**Master’s Scholarships in the field of Biostatistics/Statistics**

**Request for Applications**

(2024 enrolment)

Biostatistics is a growing field in sub-Saharan Africa due to increased biomedical data for population health and research, and the need for quantitative analytical skills for robust, innovative and efficient analyses of such complex datasets. Consequently, there is an urgent need for training of local researchers, including biostatisticians to conduct high-quality research and contribute to evidence-based decision-making.

The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) through funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are pleased to announce a call for applications for five (5) scholarships for Master’s in Biostatistics/Statistics at a South African University for the 2024 academic year. The financial support provided by the scholarships aims to enhance biostatistical capacity and increase the number of women with advanced statistical modelling skills in South Africa. Successful applicants will engage in research projects closely aligned with data related to women's health.

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to attract and provide support to up to five (5) scholars undertaking or planning to undertake a Master’s in Biostatistics/Statistics over two (2) years at South African Universities.

**The Scholarships up to the value of R401,000 will cover the following:**

* Tuition fees for year 1 and year 2.
* A monthly stipend to cover accommodation and living expenses for year 1 and 2.
* A laptop.
* Reasonable support, upon motivation, to attend/present work at a relevant national conference in year 2.

**ELIGIBILITY**

* In order to increase the number of women in the Mathematical Sciences field, this opportunity is open to female South African citizens or permanent residents only.
* Undertaking a full-time Master’s in Statistics/Biostatistics at a South African university.
* Must have a strong background in Statistics, Mathematics, Demography, and other quantitative fields.
* Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the respective South African universities offering the MSc degree or have already been offered place at South African University before applying for the fellowship. Preference will be given to applicants who have already been offered a place.
* Support letter from a Master’s in Biostatistics course coordinator/research supervisor

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| **Application Requirements** | **Attached**  **check (√)** |
| 1. ***Motivation:***   **1-page only**: Motivation demonstrating candidate’s suitability and describing how success in the application will impact candidate’s career and contribute to research on women’s health.  It should be accompanied by an abridged curriculum vitae containing a full list of current qualifications, research outputs (e.g., publications, conference, or symposium presentations etc.) and other meritorious achievements (e.g., scholarships, awards etc.). |  |
| 1. ***comprehensive curriculum vitae, including relevant research and work experience (if applicable).*** |  |
| 1. ***Evidence of acceptance to study Statistics/Biostatistics at a South African University in the 2024 academic year*** |  |
| ***4. Certified copy of South African identity document*** |  |
| ***5. Certified copy of Honours degree and academic record*** |  |
| ***6. Support letter by a Master’s in Biostatistics/Statistics course coordinator*** |  |
| ***7. Signed application form: please sign below and submit this form with your application.*** |  |

**It is important that you check (√) the right column to confirm completeness of the application before submitting.**

**Scholarship Conditions**

* The Scholarship holder shall not hold full-time employment during the tenure of the scholarship but shall be entitled to undertake teaching, clinical or other related duties / activities 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.
* 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 agreement with the SAMRC through its Division of Research Capacity Development.
* 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 SAMRC.
* Scholarship holders may not, without seeking approval from the SAMRC, register at a university other than that through which the application has been submitted.
* Scholarship holders will be expected to submit 6-monthly progress reports or as requested, signed by a course coordinator and/or research supervisor.
* Application for renewal of funding for a second year will be considered subject to satisfactory performance.
* Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement with the SAMRC to complete their studies within the specified time.
* Candidates will be required to work on a research activities/modelling techniques under supervision/co-supervision from one of the SAMRC Project team members.

**When to apply**

Opening date: 02 November 2023

Closing date: 30 November 2023, 23:59

**Application process**

Application steps 1 to 3 below must be completed.

• Step 1 - Complete the [online application](https://forms.office.com/r/7JR3c1KyfQ) before or by 30 November 2023, 23:59.

• Step 2 - Complete the [application form](https://www.samrc.ac.za/sites/default/files/attachments/2023-11/MScFellowships.docx) Master’s Scholarships in the field of Biostatistics/Request for Applications

• Step 3 - E-mail the required supporting documents together with the application form from step 2 in a single pdf file to the dedicated e-mail address: at [RCDscholarships@mrc.ac.za](mailto:Vincent.Fipaza@mrc.ac.za) on or before 30 November 2023, 23:59

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 after completion of the review, selection, and approval processes. Should you not hear from the SAMRC by 31 March 2024, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful.

**Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)**

*As of the 1st of July 2020, 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:*[*https://popia.co.za/*](https://popia.co.za/)

*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.*

For enquiries contact: Dr Lindokuhle Ndlandla at [Lindokuhle.Ndlandla@mrc.ac.za](mailto:Lindokuhle.Ndlandla@mrc.ac.za) / Tel 021 938 0442

**Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

**APPLICATION FORM: Master’s Scholarships in the field of Biostatistics/Statistics**

**Personal Details** (Mark the correct one with a tick √)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Title (Ms, Mr, Dr): | | | | | | First Name: | | |
| Surname: | | | | | | Gender: F / M | | |
| Population group: | Black | Coloured | Indian | Asian | White | Date of Birth:  *Day/ Month / Year* | | |
| Citizenship: | | | | | | South African citizen | South African Permanent resident | Other (Specify) |
| South African ID no.: (insert) | | | | | | Attach a certified copy of the ID document and confirm here with a tick (√) that you have attached it. | | |
| Postal Address: | | | | | |  | | |
| Work telephone no: (*where applicable*) | | | | | | Mobile no.: | | |
| Alternative no.: | | | | | |  | | |
| University e-mail address: | | | | | |  | | |
| Alternative e-mail address: | | | | | |  | | |

**Academic Information** (Mark the correct one with a tick √)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Highest qualification: | BSc Hons | | | Y/N |
| Honours programme name (e.g., BSc Hons Mathematical Statistics) | | |  |
| This application is for which degree year: | MSc (specify) | | | |
| 1st year | | 2nd year | |
| University at which you have been accepted/registered: |  | | | |
| Current degree funded by: |  | | | |
| First date of registration: | **Attach registration or acceptance letter** | | | |
| Faculty: |  | | | |
| Department: |  | | | |
| Relationship to the SAMRC (if any): | SAMRC intramural unit | SAMRC extramural unit | | |
| SAMRC research centre | Supervisor/main project funded by SAMRC | | |
| Previous degree funded by RCD | None of the above | | |
| SAMRC Intra/Extramural Research Unit Name (if applicable): |  | | | |
| Title of research project (if applicable): |  | | | |
| Full name of Course Coordinator / Research supervisor: |  | | | |
| Course Coordinator / Research supervisor contact details:  Email address: |  | | | |
| Contact no. of Course Coordinator / Research supervisor: |  | | | |

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

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| Signature: | Date: |