



**BANKSETA FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES**

**1. Purpose**

This document has been developed to guide the BANKSETA Discretionary Grant Funding application process, ensuring that the purpose of the funding window is clear, and stakeholders are well-informed. It considers the SETA Grant Regulations and the BANKSETA Discretionary Grant Policy. This document provides guidelines for opening funding windows, inviting applications, evaluating applications, allocating funds, and disbursing funds. The guidelines ensure a consistent, fair, and transparent process.

**Definition**: A funding window is an invitation to stakeholders to apply for funding from the SETA for the programs that the funding window is intended for. This funding window is for the placement of unemployed learners on a three-year graduate internship. This will allow learners who have completed a post-school qualification to gain work experience or exposure to enhance competence and/or employability. Learners who have completed a post-school qualification to gain work experience or exposure to strengthen competence and/or employability. This excludes TVET / University of Technology Work Integrated Learning programmes.

**2. Role of the applicant**

2.1 The successful applicant will be responsible for recruiting and selecting unemployed learners for the internship programme as defined above.

2.2 All applications must align with the scarce and critical skills and occupations identified in the BANKSETA Sector Skills Plan or the occupations identified in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

2.3 The applicant must be able to secure host employers for the duration of the internship so that the objectives stated above can be met, including but not limited to the Banking and Alternative Banking Sector, Community Education and Training Colleges, Municipalities, Government Departments and Small and Micro Enterprises.

2.4 The applicant must take on the responsibility of offering an induction/orientation/work readiness programme of between three (3) to five (5) days to learners before placement. This is crucial in ensuring the learners are well-prepared for their roles.

2.5 The applicant will be responsible for contracting learners and providing all the necessary documentation to the BANKSETA.

2.6 The applicant must provide learners with an Excel Training programme at Basic, Intermediate or Advanced level depending on the learner’s proficiency.

2.7 The applicant must brief host employers on the programme's requirements and ensure they comply with reporting requirements.

2.8 The applicant must monitor learner attendance and report on attendance and progress to the BANKSETA monthly.

2.9 Based on the report above, the provider must pay monthly stipends to learners.  **The provider is expected to open a separate bank account dedicated to the programme to report on the learner's stipend transactions. In the case of public entities this may be a separate cost centre allowing for proper reconciliation of funds paid by the BANKSETA**

2.10 At the end of the internship period, the applicant must implement an exit programme to enable a transition to employment.

2.11 On completion of the internship period, the applicant must submit completion letters to the BANKSETA and submit a close-out report within 30 days of completion of the programme.

**3. Invitation Process**

3.1 BANKSETA will publish all funding window invitations on the BANKSETA website, [www.bankseta.org.za](http://www.bankseta.org.za/)

3.2 Each funding window will remain open for at least six weeks; this window opens on 22 November 2024 and closes at 17h00 on 06 January 2025

3.3 No late applications will be accepted.

**4. Eligibility Criteria**

BANKSETA has categorised the eligible applicants below: The criteria will include the following.

|  |
| --- |
| **Please indicate the nature of the applicant and provide the required information.** |
| **Applicant Category** | **Additional Explanatory Notes** |
| BANKSETA Employers  | Levy payers registered with the BANKSETA for skills development levy purposes and who have submitted a Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) for the 2024 year by 30 April 2024 |
| Non-State Institutions | Non-Governmental Organizations or Non-profit organisations or Community Development Institutions |
| Private Enterprises and Agencies | Private companies, other than BANKSETA employers with experience and capacity in training and placement of unemployed youth |
| Government Departments and entities | Department; Public Entities District Municipalities & their agencies |

**5. Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation panel will apply predetermined evaluation criteria to score applications. The criteria will include:

| **Criterion** | **Notes/explanation** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Project Implementation Plan and Methodology | The applicant must provide a detailed plan and methodology regarding:* Selecting and securing host employers or alternatively ensuring adequate workplaces
* The applicant must indicate how many workplaces have been tentatively confirmed.
* Delivery of the work readiness workshop
* Delivery of the IT Skills workshop
* Measures to contract learners, monitor their attendance and report to the BANKSETA
* Payment and administration of the stipends to learners monthly
* Exit plan/strategy to facilitate transition to employment post-internship
 | 35% |
| 2. Capacity to manage and implement training and placement projects | * The application should provide/demonstrate evidence of capacity and capability to manage the proposed project. This should include concrete evidence of existing networks or associate organisations that form part of this capacity.
* The applicant must indicate the resources to ensure the project's successful implementation and roles and responsibilities.
 | 20% |
| 3. Experience and Track record in implementing a similar programme | The applicant must demonstrate and provide examples of projects implemented in the last five years and their relative success. This should include impact indicators such as the number of learners placed and employed post-completion of programmes. | 45% |

Each applicable criterion will be allocated a weighting, and any application scoring below 70% will not be approved. BANKSETA reserves the right to conduct a verification visit / due diligence prior to the final award.

**6. Allocation of funds**

6.1 There is no cap on the number of learners applied for.  However, BANKSETA will allocate funding based on availability of funds.

6.2 BANKSETA will allocate funding across the country equitably to ensure internship opportunities reach many unemployed graduates. Allocation criteria are driven by factors such as unemployment rates, the rural nature of the province, and the population size in the nine provinces. Each successful applicant will be allocated one or two provinces. Rural areas and placement of learners living with disabilities will be prioritised.

6.3 Beneficiary breakdown:

* Black: 85%
* Female:  60%
* People with disabilities: **at least** 4%

6.4 The table below indicates the fee structure:

| **First Year** |
| --- |
| **National Internship Programme**  |
|   |  Per Learner  |
| Learner Stipends |  72 000  |
| UIF |  1 440  |
| Work Readiness |  1 200  |
| Skills Programme |  4 000  |
| Recruitment, selection, and Placement of Learners, contracting of learners |  1 225  |
| Managing stipends for learners, monitoring Learners' attendance, and reporting on progress and activities to enable employment. |  5 200  |
|   |  **85 065**  |
| **Second Year** |
| **National Internship Programme**  |
|   |  Per Learner  |
| Learner Stipends |  72 000  |
| UIF |  1 440  |
| Managing stipends for learners, monitoring Learners' attendance, and reporting on progress and activities to enable employment. |  5 200  |
|   |  **78 640**  |
| **Third Year** |
| **National Internship Programme**  |
|   |  Per Learner  |
| Learner Stipends |  72 000  |
| UIF |  1 440  |
| Managing stipends for learners, monitoring Learners' attendance, and reporting on progress and activities to enable employment. |  5 200  |
|   |  **78 640**  |
|  **TOTAL PER YEAR** |   |
| 1st Year |  85 065  |
| 2nd Year |  78 640  |
| 3rd Year |  78 640  |
|  **GRAND TOTAL** |  **242 345**  |

**7. Submission Requirements**

7.1 Applications and related documents must be submitted using BANKSETA templates and according to the prescribed submission process. Failure to do so will result in the applications being disqualified.

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

7.3 Applicants agree to provide information as BANKSETA requires to report to the Department of Higher Education and Training and other statutory stakeholders.

**8. Submission Process**

8.1 Early submissions are encouraged.  No late applications will be accepted using standard Telkom/network time for its application closing time

8.2 Applications must be submitted to **ThreeYearInternship@bankseta.org.za**.

8.3 Applicants must keep a copy of their submission for internal use and backup purposes.

**9. Evaluation and Allocation Process**

9.1 In all cases, an evaluation panel shall be established to evaluate applications.

9.2 All panel members will be required to sign a declaration of interest.

9.3 The evaluation panel and decision will be recorded for audit purposes.

9.4 All grants are VAT inclusive, and this funding is specifically for recruitment costs, training costs, learner stipends and learner administration and support costs.

9.5 BANKSETA will evaluate all applications and approve funding to ensure an equitable allocation of funds.

9.6 Applicants must note that the programme might be oversubscribed, resulting in some applications being declined.

9.7 BANKSETA reserves the right to approve/decline applications without any preference given to any applicant, to apply discretion to equitably distribute funding to priority areas (See 6.2 and 6.3 above)

9.8 BANKSETA may approve additional applications or increase the funding for a particular application should additional funding become available later.  Approving additional funds for the project is subject to Board approval.

9.9 Feedback on the application status will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

**10. Approval, Appeal and Change Request Process**

10.1 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, it will be forwarded to the Finance and Remuneration Committee for recommendation to the BANKSETA Board.  The BANKSETA Board will do final approval.  The BANKSETA Board may delegate approval functions to the CEO as indicated in the BANKSETA Delegations of Authority Policy

10.2 Should an (unsuccessful) applicant want to appeal the board's decision, this must be done in writing. The request must be submitted **within one month** of BANKSETA communicating the outcome.

10.3 Change requests must be submitted to BANKSETA **within one month** of signing the funding agreement with a motivation for the change. The CEO may approve the change request, provided that the agreed amount is not exceeded and that the change is still in accordance with the guidelines.

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

11.1 BANKSETA will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for each approved application with the applicant.

11.2 The approval notification to the applicant should include a deadline date for returning signed MoAs to the BANKSETA so that funds are not left uncommitted for long periods of time.

11.3 The project manager will monitor all the received MoAs; any MoA not signed and returned to BANKSETA by the agreed date will be cancelled.

**12. Invoicing/ Funds Disbursement Process**

12.1 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)

12.2 The first invoice to BANKSETA must be accompanied by official proof of banking details and a valid Tax clearance certificate. Failure to provide the tax certificate shall warrant BANKSETA to remind the applicant of the 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.

* Progress Reports are to be submitted with invoices as required (BANKSETA to send template).
* Invoices will be paid provided all project requirements are met and supporting documentation is provided (proof of disbursement of stipends to unemployed learners, Financial Recon showing summary cost of stipend paid to learners), attendance registers, etc.)
* To allow for a recruitment process, the documents for unemployed learners must be submitted **no later than 15 March 2025 unless otherwise agreed to in writing with the BANKSETA**.
* A Letter of Completion should be submitted within one month of the learner successfully completing.

**13. 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 by a designated BANKSETA representative during the implementation period. 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.
* 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**

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 funding applications, funding agreements, invoicing, and performance information disclosed or provided by the applicants in confidence, safely and securely.
* 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
* Provide personalised communications
* Provide information for internal and external auditing purposes
* Complying with the law and for a purpose that is ancillary to the above.

The retention period for Memoranda of Agreement-related information is five years from the end date, after which it will be securely disposed of. BANKSETA is required by legal process to disclose any of the information. In that case, 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. Suppose a protective order or other remedy ensures that only information covered by such other or other remedy is obtained. In that case, 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 reasonable steps to ensure that only the portion of the information it is legally required to disclose is disclosed.

Prepared by:  Sfiso Dimba

Learning Programme Manager  Date: 06 November 2024



Recommended by:  Christine Jonck  Date: 18 November 2024

GM Operations





Approved by: Chief Executive Officer  Date: 21 November 2024

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