



TRANSFORMED RCD

FUNDING CATEGORIES OF THE MRC

19 APRIL 2006

General

1. PFMA and Risk management

- The MRC management has to be mindful to protect the MRC against legal liability or wasteful expenditure of resources when approving bursaries and scholarships for training and research grants.
- MRC needs to ensure that bursars/scholarship holders have a suitable supervisor, a peer-reviewed project, ethical clearance and available running expenses for the project to ensure that the recipient is able to undertake research training during the funding period.
- MRC needs to ensure that the principal investigator has the necessary expertise to ensure that the research can be done or has collaborators to ensure that the work can be undertaken.

2. General provisions

- a. Acknowledgement of the MRC in all publications.
- b. These grants are available to South African citizens and permanent residents only.
- c. The institution at which the individual is based, has to apply for a tax directive for bursary and scholarship holders, where applicable.
- d. Employed individuals should declare for tax purposes grant funding paid into their banking accounts.
- e. Periodic reporting must be honoured by grant holders.
- f. The system should enable Unit Directors to make conscious decisions to do capacity development.
- g. Decisions relating to Unit RCD grants will be guided by the racial equity profile of each unit.
- h. As a standard and if funds permit, each unit will be required to host a minimum of 1 post-doc and 1 intern as researchers-in-development.
- i. Additional student bursaries will be made available for the recruitment of outstanding students at final year undergraduate or honours level once funds become available.

Overview of Funding Categories

Funding Category	Grouping	Value (Rands)	Purpose of funding
1. Clinicians –in research initiative (CIRI)	Post MBChB/ BChD grant Senior research training fellowships for specialists under 45 yrs	R 80 000 pa 120 000 salary contribution pa	Subsistence, research costs, research activities travel and conferences Salary sub-vention, travel and conferences
2. Research internships	Masters’ and Doctoral Research training internships for Black scientists (MRC or DST internship or other)	Salaries within HR systems or co-funders’ offers.	Costs of living and studying
3. Post-graduate scholarships	Local masters scholarships Local doctoral scholarships	20 000 + 5 000 pa 30 000 + 5 000 pa	Subsistence and registration Subsistence and registration
4. Postdoctoral Awards	Local postdoctoral scholarships	80 000, 90 000, 100 000 pa	Subsistence, research costs, travel and conferences
5. Senior postdoctoral awards	MRC Career Awards	R150 000 + R 50 000 = R 200 000 pa	Salary contribution and project running expenses
6. Researcher Development Grants	Research training scholarships for Allied Health Professionals & Nurses Research Development Grant Staff development grant	R50 000 p.a. R60 000	Work relief, honours student, travel and conferences
7. Unit RCD grants	Post-doc Masters’ and PhD students from outside the MRC (research interns and bursary holders) Local Staff development grant Overseas Doctoral scholarship (sandwich programme) within existing institutional agreement Research Development Grants	Values as determined in each category Local student bursaries: R 20 000 Masters and R30 000 for PhD	Registration and study materials

	Technical assistance grants to be used for students/intern Travel Grants for Short Visits/Short Courses		
8. Overseas doctoral training (sandwich programme)	Full-time 1 year out of every 3 years for MRC or external researchers Part-time for MRC or External researchers	Max R120 000/full 12 mths max R60 000 over 12/36 mths or equivalent prorata for shorter periods	Travel, subsistence and study related costs
Travel grants	9. International conferences 10. National conferences 11. Sabbatical leave grants	Max 5 000 Max 3 000 Max 20 000	
12. Visiting International scientists	Distinguished Guest Speaker sponsorship	Max 20 000	
13. Technical Assistance	Technical Assistance Grants	Max 25 000	
14. Visiting grants	Travel grants for short visits	Max 25 000	

Funding Category

1. Clinicians – in research initiative (ICRI)
2. Research internships
3. Post-graduate scholarships
4. Postdoctoral Awards
5. Senior postdoctoral awards
6. Developing researcher Grants
7. Unit RCD grants
8. Overseas doctoral training
9. International conferences
10. National conferences
11. Sabbatical
12. Distinguished guest speaker
13. Technical Assistance
14. Travel grants for short visits/short courses

1. Clinicians – in research initiative (CIRI)

1.1 Post MBChB and BChD grants

Provides opportunity for newly qualified medical doctors and dentists to engage in research in any field of health sciences as part of their development.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens or permanent residents Recent MBChB graduates who have registered with the health professions council and have completed their internship and community service
Period of Funding	Approval is for 1 calendar year at a time Scholarships are renewable for a 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th year of training
Value of the Award	R80 000.00 pa
Conditions	Candidates may not hold a bursary from more than one statutory science council at any given time Scholarship holders may undertake teaching/academic duties to a maximum of 9 hours per week as part of their research training. Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with MRC scholarships, other non-binding remuneration/fellowships and grants without prior approval from the MRC Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change the research project without the approval of the MRC Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change his/her supervisor without the approval of the MRC A detailed report must be submitted to the MRC within 2 months of completing the 12 month period of research training
Application Process	A request for applications is sent to the tertiary institutions with medical faculties Applications are submitted to the MRC through the institution's post-graduate bursaries office An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor under whose supervision the research will be carried out
Selection Criteria	Population Group: Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African. Gender: Priority is given to females. Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be ranked highly. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC's strategic research priorities. Referee's ranking must be high The research proposal must be positively scored on a Peer-review process Supervisor's credentials and experience must be ranked high.

	Detailed project proposal with institutional research and ethics approval Engagement in an identifiable research project
Review Process	Applications are reviewed by the National Strategic Research Committee (NSRC) Committee recommendations forwarded to EMC for approval
Approval	Approved by EMC
Monitoring	A detailed report must be submitted to the MRC within 2 months of completing the 12 month period of research training If a renewal application is submitted, it must be accompanied by a progress report. The renewal application should include a motivation from the applicant's supervisor The MRC may request information from the institutions on degrees completed and on the researcher's registration status MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student

1.2 Senior Research Training Fellowships for Specialist under 45 years

This is a salary contribution and enables senior registrars and specialist under 45 years to spend dedicated time undertaking research training usually for a dissertation for an MD or PhD.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens or permanent residents Specialists under the age of 45
Period of Funding	One year
Value of the Award	Salary contribution of R120 000.00. The employing institution provides a salary top-up
Conditions	The employing institution must agree to provide a salary to-up in keeping with the institutions salary scales and free the applicant from clinical duties to enable him/her to conduct full-time research
Application Process	A request for applications is sent to the tertiary institutions with medical faculties An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor(s) under whose supervision the research will be undertaken Applications are submitted to the MRC through the institutions administrative office Applicants must submit, a research plan, institutional and ethics approval for the project, proof of source of funding for the research project, 3 referee's reports , publication list of supervisor for the past 3 years
Selection Criteria	Population Group: Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African. Gender: Priority is given to females. Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be ranked highly. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC's strategic research priorities. Referee's ranking must be high The research proposal must be positively scored on a Peer-review process Supervisors credentials and experience must be ranked as credible Detailed project proposal with institutional research and ethics approval Proof of availability of running expenses for the project
Review Process	Applications are reviewed by the NSRC. A consensus recommendation is tabled at the EMC for approval
Approval	Approval at EMC
Monitoring	Report is submitted at the end of grant period

Notes: The ideal would be to overhaul the CIRI category by increasing the value of the Post basic grant to R 100 000, linking the category with opportunities for a sabbatical/overtime waiver and providing institutional research administrative support to the Health Faculty at

each of the 8 medical schools. However this can only be initiated if there are additional financial resources of at least R 1 million for the category to start with. The age limit has also been increased by 5 years to allow more room for people who did not have opportunities.

2. MRC Research Training Internships for Black Scientists

The purpose of the Research Training Internship is to train and mentor young black researchers and to prepare them up to a level of suitability to be appointed as researchers and, to increase the human resource base of health researchers in the country. The programme also provides an opportunity to train researchers:

- in areas where there are no or minimal researchers, and
- in those disciplines that are not included in postgraduate training programmes in tertiary institutions.

Research trainees are MRC employees appointed to work in MRC units, groups and lead programmes.

Eligibility	Black graduates with a four year undergraduate degree or an Honours degree, who want to gain research experience and to complete a Masters degree, as well as those with a Master's degree who wish gain practical research experience and to complete a Doctoral degree. South African citizens or permanent residents The mentor or co-mentor must be in an MRC lead programme/group/unit/centre or be a MRC-funded researcher.
Period of Funding	12 month contract, renewable upon satisfactory progress Maximum of 2 years for research trainees registering for a Masters degree, renewable annually subject to satisfactory progress being made. Substantive motivation should be given, subject to approval, should there be a need to exceed this period. Maximum of three years for research trainees registered for a doctoral degree, renewable annually subject to satisfactory progress. Support beyond this limit only on substantive motivation and subject to approval.
Remuneration (taxable)	Pre- Masters: minimum salary scale equivalent to that of a Senior research technician per annum + R5 000 for continuing education which can be used for either registration or conference attendance. Pre- Doctoral: minimum salary equivalent to that of a research technologist p.a. + R5 000 for continuing education described above. Research programmes may top-up the salary up to a maximum of 80% of the starting salary for an MRC junior scientist (pre-masters) or scientist (post-masters level).
Employment conditions	Research trainees appointed as MRC employees and therefore under the MRC conditions of services with amendments as stipulated in the policy document.
Recruitment Process	Potential candidates are identified through a number of ways: 1. Mentors approach the Research Capacity Development (RCD) Sub-Directorate to request funds to appoint a research trainee who has either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressed an interest in research training • been headhunted • been selected through advertising for the research trainee position The mentors also receive assistance from the (RCD) Sub-Directorate with advertising for and identifying suitable research trainees

	<p>2. Individuals approach the Research Capacity Development Sub-Directorate After review of individual's <i>curriculum vitae</i>, we assist with establishing research area of interest and linkages with potential mentor(s) We also provide guidance with the application process</p> <p>3. Referrals by MRC interview panels Applications are screened for completeness and circulated to committee members</p> <p>4. Referrals from local master's or doctoral applications</p> <p>5. Grants Committee recommendation for a particular programme to identify a suitable black research trainee</p>
Selection Criteria	<p>Generic Black but 70% African Black 70% female Academic record/potential of the applicant Research area linked to MRC strategic priority health programme Mentor or co-mentor must be at an MRC programme/group/unit or be an MRC funded researcher in a priority area for scarce skills development e.g. Health Economics Suitable outcomes plan from the unit for the 12 month training period Proof of acceptance of internship policy conditions by mentor and mentee and submission of their contract containing the mentee's development plan.</p>
Renewals	<p>Dependent on satisfactory progress during the current internship period Appointment will only be finalized once proof of finalization of a prerequisite degree has been provided.</p>
Review Process	<p>Individual applications are reviewed through a process that involves unit directors all the way</p>
Approval	<p>Approval of RCD Sub-Directorate recommendations by EMC</p>
Monitoring	<p>Quarterly progress reports by interns and mentors to Internship programme coordinator, feedback at annual internship workshop. End-of-year progress reports submitted with the renewal application.</p>
General	<p>Training or skills development workshops take place annually Mentorship is a key component of this programme.</p>

Notes: A move is on the cards to ultimately maintain a ratio of 1:2 of Masters: PhD candidates and a 2:1 female:male ratios to facilitate adherence to the MRC business plan. Another major change from the past is to make registration for a Masters or PhD a requirement to eliminate the category being used as a form of employment with no research development as it has been happening in the past. This document has also refrained from using real figures for intern salaries, but instead proposes to use an equivalent of permanent positions so that the value can be raised on an annual basis to keep up with inflation. These will require an increase of 10% to the present intership budget of R 2 045 000 to maintain the present number of interns in the system.

3. POST-GRADUATE BURSARIES

3.1 Local Masters bursaries

Provides an opportunity for full-time Masters studies in any field in the health sciences.

Who Qualifies for funding	<p>South African citizens or permanent residents Applicants from any discipline in the health sciences Applicants that have obtained an honours (Hons) degree or a 4 year degree with a pass of 60% Black applicants that have obtained an Honours or a 4 year degree and demonstrated a potential to succeed Students registering for a full-time masters degree with at least a 50% research component Preference is given to applicants that will undertake research training with a supervisor that is an MRC funded researcher Applications are considered if the supervisor is not an MRC funded researcher in the following instances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student will be studying at a HDI • the student is an allied health professional or nurse
Period of Funding	Approval is for 1 calendar year at a time, renewable for a second year of study
Value of the Award	R20 000.00 pa tax free for subsistence, R5 000.00 pa for fees
Conditions	<p>Scholarship holders may undertake teaching/academic duties to a maximum of 9 hours per week as part of their training. Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with a MRC scholarship, other bursaries, grants or remuneration which binds them to enter the service of any organisation Candidates may not hold a bursary from more than one statutory science council at any given time Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with MRC scholarships, other non-binding remuneration/fellowships and grants without prior approval from the MRC Scholarship holders may not, without obtaining the MRC's prior approval, register at a university other than that through which the application has been submitted Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change the research project without the approval of the MRC Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change his/her supervisor without the approval of the MRC Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement with the MRC to complete their studies within the specified time period</p>
Application Process	<p>A request for applications is sent to the post-graduate bursaries office or research support services at all tertiary institutions Applications are submitted to the MRC through the institutions administrative office An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor under whose supervision the research will be carried out, as</p>

	<p>well as the supervisor at the university where s(he) will register</p> <p>The university at which the candidate will be registered must confirm that the candidate has been accepted for master's study</p>
Selection Criteria	<p>Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African, and females</p> <p>A promising academic record/potential of the applicant</p> <p>MRC funded supervisor:</p> <p>Research area linked to the MRC's strategic priority research programmes.</p> <p>Impressive Supervisors credentials and experience</p> <p>A limited number of MRC funded students is approved per supervisor</p> <p>Non MRC Funded supervisor:</p> <p>Supervisors credentials and experience are reviewed, the project is peer-reviewed, ethical approval as well as availability of running expenses checked.</p>
Review Process	<p>Applications are reviewed by a panel including at least two Grants Committee members.</p> <p>Consensus recommendations are forwarded to EMC for ratification.</p> <p>All renewal applications are considered first and approved subject to satisfactory progress if the funding period has not been exceeded</p> <p>All new applications from black applicants are considered for funding to ensure that any qualifying black applicant is supported</p> <p>All applications from the allied health professionals and nurses are considered to ensure that any qualifying applicant is supported</p> <p>The remainder of the new applications (white applicants) are considered for funding on a competitive basis since the number of applicants far exceeds the available funding</p> <p>Applications for funding beyond the 2nd year are considered based on a strong motivation.</p>
Approval	<p>Approved by panel described above and ratified by EMC</p>
Monitoring	<p>Progress reports are submitted with the renewal application</p> <p>The renewal application includes a motivation from the students supervisor</p> <p>MRC requests information from the institutions on degrees completed and on the students registration status</p> <p>MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student</p>
Surety	<p>Successful applicants sign a written agreement to refund the bursary, with interest, if the degree is not completed within three years unless a written extension is requested from the MRC</p>
General	<p>The total income from the MRC and other sources should not exceed R50 000.00 pa</p>

Notes: It is proposed to increase the value of this category from R 25 000 to R 40 000 p.a. to catch up with inflation over the years and to avoid losing the best candidates to funders with better values. This will only be possible if new money is available.

3.2 Local Doctoral Scholarships

Provides an opportunity for full-time doctoral studies in any field in the health sciences.

Who Qualifies for funding	<p>South African citizens or permanent residents Applicants that are completing a masters degree in any discipline in the health sciences Students registering for a full-time doctoral studies Preference is given to applicants that will undertake research training with a supervisor that is an MRC funded researcher Applications are considered if the supervisor is not an MRC funded researcher in the following instances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student will be studying at a HDI • the student is an allied health professional or nurse
Period of Funding	<p>Approval is for 1 calendar year at a time Doctoral scholarships are renewable for a 2nd and 3rd year of study Where an applicant upgrades from a master's to doctoral studies, s(he) will qualify for a maximum of 4 years of funding</p>
Value of the Award	<p>R35 000.00 for subsistence, R5 000.00 for fees</p>
Conditions	<p>Scholarship holders may undertake teaching/academic duties to a maximum of 9 hours per week as part of their training. Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with a MRC scholarship, other bursaries, grants or remuneration which binds them to enter the service of any organization without prior approval from the MRC Candidates may not hold a bursary from more than one statutory science council at any given time Scholarship holders may not receive, concurrently with MRC scholarships, other non-binding remuneration/fellowships and grants without prior approval from the MRC Scholarship holders may not, without obtaining the MRC's prior approval, register at a university other than that through which the application has been submitted Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change the research project without the approval of the MRC Once the award has been made the scholarship holder cannot change his/her supervisor without the approval of the MRC Successful applicants will be required to enter into an agreement with the MRC to complete their studies within the specified time period Successful applicants may not take up the scholarship before completion of a master's degree or submission of an outstanding master's dissertation or written confirmation of upgrade to doctoral studies.</p>
Application Process	<p>A request for applications is sent to the post-graduate scholarships office or research support services at all tertiary institutions Applications are submitted to the MRC through the institutions administrative office An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor under whose supervision the research will be carried out, as</p>

	<p>well as the supervisor at the university where s(he) will register</p> <p>The university at which the candidate will be registered must confirm that the candidate has been accepted for doctoral study</p>
Selection Criteria	<p>Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African, and females</p> <p>A promising academic record/potential of the applicant</p> <p>MRC funded supervisor:</p> <p>Research area linked to the MRC's strategic priority research programmes.</p> <p>Impressive Supervisors credentials and experience</p> <p>A limited number of MRC funded students is approved per supervisor</p> <p>Non MRC Funded supervisor:</p> <p>Supervisors credentials and experience are reviewed, the project is peer-reviewed, ethical approval as well as availability of running expenses checked.</p>
Review Process	<p>Applications are reviewed by a panel including at least two Grants Committee members.</p> <p>Consensus recommendations are forwarded to EMC for ratification.</p> <p>All renewal applications are considered first and approved subject to satisfactory progress if the funding period has not been exceeded</p> <p>All new applications from black applicants are considered for funding to ensure that any qualifying black applicant is supported</p> <p>All applications from the allied health professionals and nurses are considered to ensure that any qualifying applicant is supported</p> <p>The remainder of the new applications (white applicants) are considered for funding on a competitive basis since the number of applicants far exceeds the available funding</p> <p>Applications for funding beyond the 3rd year of funding are considered based on a strong motivation.</p>
Approval	<p>Approved by panel described above and ratified by EMC</p>
Monitoring	<p>Progress reports are submitted with the renewal application</p> <p>The renewal application includes a motivation from the students supervisor</p> <p>MRC requests information from the institutions on degrees completed and on the students registration status</p> <p>MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student</p>
Surety	<p>Successful applicants sign a written agreement to refund the bursary, with interest, if the degree is not completed within four years unless a written extension is requested from the MRC</p>
General	<p>The total income from the MRC and other sources should not exceed R70 000.00 pa.</p>

Notes: It is proposed to increase the value of this category from R 35 000 to R 65 000 p.a. to catch up with inflation over the years and to avoid losing the best candidates to funders with better values. This will only be possible if new money is available. An additional sub-category is proposed specifically for researchers between the ages of 35 and 45 to be enabled to do their PhD's, at the recommended scholarship value of R 110 000 p.a (R100 000 for subsistence and R 10 000 for study related costs)

4. Local Postdoctoral Scholarships

Capacity retention programme and provision of opportunities for further training and development to facilitate mentorship of future leadership in health research.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens or permanent residents that have completed a research doctorate in any field in the health sciences. Particular attention will be given to areas with scarce skills such as Biostatistics, Health Economics, Epidemiology, Bioinformatics, Health Systems Research etc. as well as the strategic priority research areas of the MRC.
Period of Funding	Approval is for 1 year at a time, to a maximum of 3 years.
Value of the Award	1 st year postdoctoral scientist - R 80 000.00 pa tax free (can be supplemented to a maximum of R120 000.00) 2 nd year postdoctoral scientist - R 90 000.00 pa tax free (can be supplemented to a maximum of R135 000.00) 3 rd year postdoctoral scientist - R100.00.00 pa tax free (can be supplemented to a maximum of R150 000.00) above these maximum supplements, the amounts become taxable.
Conditions	Scholarship holders must spend 80% of their time undertaking full-time research Successful applicants may not take up the scholarship before submission of their doctoral dissertation
Application Process	A request for applications is sent to the post-graduate scholarships office or research support services at all tertiary institutions Completed application forms are submitted to the MRC through the institutions' post-graduate bursary office An applicant must consult with the host researcher/mentor Applications must be accompanied by institutional research scientific and ethics approval of the broader project under which the researcher will be hosted. Other requirements are outlined both in the selection criteria and in the call for applications.
Selection Criteria	Population Group: Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African. Gender: Priority is given to females. Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be ranked highly. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC's strategic research priorities. Referees reports must be positive The research proposal must be positively scored on a Peer-review process Running expenses for the project must be adequate.
Review Process	Applications are reviewed by a panel including at least 2 Grants Committee members Consensus recommendations are forwarded to EMC for ratification
Approval	Approved by panel and ratified by EMC
Monitoring	Progress reports are submitted with the renewal application The renewal application includes a motivation from the host researcher A final report is submitted within 2 months of completion of the research training

Notes: It is proposed to increase the values of this category by R 20 000 at level p.a. to catch up with inflation and the standard of living over the years and to avoid losing the best candidates to funders with better values. This will only be possible if new money is available.

5. MRC Career Awards

This Career Development Programme is a partnership between the MRC and the tertiary education sector. The purpose of the Research Fellowship is to build research capacity and scientific leadership from historically disadvantaged sectors of society by creating new positions for senior postdoctoral scientists, particularly Black and female, that have demonstrated a potential to become excellent researchers. The researchers are prepared for positions of scientific and academic leadership as a way of sustaining and strengthening research capabilities in health research priority areas in the country.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens and permanent residents under 45 yrs Applicants must have a research doctorate & post-doctoral research experience and must apply within 5 years of obtaining a research doctorate
Period of Funding	2 years renewable for a further 2 years, subject to satisfactory performance
Value of the Award	MRC contribution of R150 000.00 towards salary and R50 000.00 towards running expenses for research project
Conditions	Employing institution or MRC programme must provide a salary top-up and R50 000.00 for running expenses for the research project Institutional research scientific and ethics approval for the research project is a necessity The Research Fellow must spend a minimum of 60% of his/her or her time undertaking full-time research on the approved project Successful applicants will be required to sign a contractual agreement with the MRC and the university
Application Process	Preliminary application to include the applicant's curriculum vitae and full publication list; a written motivation from the host department, unit, group or center and a letter of intent for the proposed research project Full application to include a full research proposal, 3 referee's reports, written commitment for the employing institution to provide the infrastructure, top-up salary and matching contribution towards the running expenses for the research project
Selection Criteria	Population Group: Priority is given to Blacks. Gender: Priority is given to females. Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be ranked at the top. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC's strategic research priorities. Referees' ranking must be high The research proposals must be positively scored on a Peer-review process, by both local and international reviewers.
Review Process	Applications are sent for peer review locally and internationally and then evaluated by panel incorporation two Grants Committee members who also score against the proposals against standard objective criteria.

Notes: The document proposes to limit this category to generic Black and prioritise female candidates to accelerate the development of this group to scientific leadership, while prioritizing research areas that will contribute to the implementation of the MRC strategic plan. It is also proposed to increase the value of the category to a total of R 300 000 (R 200 000 salary + R 100 000 research costs) if additional resources become available. Ideally total places for this category should also be increased from the present 7 to 10. This proposal will impose an additional R 1,4 million to the existing budget of R1,5 million.

6. RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The encompassing objective of these grants is to support the entry of young and entry-level health researchers to become established and be able to fully participate in fully competitive research support initiatives across the science system.

6.1 Research Training Internships for Allied Health Professionals and Nurses

Provides an opportunity for full-time research training for allied health professionals & nurses in any field in the health sciences.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens or permanent residents whose highest degree was obtained less than 5 years before. Allied health professionals and nurses in possession of a minimum of an honours degree or equivalent, who are registered for a masters or research doctorate in a related field.
Period of Funding	Approval is for 1 calendar year at a time Scholarships are renewable for a 2 nd and 3 rd year of training
Value of the Award	R50 000.00 pa
Conditions	Same as for local post-graduate scholarships
Application Process	A request for applications is sent to the post-graduate scholarships office or research support services at all tertiary institutions Applications are submitted to the MRC through the institutions administrative office An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor under whose supervision the research will be carried out
Selection Criteria	Same as for local post-graduate scholarships
Review Process	Applications are sent for peer review and then evaluated by panel incorporation two Grants Committee members who also score against objective criteria.

Approval	Approved by above panel.
Monitoring	Progress reports are submitted with the renewal application The renewal application includes a motivation from the students supervisor A detailed report must be submitted to the MRC within 2 months of completing the 12 month period of research training MRC requests information from the institutions on degrees completed and on students registration status MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student

6.2 Staff development Grants

Provides an opportunity for individuals employed in academic institutions or research units to engage in research for purposes of improving their academic qualifications. The funds can be used to afford dedicated time to spend in research activities, either as a salary while on unpaid leave or to pay for work relief.

Who Qualifies for funding	Academic staff at previous HDI's or such sectors of merged institutions, allied health professionals & nurses MRC employees, request within unit applications
Period of Funding	Maximum of 12 months.
Value of the Award	Local training maximum of R60 000 for 12 months Overseas training as described under this category.
Conditions	Written commitment from the applicant's institution or unit to provide study leave for field-work purposes and an assurance of a position to return to upon completion of the study leave Student supervision must be part of the activities for the grant holder
Application Process	Apply after consultation with RCD Sub-Directorate and unit Director Applicants must submit a full research proposal, with institutional research and ethics approval, which will be subjected to peer review. In addition, the following should be submitted: Work plan with time frames for the full duration of masters or doctoral training Budget indicating how the grant will be spent Supervisors credentials/experience Proof of availability of running costs for the research project
Selection Criteria	As for post-graduate scholarships
Review Process	Applications are sent for peer review and then evaluated by panel incorporation two Grants Committee members who also score against objective criteria.
Approval	Approved by above panel
Monitoring	A detailed report must be submitted to the MRC within 2 months of completing the period of research training, including a copy of the thesis, as well as a copy of the degree certificate within a month after graduation. MRC requests information from the institutions on degrees completed and on students registration status MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student

6.3 Research Development Grants

Provides research grants for academic staff at HDI's, allied health professionals and nurses for purposes of development. All proposals are peer reviewed before funding is approved and applicants receive support throughout the research proposal development process. This grant assists with establishing a research node around an individual through additional support for students, staff credentialing grants and technical assistance grants.

Who Qualifies for funding	<p>Allied health professionals and nurses Researchers under development in the MRC Academic staff at HDI's Applications identified by the Grants committee from the SIR approval process: For funding as is For funding following minor revision For consideration for funding following major revision</p>
Period of Funding	<p>1 year, renewable for 2nd and 3rd year</p>
Value of the Award	<p>Maximum R50 000.00 pa</p>
Conditions	<p>PI should have a masters degree and 2 or more years research experience/publications Applications must have institutional research and ethical approval</p>
Application Process	<p>MRC researchers apply within unit applications Potential applicants may consult with Research Capacity Development Sub-Directorate Application is screened by Research Grants Management, if necessary additional scientists are consulted Full proposal is submitted through the institutions administrative office</p>
Selection Criteria	<p>Research proposals are sent out for peer review Objective is to ensure that the proposal is satisfactory or acceptable with minor revision Proposals that rank lower in the priority for SIR funding but have a strong capacity development component are acceptable Proposals that rank A or B are also acceptable</p>

Review Process	Applications are sent for peer review and then evaluated by panel incorporation two Grants Committee members who also score against objective criteria.
Approval	Approved by above panel
Monitoring	Annual progress reports

7. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS FOR UNITS

These will act as mechanism for unit to implement capacity development initiatives. Applications will be reviewed within annual unit applications to the Grants Committee. All these categories have been described elsewhere, and applicable conditions will be implemented.

Post-doc Masters' and PhD students from outside the MRC (research interns and bursary holders) Local Staff development grant Overseas Doctoral scholarship (sandwich programme) within existing institutional agreement Research Development Grants Technical assistance grants to be used for students/intern	Values as determined in each category
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Notes: Units applying for capacity development grants related to students must provide:

- proof of registration
- breakdown of costs, linked to research activities
- signature for acceptance of conditions of the grant

within the application

This category will stretch the capacity development budget to its limits. It is therefore proposed that for every successful application for a grant that serves a purpose of staff development (local/overseas staff development grant, research development grant), 40% of the portion will be covered by Human Resources, 40% by Research Capacity Development and the balance by the unit/employee from other sources. The HR section can therefore claim these grants back from the Skills Levy. Due to a limitation in resources, only one capacity development grant will be considered per unit per year, unless recommended by the Grants Committee.

8. OVERSEAS DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS (SANDWICH PROGRAMME)

The MRC made a decision a couple of years ago, to abolish doctoral scholarships for full-time study outside South Africa, which used to be offered for a maximum of 3 years. The reason was that the return rate of those receiving this funding has been poor and have made changes to this funding category. By offering funding for “sandwich” programmes the organization has introduced more flexibility, which should increase the chances of those trained to remain in South Africa upon completion of their training. This category is divided into 3 sub-categories to make it possible for a researcher who needs to spend time with a supervisor outside South Africa as part of a doctoral training programme. The applicants are encouraged to register at a university in South Africa if they are unable to obtain a fee-redemption from the university outside South Africa, a category catered for under unit RCD grants. The funding needs to be flexible to accommodate the individual’s needs and doctoral programme, as long as the total is not exceeded in any 3-year span.

Who Qualifies for funding	South African citizens or permanent residents Applicants that are in possession of a masters degree in any discipline of the health sciences and studying towards a PhD Full-or part-time employed within or out side MRC. If from outside the MRC, applicants must be on permanent/full-time employment or long-term contracts (min 5 years) in an academic institution.
Period of Funding	Maximum of 12 months in a 3 year training programme. A third of the maximum scholarship will be considered based on motivation if the degree is not completed after the 3 year cycle.
Value of the Award	Full-time employed unit researchers studying part-time: R 60 000 within unit application p/y Full-time study External researchers: max R120 000/12 mths Part-time study External researchers: max R60 000/12 mths
Conditions	Full-time applicants must spend two thirds (12/36 months) of the training period in South Africa Part-time applicants will depend on structure of PhD programme
Application Process	A request for applications is sent to the post-graduate scholarships office or research support services at all tertiary institutions Completed application forms are submitted to the MRC through the institutions administrative office An applicant must consult beforehand with the research supervisor(s) under whose supervision the research will be carried out, as well as the supervisor at the university where s(he) will register Applicants must submit a work plan with time frames for the full duration of the PhD programme
Selection Criteria	Population Group: Priority is given to Blacks, particularly African. Gender: Priority is given to females. Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be ranked highly. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC’s strategic research priorities.

	<p>Referee's ranking must be high</p> <p>The research proposal must be positively scored on a Peer-review process</p> <p>Supervisors credentials and experience must be ranked high</p> <p>Other sources of funding must be disclosed</p> <p>There must either be proof that there is no available equivalent training in South Africa or the activity must fall within the MRC's strategic initiatives.</p>
Review Process	Applications are reviewed by Grants Committee as part of the annual unit applications
Approval	Approved by Grants Committee either as part of unit application or independently if from outside. Funds obtained from RCD budget as well as other sources outlined in 7 above if it qualifies as staff development grant.
Monitoring	<p>A detailed report must be submitted to the MRC within 2 months of return from overseas institution</p> <p>MRC requests information from the institutions on degrees completed and on students registration status</p> <p>MRC requests a copy of the completed dissertation from the student</p>
Surety	<p>Successful applicants receiving funding for training outside South Africa for short periods are required to sign an agreement with the MRC</p> <p>Successful applicants receiving the grant for training outside South Africa for a continuous 3 month period must provide surety to the MRC that they will return. In addition, applicants must submit proof from employer that their employment will be guaranteed at the end of the overseas training.</p>

9. International Conferences

<p>Who Qualifies for funding</p>	<p>MRC funded persons in the following categories: MRC-funded researchers who receive operating funds of R20 000 or less per annum for a self-initiated research project Research development grant holders Staff credentialing grant holders Bursars and scholarship holders receiving: A local doctoral scholarship A research training scholarship for allied health professionals and nurses A post MBChB scholarship A post BChD scholarship An overseas doctoral scholarships A senior research training fellowship for senior registrars and specialists under 40 years A local postdoctoral scholarship</p> <p>Applicants from HDI's, nurses and allied health professionals are supported if Attendance is related to proposal/research development</p>
<p>Period of Funding</p>	<p>Depends on the duration of the conference</p>
<p>Value of the Award</p>	<p>Maximum of R5 000 per award</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>The applicant must present a scientific paper or poster at the conference</p>
<p>Application Process</p>	<p>Application are submitted to the MRC on an annual basis Applicant must submit proof of acceptance of an abstract by the conference organizers and other sources of funding</p>
<p>Selection Criteria</p>	<p>MRC funded applicants: Applicant must present results from a project related to current MRC support Applicants from HDI's, nurses and allied health professionals: Does research fall within MRC framework for research funding Benefit to applicant for research development</p>
<p>Review Process</p>	<p>Applicants are reviewed at an NSCR meeting chaired by RCD and recommendations made to EMC</p>

Approval	EMC
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC after attendance at the conference
Surety	Successful applicants must sign an agreement with the MRC to return to the country

10. National Conferences

<p>Who Qualifies for funding</p>	<p>MRC funded persons in the following categories: MRC-funded researchers who receive operating funds of R20 000 or less per annum for a self-initiated research project Research development grant holders Staff credentialing grant holders Bursars and scholarship holders receiving: A local doctoral scholarship A research training scholarship for allied health professionals and nurses A post MBChB scholarship A post BChD scholarship An overseas doctoral scholarships A senior research training fellowship for senior registrars and specialists under 40 years A local postdoctoral scholarship</p> <p>Applicants from HDI's, nurses and allied health professionals are supported if Attendance is related to proposal/research development</p>
<p>Period of Funding</p>	<p>Depends on the duration of the conference</p>
<p>Value of the Award</p>	<p>Maximum of R3 000 per award</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>The applicant must present a scientific paper or poster at the conference</p>
<p>Application Process</p>	<p>Application are submitted to the MRC once annually Applicant must submit proof of acceptance of an abstract by the conference organizers and other sources of funding</p>
<p>Selection Criteria</p>	<p>MRC funded applicants: Applicant must present results from a project related to current MRC support Applicants from HDI's, nurses and allied health professionals: Does research fall within MRC framework for research funding Benefit to applicant for research development</p>

Review Process	Applicants are reviewed at an NSCR meeting by RCD and recommendations made to EMC
Approval	EMC
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC after attendance at the conference

11. Sabbatical Leave Grants

Who Qualifies for funding	Established health researchers who are engaged in an MRC or non-MRC funded research project in an academic position at a tertiary institution
Period of Funding	Duration of sabbatical leave
Value of the Award	Maximum contribution of R20 000.00 towards total costs
Application Process	Applications are submitted with the grant application for self-initiated research or on a continual basis Applicants must provide a programme of activities for the sabbatical period, institutional approval, total costs and other sources of funding
Selection Criteria	Academic record/potential of the applicant: must be a distinguished researcher. Research area and outputs expected must be outlined and linked to the MRC's strategic research priorities. Referee's ranking must be high The research proposal must be positively scored on a Peer-review process Supervisor's credentials and experience must be ranked high Other sources of funding must be disclosed Applicant's programme of activities must be provided There must proof of benefit to applicant and research discipline
Review Process	Applications are submitted once annually as part of development grant applications, within unit applications or .
Approval	Relevance to individual's current or planned research activities within the HEI Non-availability of equivalent training/assistance in the MRC/region or within in South Africa (in the case overseas application)
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC within 2 months of returning to workplace
Surety	Applicant signs an agreement with the MRC to return to South Africa and work in South Africa for 2 years after returning

Deleted: either

Deleted: or

12. Distinguished Guest Speaker sponsorship

Who Qualifies for funding	Established researchers in any field of health research who are residing permanently in another country All MRC recognised scientific societies, with an assigned host researcher. (New societies are required to submit a constitution)
Period of Funding	Duration of conference and visits to other institutions to a maximum of 3 months.
Value of the Award	Maximum of R20 000
Conditions	The guest must be an established researcher Research area must fall within the framework for MRC health research MRC contribution must be acknowledged in the conference proceedings.
Application Process	Applications are considered once annually Conference organizers/the host researcher must submit an application to MRC for funding to host a guest speaker with the following details: Motivation from host researcher, CV of guest speaker, duration of visit, other institutions to be visited, budget, conference details
Selection Criteria	Guest speaker's credentials Benefit to students and researchers Research area Discipline
Review Process	Applications are reviewed by the NSRC chaired by RCD Sub-directorate. Consensus recommendations are forwarded to EMC for approval.
Approval	EMC
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC by the visiting guest speaker after the visit
General	Guest speaker must visit and lecture at other institutions in the country

13. Technical Assistance Grants

These grants support individuals that are planning to or in the process of preparing a proposal for submission to the MRC and, individuals that are MRC capacity development grant holders.

Who Qualifies for funding	Support is provided as an outcome of an application within of the RCD grants rated low but with a good potential for improvement MRC units within annual applications, as part of student support
Period of Funding	Variable depending on the course/nature of the visit
Value of the Award	Maximum R25 000.00
Conditions	Visit, short course or workshop must have a direct benefit to the individual's current research activities within unit.
Application Process	Applications are submitted once annually either as part of development grant application or within unit application. Application must provide proof of non-availability of course/assistance locally.
Selection Criteria	Relevance to individual's current or planned research activities within the unit Non-availability of equivalent training/assistance in the MRC/region or within in South Africa (in the case overseas application)
Review Process	Potential grantees are also identified based on outcomes of capacity development grant applications that are from outside or from units, through the Grants Committee process
Approval	Grants Committee
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC after the visit or short course attendance Follow-up from Research Administration Division
Surety	Individuals receiving funds to travel outside South Africa are required to sign an agreement to return to South Africa
General	On occasion, staff at HDIs may request the MRC to make the necessary travel and accommodation arrangements for visits to scientists for assistance with statistical support as part of their research grant, and this will be funded from Technical support grants. In such instances the Research Capacity Development Sub-Directorate makes the necessary travel arrangements rather than make the travel grant available to the individual.

14. Travel Grants for Short Visits/Short Courses

This grant supports MRC employees, grant holders and bursars/scholarship holders to attend short courses abroad if the training is not available in South Africa. Supports short course attendance in South Africa. Supports international visits to undertake research or research training that cannot be done in South Africa or at the individual's institution.

Who Qualifies for funding	MRC-funded researchers/bursars/scholarship holders and researchers in MRC units/groups/centers and lead programmes qualify for funding.
Period of Funding	Variable depending on the course/nature of the visit
Value of the Award	Maximum R25 000.00
Conditions	Visit or short course must have a direct benefit to the individual with proposal development or undertaking his/her current research project
Application Process	Applications are submitted once annually as part grant application or unit application
Selection Criteria	Relevance to individual's research activities Benefit to individual/research programme/national skills development Non-availability of equivalent training or facilities in South Africa Proof of availability of supplementary funding
Review Process	Applications are submitted as part of grant applications or unit applications, considered by the Grants Committee via the normal process
Approval	Grants Committee
Monitoring	A report is submitted to the MRC after the visit or short course attendance
Surety	Individuals receiving funds to travel outside South Africa are required to sign an agreement to return to South Africa


COMMENTS

Funding Category	Comments
1. Clinicians –in research initiative (CIRI)	
Post MBChB/BChD grants	
Senior Research Training Fellowships for Specialists under 45 years	
2. Research internships	
3. Post-graduate scholarships	
Masters	
Doctoral	
4. Postdoctoral Awards	
5. Senior postdoctoral awards (Career awards)	
6. Researcher Development Grants	
Research Training Internships for Allied Health Professionals and Nurses	
Staff development grants	
Research Development Grants	

<p>7. Unit RCD grants Post-doc Masters' and PhD students from outside the MRC (research interns and bursary holders) Local Staff development grant Overseas Doctoral scholarship (sandwich programme) within existing institutional agreement Research Development Grants Technical assistance grants to be used for students/intern</p>	
<p>8. Overseas doctoral training</p>	
<p>9. International Conferences</p>	
<p>10. International Conferences</p>	
<p>11. Sabbatical leave grant</p>	
<p>12. Distinguished Guest Speaker sponsorship</p>	
<p>13. Technical Assistance</p>	
<p>14. Travel grants for short visits/short courses</p>	

15. APPROVAL INFORMATION

Policy Owner: Research Capacity Development Sub-Directorate
Approved By: EMC
Date Approved:
Revision Date: As required

President's signature: 
7/6/06