



Call for Scholarship Applications under the TAGDev 2.0 Programme for the 2026/2027 Academic Year at The University of the Free State

Call ID: RU/2026UFS/TAGDev 2.0



1.0 Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) in partnership with Mastercard Foundation, Gulu University (Uganda), Egerton University (Kenya), Africa University (Zimbabwe), University of the Free State (South Africa), Malawi University of Science and Technology (Malawi), University of Eldoret (Kenya), Uganda Martyrs University (Uganda), University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria), University of Cape Coast (Ghana), University of Bamenda (Cameroon), National University of Agriculture (Benin), and Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique (Morocco) are implementing a 10 year programme (2023-2033) called Transforming African Agricultural Universities to Meaningfully Contribute to Africa's Growth and Development (TAGDev 2.0). The programme seeks to strengthen universities and TVET institutions to better serve communities by skilling and empowering Africa's young people and their institutions to drive inclusive, equitable and climate resilient transformation of agriculture and agrifood systems. The TAGDev 2.0 programme will support young African students that are economically disadvantaged but academically competent to access university education. The scholarship is open to both female and male applicants. However, females, refugees, internally displaced persons, and persons with disabilities are highly encouraged to apply.

2.0 Eligible Programmes

This call for Scholarships for the 2027 academic year is opened to applicants interested in and eligible to study a Master of Sustainable Agriculture at University of the Free State, South Africa.

2.1. General Admission Requirements to the University of the Free State and the specific academic Programs

Postgraduate Programmes	Minimum Requirements for admission
Master of Sustainable Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An applicable four-year (NQF level 8) agricultural qualification, applicable practical experience. • A minimum mark of 65% in the research module if applicant had a research module in the NQF level 8 qualification. • An overall average of 65% in the exit year of the relevant degree or qualification.

2.2 Appeal to potential applicants

Interested applicants are requested to visit the university website to familiarize with admission requirements for each degree Program of their interest. Follow this link: <https://apply.ufs.ac.za/Application/Start>

2.3 Contact Information

Renee Coetzee Officer
University of the Free State, South Africa Email:
coetzeer2@ufs.ac.za

3.0 Eligibility for Scholarships

3.1 Who is eligible to apply?

Scholarships are open to candidates in South Africa from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Candidates from conflict and post-conflict areas of Africa residing in South Africa are also encouraged to apply. The applicant

has to be in position to qualify for admission into

undergraduate and/or postgraduate programs at University of the Free State. All applicants should read and thoroughly understand the admission criteria for the relevant programs at University of the Free State. Students already having a scholarship of any kind are not eligible to benefit from this scholarship opportunity. Anyone with a double scholarship if found will automatically be discontinued. Beneficiaries of TAGDev scholarships are not eligible to apply.

3.2. Selection criteria

- Be a national of South Africa or a refugee resident in South Africa to benefit from the national respective scholarship quota.
- Be economically disadvantaged, from marginalized communities, and/or coming from conflict and post conflict areas in South Africa.
- Be less than 30 years for undergraduate and less than 35 years for masters' studies at the time of application.

- iv. For refugees and internally displaced persons, should have completed their studies at the previous level at most four years before.
- v. The applicant should meet admission criteria to be eligible programs in University of the Free State.
- vi. For admission into University of the Free State for the Masters' degree Program one must have attained an NQF Level 8 qualification or its equivalent.
- vii. Demonstrate interest in agriculture, agribusiness and entrepreneurship
- viii. Demonstrate leadership qualities.
- ix. Have commitment to working in agriculture and agricultural value chains.
- x. Have a strong commitment to community transformation
- xi. Female candidates are highly encouraged to apply.

3.3 What the scholarship covers

This is a full board comprehensive scholarship that covers: tuition fees, research costs, workshop and conference costs, living expenses including stipend and hostel, laptop, internship attachment, community engagement and field attachment, and entrepreneurship training. Consequently, considering the level of investment, successful applicants will be required to become high achievers, highly engaging and focused students/ graduates and change makers contributing to outreach services in the communities, capable of creating enterprises that create jobs for themselves and others and have personal satisfaction and dynamism.

3.4. Support to Refugees, Displaced Persons (RDPs) and Persons With Disabilities (PWDs)

In addition to other scholars benefits, RDPs and PWDs will receive the following support:

1. RDPs will be supported with travel documents
2. PWDs will receive assistive devices to support learning and movement during the course of studies.

3.5 Nature of the scholarship

This is a comprehensive scholarship with direct and indirect costs that will be covered by the program through the implementing university where the student will be studying. Indirect costs such as participation in the international conference will be directly covered by the RUFORUM Secretariat. The following further apply:

- i. Direct costs for student training will be transferred to the university as a grant payable to the university. The students

will receive their respective services and entitlements from the university as the implementer and where necessary from RUFORUM.

- ii. All scholarships will be on a rolling basis implying that, the scholarship will be renewed on annual basis subject to satisfactory academic performance at grade B level of University of the Free State.
- iii. Retaking more than four courses will lead to the withdrawal of the scholarship awarded to the candidate.
- iv. Applicants who may be discovered to have falsified information in order to gain advantage of the scholarship shall be disqualified on confirmation of the falsification and/or forgery.
- v. Any misconduct (breaching university rules especially examination malpractice, violence towards others) on the part of the successful applicant shall lead to automatic disqualification and loss of the scholarship.
- vi. Successful applicants will be expected to become champions and transformative leaders, entrepreneurs and change makers at various levels and shall remain communicating with RUFORUM and the Universities as part of the Program Alumni.

4.0. Application process and procedure

The application process will be in two stages. The first stage is application for admission to the Program of choice at University of the Free State submitted to University of the Free State. The second stage is application for the TAGDev scholarship submitted to RUFORUM.

To apply to University of the Free State, applicants are required to have the following:

- ID copy
- Matric or Grade 12 certificate
- NQF-level 7 degree/qualification
- NQF-level 8 degree/qualification or progress report for those still busy with it
- Motivation why scholarship should be awarded

For additional information about the scholarship at University of the Free State, please contact:

Miss. Yolisa Xatasi

Associate Programme Officer Email: xatasiy@ufs.ac.za

OR

Prof. Jan Swanepoel

TAGDev 2.0 Programme Coordinator, UFS
Email: SwanepoelJW@ufs.ac.za

The procedure for submitting the TAGDev 2.0 scholarship application through the RUFORUM Information Management System (RIMS) is as follows:

- i. Access the RIMS Web Portal through; <https://rims2.ruforum.org/>
- ii. Create your account by clicking on Register Here
- iii. An email will be sent to your valid email address to activate your account. Please check in the Spam or Junk for message incase activation mail is not reflected in your inbox.
- iv. Login using your email and password you used for creating.
- v. After successful login, the Applicant Dashboard will appear with different options.

- vi. Go to Calls – > Scholarship Calls
- vii. Select the Call ID: RU/2025UFS/TAGDev 2.0
- viii. Click Apply to start filling the Application Form.
- ix. Remember to save while filling the form by **“Clicking Save Draft”**
- x. Download, print and submit it with your application form for admission to the University.
- xi. Submit the document in hard copy or simply attach it on the university online portal.

For any assistance, kindly contact the administrator at mcf@ruforum.org

Submission Deadline: 31st May 2026