

**FirstRand Foundation  
Programme Overview**



**FIRSTRAND**



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## FIRSTRAND FOUNDATION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

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As part of its social investment strategy, the FirstRand Foundation provides grantmaking support within a number of focused programme areas. Our programmatic approach involves provision of substantial three-year grants to selected partner organisations, which leads to more structured and meaningful engagement and the end result of developing high-quality partnerships and having more measurable impact.

The Foundation currently awards grants in nine different programme areas. These are supported by the FNB Fund, RMB Fund, WesBank Fund and the FirstRand Foundation itself.

#### **FirstRand Foundation Maths Education Chairs Initiative**

This innovative initiative is a flagship programme of the Foundation, which represents a long-term commitment to generating research and influencing policy in partnership with government. It consists of two separate components: the FirstRand Foundation South African Maths Education Chairs (jointly funded by the Foundation, Department of Science and Technology [DST], and the RMB Fund), and the South African Numeracy Chairs (jointly funded by the Foundation, the DST and the Anglo American Chairman's Fund). Three maths chairs and two numeracy chairs are supported, working in four universities around the country.

The initiative is an intervention in mathematics education in South Africa. The vision is for the chairs to serve as beacons of excellence by initiating and coordinating teacher education and research projects that focus on improving the quality of mathematics teaching and learning. The initiative intends to use the existing experience and expertise of the selected chairs to address the crisis that exists in mathematics education in South Africa. It has four interrelated objectives:

- improve the quality of teaching of in-service mathematics teachers at primary and secondary schools;
- improve learner performance in primary schools and the mathematics results (pass rates and quality of passes) in secondary schools as a result of quality teaching and learning;
- research sustainable and practical solutions to the challenges of numeracy and mathematics in schools; and
- provide leadership in numeracy and mathematics education and increase the dialogue around solutions for the mathematics education crisis.

#### **FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar and FirstRand Cannon Collins scholarship programmes**

The Foundation provides scholarship funding through the FirstRand Laurie Dippenaar scholarship and the FirstRand Cannon Collins (FRCC) scholarship programmes. The objective of these programmes is to award exceptional South African students the opportunity to pursue a postgraduate degree at an overseas university of their choice. The scholarship is based entirely on merit and is awarded to

candidates who have the potential to be destiny changers. The only requirement of the successful candidates is that they return to South Africa after their studies to use what they have learned for the betterment of South African society. The FRCC scholarship will officially launch in 2015 and will be awarded to an exceptional South African to study at Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

#### **FNB early childhood development programme**

This programme aims to improve the quality of and increase access to early childhood development (ECD) services in the country. The Fund invests specifically in increasing access to ECD services through non centre-based activities (e.g. play groups, home visiting, parental training, toy libraries, etc.), with a particular focus on parent/caregiver support and mainstreaming of disability.

In addition, the FNB Fund is one of the lead funders – in partnership with the DG Murray Trust and ELMA Philanthropies – of *Ilifa Labantwana*, a national ECD initiative. The second phase of this unique initiative, which runs from 2013 to 2016, seeks to provide the evidence (based on actual experience of implementation and careful evaluation) and build consensus and mechanisms to scale up appropriate and cost-effective ECD services and support for young children in South Africa, with a particular focus on provision for the poorest 40% of the population under six years of age.

#### **FNB primary education programme**

This programme focuses on primary schools within four education districts, two each in the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. The schools are identified in partnership with the districts and service providers are contracted to provide targeted support to each school based on its specific needs. All programme interventions fall within three core categories:

- leadership development of principals and school management teams;
- teacher development; and
- addressing barriers to learning.

#### **FNB tertiary education programme**

This programme provides both full and partial bursaries and is administered by specialist bursary service providers. The programme is open to South African citizens who wish to study a full-time undergraduate degree at a recognised South African university and demonstrate financial need and academic potential. Support is provided for commerce, science and engineering. At honours level, support is only available for accounting.

#### **RMB creative arts programme**

This programme aims to promote access to quality arts in education in order to enable more young South Africans, regardless of physical or socio-economic disadvantages, access to the learning opportunities offered through the creative arts. It also aims to facilitate the promotion of excellence in the disciplines of music, dance, drama, visual art and heritage so that young South African artists may participate effectively in the creative economy.

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### **RMB environment programme**

This programme aims to facilitate the rehabilitation and restoration of ecosystems through shared partnerships and improving environmental practices within South African communities.

### **WesBank Masilimeni Programme**

This programme's overall goal is to promote and grow resilient networks of micro-farming households – from subsistence to livelihood level – through the establishment of sustainable support centres and knowledge-sharing initiatives. Its objective is to strengthen food security and agricultural livelihoods across the country, in order to alleviate poverty.

### **FirstRand *KhulaSangam* programme**

*KhulaSangam* (a combination of isiZulu and Hindi, which is very roughly translated as 'growing by coming together') aims to address the critical skills shortage that exists in South Africa by bridging the gap between tertiary education and employability. It exposes unemployed South African youth graduates to Indian business, community development and society through extended internships. By participating in the programme, these graduates benefit in a variety of ways, including:

- work experience with leading companies in strategic sectors;
- exposure to international travel and culture;
- exposure to high-impact, youth-led community development projects;
- training on professionalism, personal development and leadership; and
- increased employability back in South Africa.

### **Other grantmaking notes**

- Each franchise committee has the authority to make discretionary grants of up to 5% of their total budget each year. These grants must be aligned with the objectives of the Foundation and are subject to the normal due diligence and review process.
- The Foundation provides annual funding to the FirstRand Volunteers Programme, which is a group-wide initiative that promotes employee activity in the communities where FirstRand operates. Employees are encouraged to contribute their time, energy and money to community development initiatives, in order to fulfil the programme's goal of helping people to help themselves.
- The Foundation makes funding available to provide support for national disaster relief, should this be necessary.
- The Foundation recognises that technology will play a critical role in development throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With this in mind, the following related grantmaking principles are in place:
  - Technology is powerful and has much potential, but it is not a silver bullet. The Foundation, therefore, invests in technology-related interventions soberly and cautiously.
  - The Foundation will encourage its programme partners to explore and utilise technology where it is appropriate and represents real value-add; in some cases, funding may be made available to support this process.
  - During calls for applications, high-quality proposals that include a strong, well developed technology component will be given preference.



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