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**MELLON PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT (MPD) PROGRAMME**

**CONDITIONS OF AWARD**

**Introduction**

In March 2023 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation approved a grant to the Universities of Witwatersrand (WITS), Cape Town (UCT) and the Western Cape (UWC) to support the establishment of an enduring academic pipeline model for promoting historically under-represented South African postgraduate students to complete graduate studies in the Humanities.

The four-year programme aims to capacitate fellows to be eligible and excellent candidates through activities aimed at proactively preparing them for graduate studies in a supportive environment. Support will be directed at progression from Master’s through to PhD on the four-year programme. The four-year programme will support fellows for two years of Masters and two years of PhD.

Participating South African Institutions: University of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand, and University of the Western Cape. These three universities make up the regional identity of the four year MPD programme.

Key overall goals of the four-year programme aim to:

* develop the next generation of previously disadvantaged South African scholars in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; and
* accelerate completion of Masters degrees within 2 years; and
* achieve direct progression from Masters to PhD degrees within a four-year timeline.

**GENERAL PROGRAMME ELEMENTS**

* Scholarship and research skills development component:
  + Facilitating the development of research scholars able to produce new knowledge through postgraduate degree completion and research publication
* Support component:
  + To include non-academic support such as financial, as well as support for students’ physical and mental health
* Identification of key annual milestones:
  + as well as support pathways and accountability indicators
* Students will be required to complete the Master’s degree at the home institution

**CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

* Academic excellence: achievement within top third percentile in Honours
* Full time registrations only (excludes any full time employment)
* Keen interest in pursuing an academic career
* South African
* No older than 28 years of age by the end of the first year of registration for Masters
* Preference will be given to Black, Coloured and Indian students
* Students must pursue a Masters by dissertation within the designated fields (see Appendix 2)
* Acceptance is conditional on acceptance into a Master’s program at the home institution in 2024

**PROGRAMME STRUCTURE**

MPD provides financial support. This includes:

* A stipend of R150 000 per annum to cover fees
* Fully funded participation in all regional events
* Institutional research development and support of R20 000 p.a

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS**

Signed acceptance of grant conditions and code of conduct. Satisfactory progress annually and meet all institutional requirements for submission of documents, ethical clearance and supervisory contracts.

**MENTORING**

Each graduate will be assigned a mentor who will provide academic and other support during the Masters and PhD years. The mentor will not be the supervisor and will be required to provide regular progress reports for each student mentored.

**RESEARCH & COMMUNITY**

Successful graduates will be expected to attend and participate fully in all regional shared components that co-exist with institutionally differentiated programmes, which include full participation in cohort meetings and institutional events (refer to appendix 1 for details of the regional shared components).

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

Behaviour and self-expression should support the overall vision and goals of this program and contribute toward the building of a community of scholars.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

Pursuing a PhD is a vigorous life choice. Consequently, the application process is a rigorous one and you will be required to attend selection committee meetings (institutional and regional).

Applicants should be able to reflect upon and be able to clearly communicate responses to questions such as:

* “Why do I want to earn a PhD in this field?"
* "How and why does this field excite me?"
* "How do I envision the MDP programme assisting me in my future goals?"
* "Why am I uniquely qualified to participate in the MDP programme?"

Short listed applicants will be expected to meet with the institutional coordinators in a preliminary round of selection meetings and will be required to attend an introductory workshop (27 – 29 October 2023).

Successful applicants are expected to:

* Attend mandatory meetings (bi-weekly or monthly)
* Attend all social events, seminars and workshops
* Register for Masters in 2024
* Attend the regional components throughout the four year program
* Adhere to a code of conduct
* Maintain satisfactory academic performance
* Direct progression from Honours to Masters
* Accelerate completion of Master’s degrees within two years; and
* Direct progression from Masters to PhD degrees within a four-year timeframe
* Publish at least one article in a peer reviewed journal
* *MPDP reserves the right to alter the conditions of award.*

**Appendix 1: Regional activities**

Regional activities are designed to:

* develop a regional community of aspiring academics
* support the pipeline from Masters to PhD
* create exposure to regional opportunities in the Arts,  Humanities and Social Sciences
* support capacity development in research and postgraduate studies
* introduce participants to intellectual input from scholars in their field

**PRE-YEAR 1 (2023): HONOURS RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

Rigorous selection process takes place at the end of the Honours year. Ten successful candidates from each of the participating SA institutions will attend an induction programme. The workshop will concentrate on developing a scholarly identity and leadership ability, and develop a strong regional cohort.

The weekend residential induction workshop will take place in October in Cape Town.

**27 – 29 October 2023**

**YEAR 1 (2024):**

**Regional Activity 1**: Induction, Grant components and requirements (3 - 4 days)

Host institution: WITS

Milestone: Signed acceptance of the grant conditions and code of conduct by end of March.

Programme outline: Orienting participants to the programme components and commitment required by them. Participants start to develop their personal research identity and understand their research field and its methods.

**Regional Activity 2**: Proposal completion and presentation, residential writing retreat (5 days)

Host institution: UCT

Milestone: Complete first draft of a research proposal for presentation by end of June

Programme outline: Thematic cluster of participants, facilitated by an expert in the field. Research proposal presentation and academic writing skills development.

**YEAR 2 (2025)**

**Regional Activity 1**: Residential writing retreat (3 - 5 days)

Host institution: UWC

Milestone: Develop first draft of dissertation by March/April

Programme outline: Writing facilitated by experts and/or mentors eg complete overview, rationale and literature review, theoretical framework in thematic clusters

**Regional Activity 2**: Residential writing retreat (3 - 5 days)

Host institution**:** WITS

Milestone: Finalise Masters dissertation for submission by August

Programme outline: Thematic clusters guidance and feedback from writing experts to guide completion of Masters.

**Regional Activity 3**: Online presentation and feedback, with a panel of experts

Host institution: UCT

Milestone: presentations by October

Programme outline: Regional partners suggest a panel of experts in thematic areas to moderate sessions and give feedback. Participants benefit from cohort community support, networking and exposure to top experts in the field.

**YEAR 3 (2026)**

**Regional Activity 1**: Residential writing retreat (3 - 5 days)

Host institution: UWC

Milestone: Develop PhD conceptual framework and research question by February / March

Programme outline: Lectures and seminars on research fields in each thematic area.

**Regional Activity** **2**: Writing clusters and feedback from senior academics

Host institution: WITS

Milestone: Draft PhD proposal by August

Programme outline: Training in research methodology and feedback from writing professionals. Writing for publication.

**Regional Activity 3**: Online presentation and feedback, with a panel of experts

Host institution: UCT

Milestone: Presentation of  PhD proposal by October

Programme outline:  A panel of experts in thematic areas  will moderate sessions and provide feedback. Participants benefit from the cohort community support, networking and exposure to top experts in the field.

**YEAR 4 (2027)**

**Regional Activity 1**: PhD residential writing retreat (3 - 5 days):

Host institution: UWC

Milestone: Draft  introduction, literature review and theoretical framework chapters  by February/March

Programme outline: Work on completing literature review and/or conceptual framework chapter of thesis, in thematic clusters.

**Regional Activity 2**: Writing clusters and feedback from senior academics : Going into the field

Host institution: WITS

Milestone: Preparation for conducting empirical research by August

Programme outline: Thematic clusters guided by experts to develop an actionable plan to conduct empirical research. Formal evaluation of the four year program and plan way forward for completion of PhD thesis.

**Regional Activity 3**: Online presentation and feedback components, with a panel of experts

Host institution: UCT

Milestone: Successful presentations in October

Programme outline: Regional partners suggest a panel of experts in thematic areas to moderate sessions and give feedback. Participants benefit from the cohort community, networking and exposure to top experts in the field.

**Appendix 2**

To be eligible for selection, students must be planning to study in one or more of the fields below:

Anthropology and Archaeology

Area/Cultural/Ethnic/Gender Studies

Art History

Classics

Population Studies

English

Film, Cinema and Media Studies (theoretical focus)

Foreign Languages and Literatures

History

Linguistics

Literature

Philosophy and Political Theory

Religion and Theology

Sociology

Interdisciplinary Studies: Interdisciplinary areas of study may be eligible if they have one or more eligible fields at their core

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Mellon Pipeline Development Programme (MPD) **Application Form**

Name:

email address:

Cell number:

Current registration:

Institution:

Discipline:

Name and contact details of two referees who should be either

* + a potential supervisor or
  + a potential mentor or
  + the supervisor you are currently working with

**NB Include**:

* A copy of Honours research proposal or a chapter from Honours thesis which can contain supervisor’s comments (preferably do not submit a literature review)
* Recent course paper/essay with feedback
* Academic transcript
* Copy of ID

Provide a description of: ( 4 pages maximum)

* Your future research interests and plans
* A rationale for your research focus
* The potential impact of this research on society and knowledge production
* Why a career in academia appeals to you?

**Closing Date: 18th September 2023**

*Submit applications to:*

UCT: Kathy Erasmus [Kathy.erasmus@uct.ac.za](mailto:Kathy.erasmus@uct.ac.za)

WITS: Nompumelelo Bhungu [Nompumelelo.Bhengu@wits.ac.za](mailto:Nompumelelo.Bhengu@wits.ac.za)

UWC: Vanessa Brown [vbrown@uwc.ac.za](mailto:vbrown@uwc.ac.za)