [CREATE NEW](#)

Subject	Marks Obtained
No records available	

Applicant's proposed institution *

Faculty of the institution where you are applying *

Discipline of degree to be funded *

Are you currently registered for the degree for which you are applying for funding? *

Anticipated date of completion for the degree you're applying for *

Completion time for undergraduate degree *

Are you willing to resign in order to take up the scholarship? *

Funding Period *

Department/Institution of degree to be funded *

Start date for the degree you're applying for *

Indicate what you are doing currently *

Average mark(s) obtained

Mark(s) for internal work done for Year 1, 2 and 3 of the Field

[CANCEL](#) [SAVE](#)

Step 18: Geographical Area

Please refer to the instructions to complete the section.

[BACK TO APPLICATION](#)

Geographical Area

Province of origin/birth ▼	District of origin/birth ▼
<hr/>	
Municipality of origin/birth ▼	Current province ▼
<hr/>	
Home language ▼	Other ▼
<hr/>	

[CANCEL](#) [SAVE](#)

Step 19: Person History

- The **Person History** section is required for statistical purposes by the NRF.
- If the **Previous or Current Study** is funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, please attach official proof under the **Attachments** section. Proof can be an official letter from NSFAS, ISFAP or the University, stating that you have previously received financial assistance from them. It can also be an official stamped account statement from the funder or university that clearly shows where the funds were received from.

[BACK TO APPLICATION](#)

Person History

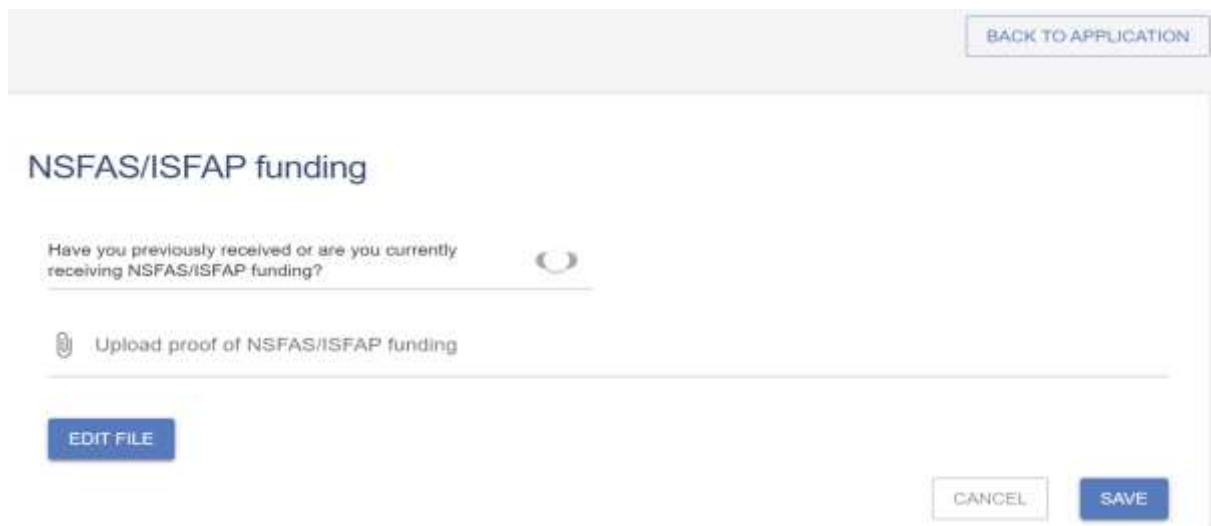
Previous studies funded by * ▼	Current degree funding * ▼
<hr/>	
Are you currently a DSI-HSRC intern? * <input type="radio"/>	
<hr/>	

[CANCEL](#) [SAVE](#)

Step 20: NSFAS/ISFAP Funding

- Move the Toggle to the right (blue tick) if you're previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP
- Move the Toggle to the left (grey cross) if you were not funded by NSFAS/ISFAP
- Applicants who were previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, must upload proof of funding in a form of:
 - an official university stamped financial statement clearly showing that the funds are coming from these funders, or
 - a statement from the funder or
 - a letter form NSFAS, ISFAP or the university stating that the applicant received funding from them.

*Please do not upload NSFAS bursary agreements as proof!



The screenshot shows a web form titled "NSFAS/ISFAP funding". At the top right, there is a button labeled "BACK TO APPLICATION". Below the title, there is a question: "Have you previously received or are you currently receiving NSFAS/ISFAP funding?". To the right of this question is a toggle switch, currently in the "off" position (grey cross). Below the question is a file upload area with a trash icon and the text "Upload proof of NSFAS/ISFAP funding". Underneath the upload area is a blue button labeled "EDIT FILE". At the bottom right of the form are two buttons: "CANCEL" and "SAVE".

Step 21: Financial Need

- With the **Financial Need** section, the NRF (through Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP)) aims to establish whether an applicant is financially needy or not (please refer to the Framework document for more information).
- If an applicant selects an option of a **combined family income of more than R350 000**, the section will be complete, and the financial means test will not be requested from the applicant.
- If an applicant selects an option of **less than or equal to R350 000**, more questions will pop-up, as shown below. If this option is selected, please complete the ISFAP

Consent Form which is downloadable from the instructions window of the Financial Need section and upload to the **Financial Need** section only. If the form is not uploaded or incomplete, a financial means test cannot be conducted.

- Applicants who were previously or currently funded by NSFAS or ISFAP, do not have to give consent for a financial means test. They must upload proof of funding under the “NSFAS/ISFAP Funding” section.

The screenshot shows the 'Financial Need' section of an application form. At the top right, there is a button labeled 'BACK TO APPLICATION'. The section title 'Financial Need' is on the left. Below it, there are four input fields: 'Combined gross family income *' with a dropdown arrow, 'Has a Financial Means Test been done?' with a radio button, 'Do you give consent for a Financial Means Test to be done?' with a radio button, and 'Upload completed consent form *' with a file upload icon. At the bottom left of this section is a blue button labeled 'EDIT FILE'.

Step 22: Household Contributor

If a financial means test is required, please complete the household contributor section, and input the details of the household contributors as they appear on the completed ISFAP consent form.

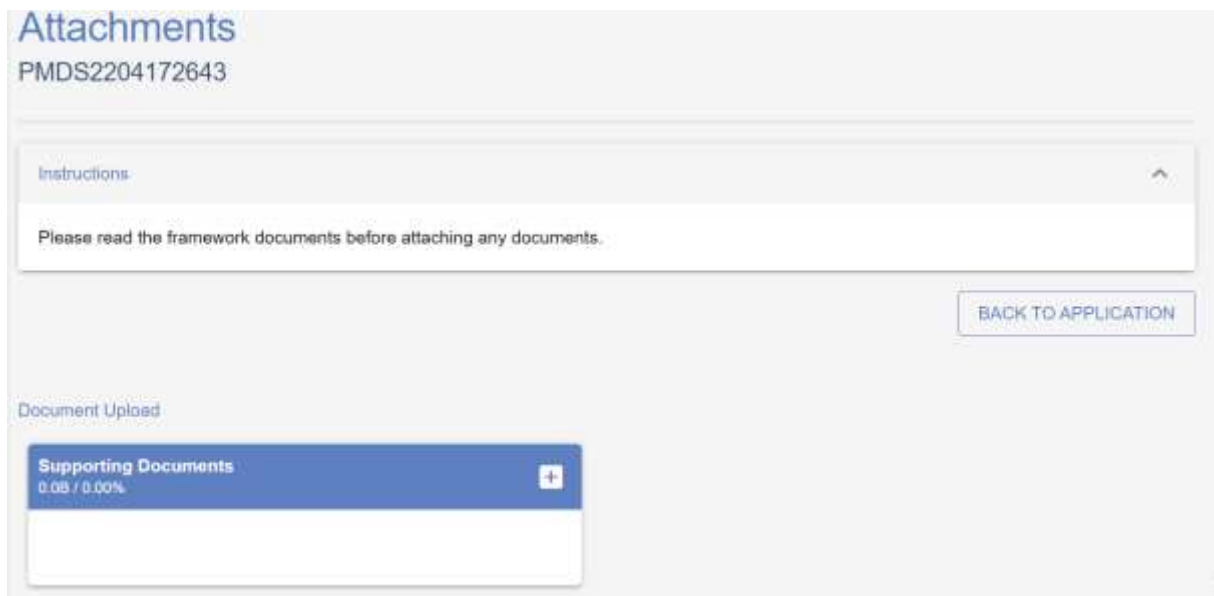
The screenshot shows the 'Household Contributor Record' section. At the top right, there is a button labeled 'CREATE NEW'. Below this is a table with the following columns: 'Relationship', 'Surname', 'First Name(s)', and 'Financial Contributor'. Below the table, there is a message: '⚠️ No data available'. At the bottom of the section, there is a radio button labeled 'Household contributor not applicable'. At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'SAVE'.

Step 23: Attachments

Please print or make a copy, certify, and scan all the required documents and upload as a **PDF file**.

The following is a summary of documents required for the honours scholarship:

- Certified copy of Identity Document (*Must be uploaded on the 'My Profile' section*).
- The latest official academic record on the university letterhead. Applicants who do not have the academic transcript due to outstanding fees, are required to attach **an official financial statement or letter from the university** indicating that the student still has outstanding fees owed to the university.
- A medical certificate for applicants who live with a disability (*Must be uploaded on the 'My Profile' section*).
- Proof of NSFAS/ISFAP for applicants who were previously or are currently funded by NSFAS/ISFAP.



The screenshot shows a web interface for uploading attachments. At the top, the title "Attachments" is displayed in blue, followed by the application ID "PMDS2204172643". Below this is a section titled "Instructions" with a small upward arrow icon. The instruction text reads: "Please read the framework documents before attaching any documents." To the right of this section is a button labeled "BACK TO APPLICATION". Below the instructions is a "Document Upload" section. It features a blue header bar with the text "Supporting Documents" and "0.0B / 0.00%", along with a plus sign icon in a square. Below the header bar is a large, empty white rectangular area for document uploads.

4. Screening Processes

Overview of the Screening Process

All submitted applications are routed to the proposed institution for screening on eligibility and the scoring process. Applications that meet the eligibility criteria are submitted to the NRF for further screening and funding decisions.

5. Applications Feedback and Disputes

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.

Feedback from the NRF

- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants rejected at the screening stage for not meeting the eligibility criteria.
- 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 upload a regret letter to the applicant's NRF portal.
- The NRF must provide feedback to applicants whose applications were recommended for funding and approved for funding. In this instance, the NRF will upload an award letter to the applicant's NRF portal.

--END--