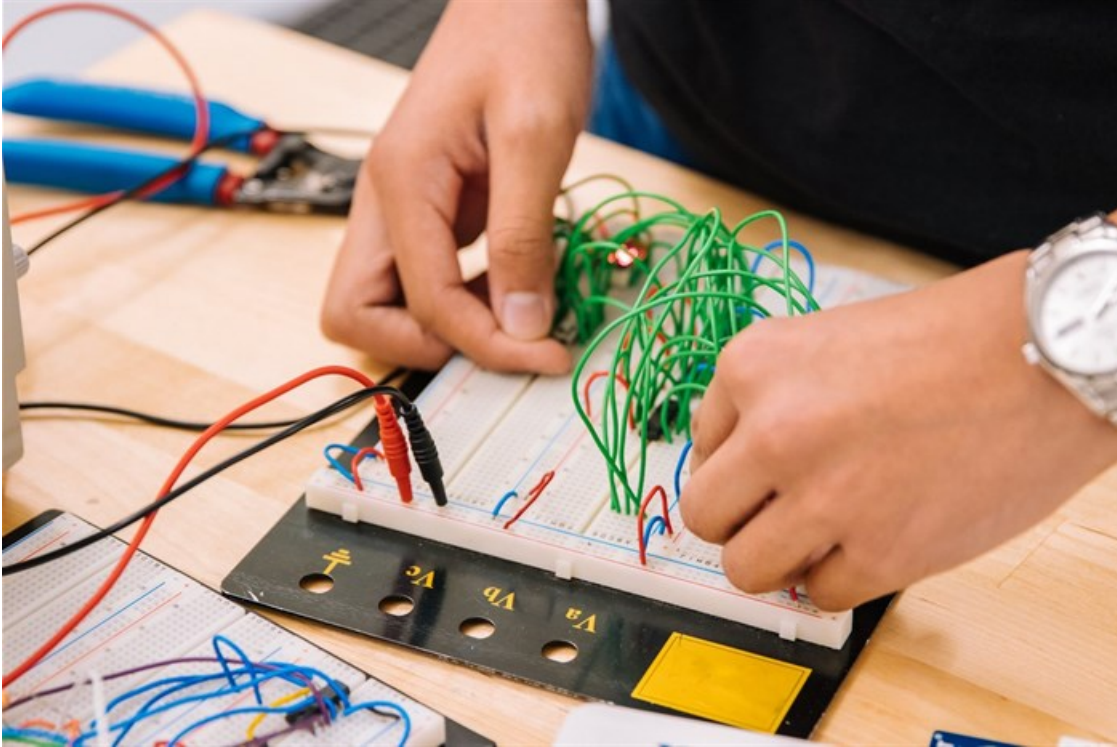


Pact to fund STEM postgrad students

The National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Energy Mobility Education Trust have concluded a three-year partnership agreement to fund postgraduate students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and commerce fields.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

The agreement is said to focus on traditionally marginalised groups and contribute to the transformation of the education landscape, with a specific focus on South Africans who are Black, female or people with a disability.

According to the Energy Mobility Education Trust CEO, Vuyo Mwase, the move will promote academic, scientific, and technological cooperation by supporting full-time studies for South African postgraduate students at the Honours level for the first year and Master's and Doctoral levels from 2024.

“The Energy Mobility Education Trust has championed the attainment of formal qualifications in STEM and commerce for over years,” said Mwase.

The CEO also noted the lack of funding for postgraduate studies.

“As such, this complementary and strategic partnership with the NRF strengthens our position and commitment to narrowing this gap. Additionally, our partnership will augment the much-needed innovation in developing and managing the current and emerging renewable energy systems,” Mwase explained.

The programme will initially provide funding opportunities for 38 Honours students for the 2023 academic year, with an initial investment of R6.8m, with Master’s and Doctoral programmes to start in 2024.

Funding for postgraduate students will be made available in the STEM disciplines, with a specific focus on mathematical science, data science, computer science, green economy, renewable energy and climate change studies.

The first phase of the programme will support students from the Universities of Fort Hare, Limpopo, Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Western Cape and Johannesburg.

The NRF’s Dr Mbulelo Ncango is of the view that the scholarship programme comes at a critical time as South Africa strives to respond to energy and climate change challenges amongst many other national concerns.

“This partnership is aligned with national policy goals on higher education, science, and technology such as the strengthening of human resource development and the creation of an enabling environment for innovation in South Africa,” he said.

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