FoodBev Manufacturing SETA

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DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

MASTER'S AND PhD RESEARCH BURSARIES FOR THE FOOD AND BEVERAGES MANUFACTURING SECTOR

FoodBev SETA invites eligible students who are registered, or have been accepted for registration, for Master's or PhD study in food science, food technology and relevant food and beverage manufacturing disciplines to submit an Expression of Interest for a Research Bursary. Applications may be submitted either through the Bursary/Financial Aid Office of an accredited Public University, University of Technology or directly by individual learners.

EOI OPENS 02 OCTOBER 2026	EOI CLOSES 16 OCTOBER 2026	SUBMIT VIA SIMS (Institution or Individual Learner)

Late, incomplete or incorrectly categorised applications will not be considered. Applications may be submitted by the institution's Bursary/Financial Aid Office on behalf of the student, or directly by individual learners through FoodBev SETA application form.

1. Purpose

This Expression of Interest forms part of FoodBev SETA's Discretionary Grant funding window and is intended to build a pipeline of postgraduate-qualified researchers, technologists and innovators for South Africa's food and beverage manufacturing sector. Funding is prioritised for research that is responsive to the Sector Skills Plan (SSP) and the Sector Priority Occupations Interventions List (SPOIL), and that strengthens food security, food safety, product innovation and manufacturing competitiveness.

2. Areas of Focus

Preference will be given to Master's and PhD research proposals aligned to the following priority fields, in line with FoodBev SETA's grant funding policy:

- Food Science
- Food Technology
- Biotechnology
- Food Production Management
- Food Safety
- Food Quality Auditing
- Food Systems

- Consumer Science: Food and Nutrition

Key research themes encouraged (identified from previous FoodBev SETA-funded postgraduate research)

- Food safety, risk assessment and contaminant/mycotoxin management in traditional, informal and processed foods (e.g. indigenous fermented products)
- Product development and reformulation using indigenous, underutilised and traditional crops (e.g. finger millet, Bambara groundnut, Moringa, cowpea, pigeon pea, taro, banana)
- Novel food processing technologies, including 3D food printing and the design of functional or therapeutic foods (e.g. dysphagia-friendly meals)
- Sustainable and biodegradable packaging solutions derived from agricultural and food-processing waste streams
- Bioprocessing, biotechnology and the valorisation of biomass and agro-industrial by-products (e.g. bioethanol production, enzymatic and microbial processes)
- Water and effluent treatment technologies relevant to food and beverage manufacturing (e.g. adsorption of heavy metals)
- Agricultural production and crop science supporting the value chain, including stress physiology and seed technology
- Nutrition-sensitive and functional food product development for vulnerable and underserved communities

Applicants are encouraged to clearly demonstrate, in their research proposal, how their topic responds to one or more of the change drivers identified in FoodBev SETA's Sector Skills Plan.

3. Who is Eligible to Apply

- South African citizen or permanent resident.
- Registered, or holding a formal offer of acceptance, for full-time Master's or PhD study for the 2026 or 2027 academic year at an accredited Public University or University of Technology.
- Field of study falls within, or is closely related to, the Areas of Focus listed in Section 2 above.
- Applying under the correct bursary category this call is for Master's and PhD Research Bursaries only.
- Not concurrently receiving funding, for the same qualification, from another SETA, funder or sponsor, unless fully disclosed as part of the application.
- Research topic/proposal formally endorsed and signed off by the student's academic supervisor.
- Preference will be given to candidates from previously disadvantaged groups, women and persons with disabilities, in line with FoodBev SETA's transformation priorities.

Applications may be submitted on behalf of the student by the institution's Bursary/Financial Aid Office, or directly by the individual learner. The same eligibility criteria and documentary requirements apply to both routes.

4. Application Requirements: Documents to be Submitted

The following must accompany every application form. Applications found to be missing any of the items below, or submitted under an incorrect bursary category, will not be considered, these requirements reflect the most common reasons applications have been found non-compliant in previous funding windows.

- Fully completed and signed application form (Annexure: FoodBev SETA Research Bursary Application Form), submitted via the institution's Bursary/Financial Aid Office or directly by the individual learner to ResearchBursaries@FoodBev.co.za.
- Certified copy of the student's ID document, not older than six (6) months.
- Stamped and signed proof of registration for the 2026 academic year, or official letter of acceptance, for the 2027 academic year.
- Certified copy of the Highest qualification(s) already obtained.
- Endorsed research topic/proposal signed by the academic supervisor (Master's applicants), or a full research proposal with budget, signed by the supervisor (PhD applicants).
- Statement of account from the institution, reflecting tuition and other payable fees.
- Self-Declaration form confirming whether the student is receiving funding from any other source and employment status of the learner.
- Tax clearance certificate for the institution (where the application is submitted by a public university/institution).
- Levy confirmation and WSP/ATR confirmation from the relevant SETA, where the submitting institution is itself a levy-paying entity.
- A motivation, in the applicant's own words, covering: the research topic in simplified non-scientific terms; what the student aims to achieve through the study; the relevance of the topic to the food and beverages manufacturing sector; and justification for why FoodBev SETA should fund the research.
- Full contact details of the institution's Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) responsible for the submission (institutional submissions), or the applicant's full contact details (individual learner submissions).

5. Important Notice on Funding Awards

- Submission of an Expression of Interest does not constitute a guarantee of funding. All applications are subject to evaluation, budget availability and approval by FoodBev SETA's Awards Committee.

- FoodBev SETA reserves the right to prioritise applications based on past performance, compliance history, strategic alignment and budget availability, and to award full, partial or no funding at its sole discretion.
- Incomplete applications, applications submitted after the closing date, or applications submitted under an incorrect category will not be evaluated.
- FoodBev SETA's decisions on funding allocations are final.

6. Enquiries and Submission

Completed application forms, together with all supporting documents, must be submitted by the institution's Bursary/Financial Aid Office, or directly by the individual learner, through FoodBev SETA's mailbox ResearchBursaries@FoodBev.co.za before 16:00 on 16 October 2026. For queries relating to this Expression of Interest, institutions and individual learners, please reach out to the following officials during working hours (Monday to Friday, 09:00 - 16:00).

Programme	Contact Person	Email Address	Contact Details
• Employed Bursary • Recognised Trade Union	Teboho Ngwane	Tebohon@foodbev.co.za	0112537313
	Mashoro Malapela	Mashorom@foodbev.co.za	0112537312
	Japhta Selwane	Japthas@foodbev.co.za	0112537304
	Julia Ratopola	JuliaD@FoodBev.co.za	0112537324
	Aluwani Ramoleta	AluwaniN@FoodBev.co.za	0112537346
	Mandy Lirumo	MandyL@FoodBev.co.za	0112537376
	Gcobani Gqangeni	GcobaniG@FoodBev.co.za	0112537325