



**CALL FOR MSc SCHOLARSHIPS IN BIOSTATISTICS FOR THE 2025 ACADEMIC YEAR**  
**DELTAS AFRICA SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN CONSORTIUM FOR ADVANCED BIOSTATISTICS (SSACAB) II PROGRAMME**  
**APPLICATION DEADLINE: 30 JUNE 2024**

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Sub-Saharan African Consortium for Advanced Biostatistics (SSACAB) is a consortium of six African and two northern partner institutions, and nine collaborating institutions with the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg as the Lead Institution. SSACAB II has received funding through the Developing Excellence in Leadership, Training, and Science in Africa (DELTAS Africa) program. DELTAS Africa is an initiative of the Science for Africa Foundation (SFA) with funding support from Wellcome Trust and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). The funding aims to develop and improve biostatistical skills among researchers to create biostatistical research nodes of excellence and a network to nurture researchers with advanced skills and expertise.

The Consortium is inviting applications for full-time MSc scholarships in Biostatistics for the 2025 academic year. The financial support provided by the scholarships aims to enhance biostatistical capacity and increase the number of researchers and practitioners in Sub-Saharan Africa. Biostatistics is a growing field in Sub-Saharan Africa due to increased biomedical data for population health and research and the need for quantitative analytical skills.

**ELIGIBILITY:**

MSc scholarships are open to candidates with a strong background in Statistics, Mathematics, Demography, and other quantitative fields. Additionally, the following are also encouraged to apply:

- (1) Competent candidates from the health science fields, such as biomedical sciences, pharmacy, and medicine who may benefit from a postgraduate course in biostatistics.
- (2) Candidates who have completed their masters' coursework and require support with their research component.

Eligible applicants should have applied for a place at either the partner or collaborating institutions offering postgraduate biostatistics degree programs.

The scholarship is open to nationals of low and middle-income countries in the Sub-Saharan African region who are resident in the region as per World Bank definition: [http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#Sub Saharan Africa](http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#Sub_Saharan_Africa)

Applicants should be under 35 years of age to qualify for the MSc program.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the respective universities offering the MSc degree before applying for the fellowship.

### **THE MSc SCHOLARSHIP PACKAGE:**

The MSc scholarships will cover the following for selected fellows in the 2025 academic year:

- ✓ Tuition fees and basic medical insurance.
- ✓ A monthly stipend to cover accommodation and living expenses.
- ✓ Reasonable support for the MSc research project and supervision.
- ✓ Travel costs to and from the academic training institution and the host research institution.

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### **ADDITIONAL MSc SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION:**

- ❖ Applications must include the following documents to be submitted to the academic training institution:
  - A comprehensive curriculum vitae, including relevant research and work experience.
  - A letter of motivation explaining why the applicant wants to pursue an MSc in Biostatistics.
  - Certified copies of academic transcripts and degree certificates.
  - Evidence of acceptance or application to study Biostatistics at a partner institution in the 2025 academic year.
  - Two confidential referee reports, sent directly to the training institution.

MSc scholarships will be awarded to candidates who are likely to strengthen the SSACAB II Partner and collaborating institutions either as academic staff members or through affiliation with research institutions within the Consortium. Awarded fellows will be tracked as part of the new SSACAB II alumni to increase their visibility and monitor the impact of the program.

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### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO BE FUNDED:**

Preferably, the candidate's proposed research should fall under SSACAB II's seven key research questions:

1. How can data science, machine learning, deep learning or artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms be used to enhance personalised treatment for patients with communicable and non-communicable diseases in Africa?
2. How will the spatial and temporal occurrence and patterns of critical diseases in Africa respond to predicted climate and environmental changes, and how will this impact public health and development outcomes?

3. Can we identify the relationship between personal characteristics, environmental changes and diseases through causal modelling and structural equation modelling?
  4. How can we use observational data to assess interventions where clinical trials are unethical or to evaluate ongoing public health interventions?
  5. What methods can be used to account for missing data in health research?
  6. How can we use bioinformatics to enable laboratories to analyse their own omics data?
  7. What biostatistics methods can be used for data triangulation and synthesis of evidence?
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#### **HOW TO APPLY:**

The application process is two-fold:

1. Applicants should first apply through the University of the Witwatersrand.
  2. Separate written applications for the DELTAS Africa SSACAB II scholarship should be sent to Promise Majozi: [promise.majozi@wits.ac.za](mailto:promise.majozi@wits.ac.za) and copied to Prof. Eustasius Musenge: [eustasius.musenge@wits.ac.za](mailto:eustasius.musenge@wits.ac.za)
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