



DISCRETIONARY GRANT

**FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES: SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISES AND
COOPERATIVE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
2023/2024**

BANKSETA FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES

1. Background

The Banking Sector Education and Training Authority (BANKSETA) is a statutory body established through the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended by Act, 26 of 2011 to enable its stakeholders to advance the national and global position of the banking and alternative banking sector. As guided by its mandate, the BANKSETA is as such an agent of transformation and seeks to promote employment equity and Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment through skills development. For further details on the BANKSETA, visit www.bankseta.org.za

2. Purpose

This document has been developed to guide the application process for BANKSETA Discretionary Grant Funding Windows. It considers 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.

3. Objective

The objective of this funding window is to support skills development in Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs) and Cooperative Financial Institutions (CFIs) through the funding of programmes that meet the criteria as indicated below.

4. Invitation Process

- 4.1. BANKSETA will publish all funding window invitations on the BANKSETA website www.bankseta.org.za
- 4.2. Each funding window will remain open for at least 6 weeks.
- 4.3. No late applications will be accepted.

5. Eligibility Criteria

- 5.1. The funding window is open for SMEs and CFIs registered with BANKSETA.
- 5.2. Employers must have submitted a Workplace Skills Plan (and Annual Training Report where applicable) by 30 April 2023 or by 31 May 2023 where extension has been granted.
- 5.3. Company registration documentation must be provided.
- 5.4. Applications must be for the skills development of current employees.
- 5.5. Organisations with less than 50 employees of Cooperative Financial Institutions are eligible.
- 5.6. Applications must be for short programmes only – PIVOTAL Programmes must be applied for under the PIVOTAL Programmes for Employed Funding Window.

6. Evaluation Criteria

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

6.1 Business Case – 30%

6.2 Project Plan – 30%

6.3 Training Provider and Relevance of Programme – 20%

6.4 Completion Record/Exit Strategy – 20%

Any application not meeting a threshold of 60% will not be approved.

7. Funding Allocation Criteria

7.1 No cap per learner

7.2 No cap on number of learners

7.3 Cap of R150 000 per Organisation will apply regardless of the number of applications.

7.4 Approvals for non-levy payers will be capped at R50 000.00 per employer.

8. Submission Process

8.1. 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.

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

8.3. 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.

8.4. Applicants are required to submit separate applications per category where applicable.

8.5. 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.

8.6. Applicants are not limited on the number of applications per category. However, applicants are requested to carefully consider business needs and prioritize applications as funding may be limited or declined considering the funding available and the number of applications received.

8.7. Each application will be evaluated individually.

8.8. Applicants must keep a copy of their submission for their 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. The evaluation panel will consist of at least the relevant Department Manager, the relevant Project Manager and one other person.
- 9.3. All panel members will be required to sign a declaration of interest.
- 9.4. The evaluation panel and decision will be recorded for audit purposes.
- 9.5. All grants are VAT inclusive.
- 9.6. BANKSETA will evaluate all applications and approve funding in a way that will ensure the equitable allocation of funding and may include limiting the number of beneficiaries approved for each application and limiting the amount per beneficiary.
- 9.7. 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 and to reallocate funds from undersubscribed categories.
- 9.8. 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.
- 9.9. Feedback on the status of the application will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

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.

11. Contracting, Commitment Schedule and Project system update

- 11.1. BANKSETA will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the applicant for each application that is approved.
- 11.2. The approval notification to the applicant should 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.
- 11.3. 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.
- 11.4. 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

- 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 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.

- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. Progress Reports are to be submitted with invoices as required (BANKSETA to send template).
- 12.5. Invoices will be paid provided all project requirements are met and supporting documentation is provided (such as proof of payment to other parties, proof of disbursement of stipends to unemployed learners, etc.)
- 12.6. Successful applicants and payments are subject to a monitoring and evaluation process.
- 12.7. 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

- 13.1. 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.
- 13.2. In the event where, due to unforeseen circumstances an agreement lapses, and the applicant is only able to continue with the project at a later stage the applicant may submit a motivation to re-instate the previous approval if the overall project is still open and if there are still funds available in the project.
- 13.3. This new application and agreement must follow the same process as the initial one and is subject to Board approval or as delegated to the CEO in the Delegations of Authority Policy.

14. Disclaimer, Termination and Breach

- 14.1. In all instances, BANKSETA reserves the right to approve / decline funding at its discretion.
- 14.2. 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.
- 14.3. 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.
- 14.4. 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

- 15.1. 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 employers 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.

15.2. 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
- for a purpose that is ancillary to the above.

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

15.4. 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.

15.5. 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.

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