

Master's Scholarships in the field of Biostatistics/Statistics

Request for Applications

(2025 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 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 (BMGF) and SAMRC are pleased to announce a call for applications for scholarships for Master's in Biostatistics/Statistics at a South African University for the 2025 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 awarded funding under the BMGF arm of the programme 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 scholars undertaking or planning to undertake a Master's in Biostatistics/Statistics over two (2) years at South African Universities. In order to increase the number of women in the Mathematical Sciences field, female South African citizens or permanent residents are encouraged to apply.

The Scholarship up to the value of R400,000 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.

Eligibility

- 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



Application requirements	Attached check (v)
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.	
2. Comprehensive curriculum vitae (CV): 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.) and relevant research and work experience (if applicable).	
3. A copy of master's programme structure i.e. a list of core modules that makes up the master's programme and other requirements for successful completion of the degree (obtainable from MSc course coordinator).	
4. Certified copy of South African identity document	
5. Certified copy of academic record	
6. Support letter by a Master's in Biostatistics/Statistics course coordinator stating that the applicant's application has been received by the institution and date by which selection process will be concluded.	
OR if registered already, please attach proof of registration	

It is important that you check (v) 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 eight (8) 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.
- An 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 selected to work on the BMGF funded projects may be required to work under supervision/co-supervision of an SAMRC-BMGF Project team member.
- If awarded, applicants must be able to take up the award immediately.
- The scholarship is for the specified enrolment year (2025), and therefore cannot be deferred to subsequent years.

How to apply

Opening date: 13 September 2024
Closing date: 24 October 2024, 23:59

Application Process

Application steps below must be completed before or by **24 October 2024, 23:59**.

- Step 1 - Complete the [online](#) application.
- Step 2 - Upload all the required supporting documents.

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 December 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/>

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.

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For enquiries contact Dr Lindokuhle Ndlandla at Lindokuhle.Ndlandla@mrc.ac.za / Tel. 021 938 0442.



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

Personal Details (Mark the correct one with a tick ✓)

1. Title (Ms, Mr, Dr)						2. First Name		
3. Surname						4. Gender: F / M		
5. Population group	African	Coloured	Indian	Asian	White	6. Date of Birth: DD/MM/YYYY		
7. Citizenship						South African citizen	South African Permanent resident	Other (Specify)
8. South African ID number (insert)						Attach a certified copy of the ID document		
9. Postal Address								
10. Work telephone number (<i>where applicable</i>)						Mobile number		
11. Alternative number								
12. University e-mail address								
13. Alternative e-mail address								

Academic Information (Mark the correct one with a tick ✓)

14. Highest qualification	e.g. BSc Hons	
	15. Honours programme name (e.g., BSc Hons Mathematical Statistics)	
16. This application is for which degree year	MSc (specify)	
	1 st year	2 nd year
17. University at which you have been accepted/registered/intend to register		
18. Current degree funded by		
19. First date of registration	Attach proof of registration if already registered	



	<i>If 2025 is your first year, please attach a support letter from your course coordinator.</i>	
20. Faculty		
21. Department		
22. Relationship to the SAMRC (if any)	SAMRC intramural unit	SAMRC extramural unit
	SAMRC research centre	Supervisor/main project funded by SAMRC
	None of the above	
23. SAMRC Intra/Extramural Research Unit Name (if applicable)		Not Applicable
24. Title of research project (if applicable)		Research project has not been finalized
25. Research field (If applicable)	Biostatistics	Data Science
	Demography	Digital Health
	Epidemiology	Health Economics
	Genomics	Immunology
	Bioethics	Evolutionary Virology
	Implementation Science	Structural Biology
26. Alignment of the proposed research to the SAMRC priority research areas	Biomedical Research	HIV, TB and other communicable diseases
	Health System Strengthening	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
	Maternal child and woman health	Non-communicable diseases
	Public Health Innovation	Violence, injury and trauma
27. Full name of course coordinator or research supervisor		
28. Course coordinator's or research supervisor's contact number		
29. Course coordinator's or research supervisor's email address		

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.

Signature:	Date:
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