The strategic objectives of the Thuthuka Programme are to:

* Promote the attainment of a Doctoral qualification by early-career academics employed at SA research institutions;
* Promote the research development of early-career academics employed at SA research institutions;
* Promote the attainment of an NRF rating by early-career academics, in particular black and female researchers and persons with disabilities;
* Promote the attainment of an NRF rating by academics that have not been able to realise their potential or sustain their research ability by virtue of the lack of an enabling research environment or due to family responsibilities;
* Foster a culture of research excellence and aid in the development and expansion of the national knowledge-based economy by boosting research outputs and human capital developments; and
* Effect a transformation in the demographic composition of the established research community with respect to gender, race and persons with disabilities.

This call for proposals pertains to threetracks. Interested applicants may **ONLY** apply for funding in one of the following three tracks:

**1.   PhD Track**

The following eligibility criteria apply in respect of the PhD Track:

* Only South African citizens;
* Should have obtained a minimum of a Master’s degree;
* Must have their PhD research proposal approved by the institution;
* Registered for a Doctoral degree;
* Generally under the age of 45 years at the time of first application (applicants over the age of 45 should submit a motivation as to why they were not able to achieve their doctoral qualification by the stipulated age.);
* Institutional commitment from the employing institution pledging to allow applicant time off for research; and
* Endorsement by a nominated supervisor supporting the proposed Doctoral work to be undertaken (supervisor’s report to be submitted via the electronic application process).

**2.   Post-PhD Track**

The following eligibility criteria apply in respect of the Post-PhD Track:

* Only South African citizens;
* Should have obtained a Doctoral degree no more than five years prior to the date of first application; and
* Generally under the age of 45 years at the time of first application.

**3.   NRF Rating Track**

The following eligibility criteria apply in respect of the NRF Rating Track:

* Only South African citizens and permanent residents;
* Should have obtained a Doctoral Degree or undergone equivalent research training based on research experience and research outputs. Applicants without a Doctoral degree should demonstrate a proven track record of research outputs;
* The applicant must have at least completed a Master’s degree;
* A research focus has been identified in an area in which the applicant plans to establish a research track record; and
* To be eligible, applicants must demonstrate in the proposal that they have been unable to establish themselves as researchers due to limited research opportunities (e.g. working in an institution with limited research infrastructure and research activity or due to family responsibilities). If such limitations are **NOT** clear from the proposal and confirmed in the applicant’s career profile, the application will not be considered.

**Eligibility Criteria**

The Thuthuka grants are limited to academics and researchers, with academic and/or joint academic and administrative professional appointments at UCT. Applicants must be employed at UCT on a full-time permanent or full-time contractual basis. In the case of a contract, the appointment must extent for the duration of the approved three-year funding cycle (i.e. 2016 to 2018).

First-time applicants must NOT be an NRF rated researcher, but may become rated during the tenure of the Thuthuka grant. Once rated, a grantholder must complete the current cycle and exit the Thuthuka funding instrument.  Should NRF Evaluation and Rating and Thuthuka applications be submitted simultaneously and both are successful, then the latter will not be awarded any funding.

**Funding**

The Thuthuka Programme will support

* Student bursaries
* Research operating costs

The Thuthuka Programme does not award funding for -

* Infrastructure development for which the Research Infrastructure Support Programme makes provision;
* Budgets only requesting funding for sabbatical/study visits, travel, student support, equipment and/or conference attendance and not for research materials and supplies;
* Single year grants or grants for less than three years, unless the applicant is in the process of completing a doctoral study (applying in the PhD track); and
* Applications with a Research Operating Cost budget total of less than R 25,000 per year requested from the NRF (very important as it will be automatically disqualified).

**UCT’s internal process is as follows:**

Applicants who intend to submit a Thuthuka proposal should attend a Thuthuka writing and budget preparation workshop to be hosted by the Research Office. If you cannot attend this workshop, please create an application on the NRF website (at [https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za](https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.zat)) to allow us to monitor your progress and provide you with ongoing advice ASAP.

         Thuthuka Training Workshop: **Thursday, 11 June 2015 (10h30 – 13h00)
(Venue: Seminar Room, Level 2, Research Office, 2 Rhodes Avenue, Mowbray. Please RSVP to Janine at** **researchfunding@uct.ac.za** **by Wednesday 10 June);**

         Submission of reviewer details to the research office (send to researchfunding@uct.ac.za): **Monday, 22 June 2015**.  Applicants must identify and submit the names and contacts of two to three  academics who are experts in the applicant’s field of research (in the case of the PhD track, the applicant must include  his/her supervisor) to review and comment on the scientific merit of the application;

* Submission of first draft of application (applications for the internal review must be submitted electronically on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>) by **Monday, 29 June 2015, 09h00;**
* Assessment of first draft applications: **30 June – 9 July 2015;**
* Feedback to applicants: **10 July 2015;**Applicant to work further on their applications based on feedback: **13 – 26 July 2015;**
* Applicants to resubmit applications to research office by **Monday, 27 July 2015, 09h00;** and
* Research Office to check revisions (and revert to the applicant if required) and submit to NRF by

**7 August 2015.**

It is of utmost importance that you consult the Call Guide for more information: <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/nrfmkii/> (click on the + sign next to the “Thuthuka 2016” under Open Calls section)

**Supporting documents** (found under Call Documents once you create a Thuthuka application at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>)

         All applicants should consult the Budget Assist Costing Tool.

         The institutional support form – applicant should complete the “Details of applicant” section on the first page. The research office will download the form, obtain the necessary endorsements from the Deans, endorse the application from the Research Office/DA perspective, and will submit it directly to the NRF.

         Applicants applying for the PhD track must ensure that their supervisors receive and complete the supervisor report (the process is workflow based and is initiated once you select the “PhD Track” under the “Funding Track” section of the application form). This is of utmost importance as applications will be automatically disqualified if the reports are not completed or submitted.

For your convenience and assistance, you can download the NRF online application screenshots by clicking [here](http://www.researchoffice.uct.ac.za/usr/researchoffice/funding/2015/ttk%20screenshots.docx), and you can download an offline editable template of the application by clicking [here.](http://www.researchoffice.uct.ac.za/usr/researchoffice/funding/2015/ttk%20app%202015.docx)  Please note, however, that the application must be submitted via the online NRF system.