



**DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES
SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISES
AND
COOPERATIVE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

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BANKSETA FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES

1. Purpose

This document has been developed to guide the application process for BANKSETA Discretionary Grant Funding Windows. It considers the SETA Grant Regulations and the BANKSETA Discretionary Grant Policy. This document provides guidelines for the opening of funding windows, inviting applications, evaluation of applications, allocation of funds and payment of funds. This document aims to ensure a consistent, fair, and transparent process.

2. Objective

The objective of this funding window is to support skills development in Small and Micro Enterprises employing less than 50 employees (SMEs) that contribute to the BANKSETA Levy grant system (Levy paying employers) and Cooperative Financial Institutions (CFIs) through the funding of programmes that meet the criteria as indicated below.

3. Invitation Process and Application requirements

3.1 BANKSETA will publish all funding window invitations on the BANKSETA website

www.bankseta.org.za

3.2 Each funding window will remain open for at least 6 weeks. The funding window opens on 5 August 2024 and close at 16h00 on 13 September 2024

3.3 No late applications will be accepted.

3.4 Applications must be for the skills development of current employees. This will be confirmed before approval.

3.5 Successful applicants should have submitted a Workplace Skills Plan (and Annual Training Report where applicable) by 30 April 2024 or by 31 May 2024 when an extension has been granted.

3.6 All documents must be completed in full.

3.7 All supporting documents must be provided.

3.8 The application may not be delegated to a contractor or someone outside the SME / CFI organization. The application must be signed and submitted by a senior, permanent employee / owner / managing director of the organization that is duly authorized to apply for funding and sign contracts on behalf of the organization.

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1 The funding window is open for SMEs (employers with less than 50 employees) that actively contribute to the BANKSETA Levy grant system and CFIs (Cooperative Financial Institutions) that fall within the BANKSETA SIC Codes. Proof of WSP submission is required. (System generated letter to be attached). Applicants who have not paid a skills development levy and / or who have not submitted a WSP will not be considered.

4.2 Proof of registration with CIPC

4.3 Proof of registration with SARS

5. Evaluation Criteria

5.1 Applications must be for short programmes or registered skill programmes – less than 6 months in duration.

5.2 Programmes must start and learner documentation must be submitted within two months of the applicant signing the funding agreement.

5.3 Proposed Training Providers must be accredited, and proof of accreditation must be provided.

6. Funding Allocation Criteria

6.1 No cost cap per learner however BANKSETA will consider market comparability of the amount applied for.

6.2 No cap on number of learners.

6.3 Cap of R200 000 **per Organization** will apply regardless of the number of applications.

6.4 Applicants must provide the quotation from the training provider and only actual training cost may be applied for.

7. Submission Process

7.1 Applications and other related documents are to be submitted on BANKSETA templates, and as per the prescribed submission process. Failure to do so may result in disqualification of the applications.

7.2 Applications must be received in the specified timeframes; no late submissions will be accepted.

7.3 Applicants agree to provide information as required by BANKSETA for the purposes of reporting to the Department of Higher Education and Training, as well as other statutory stakeholders.

7.4 Applicants are required to submit separate applications per category where applicable.

- 7.5 Applications must be submitted on a secure platform such as Dropbox, WeTransfer, or Microsoft OneDrive. Submissions on this platform must be confirmed by the applicant by sending an e-mail to a specified e-mail address. Submission of the application will be acknowledged; however, applicants must note that the completeness and correctness of applications will only be evaluated after the closing date.
- 7.6 Applicants are not limited on the number of applications per category. However, applicants are requested to carefully consider business needs and prioritize applications as funding may be limited or declined considering the funding available and the number of applications received.
- 7.7 Each application will be evaluated individually.
- 7.8 Applicants must keep a copy of their submission for their internal use and backup purposes.

8. Evaluation and Allocation Process

- 8.1 In all cases an evaluation panel shall be established to evaluate applications.
- 8.2 The evaluation panel will be appointed by the CEO and consist of at least three panel members.
- 8.3 All panel members will be required to sign a declaration of interest.
- 8.4 The evaluation panel and decision will be recorded for audit purposes.
- 8.5 All grants are VAT inclusive, and this funding is specifically for training costs. Funding does not include set up/initiation costs, administration and/or including capitalization of projects.
- 8.6 If the BANKSETA Board approves additional funding for a particular funding window or if there are savings or underutilization by successful applicants, BANKSETA may approve additional applications or increase the funding for a particular applicant. Only approved applications will qualify for additional funding.
- 8.7 Feedback on the status of the application will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

9. Approval, Appeal and Change Request Process

The evaluation documentation will be submitted for Probity Review. The probity review report will be submitted for review to the CEO. Once the CEO has reviewed, the report and supporting evidence as required will be submitted to the Finance and Remuneration Committee for recommendation to the BANKSETA Board. Final approval will be done by the BANKSETA Board. The BANKSETA Board may delegate approval functions to the CEO as indicated in the BANKSETA Delegations of Authority Policy.

Should an (unsuccessful) applicant want to appeal the decision of the Board, this must be done in writing and within one month of receiving the outcome. The request will be submitted to the CEO to review and should there be grounds for an appeal this will be tabled at the Board to reconsider. After their reconsideration the Board's decision is final. • Change requests must be submitted to the BANKSETA within one month of receiving the outcome and with a motivation for the change. The approval of the change request is at the discretion of the CEO provided that the approved amount is not exceeded and that the change is still in line with the guidelines.

10. Contracting, Commitment Schedule, and Project system update

- 10.1 BANKSETA will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the applicant for each application that is approved.
- 10.2 The approval notification to the applicant should include a deadline date for the return of signed MoAs to the BANKSETA so that funds are not left uncommitted for long periods of time.
- 10.3 The project manager will monitor all the received MoAs and any MoA not signed and returned to BANKSETA by the agreed date will be cancelled.
- 10.4 If the MoA has expired, and no project extension request is received by BANKSETA before the lapse of the MoA or if BANKSETA detects there is no project activity taking place and no reasonable cause has been provided, the MoA will be terminated, and the funding forfeited.

11. Invoicing/ Funds Disbursement Process

- 11.1 Upon approval of the application, the Applicant and BANKSETA will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to formalize the application and to agree to the disbursement schedule (in line with the specific application).
- 11.2 The first invoice to the BANKSETA must be accompanied by official proof of banking details as well as a valid Tax clearance certificate failure to provide the tax certificate shall warrant BANKSETA to remind the applicant on need to be compliant but still process payment.
- 11.3 The final invoice will be paid subject to all the project requirements being met. This may include a monitoring and evaluation audit conducted by BANKSETA.
- 11.4 Reports are to be submitted with invoices as required (BANKSETA to send template).
- 11.5 Invoices will be paid provided all project requirements are met and supporting documentation is provided (such as proof of payment to other parties, proof of disbursement of stipends to unemployed learners, etc.)

- 11.6 Successful applicants and payments are subject to a monitoring and evaluation process.
- 11.7 The BANKSETA will only be paying for beneficiaries who successfully complete the programme as required, and only make final payments once all other tranche criteria requirements are met.

12. Extensions

- 12.1 Applicants should endeavor to meet deadlines and complete the project within the project plan submitted during application phase. If, however, this is not possible the applicant should apply in writing to have the timelines extended and where needed to sign an addendum to the MoA to extend the end date.
- 12.2 BANKSETA will only accept and pay for performance information that is current and falls within the current financial year.

13. Disclaimer, Termination and Breach

- 13.1 In all instances, BANKSETA reserves the right to approve / decline funding at its discretion.
- 13.2 The BANKSETA reserves the right to verify, monitor and audit any of the above approved grants during the implementation period by a designated BANKSETA representative. Payments are also subject to these processes as per the quality requirements stipulated by BANKSETA.
- 13.2 The BANKSETA may withhold grants or recover any grants paid to an applicant if it is found that the grants allocated are not being used for the purpose for which the grant was intended.
- 13.3 Non-compliance will lead to summary termination of the agreement and the Contracting party will, due to non-compliance have neither right to any grants or disbursements nor any other right out of this agreement.

14. Confidentiality of information

- 14.1 In compliance with the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI), BANKSETA wishes to inform all its stakeholders that in applying for funding, invoicing the BANKSETA and providing supporting information for such invoices, the below standards will apply:
- 14.2 BANKSETA undertakes to keep all information obtained or received by it for purposes of funding applications, funding agreements, invoicing and performance information disclosed or provided by the employers in confidence and in a safe and secure

manner.

14.3 Information shall be revealed only to the representatives, agents, and employees whose knowledge of the information is required for the purpose related to administering the funding applications, funding agreements, invoices and supporting documentation.

14.4 The purpose related to administering the funding applications, funding agreements, invoices and supporting documentation includes the following:

- reporting skills development initiatives to the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- reporting enrolments and achievements of programmes to the South African Qualifications Authority.
- reporting on quality assurance functions to the Quality Council of Trades and Occupations.
- evaluating and processing applications for access to funding.
- compiling statistics and other research reports.
- providing personalised communications.
- providing information for internal and external auditing purposes
- complying with the law; and/or
- for a purpose that is ancillary to the above.

14.5 Information related to Memoranda of Agreement will be kept for 5 years after the stated end date. After 5 years it will be destroyed.

14.6 In the event that BANKSETA is required by legal process to disclose any of the information, it shall provide the applicant with prompt notice of such requirement so that the applicant may seek a protective order or agree to the provision of information.

14.7 In the event that a protective order or other remedy to ensure that only information covered by such other or other remedy is obtained, the BANKSETA shall use all reasonable efforts to ensure that only the information covered by such order or other remedy is disclosed.

14.8 Whether or not a protective order or other remedy is obtained, or the applicant agrees to the provision of information, BANKSETA shall take all the reasonable steps to ensure that only the portion of the information which it is legally required to disclose, is disclosed.