



DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING WINDOW  
SPECIAL PROJECTS FOR EMPLOYED GUIDELINES  
2024/2025

# **BANKSETA FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES**

## **1. Purpose**

This document has been developed to guide the application process for BANKSETA Discretionary Grants for special projects for employees in the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector. It takes into account 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**

There are two categories that applicants may apply for:

### 1. Category 1: Reskilling / Upskilling Funding Window

The objective of this category is to allow levy paying employers the flexibility to implement programmes in a way that is appropriate to their organisation. It also allows flexibility in content, duration, implementation dates and training provision platforms. This funding window is aimed at the upskilling or reskilling of employees who are impacted by restructuring or retrenchment in the organisation. This is also to allow employees to remain relevant and/or to support the job role changes planned by the employer or evolving job roles. This will allow for pro-active reskilling and upskilling and aims to prevent retrenchments and exits from the Banking Sector. Investing in reskilling or upskilling promotes a dynamic corporate culture that is committed to continuous professional development that helps to build a culture learning that is effective. The result is a more versatile workforce and an organisation that is better prepared to face future challenges. Continued Professional Development interventions allow the individual to meet legislative requirements.

### 2. Category 2: Special Projects that will benefit employees in the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector

These projects may be applied for by Professional Bodies, Sector Organisations and Legislative Bodies amongst others and may include training material development, competency frameworks, programme delivery etc.

### 3. Invitation Process

- BANKSETA will publish all funding window invitations on the BANKSETA website [www.bankseta.org.za](http://www.bankseta.org.za)
- This funding window will open on **11 September 2024** and close on **28 October 2024**.

### 4. Eligibility Criteria Category 1

- Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria as indicated below to qualify for funding.
- The applicant must be registered or in the process of registering with the BANKSETA for skills development levy purposes.
- The applicant (Employer) must have submitted a Workplace Skills Plan and Annual Training Report (where applicable) to BANKSETA by the due date of 30 April 2024 or 30 May 2024 (where extension was granted).
- The applicant must be up to date with levy contributions to BANKSETA.
- Federations /Trade Unions may apply on behalf of their members employed in the Banking or Alternative Banking Sector.
- The roles of all beneficiaries applied for must be impacted by **changes in the role** or **restructuring** or **retrenchment** in the organisation. A motivation or explanation from the applicant must be submitted in support of this.

### 5. Evaluation Criteria Category 1

Applications must meet the evaluation criteria as indicated below to qualify for funding. Any application not adhering to the below will be declined.

- Application forms requiring the registration numbers for Skills Programmes and Qualifications **must** be completed in full and correctly.
- Application forms requiring the accreditation number for training providers (where applicable) **must** be completed in full and correctly.
- Application forms **must** indicate the start and end date of the programmes. These funding windows are only for programmes starting between 1 April 2024 and 28 February 2025.
- Motivation or explanation for the changes in role or restructuring or retrenchment **must** be complete and correct.

## 6. Eligibility Criteria Category 2

- Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria as indicated below to qualify for funding.
- The applicant must be a Professional Body related to occupations in the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector
- The applicant must be a legislative body governing legislation applicable to the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector
- The applicant must be a sector representative body operating in the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector

## 7. Evaluation Criteria Category 2

Applications must meet the evaluation criteria as indicated below to qualify for funding. Any application not adhering to the below will be declined.

- Application forms **must** be completed in full and correctly.
- Application forms **must** indicate the start and end date of the programmes. These funding windows are only for programmes *starting* from November 2024 but no later than 28 February 2025.
- Motivation must be provided of how the Banking and/ or Alternative Banking Sector would benefit from this intervention.

## 8. Submission Criteria

- Applications and other related documents are to be submitted on BANKSETA templates, and as per the prescribed submission process. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the applications.  
Applications must clearly indicate:
- 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.

## 9. Submission Process

- No late applications will be accepted
- In all cases an evaluation panel shall be established to evaluate applications.
- All panel members will be required to sign a declaration of interest.
- The evaluation panel and decision will be recorded for audit purposes
- 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.

- Applicants are not limited on the number of applications; however, must carefully consider business needs and prioritize applications as funding may be limited or declined taking into account the funding available and the number of applications received.
- Each application will be evaluated individually.
- Applicants must keep a copy of their submission for their internal use and backup purposes.
- Applications to be emailed utilizing the following email address – **[SPEApplications2024@bankseta.org.za](mailto:SPEApplications2024@bankseta.org.za)** (links to online platforms should also be confirmed via email).
- All grants are VAT inclusive
- BANKSETA will evaluate all applications and where applicable, approve funding in a way that will ensure the equitable allocation of funding by limiting funds allocated to each application.
- BANKSETA reserves the right to approve / decline applications, without any preference given to any applicant, and to apply discretion to equitably distribute funding per category, based on the availability of funds.
- BANKSETA may approve additional applications or increase the funding for a particular application should additional funding become available at a later stage. This is subject to Board approval.
- Feedback on the status of the application will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

**Specific Exclusions:**

- Capital and Business Set-Up Costs.
- Salaries and Director's fees.
- Application Development Cost.
- Planning and Marketing Costs.

**10. 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 within one month of receiving the outcome and 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 are discouraged but if unavoidable must be submitted to the BANKSETA with a motivation for the change within one month of signing the funding agreement. 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.

#### **11. Contracting, Commitment Schedule and Project system update**

- BANKSETA will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the applicant for each application that is approved.
- At the time of preparing the MoA applicants must provide the following for Category 1:
  - Detailed list of learner/s
  - Detailed programme/s
  - Provider and accreditation documents
  - Actual cost of programme/s
  - Actual total cost
- For Category 1, the MoA will be signed for the actual number of learner/s – not exceeding the number approved by BANKSETA but may be less.
- The actual cost per programme/s not exceeding the amount approved by BANKSETA but may be less (if it is more the applicant will have to fund the excess).
- The approval notification to the applicant will 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.
- 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.

- 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.

## **12. Invoicing / Funds Disbursement Process**

- 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)
- 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.
- 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.
- Invoices will be paid provided all project requirements are met and supporting documentation are provided.
- Successful applicants and payments are subject to a monitoring and evaluation process.
- For Category 1, 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.

## **13. Extensions and/or Re-Applications**

- Extensions are discouraged and Applicants should endeavour 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.

## **14. Disclaimer, Termination and Breach**

- In all instances, BANKSETA reserves the right to approve / decline funding at its discretion.
- 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.
- 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 or relate to fraudulent or invalid learners.
- 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.

## **15. Confidentiality of Information**

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:

- 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 applicants in confidence and in a safe and secure manner.
- 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.

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



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

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. 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. Whether or not a protective order or other remedy is obtained, or the applicant party 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.

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