

DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES 2022-2023

FASSET FUNDING WINDOW GUIDELINES

1. Purpose

This document has been developed to guide on the application process for the Finance and Accounting Sector Skills Education and Training Authority (FASSET) Discretionary Grant funding windows. It considers the SETA Grant Regulations and the FASSET Discretionary Grant policy. Furthermore, this document includes guidelines for the opening of funding windows, application invitations, evaluation of applications and allocation as well as payment of funds. This document aims to form a consistent, fair and transparent process.

Definition: A funding window is an invitation to stakeholders to apply for funding from the SETA for the programmes that the funding window is intended for. The programmes may include learnerships, internships, academic support, skills programmes, professional body qualifications and bursaries, to name a few. These may be aimed at a particular stakeholder grouping for example Medium to Large Organisations, Small or Micro Enterprises, Co-operatives, Universities & HDI, NGO/NPO, Professional bodies, CET, TVET Colleges and government institutions. The window period has a specified opening date and a specified closing date.

2. Objective

2.1 The objective of a funding window is to:

- Provide employers in the FASSET sector an opportunity to access funding,
- communicate the priorities of FASSET in line with the approved strategy
- achieve transparency in relation to the evaluation process.

2.2 Each funding window will have its own **eligibility criteria**, **evaluation criteria** and **allocation criteria**.

2.3 Invitation Process

- 2.3.1 FASSET will publish all funding window invitations on the FASSET website www.FASSET.org.za
- 2.3.2 Each funding window will remain open for at least 6 weeks however the Reskilling Programmes funding window will remain open throughout the year.
- 2.3.3 No late applications will be accepted.

3. Eligibility Criteria

FASSET has categorised applicants as per the below; all applicants must meet the eligibility criteria as indicated to qualify for funding.

3.1 Employers

In the case of employers:

- The applicant must be operating within the FASSET sector for skills development levy purposes.
- The approval of the application will be communicated through issuing an award letter.
- Funding Agreements must be signed upon satisfaction of suspensive conditions to be outlined in the award letter.
- The employer must be up to date with levy contributions unless exempt from paying levies
- In all instances the training provider must be accredited as a training provider by the relevant Quality Council and where applicable, the registration number for the programme applied for. Documents to substantiate this need not be submitted by the applicant but will be verified by FASSET using the information retrieved on the SAQA Website. Applicants must make sure that the latest information is reflected their SAQA profile and if not, applicants must submit up-to-date supporting documentation.
- The accreditation must be valid for the period of the programme or qualification.

3.2 Higher Education Training Institutions:

- Only public TVET Colleges, Universities of Technology and Universities will be eligible to apply.
- Business Schools that are part of Public Universities may also apply.

3.3 Community Organisations:

- Only Non-Government Organisations or Non-profit organisations registered with the Department of Social Development may apply.

In all instances, the proposed intervention must address business needs, scarce skills and PIVOTAL Occupations Scarcity as identified in the FASSET Sector Skills Plan and/or support the outcomes of the National Skills Development Plan.

4. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation committee will apply predetermined evaluation criteria to score applications. The criteria will include but may not be limited to relevance / motivation for the project or the business case, an implementation plan or methodology, ability to meet equity targets of 85% Black, 54% Female and 4% people with disabilities. The applicant's track record in FASSET funded programmes will be considered and applications from applicants where training from previous funding windows have not been completed may not be considered favorably. The proposed exit strategy for successful learners will also be evaluated and scored. Each applicable criteria will be allocated a weighting and any application scoring below a predetermined score will not be approved.

5. Submission Requirements

- Applications and other related documents are to be submitted on FASSET templates and as per the prescribed submission process. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of the applications.
- Applications must be received in the specified timeframes; no late submissions will be accepted.
- By submitting, applicants agree to provide information as required by FASSET for the purposes of reporting to the Department of Higher Education and Training, as well as other statutory stakeholders.
- Please note that each funding category will have its own performance information requirements depending on the type of programme applied for.

6. Submission Process

- Early submissions are encouraged. No late applications will be accepted; FASSET uses standard network time for its application closing time
- Applicants are required to submit separate applications per category where applicable.
- Applications must be submitted to the following email address: dg@fasset.org.za.
- It must be noted that FASSET will not accept any physical submissions. If an applicant uses secure platforms such as Dropbox, WeTransfer, or Microsoft OneDrive, applicants must

confirm these 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.

- Applications must ensure that submitted documents are not corrupted and link provided doesn't expire within six months of the sharing the application. FASSET will take no responsibility for expired links and corrupt files.
- 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 depending on the funding available and the number of applications received.
- Each application will be evaluated individually.

7. Evaluation and Allocation Process

- In all cases an evaluation will be performed by the grant evaluation committee appointed in terms of the delegation of authority.
- Adjudication is performed by the grant adjudication committee for the work performed by the grants evaluation committee and successful applicants will be recommended to the CEO.
- Due diligence is performed on the recommended applicants prior to approval by the CEO.
- The outcome of the due diligence process will result in approval or rejection of the applicant by the CEO.
- All committee members will be required to sign a declaration of interest.
- The evaluation members and decision will be recorded for audit purposes.
- All grants are VAT inclusive, and this funding is specifically for training costs and inclusive learner allowances (for unemployed learners). Funding does not include set up costs and capitalization of projects.
- FASSET will evaluate all applications and approve funding in a way that will ensure the equitable allocation of funding by limiting the number of learners approved for each application and limiting the amount per learner.
- Priority will be given to first time applicants, SMMEs and entities with BBBEE level status below four.
- FASSET 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.
- FASSET 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.

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

Specific Exclusions

- Capital and business set-up costs
- Salaries and directors' fees.
- Application development costs.
- Planning and marketing costs.

8. Contracting, Commitment Schedule and Project system update

- FASSET will sign an award letter with the applicant for each application that is approved.
- The approval notification to the applicant should include a deadline date for the return of signed award letter to FASSET so that funds are not left uncommitted for long periods of time.
- The approval letter will be sent from the mailbox awardletter@fasset.org.za
- The project team will monitor all the received award letters and any award letter not signed and returned to FASSET by the agreed date will be cancelled.
- If the award letter hasn't been acknowledged and accepted within the specified period and no extension request is received by FASSET before the expiry period of the award letter, the award letter will be terminated and the funding forfeited.
- Suspensive conditions with timeframes will be specified on the award letter and non-compliance with the turnaround times will result in funding being forfeited
- Contracting will be based on the number of beneficiaries that are found to be compliant.
- The applicant will be required to submit revised pricing schedule in line with the approved budget items as listed on the award letter and based on the final approved /contracted learners.

9. Invoicing/ Funds Disbursement Process

- FASSET will open the project allocation codes for each programme based on final pricing schedule and communicate these to the stakeholders for the purpose of invoicing.
- The first invoice to FASSET must be accompanied by official proof of banking details.
- Progress Reports are to be submitted with invoices as required (FASSET to provide template).
- 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.)
- Successful applicants and payments are subject to a monitoring and evaluation process.

- FASSET will only be paying for beneficiaries who successfully complete the programme as required, and only make final payments once all requirements are met.
- Statements of results or completion certificates should be submitted within two months of the learner successfully completing and no later than the end of each financial year.

10. Extensions

- Applicants should endeavour to meet deadlines and complete the project within the project plan submitted during application phase. However, if this is not possible, the applicant should apply in writing to have the timelines extended and where relevant, add a signed date extension addendum to the contracts.
- The request for the extension must be submitted three months before the expiry of the contract.

11. Disclaimer, Termination and Breach

- In all instances, FASSET reserves the right to approve / decline funding at its discretion.
- FASSET reserves the right to verify, monitor and audit any of the approved grants during the implementation period by a designated FASSET representative. Payments are also subject to these processes being completed as per the quality requirements stipulated by FASSET.
- FASSET 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.

12. Confidentiality of information

In compliance with the requirements of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI), FASSET wishes to inform all its stakeholders that in applying for funding, submitting invoices to FASSET and providing supporting information for such invoices, the below standards will apply:

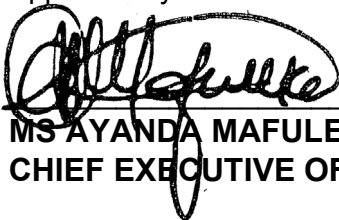
- FASSET undertakes to keep all information obtained or received by it for purposes of funding applications, funding agreements, invoicing and performance information disclosed or provided by the employers in confidence and in a safe and secure manner.
- Information shall be revealed only to the representatives, 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.

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.
- The purpose that is ancillary to the above.

If FASSET is required by legal process to disclose any of the information, it shall provide the employer with prompt notice of such requirement so that the employer may seek a protective order or agree to the provision of information. If a protective order or other remedy to ensure that only information covered by such order or other remedy is obtained, FASSET 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 employer party agrees to the provision of information, FASSET shall take all the reasonable steps to ensure that only the portion of the information which it is legally required to disclose, is disclosed.

Approved by



**MS AYANDA MAFULEKA CA(SA)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

DATE: _____