

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (NIHSS)

Funding of Postgraduates in Higher Education 2014-2024



higher education and training,
science and innovation

Department:
Higher Education and Training, Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



NATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR THE HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

NIHSS MANDATE & VISION

The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) was established on 5 December 2013. The role of the Institute is to use its various funded programmes to enhance and support the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) in South Africa and beyond, and to advise government and civil society on HSS matters.

The mandate to realise these programmes, and set-up the Institute as entity, emerged from the process of exhaustive consultation that resulted in a Charter for the HSS.

OUR VISION

The NIHSS vision is of a new Humanities and Social Sciences that is the epicentre of scholarship, pedagogy, community practice and social responsibility in Africa.

We also envision a tertiary education system serving as an equal partner with centres of excellence in the Global North and the Global South in the world's knowledge production and dissemination.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Established with the publication of Government Gazette No.37118, in the context of the Higher Education Act (1997) and Skills Development Act (1998), in alignment with the National Development Plan, Vision 2030

NIHSS MISSION

OUR MISSION

Since the inception of the Institute in 2013, its mission has been to redress existing deficits and to coordinate programmes, projects, collaborations and activities in the Humanities and Social Sciences within and through existing public universities.

The Institute serves the higher education sector, the South African government, and civil society on HSS-related matters, working alone and/or in partnership with stakeholders to:

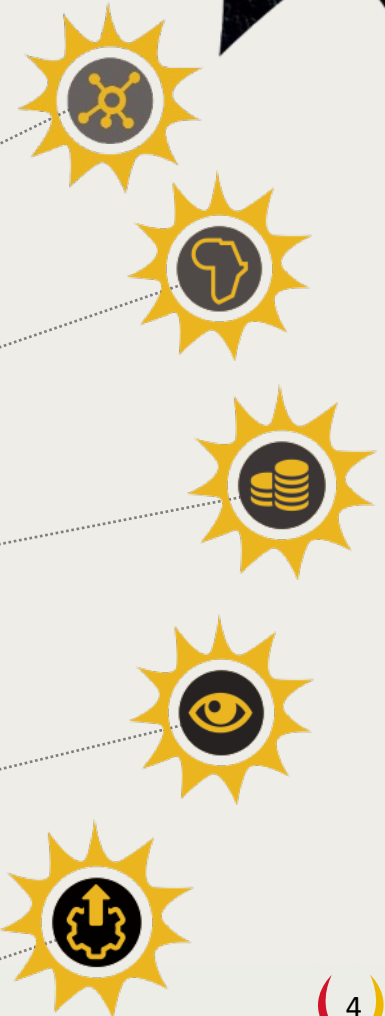
- promote the integrity, reputation and recognition of the HSS within the higher education community, the science and technology community and society at large;
- Advance research, teaching, and learning by ensuring collaboration and/or coordination of the work of higher education institutions;
- Strengthen a student-centred culture in the higher education system and help create an environment where the critical, analytical and normative capacities of students are enhanced; and
- Advocate equity, justice and social responsibility.

In 2015, the NIHSS expanded its mandate and mission with the being the custodian of the South African BRICS Think Tank. This augmented the NIHSS strategic objectives, adding: fostering international research collaborations between South Africa, Africa, and countries of the Global South, including Brazil, Russia, India and China; acting as a dynamic broker between the worlds of knowledge and policy action on behalf of South Africa and the South African BRICS Think Tank; and coordinating and managing all BRICS Think Tank-related activities on behalf of South Africa.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When conceptualising, convening and implementing academic projects and programmes, those working in the NIHSS foreground the values of teamwork, integrity, creativity, respect and excellence, and adhere to five shared principles:

- 1 Cooperation and the establishment of communities of scholarship** – the NIHSS works across organisational and disciplinary boundaries to establish communities of collaborating scholars.
- 2 Norm-driven internationalisation** – the NIHSS is open to dialogue with its Northern counterparts but focuses specifically on strengthening Africa-wide, South–South collaborations.
- 3 Social responsibility and equity** – the NIHSS is mindful that research and development funded with taxpayers’ money should have value to society and respond to the socio-economic problems that face South Africa and its citizens today.
- 4 Functional differentiation as opposed to resource differentiation** – the NIHSS, rather than preserving a higher education and research system differentiated on the basis of resource inequality, provides opportunities to eradicate resource inequality and encourages differentiation in priorities and visions to cater for diversity.
- 5 Transformative relevance** – the NIHSS works unrelentingly to open up new areas of research, which in turn have a multiplier effect on future research projects and serious transformative implications for the curriculum in the humanities and social sciences.



HOW WE ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

OUR VALUE CREATION

The NIHSS ringfences funding to stimulate research, shift debates and incubate ideas that will reignite the intellectual fires in the HSS. The Institute creates value in three main ways:

Enabling Postgraduate Scholarship

The NIHSS builds capacity, growing the number of doctoral students (via scholarships) in the HSS:

- NIHSS National Mentorship Programme
- African Pathways Programme
 - Mobility Grants

Catalyst for change in research

The NIHSS increases the scale and quality of HSS research outputs, fast-tracking research in new areas, strengthening previously neglected HSS disciplines and bringing about deep and widespread change in the way the HSS produce knowledge:

- Catalytic Research Projects
 - Working Groups
- Professional Associations
 - Humanities Hubs

Convening collaboration and advising on policy

The NIHSS forges collaborations on the continent and between developing economies, networking South African researchers with researchers in the Global South through the BRICS programme.

NIHSS DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS

751

NIHSS Doctoral scholarships awarded

To date, the Institute has awarded over 750 scholarships, not all awards have graduated yet

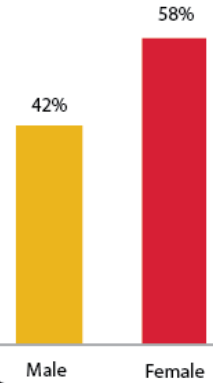
540

NIHSS-funded Doctoral graduates

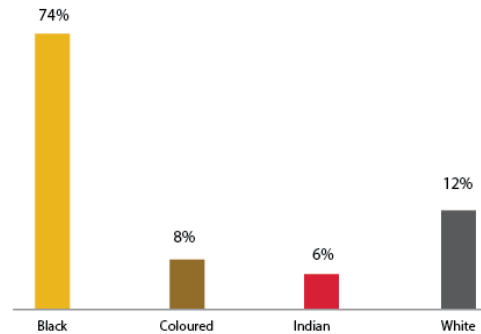
doctoral graduations reported to date to the Institute, since the inception of the NIHSS scholarship programme.



NIHSS-funded Doctoral graduates



NIHSS-funded Doctoral students graduated



MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

The National Mentorship Programme (NMP) is critical in ensuring that students receive the support they need during the course of their studies. The Institute appoints senior academics annually to serve as mentors for that academic year.

368

Regional doctoral workshops

funded by the NIHSS to enhance the creativity and technical capacities of NIHSS-funded doctoral students (2015/16 –2023/24)

09

National doctoral & Alumni conferences

annually funded and hosted by the NIHSS as an innovation to advance postgraduate scholarship (2015/16 –2023/24)

39

Mentors appointed and funded

Mentors were appointed over the 2017 –2023 period, to support students within the mentors' allocated region(s). Of these, the NIHSS contracts an average of 12 per annum.

Support includes:

- coordination and effective implementation of Regional Doctoral Schools and national thematic workshops
- hosting of regional workshops, bringing together students from different universities in the same region
- to interact and learn
- introducing the various aspects of doctoral studies, such as formulating research proposals, obtaining
- ethical clearance, and academic writing



Prof Grace Khumalo, regional mentor in Gauteng and a professor of sociology at the University of Johannesburg, with doctoral students at one of the inter-regional initiatives held at the NIHSS offices

NIHSS POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

94 NIHSS-funded Post-doctoral scholarships awarded

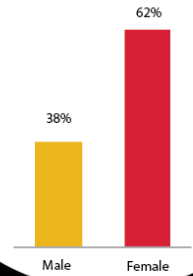


POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

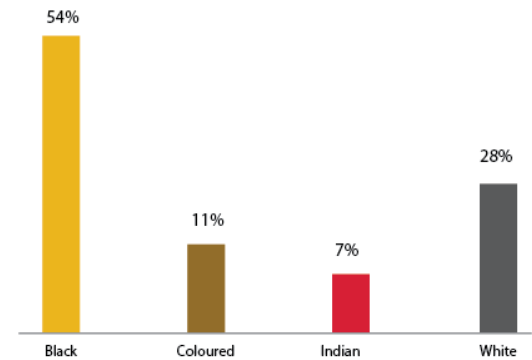
In Partnership with



NIHSS-funded Postdoc students awarded



NIHSS-funded Postdoc Students awarded

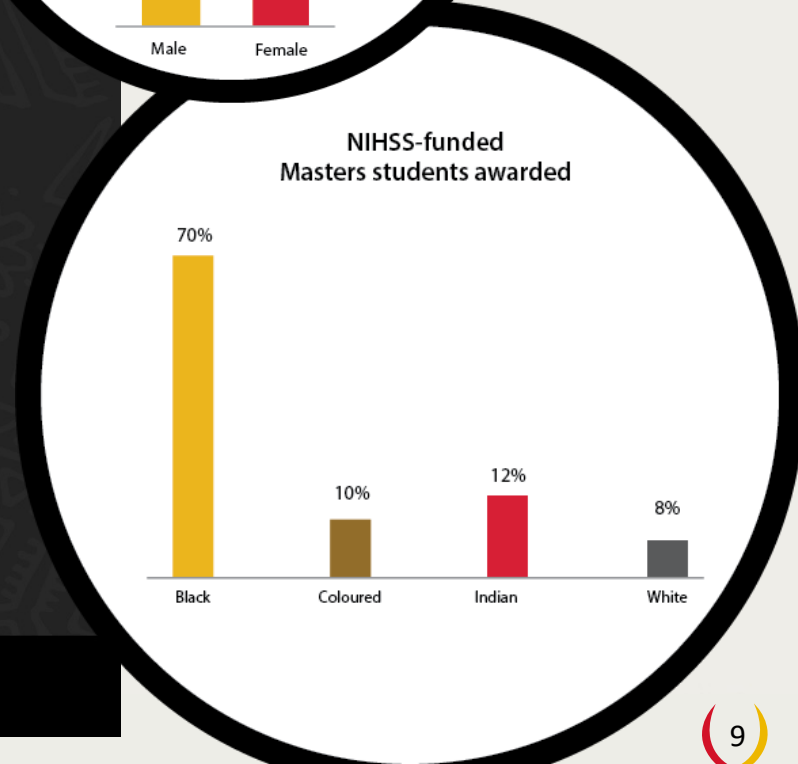
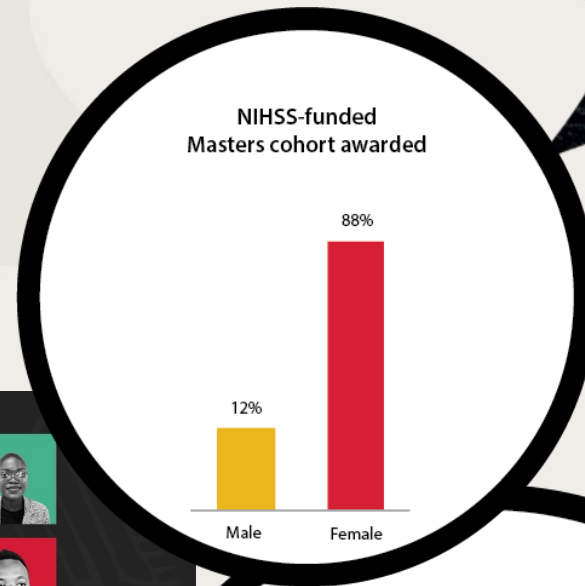


NIHSS MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS

50 NIHSS-funded Master scholarships awarded



Welcome to the first cohort of the
NIHSS-SAHUDA
MASTERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME



TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA

- The work of the NIHSS is contributing to transformation on multiple levels, from the demographic profile of South Africa's doctoral pool in the HSS and the decolonisation of curricula to the advancement of multilingualism in higher education and the strengthening of top-level research capacity at historically disadvantaged institutions.
- Not only does this work increase South Africa's small but growing share of global research – now standing at around 1% of world output – but it also ensures that blacks and black women academics are making their presence felt.

PROOF POINTS

Making multilingualism in higher education a reality: NIHSS-supported doctoral students have been among the first in South Africa to submit conference abstracts – and in some cases PhD proposals – in indigenous languages. A substantial amount of other NIHSS-supported research is shedding light on the development of academic languages other than English in higher education.

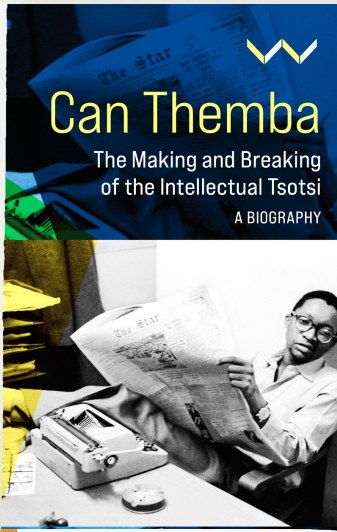
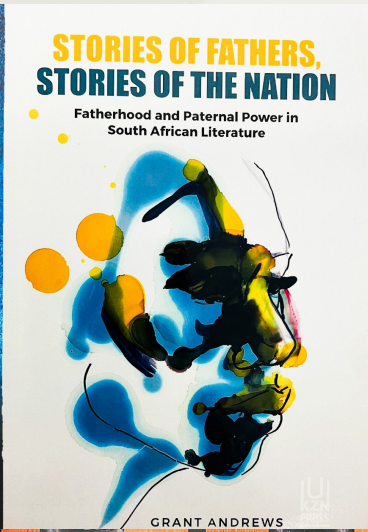
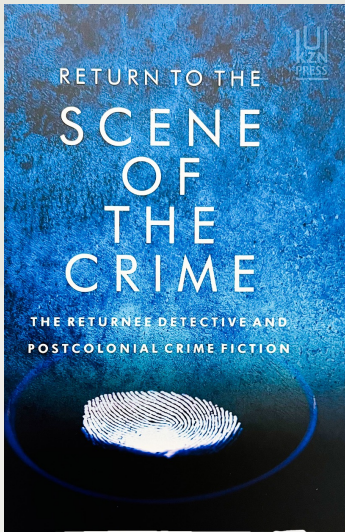
Decolonising the social work curriculum: Social work graduates participating in a PhD research study have made a range of constructive suggestions on how to decolonise the social work curriculum. Now it is up to higher education institutions and policy-makers to listen and respond.

HDI's deliver more PhD graduates: Doctoral studies have traditionally been the preserve of historically white universities in South Africa. That is changing, with more and more NIHSS PhD graduates coming from the universities of Fort Hare, Venda and Limpopo.

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IMPACT OF POSTGRADUATES

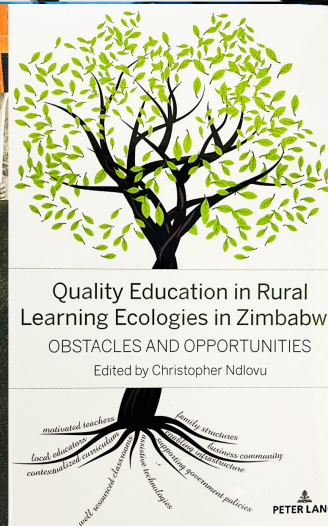
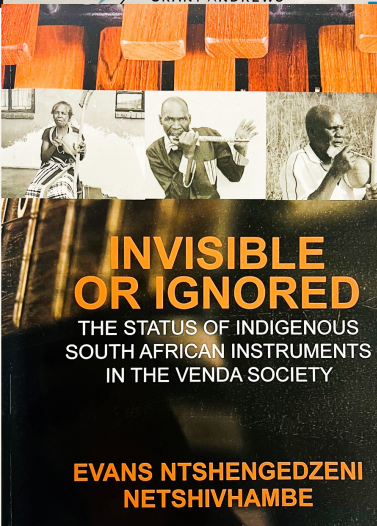
NOTABLE RESEARCH OUTPUTS



Telling Stories of Pain and Hope Museums in South Africa and Ireland

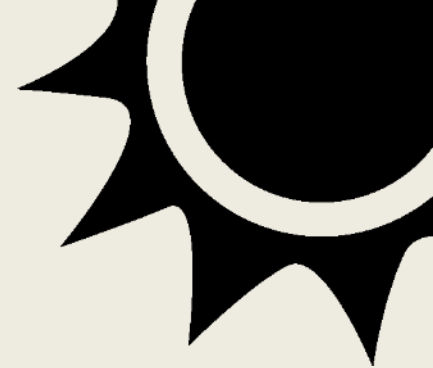


Mary Elizabeth Lange and Ruth Teer-Tomaselli

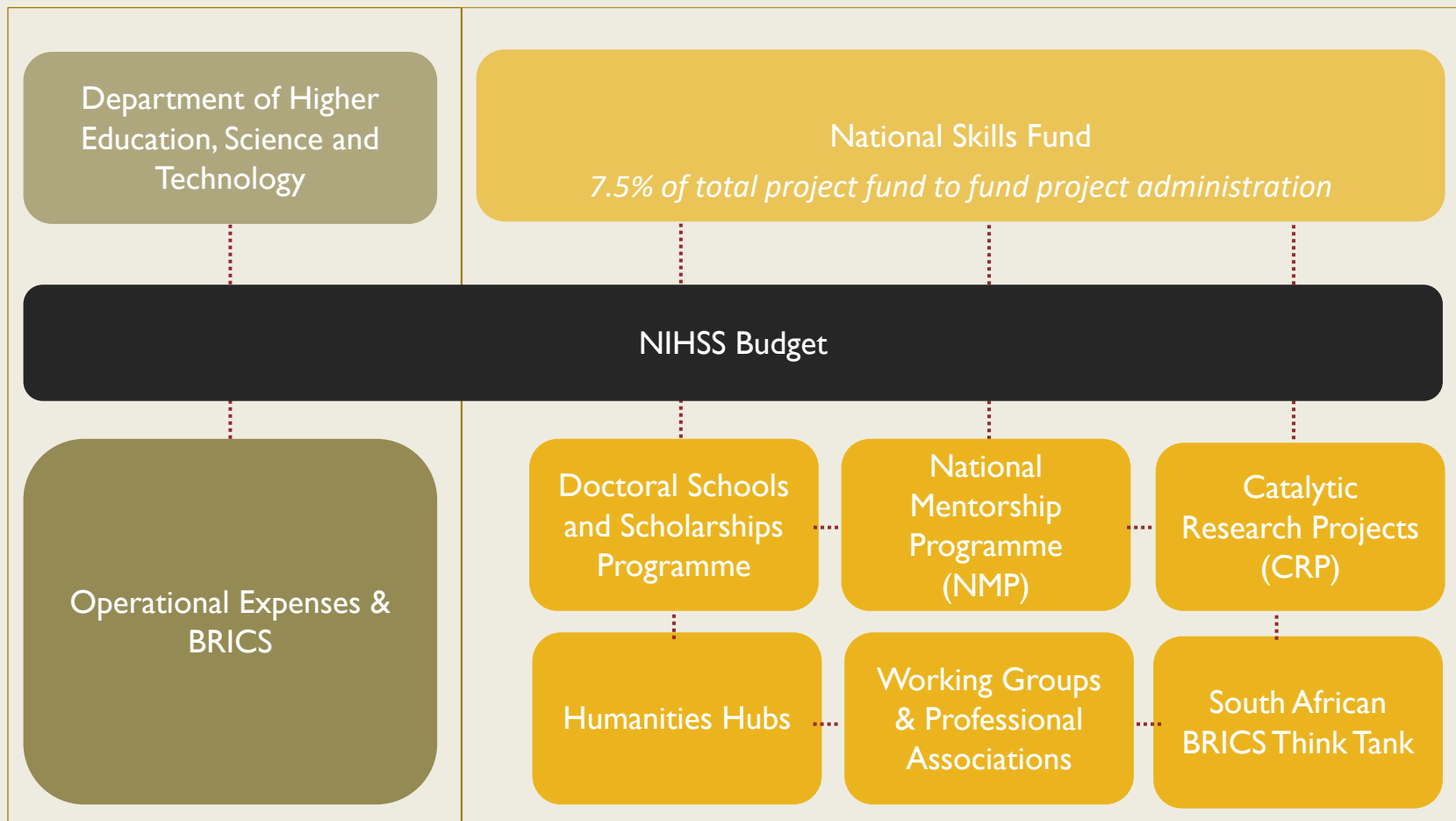


Since 2020/21 to date, there have been at least 157 publications from doctoral graduates and postdoctoral fellows.

FUNDING MODEL

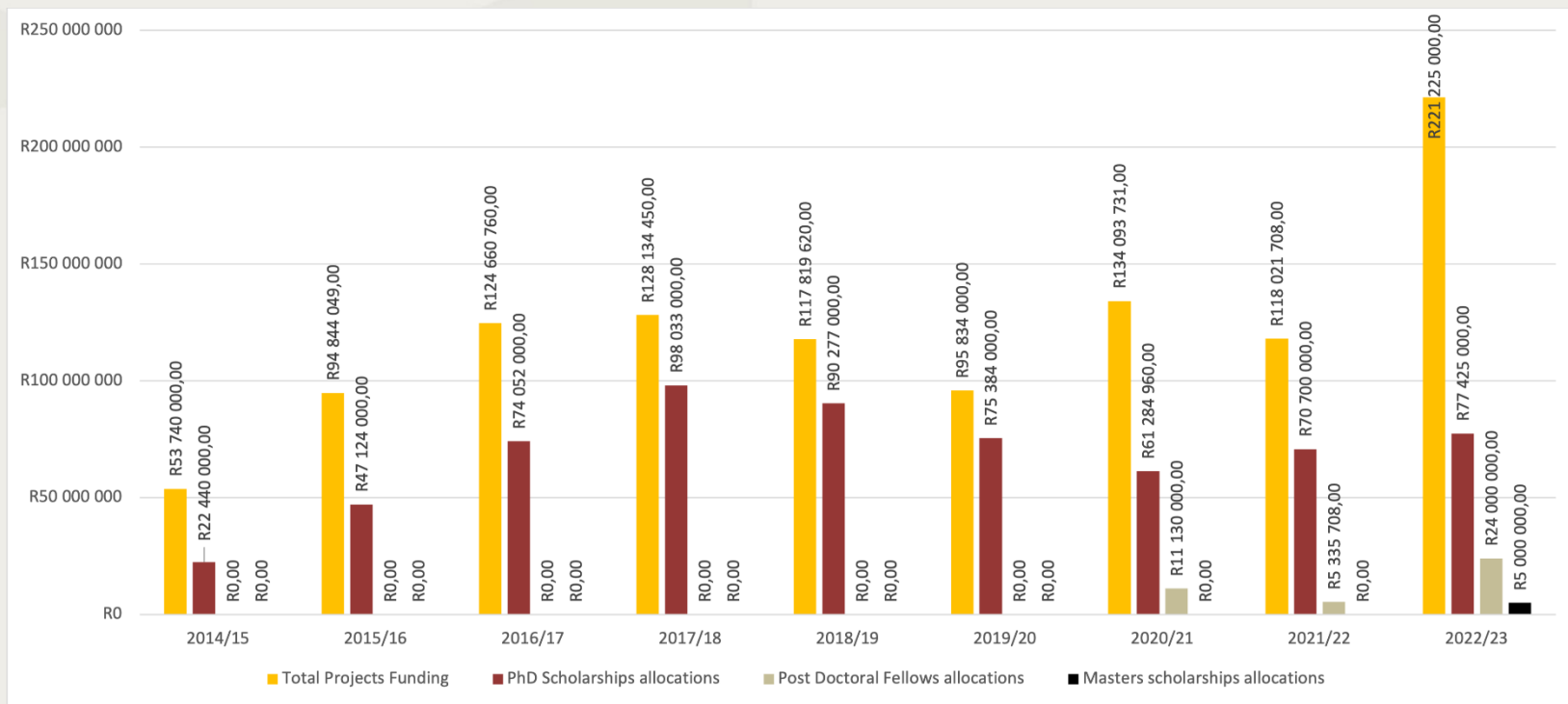


The NIHSS's operational budget is fully funded by the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology. All academic programmes are funded through designated funds from the National Skills Fund (NSF).



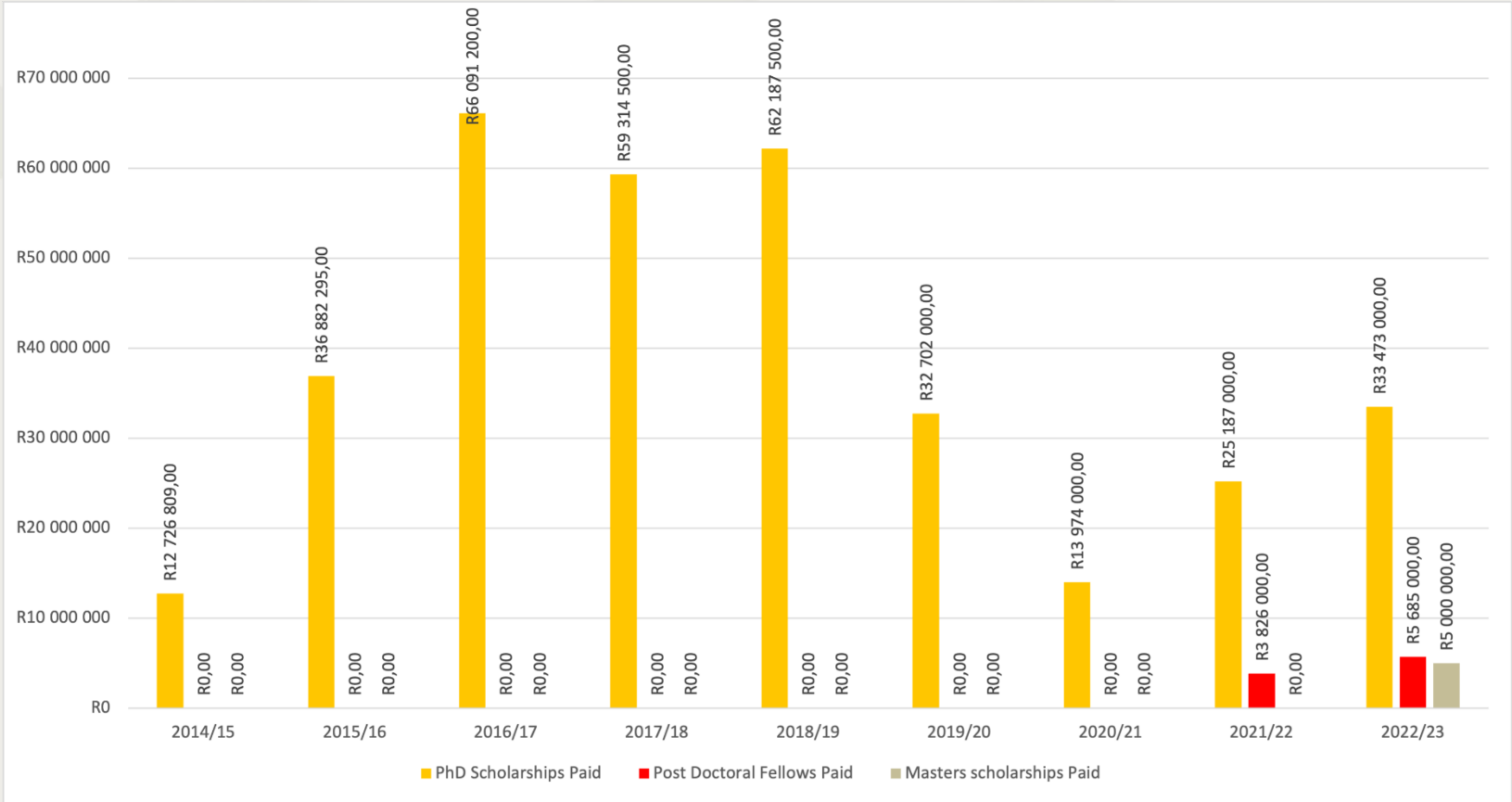
NIHSS FINANCE

FUNDING – APP FUNDING ALLOCATIONS



NIHSS FINANCE

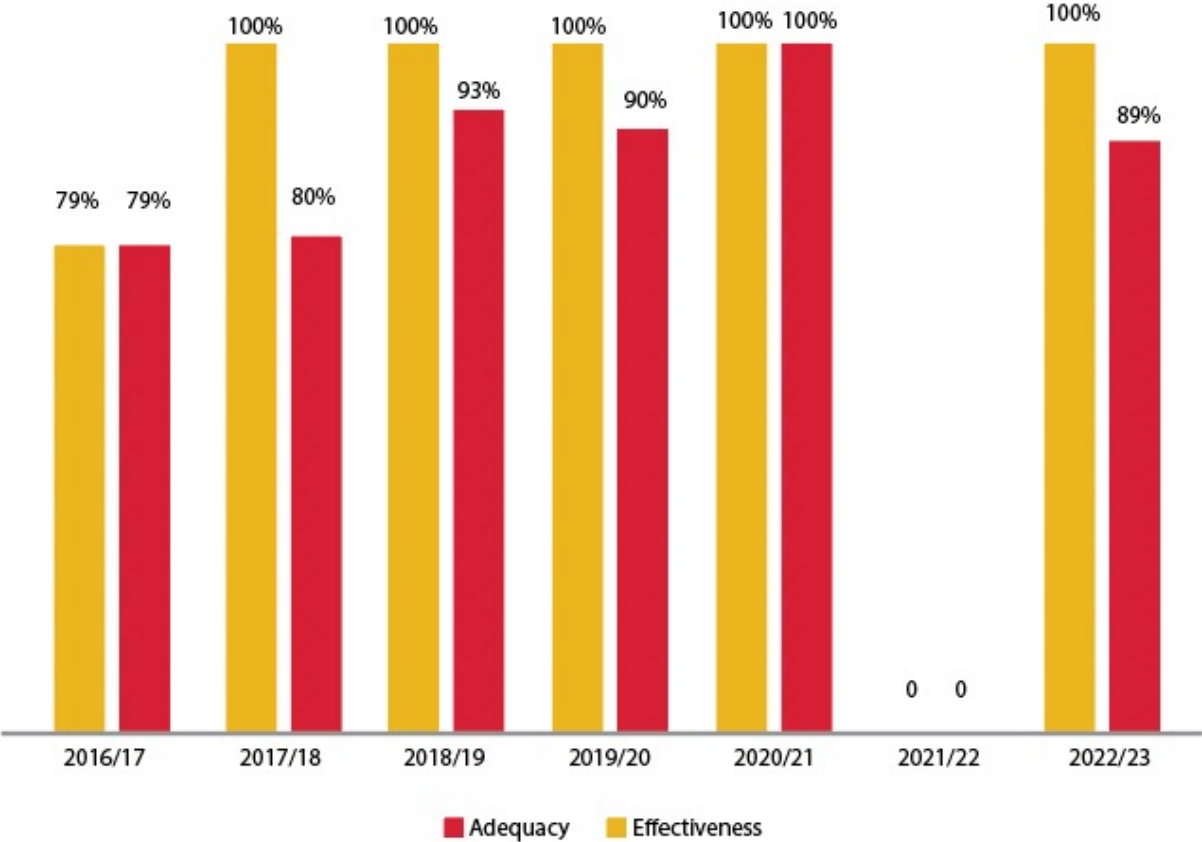
FUNDING – AMOUNTS PAID



NIHSS FINANCE – FINANCIAL HEALTH



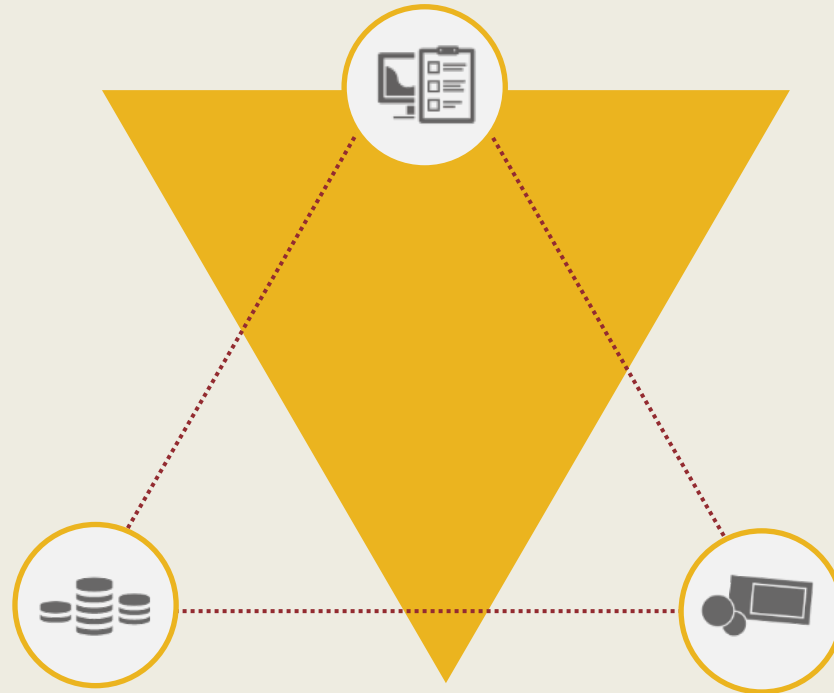
ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SCM



*Please note SCM was not audited in 2021/22.

Clean audits

2014/15:	Unqualified audit
2015/16:	Unqualified audit
2016/17:	Clean audit
2017/18:	Clean audit
2018/19:	Clean audit
2019/20:	Clean audit
2020/21:	Clean audit
2021/22:	Unqualified
2022/23:	Clean audit



Wasteful expenditure

Irregular expenditure

2018/19:	Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure = R130 477 (0.09%)	No Irregular expenditure
2019/20:	Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure = R124 791 (0.11%)	No Irregular expenditure
2020/21:	Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure = R298 661 (0.25%)	No Irregular Expenditure
2021/22:	Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure = R 329 519 (0.25%)	No Irregular Expenditure
2022/23:	Fruitless and Wasteful expenditure = R327 719 (0.23%)	No Irregular Expenditure

HIGHLIGHTS, AND CHALLENGES

TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION

- ❑ 700+ doctoral scholarships
- ❑ 50 Masters scholarships
- ❑ 94 Post-doctoral scholarships
- ❑ The NIHSS National Mentorship Programme

- ❑ **540 Doctoral Graduates**
- ❑ **58% Female Graduates**
- ❑ **74% Black Doctoral Graduates**



CHALLENGES

Sustained funding:

this remains an ongoing challenge for the Institute, despite the successes and contributions towards the higher education HSS landscape.

- Operations funding & BRICS by DHET: 2012/13- to date
- Postgraduates & Research Projects funding by NSF: 2015/16-2022/23 –
NO FUNDING in 2023/24

THANK YOU.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



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