



GRANTS GUIDELINE

2025/26

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1. ACRONYMS

AA	- Accounting Authority
ABET	- Adults Basic Education and Training
AMIC	- Automobile Manufacturing Industry Certificate
APP	- Annual Performance Plan as contemplated in SETA Grant Regulation 3(7)
ARPL	- Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning
ATR	- Annual Training Report as contemplated in section 10(1)(b)(ii) of the Skills Development Act, Act No. 98 of 1998 read with regulation 4(1)
BBB-EE	- Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CBOs	- Community-based Organisations
CCMA	- Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CEO	- Chief Executive Officer
CET	- Continuing Education and Training
CETC	- Community Education and Training College
CHE	- Council for Higher Education
CLO	- Clients Liaison Officer
CSI	- Corporate Social Initiative
COO	- Chief Operations Officer
DHET	- Department of Higher Education and Training
GETCA	- General Education and Training Certificate for Adults
HEI	- Higher Education Institution
ISO	- International Organisation for Standardisation
MANCO	- Management Committee
merSETA	- Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
MoA	- Memorandum of Agreement
NASCA	- National Senior Certificate for Adults
NCV	- National Certificate Vocational
NPO	- Non-Profit Organisation
NPP	- Non-Pivotal Plan
NQF	- National Qualification Framework

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NSDMS	- National Skills Development Management System
NSDP	- National Skills Development Plan 2030
OQSF	- Occupational Qualifications Su-Framework
PIVOTAL	- Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning
PPP	- Public Private Partnership
PP	- PIVOTAL Plan
PR	- PIVOTAL Report
PSET	- Post-School Education and Training
PWDs	- People with Disabilities
QCTO	- Quality Council for Trades and Occupations established through the Skills Development Act, Act No. 97 of 1998
RAP	- Retrenchment Assistance Programme
RPL	- Recognition of Prior Learning
SANAS	- South Africa National Accredited System
SAQA	- South African Qualifications Authority as contemplated in the National Qualification Framework Act, Act No. 67 of 2008
SARS	- South African Revenue Service
SDA	- Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998, as amended)
SDF	- Skills Development Facilitator
SDLA	- Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act No. 9 of 1999, as amended)
SETA	- Sector Education and Training Authority
SMME	- Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise
SP	- Strategic Plan
SSP	- Sector Skills Plan
TERS	- Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme
TVET	- Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIF	- Unemployment Insurance Fund
VSP	- Voluntary Severance Package
WIL	- Work Integrated Learning
WSP	- Workplace Skills Plan

***Acronyms** are non-exhaustive and will be supplemented from time to time.

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2. DEFINITIONS

The definitions below are not exhaustive and may from time to time be reviewed.

Acts for the purpose of this document, specifically means the Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998, as amended), the Skills Development Levies Act (Act No. 9 of 1999, as amended), Public Finance Management Act (Act No. 1 of 1999, as amended) and related Acts and Regulations.

Adult in education and training means a person who is sixteen years (16) or older and entered post-school programmes for the purpose of lifelong learning.

Adult Education and Training (AET) means education, training and skills development for adults, including formal, non-formal and informal learning to improve knowledge and skills for personal development, further learning and/or employment.

Apprenticeship means a workplace-based learning programme culminating in an occupational qualification for a listed trade.

Artisan means a person certified as competent in a listed trade in accordance with the relevant legislation, informed by the Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998, as amended).

Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) means the principles and processes through which prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purpose of alternative access and admission for trade test certification.

Annual Training Report (ATR) means a report on the implementation of an organisation's Workplace Skills Plan (WSP), wherein it reports on the education and training interventions that were delivered in the previous year.

Blue Economy means manufacturing of tools and processes that will contribute to sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth.

Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) means an economic system structured and transformed to enable the meaningful participation of the majority of its citizens and to further create capacity within the broader economic landscape at all levels through skills development, employment equity, socio economic development, preferential procurement, enterprise development, especially small and medium enterprises, promoting the entry of black entrepreneurs into the mainstream of economic activity, and the advancement of co-operatives.

B-BBEE Certificate means a certificate that is issued by a South Africa National Accreditation System (SANAS) accredited B-BBEE verification agency at the end of

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the verification process, summarising the results of the verification. The certificate includes indicators such as the size of the entity, the level of black ownership and its overall B-BBEE status or non-compliance. The certificate is valid for a year and is renewed annually based on evidence submitted for B-BBEE verification.

B-BBEE Sworn Affidavit means a legal instrument that can be used by exempt micro enterprises and qualifying small enterprises in place of a B-BBEE certificate.

Bursaries means study grants for students to enrol at continuing education and training colleges or higher education and training institutions on programmes relevant to the priority skills required in the manufacturing and engineering sector.

Bursary Scheme means financial sponsorship of studies for qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Circular Economy means an economic model that minimises resource inputs and waste generation in the mer-industry.

Community Education and Training College means a college established under the Continuing Education and Training Act (Act No. 16 of 2006, previously titled “Further Education and Training Act”, providing education and training programmes on a full, part time or distance learning basis that are aligned or lead to qualifications or part qualifications registered on level 1 to 4 of the NQF, which qualifications are quality managed by Umalusi.

Commitment means a contractual obligation which exists at the end of the financial year that will oblige the SETA to make a payment or payments in the future.

Contractual Agreement means an agreement (written) with specific terms between the SETA and a third party whereby the third party undertakes to perform something in relation to a discretionary project for which the SETA will be obliged to make payment against the discretionary grants.

Continuing Education and Training College means a public or private college established under the Continuing Education and Training Act (Act No. 16 of 2006) as amended. Public colleges are established as technical and vocational education and training colleges or community education and training college by the Minister of Higher Education and Training. Private colleges are declared and registered (or provisionally registered) as colleges having first been incorporated or recognised as a company in terms of the Companies Act (Act No. 71 of 2008) (“Companies Act”). Public and private

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colleges offer on a full or part time or distance learning basis continuing education and training programmes.

Continuing Education and Training (CET) means all learning and training programmes aligned to or leading to qualifications or part qualifications registered on level 1 to 4 of the NQF, provided at public or private continuing education and training colleges.

Co-operatives means forms of ownership registered in terms of the Co-operatives Act (Act No. 14 of 2005, as amended) and, for the purpose of this Policy, involved in skills development activities that are within or for the merSETA sector.

Credits means the amount of learning contained in a qualification or part-qualification whereby one (1) credit is equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning.

Critical Skills means skills and knowledge within an occupation that are required for the work/job tasks and activities of an occupation.

Corporate Social Initiative means a development project within a community or for a community that is not core to Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) but related to education or training, and in which merSETA may invest to create long term benefits that will improve the socio-economic well-being of grant beneficiaries.

Discretionary Grants means money allocated within a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) to be spent on discretionary grants and projects contemplated in regulation 3(2)(c) to (9) as read with regulation 6.

Employers (and companies bear the same meaning) means companies that are registered in terms of Companies Act. Employers include levy paying and non-levy paying companies as defined and described in the Grant Regulations of 3 December 2012.

Employer Associations means a body of employers, usually from the same sector of the economy, associated to further the interests of member companies such as conducting negotiations with trade unions, providing advice and/or making representations to other bodies.

Employee Skills Development Facilitator means a representative from a company where there is no recognition agreement, representing the workplace and appointed by the employees to serve on the training committee and signs off on the mandatory grants submissions.

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Entity/Organisation means a body that is legally established in terms of relevant establishment laws such as the Companies Act, various education legislation, Non-Profit Organisation Act (Act No. 71 of 1997), Public Service Act (Act No. 103 of 1994) (“Public Service Act”) and the Constitution of the Republic (“Constitution”) of South Africa 1996.

Funding Window means a public call made through open media platforms and publications for applications for mandatory and discretionary grants in accordance with the merSETA Grants Policy and related Grants Criteria and Guideline.

Full Funding Scheme means financial sponsorship of studies to the maximum amount of the bursary funding.

Government Departments and Public Entities means national, provincial and local government departments and public entities established in terms of the Public Service Act, Municipal Acts and the Constitution, governed by the Public Finance Management Act (Act No. 1 of 1999) and Municipal Finance Management Act (Act No. 56 of 2003) and participate in skills development related interventions within or for the merSETA sector.

Green Economy means manufacturing in a manner that reduces the number of natural resources needed to produce finished goods through more energy and materials-efficient manufacturing processes.

Gold Category means the merSETA levy-paying entity categories for companies that are up to date with levies, having received mandatory grants payments and have an average pass rate of **60%** (sixty per cent) in the implementation of learning interventions.

Institutional and Sectoral Research means research commissioned by the SETA on any aspect of the administration or management of the SETA, as well as research into sectoral supply and demand.

Silver Category means the merSETA levy-paying entity categories for companies that have limited participation in the skills development interventions of the merSETA or never worked with the merSETA.

Platinum Category means the merSETA levy-paying entity categories for companies, up to date with levies, having received mandatory grants payments for at least three years, and have an average pass rate of **80%** (eighty percent) and

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placement rate of **70%** (seventy percent) in the implementation of learning programmes, including apprenticeships.

Higher Education Institution means a public or private institution established in terms of the Higher Education Amendment Act (Act No. 9 of 2016) that provides higher education on a full-time, part-time or distance basis and may be a university, university college or higher education college as defined by the Act. Private higher education institutions must be first incorporated or recognised in terms of the Companies Act to be established and registered.

Intervention (and initiative has same meaning) means an activity or combination of activities implemented to address the mandate and strategy of the merSETA. Interventions include but not limited to research, planning, evaluation, innovation, learning programmes, quality assurance of learning, strategic programmes projects and partnerships.

Industry 4.0 means the digitalisation of mer-industries which involves the use of digital tools and the impact on business processes, the organisation of work and the occupational profile of our mer-sector labour market.

International Partners mean entities, which include, but are not limited to international development agencies, international learning, and research institutions, legally constituted in their country of origin.

Labour Organisations means an organisation, agency, committee or group that represents the interests of employees by participating in activities such as conducting negotiations with employers, providing advice or making representations to other bodies.

Learnership means a workplace-based learning programme culminating in an occupational qualification.

Learning Programme for the purpose of this document means (i) a structured and purposeful set of learning experiences that lead to a qualification or part-qualification, knowledge, skills and competencies. This may include learnerships, apprenticeships, skills programmes and any other prescribed programme that include a structured work experience component; (ii) Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning, bursary supported learning programmes, Adult Education and Training programmes, academic skills programmes, skills set, credit bearing or non-credit bearing short courses, student

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internships A, B and C, individual modules for Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) part or full qualifications.

Legislation for the purpose of this document means the Skill Development Act (SDA), Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA), Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and related Acts and Regulations.

Labour Skills Development Facilitator means a representative from organised labour, where a recognition agreement has been signed between business and labour, representing the workplace, and appointed by a recognised trade union, to serve on the training committee and signs-off on the mandatory grants submission. This is applicable to companies where recognition agreements exist, regardless of the number of employees.

Labour Representative means the representative of the labour constituency within the workplace.

Levy Income means the total amount of money received by the SETA in terms of section 7(1) and 8(2)(a) as read with 8(3)(b) of the Skills Development Levies Act.

Levy Paying Employer means an employer who is compelled to pay skills development levies in terms of section 3(1) of the Skills Development Act.

Management Committee means the merSETA committee chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), comprising senior members appointed in terms of Treasury Regulation 24.1 and responsible for decision-making in relation to the approved Delegation of Authority Framework of the merSETA.

Mandatory Grants means funds designated as mandatory as contemplated in Regulation 4 of the Grant Regulations, to fund education and training programmes as contained in the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) and Annual Training Reports (ATR) of levy paying companies.

Memorandum of Agreement means a legal agreement concluded between two (2) or more parties for the execution of agreed learning programmes and project objectives, setting out the terms and conditions of the agreement. Counterparties in this type of agreement may be those contemplated in Sections 6 (7) and (10) (a) to (d) of the Grants Regulations.

Means Test means an assessment that shall be conducted to determine whether an individual is eligible for bursary allocation, based upon family/household's combined annual income.

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merSETA Permanent Employee's Child means legal dependant or biological child or adoptive child doing studies in the Post School Education and Training (PSET) institutions.

Missing Middle Category means family/household with income between R350,000.00 and R700,000.00.

NGOs, CBOs, NPOs, NPCs means civil society organisations focused on public benefit and community development, whose core activities are related to education, training and skills development and, or services and goods linked to the merSETA industries' value chain, and must be registered under the laws governing the registration of such entities, including the Companies Act, NPO Act and Income Tax Act. The entities may also be registered with the Department of Social Development.

Non-Credit Bearing Short Course means a short learning programme where credits are not awarded. Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses may be funded through mandatory grants or discretionary grants non-PIVOTAL programmes.

Non-PIVOTAL Programmes means (i) credit and non-credit bearing programmes not leading to qualifications or part qualifications but must still address the key objectives and priorities of the merSETA; (ii) project initiatives that include but are not limited to research, evaluation, innovation projects and other non-learning programmes core to the achievement of the merSETA mandate and strategy.

Notional hours of learning means the agreed estimate of the learning time that it would take an average learner to meet the defined outcomes. It includes consideration of contact time, research, completion of assignments, time spent in structured learning in the workplace, individual learning, group work, projects and others. Ten (10) notional hours equate to one (1) credit.

Other Legal Entities means legal persons or organisations, duly registered, inclusive of co-operatives, civil society organisations, non-profit organisations, international organisations, as well as public entities, public education and training institutions and recognised trade unions, eligible to receive discretionary grants funding in terms of Section 6(7) and Section 6(10) of the Grant Regulations (Government Gazette No. 35940).

Payment Claim Form means a form with a list of MoA deliverables achieved, with a statement of the sum due.

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Partial Funding Scheme means financial sponsorship of studies to a partial amount of the bursary funding.

Partnerships means contractual arrangements between one (1) or more parties where the parties agree to a common education, training and/or skills development purpose, aligned to national and sector specific strategic imperatives.

Part Qualification means an assessed unit of learning that is registered on the NQF as a part qualification.

PIVOTAL Programmes means Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning programmes leading to qualifications or part qualifications registered on the NQF. PIVOTAL programmes may include internships or professional programmes that culminate in SAQA recognised designations.

Post School Education means universities, universities of technology, TVET and community colleges involved in skill development activities within and for the merSETA sector. The skills development activities may include research or providing direct skills development support in rural and other prioritised socio-economic contexts.

Private Education and Training Providers means non-public providers or private education and training institutions registered as private higher education institutions or continuing education and training colleges or skills development providers established by private sector companies or employer associations. Private education and training providers and skills development providers must be compliant in terms of legislative requirements and registration for the purpose of participation in learning and skills development interventions pertaining to relevant policies of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Council for Higher Education (CHE), Umalusi, QCTO and the merSETA.

Public Education and Training Institutions means Public Higher Education Institutions as defined in the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) and a public college as defined in the Further Education and Training Act, 2006 (Act No. 16 of 2006).

Programmes means strategic imperatives consisting of one or more projects or partnerships related to strategic imperatives in the merSETA's Strategic Plan (SP) and Annual Performance Plan (APP).

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Projects means non-routine, temporary undertakings with defined strategically aligned scope of work, a clear start and end point and time-bound deliverables to achieve a unique goal within a defined deliverable schedule, inclusive of activities, reporting and, monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Project Costs means costs payable for an approved project funded through a discretionary grant.

Retrenchment Assistance Programme means a training programme for persons who have been retrenched or in the process of being retrenched (both voluntarily and under duress) or have opted for a Voluntary Severance Package (VSP) from April 2007, who are eligible for training assistance.

Public/Private Partnerships means a transaction between an institution of the state and private sector party.

Qualification means a national qualification registered on the NQF.

Recognition of Prior Learning means the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of a person are made visible, mediated and assessed for the purpose of alternative access and admission, recognition and certification, or further learning and development (SAQA 2013: National Policy for the Implementation of RPL and Government Gazette 42319 of 19 March 2019).

Research Institutes means, for the purpose of this document, institutes involved in research initiatives related to the merSETA sector.

Scarce Skills means occupations identified through sector-related research and labour market analysis as in demand, but for which there is inadequate supply of appropriately qualified people.

Sign-off means a signed agreement between an employer and a recognised trade union(s) about the identified skills development interventions referred to in the grant applications. A sign-off could be an electronic sign-off. This applies to enterprises or companies where a recognition agreement exists with trade unions or alternatively, employee representatives in companies who employ fifty (50) or more people and do not have a recognition agreement with trade unions.

Skills Development Providers means a legal entity accredited by the QCTO to offer occupational qualifications or part-qualifications registered on the Occupation Qualification Sub Frame (OQSF).

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Skills Programmes means an accredited learning programme that is occupationally based and which, when completed, may constitute credits towards a qualification registered on the NQF, as informed by the Skills Development Act (Act No. 97 of 1998, as amended).

Skill Sets means a clustered range of skills required by a qualified person or a person already doing a task or job for the purpose of trans-skilling, re-skilling, or up-skilling in relation to industry needs and is linked to more than one NQF qualification according to the National Qualification Framework Act (Act No. 67 of 2008).

Social Partners means, in terms of skills development legislation, organised employers, organised labour, government, community and professionals brought together to cooperate in working relationships to achieve mutually agreed upon goals to the equitable benefit of all social partners.

Sponsorship means provision of resources (money, people or equipment) by the merSETA (sponsor) directly to a sponsored entity (education institution, career expos, corporate social investment project) to enable the sponsored partner to pursue some activity in return for certain sponsorship rights (to be included in a sponsorship agreement) contemplated in terms of the merSETA marketing and communication strategy.

Strategic Projects means interventions that are intended to address strategic priorities of the merSETA, which include national or industry imperatives, as encapsulated in the merSETA SP and APP.

Strategy means the integrated planned presentation of merSETA strategic imperatives and obligations encapsulated in the Sector Skills Plan, Five (5) Year Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan and the DHET Service Level Agreement. The Accounting Authority (AA) is the custodian of the merSETA strategy, providing oversight and monitoring its implementation.

Structured Workplace Learning means the component of learning in an occupational qualification, an internship or work placement for professional designation whereby a learner is mentored by a qualified, and where required, registered mentor in the application and integration of the knowledge and practical skills learnt, under supervision, in the actual context of a workplace in accordance with the prescripts set by the relevant qualification authority or professional body.

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Student Internship - Category A (Formerly Experiential Learning, P1 and P2)

means a period of workplace-based learning undertaken as part of the requirement for a Diploma, National Diploma, Higher Certificate or Advanced Certificate, as stipulated in the Higher Education Qualifications sub-framework of the NQF managed by the Council on Higher Education and South African Qualification Authority (SAQA).

Student Internship - Category B means a period of workplace-based learning undertaken as part of the requirement for a professional designation, and candidacy in the merSETA means the same.

Student Internship - Category C means a period of workplace-based learning undertaken as part of the requirement for the Occupational Qualifications of the Trade and Occupations Sub Framework of the NQF managed by QCTO and the SAQA.

Tax Clearance Certificate means a document issued by the South African Revenue Services (SARS) confirming that an applicant's tax affairs are in order.

Training Committee means an established committee for the purpose of active participation in skills development learning programmes in companies for both the companies that have a recognition agreement with trade unions or those that employ 50 (fifty) or more employees and do not have a recognition agreement with trade unions.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training College means a college established under the Continuing Education and Training Act No 16 of 2006, providing education and training programmes that lead to qualifications or part qualifications registered on level two (2) to four (4) of the NQF, which are quality managed by Umalusi. TVET colleges may be accredited by the QCTO as skills development providers to provide programmes leading to occupational qualifications of the Trades and OQSF of the NQF as well as programmes at level five (5) of the Higher Education Sub-Framework of the NQF under a certification agreement with a higher education and training institution.

Temporary Employer/ Employee Relief Scheme means an Unemployment Insurance Fund scheme to provide relief of a worker or group on temporary suspension of work of a worker or group of workers that is used for training purposes. The layoff depends on an agreement between an employer and a trade union on behalf of workers, or in the absence of a trade union, between an employer and

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individual workers, who may otherwise be subject to dismissal for operational requirements.

Trade-Related Learnerships towards fully qualified artisan status means the completion of NQF Levels two (2) to four (4) trade-related learnerships and subsequently obtaining a trade test certificate through the ARPL process.

Verification for the purpose of this document means the process of ensuring that all eligible organisations applying for mandatory and discretionary grants meet the requirements for the awarding of grants.

Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) means a strategic document that articulates how an employer intends to address the training and development needs in the workplace during a forthcoming year.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) means an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns, which culminates in a qualification or part qualification and can include practical, professional practice, internships, workplace experience, industry-based learning, cooperative education, service learning, real work learning, placements, experiential learning and clinical placements.

** All terminology not defined above shall bear the same meaning as in the applicable legislation.*

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3. PURPOSE

- 3.1 The purpose of the merSETA Grants Criteria and Guideline is to set out conditions, rules and standards for:
 - 3.1.1 The management of grants to include the application, verification, evaluation, awarding and implementation of Mandatory Grants (MG) and Discretionary Grants (DG) funds.
 - 3.1.2 Grants allocation for Projects addressing the Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) and non-PIVOTAL programmes.
 - 3.1.3 Evidence milestones required in the delivery of committed funds through Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs).

4. PRINCIPLES OF GUIDELINE

- 4.1 **Transparency:** The merSETA conducts grants funding processes in a manner that is honest and open, ensuring access to information whilst guided by the laws of the Republic of South Africa.
- 4.2 **Accountability:** The merSETA conducts grants funding processes in a manner that demonstrates its obligation to responding to the needs of its stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- 4.3 **Inclusivity:** The merSETA supports structural economic transformation that promotes an inclusive growth agenda, transformation in terms of control and ownership, and demographic transformation of the labour market with respect to issues such as race, gender, differently abled people, youth, as well as township and rural communities.
- 4.4 **Ethics:** The merSETA conducts grants funding processes in manner that is professional, unbiased, fair and equitable, and recognises the diversity and dignity of its stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- 4.5 **Conflict of Interest:** The merSETA conducts grants funding processes in a manner that promotes the interests and needs of its stakeholders and beneficiaries through best practice governance oversight and monitoring, and requires declaration of conflict of interest from DG applicants.
- 4.6 **Due Diligence:** The merSETA is accountable for the efficient, effective and responsible allocation and utilisation of levy grants which are public funds. The merSETA therefore applies the due diligence principle in the management of levy

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grants and the way they are allocated and used for the needs and services of its Grant Policy beneficiaries.

5. DISCRETIONARY APPLICATION AND AWARD

5.1 Application for merSETA Discretionary Grants

- 5.1.1 The merSETA will open dedicated funding window(s) for DG and MG applications.
- 5.1.2 Applications for Discretionary Grant funding are submitted following an official notice from the merSETA, published in public platforms, which may include newspapers, the merSETA website (www.merseta.org.za) and merSETA social media platforms (@mersetasocial). The application notice determines the application submission method as well as submission deadline. Any application that does not comply with the application notice will automatically be disqualified.
- 5.1.3 Discretionary Grant applications, without exception, will be subjected to a verification, an evaluation and an approval process within set time limits.
- 5.1.4 Unless stated in the Discretionary Grant advert, all DG applications will be received through the National Skills Development Management System (NSDMS). No application will be accepted through any other means other than the modality stipulated in the advertisement notice.
- 5.1.5 Applicants are encouraged to align their applications to the priority areas of the merSETA Sector Skills Plan and indicators as outlined in the merSETA Annual Performance Plan obtainable from the merSETA website (www.merseta.org.za), as well as to any other strategic priority initiatives identified in the merSETA advertised notices and guidelines.
- 5.1.6 The merSETA may also initiate international partnerships for the benefit of the local industry.
- 5.1.7 Applicants must complete a declaration of conflict of interest and or close relationship with any employee of the merSETA.

5.2 Discretionary Grants Allocation

- 5.2.1 Discretionary Grants are allocated at the sole discretion of the merSETA.
- 5.2.2 Learning programmes, funded through the MG process, shall not be funded from DG.
- 5.2.3 Discretionary Grants allocation will be in line with the Grant Policy and availability of funds.

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- 5.2.4 Discretionary Grants allocation for levy-paying companies will be aligned to a determined percentage of the levy contribution of the applying entity. (See more details in company categories section).
- 5.2.5 Additional funding could be considered, over and above the funding referenced in 5.2.4 clause above, provided the request is aligned to merSETA priorities and availability of funds.

6. PRIORITY LEARNING PROGRAMMES

- 6.1 The merSETA's grants funding targets pertaining to Projects addressing PIVOTAL, Non-PIVOTAL interventions (initiatives) are aligned to merSETA strategic priorities, as identified in the Sector Skill Plan (SSP), SP, APP and National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030 outcomes.
- 6.2 PIVOTAL programmes include: learnerships, apprenticeships, bursaries, skills programmes, skills set, Individual modules (occupational certificates), part qualification (QCTO) modularised qualification, graduate internships, TVET colleges, universities of technology and universities and student internships (Categories A, B and C).
- 6.3 Entities eligible to apply for Discretionary Grant funding to undertake PIVOTAL programmes include but are not limited to: Employer companies, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Non-profit Organisations (NPOs), Community-based Organisations (CBOs), Non-profit Companies (NPCs), Public Education and Training Institutions, Government partnership and public entities.
- 6.4 The application notice determines the application submission method as well as submission deadline. Any application that does not comply with the application notice will automatically be disqualified.
- 6.5 Applications for funding of bursaries for unemployed learners may be allocated to entities that will manage the bursary programme, including selection according to means test, support student during the learning and fulfil the merSETA reporting requirements.
- 6.6 Permanent merSETA employees' children bursary towards accredited, registered part qualification, and full qualification will be managed and reported by the merSETA.

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7. DISCRETIONARY GRANTS VALUES PER LEARNING PROGRAMME

7.1 PIVOTAL Learning Programmes

The table below indicates grant values for PIVOTAL learning programmes as defined.

PIVOTAL PROGRAMMES	ESTIMATED VALUE
NQF Level 2 to 4 Learnerships Ending in a Trade Test: trade-related learnerships where a learner will move to the next level of a learnership if competent. If a learner is declared competent on Level 4, they will undertake the relevant trade test. Note: Unit Standard based qualifications are being phased out – Last date of enrolment is 30 June 2024	R206,290.00 up to the value of 49.5% of levy contributed payable in tranches for the duration of the training programme per learner until successful completion of the trade test. Should a learner not undertake a trade test the value of R 2, 773 will be deducted from the final tranche payment. <u>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</u> R20,625.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration)
QCTO Modularised Qualification Certificates (Occupational Certificate – Full Qualification) Learnership Level 1 Learnership Level 2 Learnership Level 3 Learnership Level 4 or higher	R45,834.00 payable in tranches for the duration of a training programme per learner until successful completion. R56,838.00 payable in tranches for the duration of a training programme per learner until successful completion. R67,839.00 payable in tranches for the duration of a training programme per learner until successful completion. R206,290.00 up to the value of 49.5% of levy contributed payable in tranches for the duration of a training programme per learner. This grant value is applicable if credits are over 540. If less than 540 credits, the grant value is R78 840, 00.
Apprenticeships	R206,290.00 up to the value of 49.5% of levy contributed payable in tranches for the duration of a training programme per learner until successful completion of the trade test. <u>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</u> R20,625.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration)

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PIVOTAL PROGRAMMES	ESTIMATED VALUE
Learnerships (Historical registered qualifications unit standard-based) Note: Unit Standard based qualifications are being phased out – Last date of enrolment 30 June 2024.	R23,835.21 per learner per level plus additional learner allowances. NQF L1 = R45,834.00 NQF L2 = R56 838,00 NQF L3 = R67,839.00 NQF L4 or higher = R78,840.00 <u>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</u> R6,875.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration).
Graduate Internship	Basic grant to company: R96,250.00 per annum per learner.
Candidacy (student internship category B)	Maximum grant of R288,750.00 for a three-year period (R96,250.00 per annum).
Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) at ABET Level 4, as well as the National Senior Certificate for Adults at NQF Level 4	Basic grant to company (Minimum of two subjects): up to a maximum of R3,300.00.
Bursaries at Higher Education and Training Institutions for permanently appointed employees at merSETA member companies for programmes that are 6 months or more	Basic grant: R26,125.00.
Bursaries at TVET Colleges for permanently appointed employees at merSETA member companies	Maximum grant of R26,125.00 per learner. Actual payment will depend on the specific invoice amount of the TVET college.
Bursaries for the unemployed learners studying at PSET institutions	Maximum bursary grant of R180,000.00 for full bursary, and R110,000.00 for partial bursary. (Include but not limited to: Tuition fee, textbooks fee, laptop and student accommodation).
Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	R35 000.00 Employed Candidates (total grant including pre-assessment, gap training and trade testing, where applicable).

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Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	R55 000.00 Unemployed Candidates (total grant including pre-assessment, gap training and trade testing, where applicable).
QCTO Modularised Qualification Certificates (Part Qualifications)	<p>R199,00 per credit per Part Qualification up to 119 credits plus additional learner allowances.</p> <p>NQF L1 (Learner allowances) = R183 per credit</p> <p>NQF L2 (Learner allowance) = R275 per credit</p> <p>NQF L3 (Learner allowance) = R367 per credit</p> <p>NQF L4 or higher (Learner allowance) = R458 per credit</p> <p><u><i>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</i></u> R4,583.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration).</p>
Skills Programmes	<p>R385.00 per credit per skills programme (One learner can do multiple skills programmes up to 80 credits. The grant value will be capped at the maximum of 80 credits).</p> <p>Where learners have undertaken skills programmes, which consists of less than 80 credits, the credits remaining, based on the maximum of 80 credits can be allocated to awarded skills programme learners, within the signed MoA. The grant is made up of R199.63 per credit for training and R185.37 per credit for a learner allowance.</p> <p><u><i>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</i></u> R4,583.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration).</p>
Skills Sets	<p>R385.00 per credit (only one programme per learner will be awarded. The grant value will be capped at the maximum of 80 credits for skills sets).</p> <p>Where learners have undertaken Skills Set which consists of less than 80 credits, the credits remaining, based on the maximum of 80 credits can be allocated to awarded Skills Set learners within the signed MoA, where the Skills Sets consist of more than 80 credits.</p>

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	<p>The grant is made up of R199.63 per credit for training and R185.37 per credit for a learner allowance.</p> <p><u><i>Bonus grants for people with disabilities</i></u> R4,583.00 per learner (proof to be submitted on registration).</p>
Student Internship - Category A (formerly Experiential Learning, P1 and P2)	Basic grants to companies of R44 000.00 per learner per semester (a semester is a –six-month period). Where a learner has been placed to complete P1 and P2, such learner will be allocated a grant of R88,000.00.
Internship for National Diploma	Basic grants to companies of R96,250.00 per learner for the practical exposure for a minimum of 18 and maximum of 24-month period.
Credit Bearing Short Courses	R196,00 per credit (one learner can do multiple short courses up to a maximum of 119 credits).
Project management fee will be allocated at the discretion of the merSETA and will be calculated at 7.5% or less the total award.	

7.2 NON-PIVOTAL Programme Initiatives

The table below provides examples of the types of initiatives that may fall within the category of NON-PIVOTAL programmes. The listed initiatives are not exhaustive. Applicants must take note that other programmes may be identified in DG funding window notices (adverts) sent out to invite DG applications.

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NON-PIVOTAL PROGRAMME INITIATIVES	DESCRIPTION OF NON-PIVOTAL INTERVENTIONS
Lecturer Development	Learning programmes intended at promoting the growth of public TVET colleges by exposing TVET college lecturers to workplace experience.
Adult Education and Training (AET), previously known as Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET), at ABET Levels 1 to 3	Learning programmes addressing the low level of youth and adult language, numeracy and other employability skills. The learning programmes may include an ABET or AET or Foundational Learning Certificate (FLC) or short courses.
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise Development	Learning programmes to support and encourage the development of small and micro enterprises. The support may include funding/ training/workshops/ short skills/ mentorship/ incubation/ online training.
Co-operatives, CBOs, NGOs, NPCs, NPOs	Learning programmes to support and encourage skills development for co-operatives and CBO/NGOs. The support may include funding/ training/ workshops/ short skills/ mentorship/ incubation/ online training.
Skills/Occupations for Green or Circular Activities within or for Mer Industries	Developing skills for green or circular economy-related occupations or production or for establishing sustainable “green” values and activities through skills programmes, skill sets or part qualifications or full qualifications.
Worker Education and Training	Trade Unions in the merSETA sector, for the benefit of educating and developing their members on skills development programmes, which form part of their duties as worker representatives.
Innovation and Research Programmes and Projects	Programmes may include curriculum research and programme/ qualification development projects and pilot projects for transforming/ emerging/ new occupations in demand.
Non-Credit Bearing Programmes	Non-credit bearing training will be funded as Non-PIVOTAL programmes for R1 228, 00 per day for training including a stipend for a maximum of 10 days for the unemployed.
CET and TVET Colleges Infrastructure Development	Community Education and Training (CET), and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college funded for merSETA occupational programmes, equipment and workshop infrastructure.

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Anti Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment Programmes	Gender-based violence programmes will be funded through proposal submissions with a proposed budget. This grant is available for employers to implement GBV programmes in their workplace.
Career Advice and Guidance Programmes	Career advice and guidance related projects include but not limited to initiatives such as conferences/ workshops/ seminars, sponsorship requests, career awareness and advocacy expos/ exhibitions/ events/ publications, and career advice and guidance capacity building/ training projects that enhance awareness of the merSETA services, products and influence positive uptake of the merSETA programmes to target audiences. Initiatives linked to career programmes may also include raising knowledge of current, emerging, transforming and future occupations and skills for both merSETA internal and external stakeholders influencing continuous services and products delivery required of the merSETA mandate and functions.
Current and Future Skills	Programmes needed for development in technological advancement and digitalisation (4 th Industrial Revolution).
Support the Imperatives Contained within Job Summit Agreements	Programmes which include temporary employee and employer relief scheme through delivery of flexible programmes that ensure that young people are suitably prepared and skilled to fill every entry level role, particularly where companies need to scale their operations. These may include inter alia work readiness programmes, short courses (accredited or non-accredited) that allow candidates to respond to changing economy.
Rural Development Programmes Targeting Women, Youth and People with Disabilities	Programmes which support the implementation of rural development programmes for women, youth, and people with disabilities.
Revitalisation of Rural/ Township Local Economy	Support the revitalisation of rural and townships to uplift local economy through skills development.

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8. CATEGORIES OF COMPANIES AND ESTIMATED ALLOCATION

8.1 This section only applies to the allocation of Discretionary Grants funding to employer companies. The merSETA has three (3) employer categories: Platinum, Gold and Silver companies.

COMPANY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	ESTIMATED GRANT ALLOCATION CONSIDERATIONS
Platinum	<p>It is important to note that an active training committee must be in place if the employer has 50 or more employees and where there is a recognised trade union or unions, they must form part of the training committee.</p> <p>Have a progress or placement average of 70%.</p>	<p>Platinum companies will be given priority over other categories for DG allocation in line with the APP and strategic priorities of the merSETA.</p> <p>Where 49.5% levies contributed are below R825 160.00, a R825 160.00 fully funded will be granted. A higher allocation will be considered on condition that the company has the necessary capacity to implement the priority skills.</p>

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COMPANY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	ESTIMATED GRANT ALLOCATION CONSIDERATIONS
Gold	<p>Must be a merSETA levy-paying company.</p> <p>Levies up to date.</p> <p>Minimum 2-year training track record.</p> <p>Progress/ placement average of 60%.</p>	<p>Gold companies will be given priority over the silver category for DG allocation in line with the APP and strategic priorities of the merSETA.</p> <p>Where 49.5% levies contributed are below R825 160.00, a R825 160.00 fully funded will be granted. A higher allocation will be considered on condition that the company has the necessary capacity to implement the priority skills.</p>

COMPANY CATEGORY	CRITERIA	ESTIMATED GRANT ALLOCATION CONSIDERATIONS
Silver	<p>Limited exposure to skills development.</p> <p>Have never worked with the merSETA before.</p> <p>To include non-levy paying companies.</p>	<p>Silver companies will be considered for DG allocation should there be a short fall of target achievements in line with the APP and strategic priorities of merSETA.</p> <p>Where 49.5% levies contributed are below R825 160.00, a R825 160.00 fully funded will be granted. Where there is no levy contribution, R825 160.00 fully funded will be granted. A higher allocation will be considered on condition that the company has the necessary capacity to implement the priority skills.</p>

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9. ENTITIES ELIGIBLE FOR DISCRETIONARY GRANT

- 9.1 Public and private entities within the manufacturing, engineering and related services sector are eligible for Discretionary Grants funding. The eligible entities include but not limited to:
- 9.1.1 Public education and training institutions (universities, universities of technology, and TVETs), and public Community Education and Training Centres.
- 9.1.2 Public sector entities that implement programmes within the merSETA sector that meet allocation criteria.
- 9.1.3 An employer (company) or enterprise within the jurisdiction of the merSETA, including an employer or enterprise not required to pay a skills development levy in terms of the Skills Development Levies Act.
- 9.1.4 Non-profit Organisations (NPOs inclusive of NGOs), and co-operatives that implement programmes within the merSETA sector that meet allocation criteria.
- 9.1.5 Trade unions in the merSETA sector, for the benefit of educating and developing their members through skills development-related programmes.
- 9.1.6 Individuals.

NB: Refer to Annexure A below. Criteria and Guidelines for evaluating and recommending DG Project Applications 2025/26 for other types of eligible entities

10. PAST PERFORMANCE AND DISCRETIONARY GRANT ALLOCATION

- 10.1 Past performance in PIVOTAL, Non-PIVOTAL and project awards will be considered in the verification, evaluation and approval of new grants applications. The below performance criteria are applicable to entities that have previously received Discretionary Grant funding for learning programmes:

Grant Window	Satisfactory Progression Criteria
DG Year 21	• Agreements closed out with exception of approved extensions with signed addendums in place.
DG Year 22	• Third tranche payments of all learning programmes have been made. • All short learning programmes (12 months or less) have closed out.
DG Year 23	• Second tranche payments of all learning programmes have been made. • All learning programmes to be closed out, except for learners on apprenticeships, NQF Level 2 to 4, bursaries and internships.
DG Year 24	• First and second tranche payments for all learning programmes have been made.

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Withdrawal on previous funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations that have withdrawn on two (2) consecutive allocations and whose MoAs termination has resulted in recoveries will need to submit a motivation before further allocations can be considered.
Terminated MoAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations that have breached their MoAs shall not be permitted to submit applications. A motivation to lift the restriction must be submitted in writing before further applications can be considered.

10.2 Annexure A below: Guidelines for evaluating and recommending DG Project Applications 2025/26 provides further criteria and guidelines for a range of initiatives and related eligible entities:

11. CONTRACTING AND COMMITMENT

11.1 Contracting will be done in the form of a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) by all parties which stipulates the awarded interventions and funding value. The agreement also stipulates the expected deliverables and performance targets, as well as delivery timelines.

12. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

12.1 Contract management will be conducted in line with the signed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) and the grant recipient takes full responsibility for the implementation of the allocation and deliverables.

12.2 All MoAs will be managed by a designated merSETA official located either at Head Office or at a regional office of the merSETA.

12.3 For MoAs with learning programme interventions, the merSETA regional offices will play a critical role in the management of said MoAs and providing support to grant recipients, including ensuring quality assurance of learning requirements such as workplace approvals and accreditations.

12.4 Some projects as determined by the merSETA will have project governance structures which will meet at regular intervals to monitor the implementation of projects. Such project governance structures will have terms of reference outlining the terms of engagement for both parties.

12.5 The merSETA reserves the right to terminate a Memorandum of Agreement if a grant recipient has not adhered to the terms of an agreement.

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13. EVIDENCE REQUIRED TO CLAIM PAYMENTS

- 13.1 Upon signing and returning a Memorandum of Agreement, an entity must submit a payment claim for the first tranche payment, which will be divided into two (2) parts. The first part of the payment will be made upon the signing of the agreement by both parties. The second part will be made once the entity has uploaded learners onto the merSETA Learner Management Platform. The payment will be made to the compliant grant recipient within thirty (30) working days.
- 13.2 For a DG project which has learners, the grant recipient is required to register contracted learners on the merSETA Learner Registration Platform before a claim can be lodged. The second tranche payment will be made according to the number of registered learners following a submission of a DG payment claim.
- 13.3 The third tranche payment of a MoA which has learners will be paid when the MoA has achieved a 50% progress milestone following a submission of a DG payment claim.
- 13.4 The fourth tranche payment of a MoA which has learners will be paid when the MoA has achieved 100% completion following a submission of a close out report and a DG payment claim.
- 13.5 In other forms of MoAs, the payment schedule will be agreed with the grant recipient and forms part of the contract. The contract will stipulate the required deliverables to make a payment claim.

14. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF MANDATORY GRANTS

- 14.1 An employer submitting a Mandatory Grant application must be a merSETA levy-paying company and must have submitted a Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) and Annual Training Report (ATR) where applicable.
- 14.2 The merSETA will not fund training for re-licencing purposes, undertaken as part of legislative requirements. Re-licensing forms part of an employer's legal obligations.
- 14.3 Mandatory Grant amounts paid to employers for planned learning interventions may not be equal to the amount requested, in view of the value of Mandatory Grants that could be less than the training costs projected by the employer.
- 14.4 The merSETA will monitor the implementation of at least twenty percent (20%) of all Mandatory Grants submissions. The merSETA has the right to verify any report

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submitted. The Client Liaison Officer (CLO) will conduct verifications at the respective regional offices.

- 14.5 Where a company has deviated more than forty percent (40%) from the previous year's workplace skills plan, the company is required to submit a motivation stating the reasons for the deviation. The sole reason for the use of the information contained in the deviation motivation would be to assess the trends in the workplace and the circumstances the employer and employees are experiencing.
- 14.6 Consideration will be given for the inclusion of training implemented and reported in the ATR, which was not specified in the WSP.
- 14.7 Where required, nominated employee/labour Skills Development Facilitator (SDF) is required to be registered on the NSDMS by the primary SDF, against the specific company and must submit a signed authorisation document to the merSETA before access may be granted.
- 14.8 Where the nominated employee/labour SDF is not available to sign off on the application, alternate employee/labour SDF must sign off on the application.
- 14.9 Where required, the employee/labour SDF is required to sign off electronically directly on NSDMS.
- 14.10 Where disputes have been declared, the employer must log the dispute and ensure that the information related to the dispute is uploaded against the "document upload" tab on or before the submission deadline.
- 14.11 Companies that submitted Mandatory Grant applications within the specified timeframe and have not met the minimum criteria listed below may be requested to submit outstanding information by no later than the 15th of July of the financial year. Minimum criteria may include:
- 14.11.1 Clarification of sign-off by either the labour or employee SDF (whichever is applicable).
- 14.11.2 Outstanding labour or employee SDF signatories (whichever is applicable).
- 14.11.3 Proof that an inter-SETA transfer was approved, and the transfer has occurred prior to the Mandatory Grant submission deadline.
- 14.11.4 Minutes of the Training Committee meeting/s.

NB:

- It is important to note that the above will be the only information that will be considered after the 30th of April of the financial year.

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- Employers who fail to meet the prescribed criteria, outlined in this document, will forfeit their grants.
- Mandatory Grants not claimed within the stipulated timeframe will be transferred to Discretionary Grant by 15 August of the financial year.

14.12 The merSETA CEO, as the AA's delegated representative, may grant an extension of a maximum period of one month from the submission date, as regulated. For the merSETA to consider any extension, such request must be submitted electronically on the NSDMS on or before the 30th of April deadline.

15. CRITERIA FOR THE APPROVAL OF MANDATORY GRANTS

15.1 The merSETA must allocate Mandatory Grants to the merSETA's levy-paying employers who submitted their applications on or before 30 April of the financial year and have met the following criteria:

15.1.1 Submitted and implemented a WSP and ATR, where applicable, in the required format.

15.1.2 Registered for the first time in terms of the SDLA and applied for a mandatory grant within six months of registration.

15.1.3 Levy payments are up to date.

15.1.4 Employers who have recognition agreements with a trade union or unions must provide evidence that the WSPs and ATRs have been subjected to consultation with the recognised trade unions in the form of training committee minutes. The WSPs and ATRs must be signed off by the labour SDF appointed by the recognised trade union, unless an explanation can otherwise be provided.

15.1.5 Employers who have no recognition agreement and have 50 or more employees must provide evidence that the WSPs and ATRs have been subjected to consultation with the nominated employee SDF in the form of training committee minutes. The WSPs and ATRs must be signed off by the employee SDF appointed by the employees within the organisation.

16. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

16.1 It is the responsibility of the employer/organisation to supply the merSETA with information relating to their banking details by submitting the information online.

16.2 The merSETA will validate requests for changes to banking details.

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- 16.3 The merSETA reserves the right to request supporting documentation to verify compliance with the conditions of each project and/or grant rule/s prior to effecting payments.

17. MANDATORY GRANT APPLICATION PLATFORM

- 17.1 The merSETA will make the NSDMS available for electronic submissions.

18. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS WITH GRANT APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS

- 18.1 The merSETA will make use of the following communication channels:

merSETA website: www.merseta.org.za	Skills Development Forums
Stakeholder publications	Roadshows
Newspapers	Regional offices
E-mail blitz	All official merSETA meetings
merSETA social media platforms	

19. GUIDELINE REVIEW

- 19.1 This Grants Guideline will be reviewed every five (5) years or as per operational and strategic changes and requirements, and will be monitored in line with the merSETA Quality Management System, based on ISO 9001:2015 for effective implementation.

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20. ANNEXURE A - GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING AND RECOMMENDING DG APPLICATIONS

Applicants must use the criteria and guidelines below as guidance in compiling their applications. Recommendation for DG awards will be evaluated against these criteria and guidelines for the categories of initiatives indicated. The criteria and guidelines apply for both awarding and non-awarding recommendations.

Note:

DG applications can be for projects and programmes addressing Programmes 2, 3 and 4 of the Annual Performance Plan (APP) 2025/26.

An application may address more than one focus area, strategic programme, 2025/26 APP strategic output or APP indicator.

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1. Projects (non-learning programme initiatives): e.g., innovation, research, career advice & guidance programme related initiatives, PSET E&T curriculum improvement/ review/ support, 4IR	
1.1 Names of evaluation team.	1.13 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP 2025/26 SOs).
1.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	1.14 Link to APP 2025/26 indicator/s.
1.3 Entity “N” Number or “SDL” Number as captured on NSDMS.	1.15 Key result/s expected: i.e., purpose, objectives, outputs, outcomes.
1.4 Name of entity.	1.16 Clearly indicate the evidence used to determine the organisation’s capacity to deliver the project in accordance with the project purpose, objectives, outputs and outcomes, and reference letter of similar work done.
1.5 Where the application is being made by a consulting or freelance SDF, a letter on letterhead, no older than three (3) months, signed by CEO/ MD/ Director of the entity appointing the SDF.	1.17 Has the merSETA previously had the applicant as a partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoA. If there is a MoA still in place, indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
1.6 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	1.18 Is the project linked to or includes the delivery of learning/ training/ skills development programme/s? If yes, learning programme title or qualification or part qualification or unit standard/s title, number of beneficiaries, evidence of training capacity/ record for stipulated learning/ training/ skill development programmes) even for non-credit bearing – i.e., proof of accreditation for credit bearing short programme or NQF registered qualification or part qualification or unit standard. Accreditation may be with SETA, other QA, or recognised accrediting body for courses such as a professional body, HEI. Two (2) reference letters not older than three (3) months.
1.7 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	1.19 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (1.18) above.
1.8 Legal status verification – copy of registration certificate of relevant law.	1.20 Duration of the project.
1.9 State core business (goods and, or services) for which entity is registered.	1.21 Amount for which applied.
1.10 Tax clearance (indicate whether it has been acquired or requested). If requested the award will be provisional for 10 working days.	1.22 Recommended amount - if less than the amount for which applied, reasons for the lesser amount recommendation.
1.11 BBBEE Certificate or Affidavit, where applicable.	
1.12 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Grant Application Guideline.	

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2. SME Learning Programme Delivery Application	
2.1 Names of evaluation team.	2.13 Link to APP 2025/26 indicator/s.
2.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	2.12 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP 2025/26 SOs).
2.3 Name of entity.	2.14 Learning programme type/s to be delivered i.e., learnership, ARPL, AET, apprenticeship, bursary, WIL, internship, candidacy, QCTO occupational qualification.
2.4 Where the application is being made by a consulting or freelance SDF, a letter on letterhead, no older than three (3) months, signed by CEO/ MD/ Director of the entity appointing the SDF.	2.15 Is the applicant a previous merSETA delivery partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoAs. If there is a MoA still in place indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
2.5 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	2.16 Learning programme title or qualification or part qualification or unit standard/s title and evidence of training capacity/ record for stipulated learning/ training/ skill development programme even for non-credit bearing short programmes: i.e., proof of accreditation for credit bearing short programme or NQF registered qualification or part qualification or unit standard. Accreditation may be with a SETA, other QA, or recognised accrediting body for courses such as a professional body, HEI. Two (2) reference letters no older than three (3) months.
2.6 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	2.17 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (2.16) above.
2.7 Legal status verification - copy of registration certificate of relevant law.	2.18 Beneficiaries: are the learning programmes for own staff and/or for unemployed persons, number?
2.8 State core business (good and, or services) for which entity is registered.	2.19 Recommendation of the regional office
2.9 Tax clearance (indicate whether acquired or requested). If requested the award will be provisional for 10 working days.	2.20 Duration of Project
2.10 BBBEE Certificate or Affidavit.	2.21 Amount for which applied
2.11 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Discretionary Grant Application Guideline.	2.22 Recommended amount - if less than the amount for which applied, reasons for the lesser amount recommendation

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3. Cooperative Enterprise Learning Programme Application

3.1 Names of evaluation team.	3.13 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP 2025/26 SOs).
3.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	3.14 Link to APP 2024/25 indicator/s.
3.3 Entity “N” Number or “SDL” Number as captured on NSDMS	3.15 Learning programme type/s to be delivered i.e., learnership, ARPL, AET, apprenticeship, bursary, WIL, internship, candidacy, QCTO occupational qualification.
3.4 Name of entity.	3.16 Is the applicant a previous merSETA delivery partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoAs. If there is a MoA still in place indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
3.5 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	3.17 Learning programme title or qualification or part qualification or unit standard/s title and evidence of training capacity/ record for stipulated learning/ training/ skill development programme even for non-credit bearing short programmes: i.e., proof of accreditation for credit bearing short programme or NQF registered qualification or part qualification or unit standard. Accreditation may be with a SETA, other QA, or recognised accrediting body for courses such as a professional body, HEI. Two (2) reference letters no older than three (3) months.
3.6 Where the application is being made by a consulting or freelance SDF, a letter on letterhead, no older than three (3) months, signed by the CEO/ MD/ Director of the entity appointing the SDF.	3.18 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (3.16) above.
3.7 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	3.19 Beneficiaries: own staff or unemployed, members of a cooperative.
3.8 Legal status verification – copy of registration certification of relevant law.	3.20 Indication of whether regional office verifications were done or not, recommendation of the regional office.
3.9 State core business (good and, or services) for which entity is registered.	3.21 Duration of Project.
3.10 Tax clearance (indicate whether acquired or requested). If requested award will be provisional for 10 working days.	3.22 Amount for which applied.
3.11 BBBEE Certificate or Affidavit.	3.23 Recommended amount – if less than amount for which applied, reasons for the lesser amount recommendation.
3.12 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Discretionary Grant Application Guideline.	

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4. NGO/ NPO/ NPC/ CBO/ Private Entity Applying as a Skills Development Provider/ Training Provider	
4.1 Names of evaluation team.	4.13 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Discretionary Grant Application Guideline.
4.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	4.14 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP 2025/26 SOs).
4.3 Entity “N” Number or “SDL” Number as captured on NSDMS.	4.15 Link to APP 2024/25 indicator/s.
4.4 Name of entity.	4.16 Learning programme type/s to be delivered i.e., learnership, ARPL, AET, apprenticeship, bursary, WIL, internship, candidacy, QCTO occupational qualification .
4.5 Where the application is being made by a consulting or freelance SDF, a letter on letterhead, no older than three (3) months, signed by CEO/ MD/ Director of the entity appointing the SDF.	4.17 Is the applicant a previous merSETA delivery partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoAs. If there is a MoA still in place indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
4.6 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	4.18 Learning programme title or qualification or part qualification or unit standard/s title and evidence of training capacity/ record for stipulated learning/ training/ skill development programme even for non-credit bearing short programmes: i.e., proof of accreditation for credit bearing short programmes on NQF registered qualification or part qualification or unit standard. Accreditation may be with a SETA, other QA, or recognised accrediting body for courses such as professional body, HEI. Two (2) references letters no older than three (3) months.
4.7 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	4.19 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (4.16) above.
4.8 State core business (good and, or services) for which entity is registered.	4.20 Beneficiaries: own staff or unemployed, members of a cooperative.
4.9 Legal status verification – copy of registration certificate of relevant law.	4.21 Indication of whether regional office verifications were done or not, recommendation of the regional office.
4.10 Letter of good standing from the Department of Social Development (DSD) National – NB if registered under NPO Act.	4.22 Duration of Project.
4.11 Tax clearance (indicate whether acquired or requested). If requested award will be provisional for 10 working days.	4.23 Amount for which applied.
4.12 BBBEE Certificate or Affidavit.	4.24 Recommended amount – if less than amount for which applied, reasons for the lesser amount recommendation.

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5. HEI/TVETC/CET Applying to Deliver Learning Programmes

5.1 Names of evaluation team.	5.11 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP2025/26 SOs).
5.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	5.12 Link to APP 2025/26 indicator/s.
5.3 Entity "N" Number or "SDL" Number as captured on NSDMS	5.13 Learning programme type/s to be delivered i.e., learnership, ARPL, AET, apprenticeship, bursary, WIL, internship, candidacy, QCTO occupational qualification.
5.4 Name of entity.	5.14 Is the applicant a previous merSETA delivery partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoAs. If there is a MoA still in place indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
5.5 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	5.15 Learning programme title or qualification or part qualification or unit standard/s title and evidence of training capacity/ record for stipulated learning/ training/ skill development programme even for non-credit bearing short programmes : i.e., proof of accreditation for credit bearing short programme or NQF registered qualification or part qualification or unit standard. Accreditation may be with a SETA, other QA, or recognised accrediting body for courses such as a professional body, HEI. Two (2) references letter no older than three (3) months.
5.6 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	5.16 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (5.16) above.
5.7 Legal status verification – copy of registration certificate for private TVET/ CET/ HEI.	5.17 Beneficiaries: (i) number of learners, and must also indicate beneficiaries in terms of one or both of (ii) and (iii). (ii) target learners i.e., graduate interns, TVETC/HEI WIL learners, retrenched workers (former employee of the mer-sector member company), ARPL candidates, AET learners, entrepreneurship learners, apprentices, learnership learners, bursary recipients. (iii) target organisations e.g., SMEs, cooperatives, NGOs, CBOs, start-ups/incubation projects, rural/township enterprises or projects.
5.8 Tax clearance for private HEI/ TVET/ CET (indicate whether acquired or requested). If requested award will be provisional for 10 working days.	5.18 Duration of Project.

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5.9 B-BBEE Certificate or Affidavit, where applicable.	5.19 Amount for which applied.
5.10 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Grant Application Guideline.	5.20 Recommended amount – if less than the amount for which applied, reasons for lesser amount recommendation.

6. Entity Applying to Project Manage the Delivery of Learning Programmes (an entity that may be intermediary body or skills development agency that is not delivering the training but will manage the placement of learners to be trained by host employers and, or skills development provider, and or PSET institutions. Such entities may also be agencies to manage merSETA bursaries for studies at PSET institutions for the study of qualification for the priority occupations and skills list in the SSP and APP)	
6.1 Names of the evaluation team.	6.13 Link to APP 2025/26 indicator/s.
6.2 Application ID from NSDMS.	6.14 Learning programme type/s to be delivered i.e., learnership, ARPL, AET, apprenticeship, bursary, WIL, internship, candidacy, QCTO occupational qualification.
6.3 Entity “N” Number or “SDL” Number as captured on NSDMS.	6.15 Is this a new applicant? If yes, indicate evidence used to determine the capacity to deliver on the application submitted - i.e., project management capacity in terms of human resources (project management team) and project financial and administration systems, a system for recruitment of learners, a system for the acquisition of third-party skills development providers or training institutions and/or host employers.
6.4 Name of entity.	6.16 Is the applicant a previous merSETA delivery partner? If yes, indicate evidence of performance on previous MoAs. If there is a MoA still in place indicate progress of implementation of the MoA.
6.5 Type of entity (ref. all eligible entities listed in Grants Policy).	6.17 Third-party agreements already in place for the delivery of learning programmes and proof of the third-party's/parties' capacity to deliver the learning programme/s for which the entity has applied – i.e., proof of accreditation by recognised accrediting body and reference letters. Third-party agreements already in place with potential host companies where the learning programme/s is either a WIL or candidacy or work experience internship or a learnership or an apprenticeship or any other that requires workplace experience for learners to complete.
6.6 Proof of banking details – bank verified and signed by entity CEO/ MD/ Director/ CFO.	6.18 Occupation/s or skills gaps to be addressed if yes to (6.14) above.
6.7 Legal status verification – copy of registration certificate of relevant law.	6.19 Beneficiaries: (i) number of learners, and must also indicate beneficiaries in terms of one or both of (ii) and (iii). (ii) target learners i.e., graduate interns, TVET /HEI WIL learners, retrenched workers

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6. Entity Applying to Project Manage the Delivery of Learning Programmes (an entity that may be intermediary body or skills development agency that is not delivering the training but will manage the placement of learners to be trained by host employers and, or skills development provider, and or PSET institutions. Such entities may also be agencies to manage merSETA bursaries for studies at PSET institutions for the study of qualification for the priority occupations and skills list in the SSP and APP)	
	(former employee of the mer-sector member company), ARPL candidates, AET learners, entrepreneurship learners, apprentices, learnership learners, bursary recipients. (iii) target organisations e.g., SMEs, cooperatives, NGOs, CBOs, start-ups/incubation projects, rural/township enterprises, or projects.
6.8 State core business (good and, or services) for which entity is registered.	6.20 Regional verification confirming the legitimacy of applying entity.
6.9 Tax clearance (indicate whether acquired or requested). If the requested award will be provisional for 10 working days.	6.21 Duration of project.
6.10 B-BBEE Certificate or Affidavit, where applicable.	6.22 Amount for which applied.
6.11 Focus area of initiative as per the grant application advertisement and Grant Application Guideline.	6.23 Recommended amount – if less than the amount for which applied, reasons for the lesser amount recommendation.
6.12 Link to Strategic Output/s of merSETA (ref APP 2025/26 SOs).	

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