



science & innovation

Department:
Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2024 SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) calls for nominations for the 2024 South African Women in Science Awards (SAWISA). The awards recognise and reward excellence by women scientists and researchers, and profile them as role models for younger women. The awards will be made to women who are South African citizens or permanent residents.

The theme for the 2024 SAWISA is “Transition towards an Innovation Economy: The Role of Women Leaders in STEM”. The innovation economy is an inclusive concept encompassing various sectors, namely, creative and cultural endeavours, energy and environment, water and ocean management, caregiving and assistance, the social sector and public services, and the often-overlooked contributions of unrecognised work, among others. Thus, research in both the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), and the Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences (NES) can contribute to an innovation economy. An innovative economy is a key driver of economic growth, entrepreneurship, competitiveness and prosperity, and its emphasis is on innovation, creativity, and the development of new ideas, products, and services.

Awards will be made in the distinguished young woman and distinguished woman researchers' categories in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences (NES) categories, as well as in any field aligned with the theme¹.

¹ Where warranted, winners may be considered for nomination for the National Orders, the highest honours bestowed by the President in recognition of an excellent service to the nation. The National Orders are awarded to South African citizens who have accomplished excellence and exceptional achievements in community service, business, economy, science, medicine and technological innovation, among others.

The SAWISA also incorporates awards to currently registered Master's and PhD students, namely, the DSI Fellowships. The fellowships are not necessarily restricted to the theme.

The 2024 SAWISA will be presented on **15 August 2024** as part of the Department's celebration of Women's Month. The awards will be made in the following categories:

1. Awards for Distinguished Woman Researchers

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences
- Transition towards an Innovation Economy.

2. Awards for Distinguished Young Woman Researchers

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences
- Transition towards an Innovation Economy.

3. DSI Fellowships

- Six Master's students: two in Natural Sciences, one in Engineering Sciences, one in HSS, one in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and one in Astronomy.
- Six PhD students: two in Natural Sciences, one in Engineering Sciences, one in HSS, one in IKS and one in Astronomy.

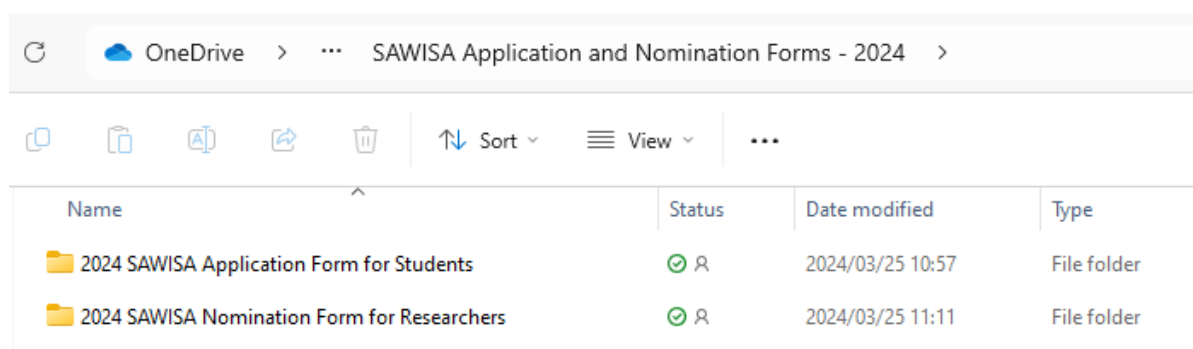
NOMINATION/ APPLICATION PROCESS

Nominations and applications must reach the Department of Science and Innovation by **Friday, 07 June 2024**. **No late submissions will be accepted.**

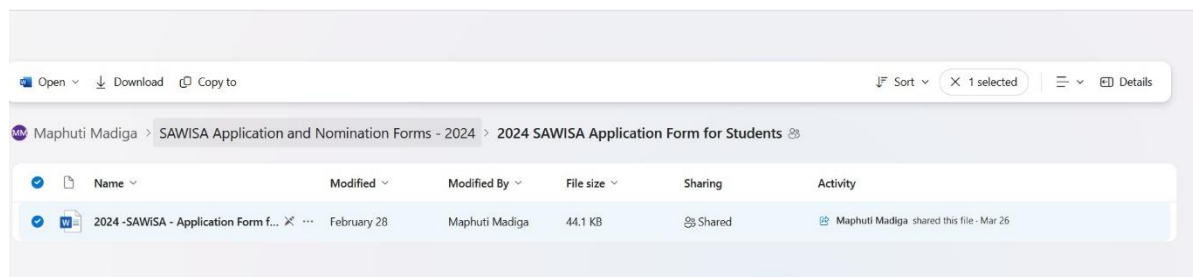
The application form for DSI Fellowships and the nomination form for researchers are available for download at this link: [SAWISA Application and Nomination Forms - 2024](#)

How to download:

1. Click on the above link, there are two folders as shown below.



2. Select the correct folder and select the form of choice to download.



Please note that the forms are not editable, only downloadable.

The application or nomination forms should be accompanied by the documentation specified for each category. To meet the requirements, all the abovementioned forms and supporting documents must be completed, clearly indicating the category, and submitted electronically to SAWiSA@dst.gov.za.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Only shortlisted finalists will be contacted.
- Winners may be requested to participate in public awareness initiatives led by the DSI.

- All applicants /nominees are required to submit a short profile referred to in the application form.

For more information, contact Dr Maphuti Madiga at 079 510 9279 or at Maphuti.Madiga@dst.gov.za.

AWARD CATEGORIES

1. DISTINGUISHED YOUNG WOMAN RESEARCHERS

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences

These awards will be made to young woman scientists or researchers for their outstanding contribution to advancing science and building the knowledge base in their areas of research not necessarily aligned with the theme.

Nomination criteria

Nominations are for young woman scientists or researchers **under the age of 40 or turning 41 during the year of the awards**, who have PhDs and whose research projects have contributed to advancing science and building the knowledge base.

NB: Overall winners in the past 10 years are not eligible to be nominated in the categories they previously won.

Who may make a nomination?

Any person who knows or has worked with the young woman scientist or researcher. The nominator should provide the motivation as required in the nomination form.

Adjudication criteria

The young women scientists or researchers will be judged on their track record of research outputs, research impact, professional and research experience, human capital development, contribution to women and girl's empowerment to promote gender equality, science engagements and collaborations.

Value of each award

Winner: R85 000

First runner-up: R60 000

Second runner-up: R35 000

Use of award

There are no restrictions on the use of the award by the recipient.

Documents required –

- **A completed and signed nomination form;**
- **A completed CV template;**
- **Proof of scientific/research publications:** The first page of each of the nominee's five to 10 best articles, and the title pages of her books or book chapters;
- **Short profile;**
- **Proof of innovation or applied knowledge outputs** (if applicable): List of intellectual property outputs with relevant registration numbers;
- **Three Reference Letters (including the Nominator's letter)** discussing the nominee's professional competence, qualities or interests); and
- **A certified copy of ID.**

2. DISTINGUISHED WOMAN RESEARCHERS

- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Natural (Life and Physical) and Engineering Sciences

These awards will be made to women scientists or researchers for their outstanding scientific contribution to advancing science and building the knowledge base in their areas of research not necessarily aligned with the theme.

Nomination criteria

Nominations are for established woman scientists or researchers with at least five years of postdoctoral experience, and who are actively involved in research.

NB: Overall winners in the past 10 years are not eligible to be nominated in the categories they previously won.

Who may make a nomination?

Any person who knows or has worked with the woman scientist or researcher. The nominator should provide the motivation as required in the nomination form.

Adjudication criteria

The women scientists or researchers will be judged on their track record of research outputs, research impact, professional and research experience, human capital development, contribution to women and girl's empowerment to promote gender equality, science engagements and collaborations.

Value of each award

Winner: R95 000

First runner-up: R70 000

Second runner-up: R45 000

Use of award

There will be no restrictions on the use of the award by the recipient.

Documents required –

- **A completed and signed nomination form;**
- **A completed CV template;**
- **Proof of scientific/ research publications:** The first page of each of the nominee's 10 best articles, and the title pages of her books or book chapters;
- **Short profile;**
- **Proof of innovation or applied knowledge outputs** (if applicable): List of intellectual property outputs with relevant registration numbers, or list of outputs with inclusive growth and development impact;
- **Three Reference Letters (including the Nominator's letter)** discussing the nominee's professional competence, qualities or interests; and
- **A certified copy of ID.**

3. THEME: Transition towards an Innovation Economy

There are only two awards under the theme, namely, distinguished young woman researcher and woman researcher. These awards will be made to women in any field whose **research has contributed to the transition towards an innovation economy and women who have demonstrated leadership in STEM.**

Nomination criteria

(i) Distinguished Young Woman Researcher

Nominations are for young woman scientists or researchers, **under the age of 40 or turning 41 during the year of the awards**, who have PhD degrees and whose research has transitioned to an innovation economy where women in science are leading.

(ii) Distinguished Woman Researcher

Nominations are requested for established woman scientists or researchers with **at least five years' postdoctoral experience**, whose research has transitioned to an innovation economy where women in science are leading.

NB: Overall winners in the past 10 years are not eligible to be nominated in the categories they previously won.

Who may make a nomination?

Any person who knows or has worked with the woman scientist or researcher. The nominator should provide the motivation as required in the nomination form.

Adjudication criteria

Nominees will be judged on their i) track record of research outputs, ii) research impact, iii) professional and research experience iv) leadership roles in STEM v) technological, social and grassroots innovations, and contribution to social and economic development vi) collaboration and networking, vii) human capital development and viii) development and implementation of relevant policies that advocate and promote the participation of women and girls.

Value of each award

Distinguished Young Woman Researcher: R95 000

Distinguished Woman Researcher: R105 000

Use of awards

There are no restrictions on the use of the awards by the recipients.

Documents required –

- **A completed and signed nomination form;**
- **A completed CV template;**
- **Proof of scientific/research publications:** First page of each of the nominees' five to 10 best articles, and the title pages of their books or book chapters;
- **Short profile;**
- **Proof or evidence of technological, social and grassroots innovations, contribution to social and economic development and of Leadership roles in STEM.**
- **Three Reference Letters (including the nominator's letter)** discussing each nominee's professional competence, qualities or interests, and
- **A certified copy of ID.**

4. DSI FELLOWSHIPS

These awards will be made to 12 women who are currently involved in full-time study or research leading to Master's or PhD degrees. The fellowships recognise the awardees' outstanding ability and potential in research, enhance their research experience and output, and encourage more young women to complete research degrees.

Postgraduate fellowships will be awarded to:

- Six Master's students: two in Natural Sciences, one in Engineering Sciences; one in HSS, one in IKS and one in Astronomy.
- Six PhD students: two in Natural Sciences, one in Engineering Sciences; one in HSS, one in IKS, and one in Astronomy.

Application criteria

The fellowships are open to women who are involved in full-time study towards master's or PhD degrees and are registered at South African universities. Applicants should be women who are:

- South African citizens or permanent residents;
- under the age of 35; and
- high performers in their current and previous degrees.

NB: Previous fellowship awardees cannot apply for the same degree of study.

Adjudication criteria

Applicants will be judged on their academic performance of their studies; track record of achievements; quality and feasibility of their proposed study/research plan and schedule; relevance of their research (aligned with the decadal plan) and their career plans as per the application criteria given.

Value of the awards

R75 000 for a master's degree (x6)

R95 000 for PhD degree (x6)

Conditions of award

The fellowship may be used to top up an existing postgraduate scholarship awarded by the National Research Foundation or other agencies. It may be used for attending or presenting a paper at a local or international conference, publishing a research paper, registering a patent, or obtaining personal equipment to conduct research.

Documents required –

- **An application form;**
- **Proof of research publications or outputs:** copies of one to five relevant research publications (showing potential to provide solutions to immediate problems and scarcity of researchers in the field pursued), and title pages of the applicant's books or book chapters;
- Short profile;
- **Reference letter:** The letter must reflect the relationship of the referee with the applicant, the contact details of the referee, and highlight the following about the applicant:
 - evidence of excellence in current studies,
 - technical accomplishments and relative standing of the candidate among her peers (publications, conferences, mentoring etc.),
 - relevance of research being pursued (potential to provide solutions to immediate problems and scarcity of researchers in the field pursued),
 - her role in encouraging and supporting young women,
 - personal or professional qualities or interests that make the applicant especially qualified to receive a fellowship, and
 - any other indicators of outstanding ability;
- **A letter of support** from a supervisor who knows the applicant's work. This letter should outline the applicant's suitability to receive the award, and the quality of and performance in their studies;
- **Letter of intent and applicant statement**, which must indicate:
 - The applicant's desire to be considered for the fellowship,
 - how the applicant qualifies for the fellowship, and
 - a demonstrable need for the specialised knowledge and skills that she plans to acquire;

- **Full academic record;**
- **Certified copies of qualifications; and**
- **A certified copy of ID.**