



SAMRC Extramural Research Units (EMUs)

Request for Applications (RFA):

**Gap Funding for Students &
Equipment/Maintenance Support**

Date Posted: 8 September 2025

Closing Date: 24 October 2025

(SAMRC-RFA-EMU-09-2025)



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1. INTRODUCTION

The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) plays a critical role in advancing health research, innovation, and capacity development in South Africa. Through its network of **Extramural Units (EMUs)**, the SAMRC supports high-quality, multidisciplinary research programmes that address priority health challenges, build human capital, and contribute to national and global knowledge.

In recent months, the South African research landscape has been significantly affected by the withdrawal of funding from the United States federal government. This has created a funding gap with direct consequences for research and its related activities. Without intervention, these challenges risk undermining the progress made in health research.

The SAMRC recognises the urgent need to cushion the impact of these losses and ensure the continuity of research productivity within its Units. Therefore, the SAMRC has availed funding for EMU support in the form of Gap funding for **postgraduate students (MSc, PhD) who have been directly affected by the withdrawal of US federal funding**, as well as for **Equipment and Maintenance Support**.

Through this intervention, the SAMRC reaffirms its commitment to strengthening South Africa's research system by protecting talent, sustaining infrastructure, and enabling research excellence. The SAMRC invites eligible EMUs to submit applications to ensure that the negative impact of the funding cuts is minimised, and that research momentum is preserved for the benefit of South Africa and beyond.

2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

2.1 Gap Funding for Students

- Purpose: To provide interim financial support to postgraduate students (MSc, PhD) who have been directly affected by the withdrawal of US federal funding.
- Funding Amount: **R30,000 per student** (once-off support).
- Eligible Costs: Stipend support, tuition fees, or research-related expenses that ensure continuation of studies.

2.2 Equipment and Maintenance Support

- Purpose: To ensure that critical equipment remains functional and accessible for ongoing research activities.
- Funding Amount: **Up to R100,000 per successful applicant**.
- Eligible Costs: Minor equipment purchases, servicing, calibration, or repair/maintenance costs of existing essential research equipment.



3. ELIGIBILITY

- Applications are restricted to **EMUs**.
- For student support: Only students **currently registered** and whose funding has been disrupted due to the US funding withdrawal are eligible.
- For equipment support: Units must demonstrate that the equipment is critical to research activities and that the requested support is necessary to sustain ongoing projects. Applications should also indicate any co-funding from the Unit or host institution.

4. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- Applications must submit a motivation to the SAMRC using the template provided ([motivation template](#)).
- Each motivation must be endorsed by the EMU Director by signing the motivation;
- For **Gap Funding for Students**, a full CV of the applicant must be submitted which focuses on publications, presentations, academic accomplishments & awards;
- For **Equipment and Maintenance Support**, there must be an Indication of co-funding from the Unit or host institution.
- It is critical that applicants follow the application instructions. Conformance to the requirements in the Application Guideline is required and strictly enforced. Applications that do not comply with these instructions will be rejected and will not proceed for further review.

4.1 Submission dates and times

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications **before** the due date so that the review processes can be initiated as soon as possible. Table 1 outlines the dates that are relevant to this RFA process.

Table 1. Application timelines

STAGES	DATE/PERIOD
1. Publication of RFA	8 September 2025
2. Deadline for submitting the motivation	24 th October 2025
3. Evaluation period	November 2025
4. Notification of awards	December 2025

5. BUDGET

- **Student Support:** R30,000 per eligible student.
- **Equipment/Maintenance Support:** Up to R100,000 per application.
- No indirect costs or overheads may be charged to this funding.



6. REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will undergo an internal review by the SAMRC; the evaluation criteria includes:

6.1 For Student Support:

- Demonstrated loss of federal funding.
- Potential impact of support on student's ability to continue studies.
- Alignment with SAMRC's mission to retain research capacity.

6.2 For Equipment Support:

- Criticality of the equipment to ongoing research.
- Justification of the requested maintenance/purchase.
- An indication of co-funding from the Unit/ host institution.

7. NOTIFICATIONS TO APPLICANTS

- Applicants will be notified of the status of their proposal approximately **six weeks** after the deadline.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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