DISCRETIONARY GRANT POLICY 2024/25

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TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Term / Acronym	Definition
Accounting Authority	The Accounting Authority appointed in terms of section 11 of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, and which by virtue of section 49(2) (a) of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 is the Accounting Authority of SASSETA.
APP	Annual Performance Plan as contemplated in the National Treasury Regulations.
ATR	Annual Training Report as contemplated in regulation 4(1) of the SETA Grant Regulations.
BBBEE	Broad-Based-Black Economic Empowerment.
Board	Board means the Accounting Authority. Board and Accounting Authority are used interchangeably in this Policy.
Bursary	Discretionary Grant provided to students in line with the Discretionary Grants Policy (excluding internal staff bursary) to assist students/learners with the costs associated to their studies at a College or University.
CBO	Means Community Based Organisation.
Chief Executive Officer	The Chief Executive Officer of SASSETA, appointed in terms of section 13B of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, and to whom various powers have been delegated by the Accounting Authority.
CIPC	Means the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission.
DG	Discretionary Grants.
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training.
Discretionary Grant	Money allocated within the SETA to be spent on discretionary grants and projects contemplated in regulation 3(2)(c) to (9) as read with regulation 6 of the Grants Regulations.
Internship	Workplace-based experiential learning opportunity that is generally offered as a supervised programme to supplement formal study completed.
Learnership	Structured learning process for gaining theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the workplace leading to a qualification registered on the NQF. A learnership is outcomes-based and not time-based and allows for recognition of prior learning.

Term / Acronym	Definition
Learning programme	Any structured educational programme formed from a set of unit standards or modules from any other registered qualification; based on learning activities intended to give a learner particular knowledge and skills.
LPERC	Learning Programmes: Evaluation and Recommendation Committee, established in terms of clause 17 read with 18, to adjudicate and make recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer with regard to Discretionary Grants.
LPERC Sub-Committee	A sub-committee of the Learning Programmes: Evaluation and Recommendation Committee (LPERC), established in terms of clause 17 read with 18, to evaluate and make recommendations to the LPERC with regard to Discretionary Grants applications and proposals.
Minister	The member of Cabinet to whom the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 has been assigned in terms of section 91 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
NGO	Means non-governmental organisation
NSDP	National Skills Development Plan, 2030.
Non-Pivotal Programmes	Non-Pivotal Programmes are programmes which do not necessarily lead to credit bearing qualifications, however, address key sectoral objectives and national priorities.
NQF	National Qualifications Framework.
PBO	Means Public Benefit Organisation.
Outsourced company	A company selected via the supply chain process that will, if so appointed, be used to evaluate DG applications and present such to the LPERC.
PLT	Practical Legal Training
Pivotal	Professional, vocational, technical, and academic learning programmes that result in qualifications or part qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework as contemplated in regulation 3 (6) and (7) as read with regulation 6 (11) to (15) of the SETA Grant Regulations.
Pivotal Training Plan	An annual plan for training, developed by companies employing more than 50 staff as contemplated in the SETA Grant Regulations.
PBO	Public Benefit Organisation

Term / Acronym	Definition
Public Institution	Public University, TVET College, CET College or a Government Department or Municipality or State-Owned Entity or a Public Entity listed in the schedules to the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999.
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning.
Rural Area	As determined by the Municipal Demarcation Board from time to time.
SDA	Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, as amended.
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority.
SETA Grant Regulations	The Sector Education and Training Authorities Grant Regulations promulgated by the Minister in terms of section 36 of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, published in Government Notice No 990 in Government Gazette No 35940, dated 3 December 2012 as amended by Government Notice R486, Government Gazette No 36655 dated 15 July 2013.
Skills Levies Act	Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999, as amended.
Skills Programme	Occupation-based learning programme aimed at building skills that have economic value and which gives credit towards a qualification / part qualification on the NQF.
SLA	Service Level Agreement entered into with DHET.
SSP	Sector Skills Plan as contemplated in section 10 (1) (a) and (b) of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998.
TVET	Technical, Vocation, Education and Training Institution.
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan contemplated in regulation 4 of the SETA Grant Regulations.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to set out, in line with SETA Grant regulations, the basis on how SASSETA disburses Discretionary grants to achieve the implementation of its Sector Skills Plan (SSP), Annual Performance Plan (APP), DHET Service Level Agreement (SLA) and national imperatives as set out in the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP).

2. SCOPE

This Policy outlines the principles and approach governing the management and disbursement of the Discretionary Grants in response to the SETA Grant Regulations. The Policy is applicable to:

2.1 Public Education and Training Institutions as well as Private Skills Development Skills Development Providers.

2.2 An employer or enterprise within the jurisdiction of SASSETA (SETA 19), including an employer or enterprise not required to pay skills development levy in terms of Skills Development Levies Act.

2.3 Other legal person contemplated in sub-paragraph (7) of the SETA Grant Regulations that meets the criteria for the payment of such grants.

2.3 An employer contemplated in section 30 and 30 (A) of the Act who has submitted to its relevant SETA or Public Service PSETA WSP and ATR as a minimum in the prescribed format.

2.5 Trade Unions / Union Federation, NGO's, CBO's, NLPE's and Co-operatives operating in the safety and security sector.

3. OVERSIGHT

The approval of Discretionary Grant applications shall fall within the operational mandate, save in respect of awards that exceed the delegated authority of the Chief Executive Officer, and appeals. The Board shall retain oversight responsibility over the implementation of the Policy.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 This Policy acknowledges that skills development is not a linear process, in fact; skills and knowledge are produced in a complex set of institutions and institutional arrangements.

4.2 The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 as amended, *inter alia*, provides an institutional framework to implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills level of the South African workforce. It also makes provision for the establishment of SETAs as institutional vehicles to develop and implement sector skills plans, promote learning programmes, register agreements for learning programmes, collect and disburse skills development levies in accordance with the SETA Grant Regulations.

4.3 This Policy is consistent with the provisions of the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999, and the SETA Grant Regulations, which stipulates the processes for the management and disbursement of the funds received as levy income.

5. POLICY OBJECTIVES

5.1 The primary objective of this Policy is to create an enabling environment for the management and disbursement of Discretionary Grants in a manner that is equitable, fair, competitive, transparent, and cost effective.

5.2 The secondary objective is to regulate the use of the Discretionary Grants for SASSETA to use them to implement the SSP, the APP, the DHET SLA and to address sector and national skills development priorities in the country. These are not grants that employers are entitled to but grants that SASSETA deploys to achieve its objectives in relation to the development of the sector. The purpose of the various discretionary grant policies is not to set out how employers can "get their money back" but rather how the SETA will achieve the implementation of the SSP, APP and DHET SLA in a financial year.

5.3 A further objective is to enable SASSETA to use Discretionary Grants to fund learning programs for learners who have been disadvantaged by cancellation of Discretionary Grants projects under which they were benefitting until they complete their studies.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

6.1 The Discretionary Grant on 1 April each year must be spent or committed, provided learning programmes for the committed funds have already commenced or in the process of commencing.

6.2 SASSETA shall allocate at least 80% of its available Discretionary Grants within a financial year to PIVOTAL programmes that address the scarce and critical skills within the safety and security sector, the needs identified by DHET, in Public Institutions, in private sector's Workplace Skills Plans, the Sector Skills Plan, the NSDP outcomes or qualifications/skills programmes that lead to the top priorities identified in the national list of occupations in high demand, through funding applications.

6.3 SASSETA is committed to the promotion of NQF registered and quality assured programmes that addresses occupational shortages and skills gap needs as set out in the SSP, APP including work integrated learning.

6.4 The remaining portion, to the maximum of 20%, shall be used for non-pivotal and Strategic Projects.

6.5 SASSETA may ring fence funding for projects in a financial year. The ring fencing will be based on the funding applications received from the stakeholders in response to the request from SASSETA and other information gathering mechanisms such as the priorities of the DHET, SSP, APP, and other clearly defined government priorities on skills development linked to the NSDP.

6.6 Projects may be awarded in one financial year for implementation in the following financial year where funds are available and the current financial year's performance targets have been achieved.

6.7 The Skills Development Provider fee paid by SASSETA covers all direct training costs, and no further claims can be made.

6.8 The Skills Development Provider fees paid by SASSETA excludes indirect / incidental costs such as transport, accommodation, and meals (which will be for the cost of the employer), except where otherwise indicated.

6.9 SASSETA recognises and embraces the principles of transparency, openness, equity, access and fairness in allocation and disbursement of discretionary grants without prejudice to any individual or stakeholder.

7. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

7.1 According to the SETA Grant Regulations, a SETA must, on an annual basis, and in accordance with any guidelines issued by DHET and operational requirements, approve a Discretionary Grant Policy, specifying how the SETA discretionary funds will be allocated to meet sector needs as set out in the APP and the Service Level Agreement entered into with DHET and national skills development needs.

7.2 The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 provide for the collection of levies from employers and provides directives and/or guidelines on how the funds allocated to SETAs should be disbursed.

7.3 The SETA Grant Regulations is to:

7.3.1 Regulate the proportion of funds available for skills development that is spent on administration costs.
7.3.2 Make provision for SETAs to contribute to the cost of the work of the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).
7.3.3 Discourage the accumulation of surpluses and carry-over of unspent funds at the end of each financial year.
7.3.4 Improve the quantity and quality of labour market information received by SETAs through Workplace skills plans, annual training reports and professional, internships, vocational, occupational, technical, and academic learning (PIVOTAL) training reports, which provide a reflection of skills needs and inform planning.
7.3.5 PIVOTAL programs, which are NQF-registered and quality assured, towards addressing priority scarce and critical skills needs in the sector, as identified through Sector skills plans and research; and
7.3.6 Create a framework within which expanded use is made of public education and training Skills Development Providers for the provision of skills development programmes.

7.4 Other pieces of legislation that guide the implementation of projects are:

Source	Requirement
Basic Conditions of Employment Act 77 of 1997	Set the guidelines for the basic work conditions for the learners, apprentices, and interns.
BBBEE Act 13 of 2003 amended in 2011	Sets the guidelines for awarding of projects based on the criteria set in the Act.
National Qualification Framework Act 37 of 2008	Sets the guidelines for qualification development and implementation.
Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000	PAJA aims to give effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair and to the right to written reasons for administrative action as contemplated in section 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.
The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No. 2 of 2000	PAIA was enacted to give effect to the constitutional right of access to information from public and private bodies.
Protection Of Personal Information Act 4 Of 2013	The POPI Act has been promulgated to regulate, in harmony with international standards, the processing of personal information by public and private bodies in a manner that gives effect to the right to privacy subject to justifiable limitations that are aimed at protecting other rights and important interests.
Skills Development Act 97 of 1998	The Skills Development Act aims to expand the knowledge and competencies of the labour force in order to improve productivity and employment.
Public Finance Management Act	Sets the regulations on how public funds are to be utilised.
Sectoral Determination Act no 5 Learnerships	Governs the employment of learner workers, which includes all learnership agreements and skills development programmes
SETA Grant Regulations	Regulates discretionary grant management with the SETA
Skill Development Levies Act 9 of 1999	Provides the SETA's funding framework for SETAs learning Programmes

8. FUNDING FRAMEWORK

General income and funding of SASSETA is regulated by the Skills Development Levies Act and SETA Grant Regulations as below:

8.1 SASSETA's income is derived from the skills levy of contributing employers.

8.2 10,5% is allocated towards administration costs for the running of the SETA and includes a 0.5% allocation towards the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) as legislated.

8.3 Any Mandatory Grants that are not claimed by 15 August and/or unallocated funds from the administration budget will be transferred to the discretionary fund pool.

8.4 Any additional income received shall be allocated to discretionary projects.

8.5 49.5% will be allocated as Discretionary Grants, of which:

8.5.1.1 At least 80% must be used to fund strategic interventions as detailed in the Strategic Plan (SP) and Annual Performance Plan (APP) through PIVOTAL programmes; and

8.5.1.2 A maximum of 20% may be allocated to funding of non-PIVOTAL programmes to develop the sector in accordance with the priorities outlined in the SSP and other clearly defined government priorities on skills development linked to the NSDP.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

9.1 SASSETA may use a maximum of 7.5% of project funding to fund its project related administration costs including but not limited to Salaries, Travel & Accommodation and Marketing.

9.2 On application, SASSETA may consider paying a nominal administration or project management costs providing for administrative support to Public TVET Colleges and Public CET Colleges. This may include the allocation of interns to provide administrative support where appropriate, the duration of such internship will be linked to the duration of the project. No private sector beneficiaries will be considered.

10. ALLOCATION OF DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

10.1 BROAD BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment act provides that the Minister of Trade and Industry may issue codes of good practice that could include "qualification criteria for preferential purposes for procurement and other economic activities." The amended BBBEE Act no 53 of 2003 places more of a burden on State entities to clamp down on BBBEE compliance by service Skills Development Providers.

Thus, the criteria for awarding of discretionary grants will include the receipt of BBBEE certificates. Where an enterprise is exempted from having a BBBEE certificate then they would need to submit the required sworn affidavit to SASSETA.

10.2 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

SASSETA is committed to the development of persons with disabilities (PWD). Preference will be given to applications for PWD. An additional allowance of 20% of the stipend will be paid to the PWD learner on SETA funded programmes on application. Employers may apply, with motivation and supporting documents, for a once-off allowance to modify the learning environment to accommodate learners with disabilities.

10.3 LEARNER / BENEFICIARY RECRUITMENT

SASSETA does not recruit learners for programmes. Applicants for grant funding and project funding are required to perform this function, subject to the following:

10.3.1 Preference must be given to South African Citizens. Foreign nationals will only be considered for employed programmes, if they have the necessary work or study permits and the legislation relating to the learning programme allows for it.

10.3.2 Preference must be given to beneficiaries who reflect the national transformation targets as set out in the APP.

10.3.3 Preference must be given to youth (ages 18 – 35), children of military veterans and military veterans in this age group for unemployed beneficiaries as set out in the APP, DHET SLA and SASSETA's Strategic Plan.

10.3.4 Consideration will be given to persons from lower income and marginalised communities.

10.4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to 10.1 and 10.2 above, consideration will be made:

10.4.1 To increase learning programmes in rural areas, the evaluation criteria will include giving preference to applications to be implemented in rural areas.

10.4.2 Where necessary, SASSETA will prioritise and may increase funding for interventions in rural areas and other regions that may be identified as a priority for development.

10.4.3 To ensure that SASSETA contributes to employment opportunities as well as enterprise development in South Africa as outlined in the National Development Plan, preference will be given to PWD, Black, Rural and Women owned enterprises when selecting skills development providers to train public sector employees. This will be considered together with the costing considerations.

10.4.4 Subject to availability of funds and in line with regulations and NSDP transformational imperatives; Scarce and Critical skills, industry required programmes and Occupations in High Demand will be given priority funding.

10.4.5 In addition to the NSDP transformational imperatives, SASSETA will give special consideration for:

10.4.5.1 Applications that address emerging needs of the Economic Reconstruction & Recovery Programme (ERRP), the Presidential Youth Empowerment Intervention (PYEI) and other national skills priorities determined by the Minister.

10.4.5.2 Applications that address national strategic goals as set out in the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), the National Skills Accord and other relevant national priorities.

10.4.5.3 Applications that respond to industry skills needs as identified through the SASSETA Sector Skills Plan and other relevant research and address targets as indicated in the Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan.

10.4.5.4 Applications that support the development of public TVET and public CET Colleges to deliver SASSETA occupational qualifications.

10.4.5.5 Funding learning programs for learners who have been disadvantaged by cancellation of Discretionary Grant projects under which they were benefitting until they complete their studies.

11. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

11.1 To access Discretionary Grant funding for PIVOTAL programmes, employers are required to:

11.1.1 Be registered with SASSETA (SETA 19) at SARS, or if exempted, the companies should be operating in the safety and security sector.

11.1.2 Companies with 50 or more employees must complete and submit a WSP/ATR in the prescribed template (sub-regulation7) by 30 April or if granted an extension, by 31 May of the prior year; and those with less than 50 employees must complete and submit a PIVOTAL Training Plan together with all applications for discretionary grants

11.1.3 Have such WSP/ATR or PIVOTAL Training Plan accepted by SASSETA.

11.1.4 Levy payments, where applicable, must be up to date. SASSETA reserves the right to request evidence to this effect.

11.1.5 Be a legal person.

11.2 A new company that has been registered for the first time in terms of section 5 of the Skills Development Levies Act in the previous six (6) months and has submitted an application for a mandatory grant within six (6) months of registration may apply for the discretionary grants.

11.3 All Public Benefit Organisations (PBO's) such as NGO's, CBOs, and Cooperatives, operating in the safety and security sector must be duly registered with CIPC, Department of Social Development and be in good standing with the South African Revenue Services, having filed returns annually for all taxes not exempted from.

11.4 Trade Unions and Union Federations operating in the safety and security sector must be duly recognised in the SASSETA Constitution, registered with the Department of Employment and Labour and be in good standing with the South African Revenue Services, having filed returns annually for all taxes not exempted from.

11.5 All organisations other than those established by legislation must be duly registered with the CIPC and status be "In Business," having filed annual returns with the CIPC.

12. PARTNERSHIPS

12.1 The NSDP requires a SETA to partner with registered public TVET Colleges, public Universities and public CET Colleges in the delivery of learning programs. It is the strategy of SASSETA to ensure that it delivers most of its learning programmes through public institutions. It therefore follows that most of these will be delivered in partnership with registered public TVET Colleges, public Universities and public CET Colleges. The SASSETA may accordingly enter MOUs with these entities to advance skills development within the sector. Should SASSETA have an MOU with these public entities and there is a training need from the sector that these public entities can fulfil, then the training programme need not be advertised, the public entity may be appointed by SASSETA following the evaluation and approval process referred to in clause 12.4.

12.2 Further to this, SETAs are encouraged to support CBO, NGO, Cooperatives, Trade Unions, Union Federations, Non-Levy Paying Entities (NLPE's) operating in the safety and security sector. These partnerships are formed to ensure proper skills development for both employed

and unemployed individuals. An MOU with this category of entities can be entered into in order to achieve this objective.

12.3 NGOs, CBOs, Co-operatives and NLPEs that have an existing valid MOU with SASSETA may specify their training needs through the Expression of Interest process. Should the entity be accredited to offer the training intervention, or the training may be provided by a public entity referred to in paragraph 12.1 then the training need not be advertised, however the evaluation and approval will be as per the discretionary grants process.

12.4 Learning programmes to be delivered under a partnership as envisaged in this section must be submitted within the timeframe determined for the submission of Expressions of Interest and must be presented to the LPERC Sub-Committee to evaluate and make necessary recommendations to LPERC that will adjudicate and recommend to the Chief Executive Officer for final approval as outlined in clause 17 below.

12.5 The Memorandum of Understanding must clearly outline the following:

- Relationship between the parties;
- The areas of common interest; and
- How their needs will be addressed

The Memorandum of Understanding will not form the Discretionary Grant contract between the parties. After a specific learning programme for implementation has been approved through the Discretionary Grants process, a Discretionary Grant Funding agreement will be entered into and will specify:

- Details of the learning programme
- Scope of Work
- Number of Learners
- Obligations of the Parties
- Approved funding
- Project duration
- Payment Deliverables and
- Disbursement Schedule

12.6 The NSDP encourages the support of Trade Unions and Union Federations operating in their sector in identifying skills needs and strategies to address those needs. They will not be subject to the same evaluation criteria as other entities.

12.7 To qualify for funding the Unions should provide proof of valid tax exemption from SARS.

12.8 The training and skills needs will be subjected to evaluation and approval as outlined in clause 12.4 above. If there is a need for a Skills Development Provider the Trade Union or Union Federation shall source that provider and comply with accreditation requirements that may be placed by SASSETA to ensure that proper training take place.

13. ALLOCATION OF DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDS

13.1 The SASSETA Board shall approve a five-year Strategic Plan, which is reviewed annually and is informed by the legislative and regulatory environment, Policy imperatives as well as Sector Skills Plan (SSP) research.

13.2 Annually, SASSETA enters into a Service Level Agreement with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). This SLA sets out the minimum service levels that the SETA must meet in performing its statutory functions, meeting the National Skills Development Strategy targets, and implementing its Strategic Plan (SP) and Annual Performance Plan (APP).

13.3 The SP and APP set out the Operational Plan on how the strategic objectives will be achieved and how funding will be allocated towards achieving SASSETA's strategic, financial and performance indicators with a view to making principle decisions that will guide the strategic direction for the period. The SP and the APP are subject to the approval of the Minister of Higher Education and Training.

14. ACCESSING DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING

The following broad processes will be followed to access the Discretionary Grant:

14.1 Government Departments and Public Entities with a valid Memorandum of Understanding / Agreement with SASSETA must submit an Expression of Interest listing their training needs for each financial year within the timeframes determined by SASSETA. Expressions of Interest will be presented to LPERC Sub-Committee to evaluate and make the necessary recommendations to LPERC and ultimately the Chief Executive Officer for final approval. If a Skills Development Provider is required to conduct training, such will be advertised and SASSETA shall source that provider through a funding window. Should a Government Department or Public Entity require to appoint their own provider, they should follow their own procurement processes in the appointment and provide proof on this regard to SASSETA.

14.2 Artisan Programme requests from government departments and other public entities may be allocated to DHET registered Centres of Specialisation and accredited public TVET Colleges without the need to advertise. Where private training Skills Development Providers are required, a competitive bidding process will be followed.

14.3 All other stakeholders not provided for in 14.1 and 14.2 above should apply for PIVOTAL and Non-PIVOTAL discretionary grants during an open funding window and the applications will follow the discretionary grant evaluation and approval process as outlined in clause 17 below.

14.4 When the PIVOTAL targets set out in the APP and SLA have been met and funds are available, SASSETA may invite applications for Non-PIVOTAL grants through a funding window.

15. FUNDING WINDOWS

15.1 Each financial year SASSETA shall prepare and advertise via the media an invitation to apply for projects and the first advertisement for each funding window type (private sector, public sector and Non-Pivotal or Strategic Projects) shall remain open for at least 21 days. The Chief Executive Officer shall approve all adverts. Should there be a need for deviation, the Chief Executive Officer must approve such deviation.

15.3 Should there be no successful/compliant applicants and as a result of which delivery on APP/SLA could be compromised after the first funding window of the private sector or public sector funding window:

15.3.1 SASSETA may Open a Closed Funding Window inviting all entities that have submitted their WSP and such WSP has been accepted by the SETA to submit proposals for training in areas that SASSETA has identified a shortfall in terms of the APP targets. This invitation will be published on the SASSETA website. Upon receipt of such proposals / applications the normal evaluation process will be followed.

15.3.2 Should the APP target be met, and there is a high demand for a learning intervention and there are sufficient funds available, then SASSETA may consider such funding applications (received within a funding window, or Expression of Interest) with the additional funding that is available.

15.5 Applicants seeking both Full Funding and Co-Funding for projects may apply in the appropriate funding window. Co-funding applications will be prioritised over applications for full funding.

15.6 Goods and services (including training) which have to be procured for projects recommended from the Expression of Interest, unsolicited project proposals and other approved discretionary grant projects will be procured utilising approved competitive bidding processes .

15.7 The Chief Executive Officer of SASSETA may, during the course of the financial year, publish on an urgent basis, proposals to address areas where project delivery is poor as reflected in the DHET QMR/SLA and/or APP reporting. Advertisements in this regard will be for a shorter duration of time than a normal advertisement, but not less than 7 calendar days to allow for all applicants to prepare for an application.

15.8 The award of Discretionary Grants shall take place as early in the financial year to which this policy applies as possible, provided that the APP and Budget of the SETA for the financial has been approved.

15.9 Applications for discretionary grants submitted in a prior year and whose evaluation was not concluded at the end of the prior year, may be considered in terms of the policy applicable in the prior year.

16. JOINT VENTURES

16.1 For PIVOTAL programmes advertised in the private sector funding window, all eligible applicants may indicate a preferred Skills Development Provider and provide all the SDP's compliance documents and proof of accreditation. This is not considered a joint venture.

16.2 For Non-PIVOTAL Strategic Projects where parties will be implementing the proposed project as a Joint Venture or Consortium, the sum total of all credentials within the joint venture / consortium must fully comply with the legal and regulatory requirements, the application made in the name of the Joint Venture / Consortium and a duly signed Joint Venture agreement clearly defining the roles of each party must be attached to the application. If successful, the

SETA will enter into a funding agreement with the JV or Consortium and not individual parties to the JV / Consortium.

17. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

17.1 A Learning Programmes Evaluation and Recommendations Committee (LPERC), whose main functions is the evaluation and adjudication of applications for Discretionary Grants and the making of recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer is hereby established.

17.2 LPERC shall have a sub-committee that shall be responsible to assess the initial compliance of applications with the applicable prescripts, evaluate the proposals and make recommendations to the LPERC.

17.3 LPERC adjudicates over the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee and makes recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer.

17.4 SASSETA will evaluate applications following a four-phase process that puts emphasis on good governance principles as defined in the DG SOP and the Terms of Reference of each Committee.

- 17.4.1 Compliance Assessment.
- 17.4.2 Evaluation
- 17.4.3 Due diligence
- 17.4.4 Adjudication

17.5 Consideration will be given to the amount of levies paid by the applicant, the applicants past performance and the number of other projects that the applicant has received / is being considered for in the financial year.

17.6 SASSETA may approve funding over and above the stipulated maximum Skills Development Provider fee for a project where costs of accommodation, meals for unemployed learners and transportation are necessary for the delivery of the project, especially where projects are in a rural area or for a specific beneficiary category of individuals once it is satisfied that there is a need, and that all due diligence was done for the recommendation of such funding.

17.7 SASSETA may also approve additional allowance over and above stipulated stipend rates for students with disabilities or for students left stranded from the cancellation of a project due to employer/ training Skills Development Provider contraventions /non-performance.

17.8 SASSETA reserves the right to allocate grants proportionately in line with the capacity of the organisation to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of grants and to minimise the risk of performance targets not being met.

17.9 SASSETA will ensure the rotation of service Skills Development Providers when appointing Skills Development Providers to train in respect of the training needs of the government departments and public entities. This will not be the only factor considered as the critical matter of the costing, track record and experience do play a role.

17.10 SASSETA reserves the right to implement conservative grant allocation regimes and additional support for entities new to SASSETA with no proven track record, existing companies with a poor track record, small companies, or non-levy paying companies.

17.11 Applicants who have not implemented a project within the preceding 12 months nor have an active project on the commitment register (at time of shortlisting / award recommendation) will be subject due diligence assessments before a funding agreement is concluded.

17.12 Should the applicant have an active project on the current Commitment Register in the year of application and there has been no material change in the status of the applicant, then a new due diligence need not be conducted.

17.13 For all artisan projects, SASSETA will ensure that workplace approval has been granted by the relevant SETA / QCTO prior to the conclusion of the funding agreement.

17.14 Applicants falling in the category stipulated 17.11 and 17.13 will not be awarded grants if they fail to fully cooperate during the due diligence process conducted by SASSETA or its representative, or if it is discovered that they falsified any documents or information at any point during the application and evaluation process.

17.15 SASSETA may award specified multi-year programmes with one year's budget at a time.

17.16 All grant recipients will be required to enter into a DG funding agreement with SASSETA to give effect to the grant award.

18. COMPOSITION OF DISCRETIONARY GRANT COMMITTEES

18.1 The following are appointed as Members of LPERC:

- 18.1.1 Chief Financial Officer
- 18.1.2 Executive Manager: Corporate Services
- 18.1.3 Executive Manager Learning Programmes
- 18.1.4 Executive Manager: Skills Research, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
- 18.1.5 Manager: Grants & Project Management (Non-Voting) – Presenter
- 18.1.6 Grants Practitioner (Non-Voting) – Observer, and Presenter in the absence of the Manager: Grants & Project Management

18.2 The Managers of the following departments are appointed as Members of the LPERC Sub-Committee:

- 18.2.1 Grants & Project Management
- 18.2.2 Finance
- 18.2.3 Learning Programmes – Private Sector
- 18.2.4 Learning Programmes – Public Sector
- 18.2.5 Education Training and Quality Assurance
- 18.2.6 Skills Planning & Research
- 18.2.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

18.3 In addition to 18.2 above, the Managers in the departments below are appointed as secondi to LPERC, alternatively Observers in the sub-committee and may be invited meetings to advise in areas of expertise as and when required;:

18.3.1 Information, Communications & Technology
18.3.2 Governance, Risk & Compliance
18.3.3 Marketing & Communications
18.3.4 Supply Chain Management
18.3.5 Human Resources Management

18.4 Where any of the positions indicated above are vacant, the Acting Manager / Executive Manager shall become a member until such time as the vacancy has been filled. If no employee has been formally appointed to act in that position, the Chief Executive Officer shall appoint the temporary member from the Managers of the Departments listed in 18.3 above.

18.5 The Chief Executive Officer will review and approve the Terms of Reference for the LPERC Sub-Committee and LPERC in line with the approved DG Policy.

18.6 The Chief Executive Officer will appoint the Chairperson and Secretariat of each Committee at the beginning of each financial year.

19 DISBURSEMENT OF DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

19.1 Discretionary Grants will be disbursed according to the provisions of the DG funding agreement to be entered into by the parties.

19.2 SASSETA reserves the right to implement conservative payment regimes for companies or entities new to SASSETA with no proven track record, existing companies or entities with a poor track record, small companies or entities, or non-levy paying companies.

20 AMENDMENTS TO DG FUNDING AGREEMENTS AND AWARDS

20.1 Changes to DG funding agreements may be necessary from time to time in the management of projects and contracts. Requests for project cancellations, write-backs, revocation of awards and transfers of funds will be approved by the Chief Executive Officer having considered the reasons advanced for the proposed amendment, impact on performance targets of the SETA and the financial implications. LPERC will be notified regularly of approved cancellations, write backs, revocation of awards and transferred funds, for noting.

20.2 Requests for additional funding and change in scope of approved projects will be tabled at the LPERC Sub-Committee to evaluate and make necessary recommendations to LPERC that will adjudicate and recommend to be made to the Chief Executive Officer.

20.3 Any errors, corrections of typographical errors are dealt with operationally between Executive Manager: Learning Programmes and the Chief Executive Officer.

21 EXTENSION OF PROJECTS

21.1 Extension of project duration with no financial implications shall be reviewed by the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes who will review the reasons for the extension request, impact on performance targets of the SETA and make necessary recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

21.2 Extension of project duration with financial implications shall be reviewed by LPERC Sub-Committee who will review the reasons for the extension request, financial implications, and impact on performance targets of the SETA and make the necessary recommendations to the LPERC for adjudication and recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer.

22 SUSPENSION OF PROJECTS

22.1 SASSETA reserves the right to suspend projects and related funding where there is prima facie evidence of misconduct, or abuse of learners. The Executive Manager: Learning Programmes shall present recommendations for suspension projects to the Chief Executive Offer for approval, having reviewed the reasons for the proposed suspension, financial impact and impact on performance targets of the SETA. When projects are suspended, for whatever reason no funds can be disbursed under these projects.

22.2 The Chief Executive Officer may lift suspension of projects on presentation of evidence by the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes that the reasons for the suspension have adequately been addressed.

23 TERMINATION OF PROJECTS

23.1 All projects will automatically terminate on the termination date of the DG funding agreement or on completion of the deliverables of the project, whichever comes first.

23.2 SASSETA reserves the right to terminate projects, having followed due process, where allegations of misconduct, abuse of learners have been confirmed as well as those whose performance remains poor despite a remedial process. The list of poor performing Skills Development Providers and those with a poor track record will be maintained by the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes..

23.3 All funds that remain unused once the termination and/or close-out processes have been completed shall revert to the SASSETA discretionary grant fund.

23.4 SASSETA will always prioritise learning and learners, as such it may appoint other Skills Development Provider(s) to complete terminated projects. These Skills Development Providers will be procured through a competitive bidding process and will be evaluated as per DG SOP, taking into account the unique circumstances of the project.

24 RE-INSTATEMENT OF PROJECTS

24.1 SASSETA reserves the right to re-instate projects and related funding where funding agreements had expired or been terminated when prima facie evidence of the provider having met the requirements of the agreement prior to expiry / termination or in instances where the service provider has provided a feasible Action Plan demonstrating exactly how they intend to meet the remaining deliverable(s) within the proposed re-instatement period and such Action Plan is supported by the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes.

24.2 Requests to re-instate projects shall be reviewed by Executive Manager: Learning Programmes who will review the reasons for the initial termination, proposed Action Plan, financial implications, and impact on performance targets of the SETA and make the necessary recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

25 PROJECT SUPPORT, MONITORING & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

25.1 SASSETA has an independent Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) department whose functions include, *inter alia*, monitoring of all programmes. These are provided for in separate Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting policies.

25.2 In addition to the MER policies and processes, the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes, shall establish support, monitoring and performance management processes to do the following:

25.2.1 To track and review progress and performance of projects.
25.2.2 Assess the progress and performance of the projects,
25.2.3 Identify any areas in which changes to the plan are required and initiate the corresponding changes for projects.
25.2.4 The key benefit for monitoring and controlling of projects is that project performance is measured and analysed at regular intervals, appropriate events, or exception conditions to identify variances from the project management plan for projects.
25.2.5 Controlling changes and recommending corrective or preventive action in anticipation of possible problems for projects.
25.2.6 Day-to-day monitoring the ongoing project activities against the project management plan and the project performance measurement baseline in projects.
25.2.7 Influencing the factors that could circumvent integrated change control or configuration management so only approved changes are implemented, and
25.2.8 This continuous monitoring provides the project team insight into the health of the project and identifies any areas requiring additional attention.

26 PIVOTAL GRANTS

The criteria below will be applied when evaluating funding applications for PIVOTAL grants:

26.1 Only Learning Programmes that address the Critical & Scarce Skills list as identified in the SSP, the Expressions of Interest received, the ERRP, PYEI and the Occupations in High Demand as gazetted will be considered.

26.2 Proposals / applications for funding / directives received from the Department of Higher Education.

26.3 Applicant Skills Development Providers/ employers must ensure that they are duly accredited for the duration of the programme in their own name (where applicable), be SARS compliant, be a registered business entity in good standing, possess a valid BBBEE certificate / affidavit and have all professional / sectoral / regulatory / statutory registrations required in the sub-sector, they are in a liquid cash position, they are registered for COIDA or have the necessary public liability insurance that will protect learners from injuries on duty.

26.4 Should applications received be in excess of those relevant to the SASSETA APP and SLA targets, SASSETA may consider such applications where funds are available.

27 ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT

This is technical training that will lead to one of the designated trades. This includes training done under the Centres of Specialisation programme of the DHET and is guided by the National Artisan Moderation Body (NAMB) Guidelines.

27.1 The stipend is included in the total amount and will be aligned to the rates set by the relevant Bargaining Council (for Artisans only).

27.2 An Artisan-trainee ratio of 1:3 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

27.3 SASSETA will cover the cost of stipends for up to 3 years; Pre-Assessment, Medical Assessments, Toolbox & PPE, Training (Skills Development Provider Fees, Learning Materials), Trade Test Preparation and Trade Test fees.

27.4 Both public and private institutions may train artisans, however preference will be given to designated Centres of Specialisation and public TVET Colleges when awarding discretionary grants.

27.5 Centres of Specialisation applications will be considered as outlined in the Centres of Specialisation Policy.

28 BURSARIES

The Bursaries Policy will be applied to identify suitable qualifying recipients of bursaries.

29 OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

An Occupational qualification is a qualification associated with a trade, occupation or profession resulting from work-based learning and comprises of knowledge/theory and application.

29.1 A mentor-trainee ratio of 1:3 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

29.1.1 Occupational qualification will be implemented over a period of up to 3 years.

29.1.2 Funding agreements will be issued for the full duration in line with the training and project implementation plans.

29.1.3 Beneficiaries may not be concurrently funded by SASSETA for any other programme while registered on a SASSETA funded Occupational Qualification.

29.1.4 Preference will be given to employers who commit to employ some or all of their learners at the end of the Occupational qualification, subject to the satisfactory performance of the learner.

30 LEARNERSHIPS

A Learnership is a structured, work-based learning programme that includes theory and workplace learning and leads to an NQF registered qualification. Learnerships are directly linked to an occupation or field of work and are registered by SETAs. While SASSETA may fund learnerships registered against national qualifications that are accredited by other ETQA / Qualifications Development Partners (QDP's); SASSSETA will only register Learnerships against national qualifications that are quality assured by SASSETA or the QCTO.

30.1 Learners will be funded to pursue learnerships pitched at NQF Level 1 – NQF Level 8.

30.2 A mentor-trainee ratio of 1:5 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

30.3 Learnerships will be implemented over 12 months for certificate level learnerships and 24 months for diploma level learnerships, with a further 4 months for recruitment, quality assurance and administrative processes.

30.4 Funding agreements will be issued in line with the training and project implementation plans and provisions of this policy.

30.5 Beneficiaries may not be concurrently funded by SASSETA for any other programme while registered for a SASSETA funded learnership.

30.6 Preference will be given to employers who commit to employ some or all of their learners at the end of the learnership, subject to the satisfactory performance of the learner.

31 SKILLS PROGRAMMES

A Skills Programme is an occupationally based; credit-bearing learning programme which when completed will constitute credits towards a qualification registered on the National Qualification Framework. While SASSETA may fund Skills Programmes registered against national qualifications that are accredited by other ETQA / Qualifications Development Partners (QDP's); SASSSETA will only register Skills Programmes against national qualifications that are quality assured by SASSETA or the QCTO.

31.1 SASSETA will fund duly registered skills programmes pitched at NQF Level 1 – NQF Level 10.

31.2 A mentor-trainee ratio of 1:5 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

31.3 This grant will be for programmes offered over a minimum of 5 days and a maximum of 6 months. This period may be extended to 9 months on presentation of a learning plan that clearly accounts for the extended period from the training Skills Development Provider.

31.4 Funding agreements will be issued in line with the training and project plans in consideration of the certification status at the responsible quality assurance body.

31.5 Only Skills Programmes that address the Critical & Scarce Skills list as identified in the SSP, the ERRP, the PYEI, the Expressions of Interest, DHET proposals / funding requests / directives and the Occupations in High Demand as gazetted will be considered for funding.

32 WORKPLACE INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL)

32.1 There are 5 types of WIL grants, and they are detailed below. SASSETA offers WIL Grants in accordance with the following principles:

32.1.1 People with disabilities in any of the categories above will be given preference.

32.1.2 Preference will be given to employers who commit to employ some or all of their interns at the end of the internship, subject to the satisfactory performance of the Interns / Candidates / Pupils.

32.1.3 A Mentor: Trainee ratio of 1:5 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

32.1.4 Graduate interns / Candidate Attorneys / Pupils will be developed according to the training plan submitted by the employer to SASSETA at the beginning of the Internship / Candidacy / Pupillage.

32.1.5 A service certificate will be required at the end of the Internship / Candidacy / Pupillage.

32.1.6 The beneficiaries may not be concurrently funded for any other programme for the duration of the WIL programme without the express written approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

32.1.7 The stipends will be disbursed in one of the following manners:

32.1.7.1 Monthly directly to the learners in line with DG contracts.

32.1.7.2 Quarterly, in advance, to the employer who will include the learner in their payroll and provide proof of payment to SASSETA. This option is only available to private employers who have previously demonstrated the ability to pay learners on time and provide evidence of such timeously.

32.2 CANDIDACY PROGRAMMES

A Candidacy programme is a structured workplace-based learning programme undertaken by a graduate as part of the requirement for registration as a professional in the required professional designation as stipulated by a professional body.

32.2.1 LLB graduates pursuing registration (admission) as an attorney or advocate will be considered for this grant.

32.2.2 A Principal-trainee ratio of 1:3 is recommended (unless otherwise regulated by a specific sub sector) to maximise skills transfer while allowing for operational requirements of the mentor.

32.2.3 Law firms, Advocates and other institutions that apply for Candidacy grants must be duly approved / registered for the training of Candidate Attorneys or Pupils.

32.2.4 Preference will be given to Black females and people with disabilities.

32.2.5 Funding for Candidacy grants will be considered as follows:

32.2.5.1 Candidate Attorneys may be paid to a maximum of 24 months, no Practical Legal Training (PLT); or

32.2.5.2 Candidate Attorneys may be paid to a maximum of 12 months, plus the cost of PLT; or

32.2.5.3 Pupils will be paid to a maximum of 12 months.

32.2.6 Preference will be given to employers who commit to employ some or all of their Candidates / Pupils at the end of the candidacy as well as employers who apply for the 12 months option with PLT, subject to the satisfactory performance of the Candidates / Pupils.

32.3 INTERNSHIPS

32.3.1 An internship is a programme designed to give unemployed University, University of Technology, TVET, CET and Learnerships graduates an opportunity to apply their academic qualifications through structured workplace exposure.

32.3.2 Internships can also be offered to National Senior Certificate graduates and people with disabilities with any level of qualification.

32.3.3 These learners are placed on a full-time basis in stakeholder companies towards gaining structured workplace experience that builds on the qualification.

32.3.4 Interns in this category will receive stipends for a maximum of 24 months.

32.4 TVET PLACEMENT

TVET Placement means a period of workplace-based learning undertaken as part of the requirement for a Diploma, National Diploma, Higher Education Certificate or Advanced Certificate as vocational qualification stipulated in the Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF).

32.4.1 Where structured workplace learning is required by a TVET, such requirements need to be properly set out by the TVET college for the employer to provide structured workplace learning. For qualification purposes, the structured workplace learning must be in accordance with the prescripts set by the TVET College as set out in the logbook.

32.4.2 Unemployed learners who need to complete a qualification through a TVET institution will receive stipends for a maximum of 18 months.

32.5 UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

32.5.1 Where structured workplace learning is required by a University of Technology in order to meet the requirements of a qualification, such requirements need to be properly set out by the University for the employer to provide structured workplace learning. For qualification purposes, the structured workplace learning must be in accordance with the prescripts set by the relevant University of Technology.

32.5.2 The University of Technology learners will have logbooks from the University of Technology to guide them and their mentors. Placement is for up to 6 months.

32.6 TVET / CET LECTURER DEVELOPMENT

TVET / CET lecturer workplace exposure refers to a period of workplace-based learning a lecturer employed at a public TVET / CET College receives at a workplace that offers the services being trained. This is done to strengthen the public TVET / CET training system.

32.6.1 The grant will cover the accommodation, meals, transport, and courseware of the lecturer.

32.6.2 Lecturers on this programme will still be earning a salary from their TVET College, thus no stipend is payable.

33 CAREER DEVELOPMENT

SASSETA provides career guidance, support, and development to learners in Grades 8 – 12, Life Orientation and other Educators, NGOs, CBO's, Libraries, and other stakeholders that operate in the Career Guidance / Career Development space and require the funding. Stakeholders may access these services by submitting a written request to SASSETA; and SASSETA pro-actively engage stakeholders and provide guidance and support.

33.1 SASSETA will only pay for exhibitions after following a clear and transparent procurement process.

33.2 Career development activities will be funded from the non-PIVOTAL funds.

34 NON-PIVOTAL GRANTS

SASSETA will, in consultation with its stakeholders, identify specific interventions that will support the implementation of its sector skills plan, the National Skills Accord, the National Skills Development Plan and other relevant national and identified industry priorities through catalytic/strategic projects falling outside the space of PIVOTAL programmes.

A Non-Pivotal Discretionary Grant is made available to stakeholders (as identified under the purpose of the DG Policy) for initiatives that advance the goals and objectives of the Sector Skills Plan (SSP), objectives of the NSDP and interventions as laid down in the SETA Grant Regulations that are not necessarily unit standard based training. These include:

a) learning material development,

b) new qualification development,
c) qualification re-alignment and review
d) development of Occupational Skills Programmes
e) support to military veterans and/or their dependants,
f) non-pivotal rural development programmes,
g) stakeholder capacity building / support,
h) career guidance / career development,
i) training for retrenchees to rescale and rebuild sustainable communities,
j) TVET infrastructure development,
k) Gender Based Violence,
l) Victim Empowerment,
m) Attorneys and Advocate Admission Exams for admission to the attorneys and advocates profession / Practical Legal Training (PLT)
n) Cyber Security,
o) Development of E-Learning material, software, and other infrastructure,
p) Supplier / Enterprise development;
q) Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)
r) Presidential Youth Empowerment Initiatives (PYEI) not covered in PIVOTAL grants
s) Centres of Excellence,
t) Programmes for People with Disabilities,
u) Offender and Ex-Offender Programmes
v) Youth Empowerment Programmes
w) Sector specific / legal updates
x) Learning interventions that lead to the accumulation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points
y) piloting interventions flowing from the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training (PSET),
z) benchmarking,
aa) study tours; and
bb) programmes dealing with sustainability issues in the industry.
cc) Short courses linked to programmes identified in the SSP

34.1 The non-pivotal grant does not cover conferences, campaigns or any political events.

34.2 A portion of the discretionary grant component may fall outside the named projects / programme types to allow for an allocation to piloting of special projects/programmes.

34.3 SASSETA may enter into strategic partnerships for delivery of projects as guided by national policies and sector imperatives and sustainability issues facing the sector.

34.4 The SASSETA shall as far as possible spend its non-PIVOTAL funding on public TVET's, public CET Colleges, public universities, trade unions, NGOs, CBO, NPOs, NLPE's, CPF's, Co-operatives and rural schools by funding critical and necessary institutional support that is required by these institutions.

34.5 This also includes providing support to learners in rural schools that will aim to enhance their performance..

34.6 The SASSETA may also use these funds to run training or workshops for organisations that fall within the Safety and Security cluster or organisations that provide benefits to the Safety and Security cluster.

34.7 The SASSETA shall, as far as possible, spend its non-PIVOTAL funding on public institutions by funding critical and necessary institutional support that is required by these institutions.

34.8 The budget available for non-pivotal grants per year is determined by the SASSETA as part of its internal budgeting process. Part of the non-pivotal grant will be used internally. In this regard, competitive bidding processes as outlined in the DG SOP must be fully adhered to.

34.9 The allocation of non-PIVOTAL grants will be done under the following guidelines:

34.9.1 The Executive Committee of SASSETA will identify programmes that must be prioritised during a financial year as outlined in the SSP.

34.9.2 There will be an advertisement inviting proposals for these programmes and the normal advertisement and evaluation process for discretionary grants will be followed.

34.9.3 The budget will be pre-determined and subject to limits within the SDLA and the approved Annual Performance Plan.

34.9.4 For PIVOTAL learning programmes, the funding will be aligned to the funding limits herein and for non-PIVOTAL programmes, LPERC will recommend the grant value having considered the proposal presented and available funding.

34.9.5 Transfer of ownerships for tools of trade, tablets and/or laptops purchased during the projects may be made to the beneficiaries.

34.9.6 The applicant will be allowed to use a portion of the funds as stipulated above for venue hire and catering. SASSETA can assist with provision of facilities and catering in line with the SASSETA processes.

34.9.7 Applications / Expressions of Interest / project proposals should be submitted according to the format and guidelines and timelines provided by SASSETA.

34.9.8 Where an applicant has applied for a PIVOTAL programme using the non-pivotal application form, such application may only be considered if the date of receipt is within an open funding window where similar applications were invited and received.

34.9.9 It is important that the proposal reflects a clear plan of how the project will be implemented. The application must clearly reflect how the grant will be utilized for skills development or capacity building.

34.9.10 Due to the fact that proposals may come to the SASSETA from different stakeholders, including public sector and the private sector, this criterion should be used in line with other evaluation criteria where necessary depending on the type of proposal received and the type of applicant and the type of grant applied for.

34.9.11 The SASSETA reserves the right to allocate funding proportionately in line with the capacity of the organisation to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of grants and management of performance related risks.

34.9.12 All grant recipients will be required to enter a discretionary grant funding agreement with SASSETA.

35 UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

An unsolicited proposal is a proposal / grant application / Expression of Interest that is received by SASSETA outside Expression of Interest window for parties with whom the SETA has a valid MOU. Having a valid MOU with SASSETA does not automatically translate to an entitlement to submit proposals at any time.

35.1 SASSETA will not consider unsolicited proposals from the private sector.

35.2 SASSETA will only consider unsolicited proposals / funding requests / Expressions of Interest from public Universities, TVET Colleges as well as DHET registered CET Colleges, NGOs, CBO, NPOs, and Cooperatives , if they meet clearly defined government priorities on skills development linked to the NSDP, Centres of Specialisation, ERRP and PYEI and only if the entity has a valid MOU with SASSETA at the time of submission of such request.

35.3 Where the SETA receives an unsolicited proposal from entities set out in 35.2, the SETA can consider the proposal if it meets clearly defined government priorities on skills development linked to the NSDP, Centres of Specialisation, ERRP and PYEI.

35.4 Where SASSETA considers a proposal as anticipated in 35.2 and 35.3 above, the proposal should meet the following requirements:

35.4.1 Must be in line with clearly defined government priorities on skills development linked to the NSDP, Centres of Specialisation, ERRP and PYEI.
35.4.2 Prioritisation shall be determined by the impact the proposed programme will have on the sector or to the youth.
35.4.3 The project does not in any way take away funding from other projects, which might have been funded by the discretionary grant funding funds during the funding window.
35.4.4 Project proposals may only be considered outside the discretionary grant funding window once all solicited projects (received through an open funding window or Expression of Interest Window) that could be funded have been funded during the funding window.
35.4.5 Should SASSETA be interested in accepting an uninvited proposal, such proposal shall be reported to DHET as per regulations issued by DHET.

36 STRATEGIC PROJECTS

The SASSETA Board may propose programmes for implementation in line with national imperatives. These will be provided for as follows:

36.1 Strategic Projects will be funded from the NON-PIVOTAL budget.

36.2 A maximum of 10% of the discretionary grant may be set aside for the implementation of Board Strategic Projects, having given consideration to internal functions funded from NON-PIVOTAL including career development, tracer studies, learning material development as well as qualification and curriculum development.

36.3 Proposed projects will be scoped and conceptualised in SASSETA, and the Concept Proposals presented for approval by the Board via the LPERC Sub-Committee, LPERC and the office of the Chief Executive Officer.

36.4 A competitive bidding process will be followed for the sourcing of Skills Development Providers, as provided for in the operational mandate.

36.5 Strategic Board projects may be awarded in a financial year in excess of the approved budget as recorded in the APP if the award is made after the SETA has met all its targets, has provided for internal functions payable from the Non-PIVOTAL grant and is not in excess of the 20% provided for NON-PIVOTAL grants as set out in the SDLA.

37 CO-FUNDING

37.1 This Policy allows for the SASSETA to enter into co-funding of learning programmes which it views to be strategic in nature in the development of the scarce and critical skills in the sector and national skills priorities.

37.2 Co-funding applications will be prioritised over full funding requests.

38 MULTI YEAR PROGRAMMES

38.1 All applications and agreements entered into for Artisans and bursaries shall be linked to the full duration of the qualification / programme, but funding may be allocated on an annual basis, subject to the performance of the learner, training Skills Development Provider and subject to funding availability.

38.2 Should a learner withdraw from their studies during the contract period, the contract shall be automatically terminated.

38.3 Skills Development Providers will either be awarded multiyear projects or where they were not awarded the multiyear contracts at application stage they will be considered without any bias for continuation of training. In this regard there will not be any need for them to re-apply for the continuation of the training.

38.4 In cases where there is no multiyear contract; public training Skills Development Provider extension should be considered for presentation to the Learning Programmes: Evaluation and Recommendation Committee prior to approval by the Chief Executive Officer/Board. In this case new contracts will need to be entered into for the following year.

39 FORCE MAJEURE

39.1 No party to a Discretionary Grant Funding Agreement shall be deemed to be in default of any provision of that agreement or be liable to any other party or to any third party for delay, error, failure in performance or interruption of performance resulting directly or indirectly from causes beyond that party's reasonable control ("force majeure").

39.2 For purposes of clarity, such causes beyond a party's reasonable control shall mean any happening, whether due to natural causes or human acts, which is unforeseeable with reasonable foresight and unavoidable with reasonable care, and shall include, but is not limited

to, any regulations or instructions issued by any governmental authorities or any department or agency thereof or allied thereto, Acts of God, fire, wind, floods, typhoons and storms, earthquake, elements, war hostilities (whether declared or not), strikes, embargoes, invasion, acts of public enemies, rebellion, insurrection, terrorism, epidemics, pandemics, riots or natural disasters beyond the reasonable control of the parties.

39.3 Any party who is affected by the aforegoing shall forthwith take all reasonable steps to commence performance as soon as is practically possible and shall keep the other party/ies informed at all times of all relevant matters relating to such cause beyond its reasonable control.

40 REPORTING

Performance reports and reports on operational progress and financial status on all SASSETA projects and grants will be submitted quarterly, as relevant, to the SASSETA Board and the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

41 COMMITMENTS

SASSETA will only raise "definite commitments" against agreements that have been duly signed by all parties. Should one-party sign then same will be recorded as a "non-definite" commitment.

42 POPI ACT

42.1 SASSETA complies with the provisions of the POPIA Act. Information collected will be solemnly utilized for the purpose of the engagement. Consent will be obtained from the information owner to ensure that the user is aware of the information collection purposes and the intent of use. This will further be inclusive of any further processing that will be dictated by the processes that will be initiated as part of the engagement.

42.2 SASSETA will put in place controls to secure the information collected including the preservation of quality of the information and mechanisms to ensure ease of access and accountability for information collected.

42.3 The information collection process will be communicated to the information owner including the duration of use, disposal post utilization and any records that will be retained for the purposes of the engagement. This will further extend to any information replication as a result of backup or research study files that will be created.

43 APPEALS

43.1 SASSETA subscribes to principles of transparency, equity and fairness and subscribes to the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA). As such, applicants who feel their application was unfairly declined are invited to submit a letter of appeal stating factors they feel were overlooked in the evaluation process to the Chief Executive Officer within seven days (7) of receipt of a letter declining the application.

43.2 The Chief Executive Officer will consider whether the appeal has prospects of success:

43.2.1 If the appeal has prospects of success the Chief Executive Officer shall refer such appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board (the Appeals Committee) who will preside over the appeal.

43.2.2 If the appeal has no prospect of success, the Chief Executive Officer shall inform the appellant of such and provide them with reasons. The appellant may, within seven (7) days of receiving the reasons from the Chief Executive Officer petition the Executive Committee of the Board.

43.3 The Executive Committee of the Board, as the Appeals Committee will review the application in line with the relevant discretionary grant policy, published DG advert, due diligence results and evaluation outcome, where applicable, consider the financial implications, and make a decision. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final.

43.4 LPERC shall be notified of any appeals submitted and the decision of the Appeals Committee.

44 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this Policy lies in the office of the Executive Manager: Learning Programmes and will apply from the date indicated above. On matters the Policy does not give guidance on the Chief Executive Officer shall provide same.

45 POLICY VALIDITY

This Policy will be valid from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and is subject to review by the Accounting Authority annually as required by the SETA Grant Regulations.

46. APPROVED GRANT RATES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMMES

a) LEARNERSHIPS & OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Discretionary grants towards Learnerships and Occupational Qualifications will be paid subject to the maximum annual amounts stipulated below:

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner
Learnership Programmes/Skills Development Provider Fees	NQF 1 NQF Level 2-3 NQF Level 4 NQF Level 5 NQF Level 6 and above	Up to R 16 000.00 per annum Up to R 18 000.00 per annum Up to R 20 000.00 per annum Up to R 24 000.00 per annum Up to R 26 000.00 per annum
Special Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Projects	Various Levels	Up to 50% of full learnership cost as indicated above.

The stipend is determined by the level of the learnership enrolled for, irrespective of the individual qualifications.

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner per Month
Stipends - Learnerships	NQF 1 NQF Level 2 NQF Level 3 NQF Level 4 NQF Level 5 NQF Level 6 onwards	R 1 800.00 R 2 000.00 R 2 500.00 R 3 500.00 R 4000.00 R 4 500.00

No stipend is payable to employed learners.

45.1.1 **SKILLS PROGRAMMES**

The grant will be approved up to the maximum values stated below:

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner per Month
Skills Programmes Skills Development Provider Fees (Non-Labour / Material-Intensive practical / workplace training)	NQF Level 2-4 NQF Level 5-6 NQF Level 7-8	R 5 500.00 R 8 500.00 R 12 500.00
Artisan related / Technical Skills Programmes, and other labour/materials-intensive skills programmes Skills Development Provider Fees (Labour / Material Intensive practical's/ workplace training)	NQF Level 2-6 NQF Level 7-8	R 12 500.00 R 14 500.00

Stipend

With the exception of programmes for unemployed learners with disabilities, learners with special needs and military veterans, SASSETA will not pay a stipend for programmes shorter than 3 months.

For Unemployed Learners on Programmes lasting 3 months or more, stipends will be disbursed according to the schedule below:

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner per month
Skills Programmes 18.2 (3 months or more) No stipend will be paid for Skills Programmes 18.2 less than 3 months. Projects for learners with disability, military veterans, and learners with special needs	NQF Level 2 NQF Level 3 NQF Level 4 NQF Level 5 NQF Level 6 onwards	R 2 000.00 R 2 500.00 R 3 500.00 R 4 000.00 R 4 500.00 Additional 20% per month

No stipend is payable to employed learners.

45.1.2 WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING / INTERNSHIPS

No grant is payable to the employer, only stipends to the learners.

Stipend

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications		Amount per Learner
Work Integrated Learning Programmes (Internships, TVET Placements and Graduate Placements	NQF Level 1	• General Education and Training Certificate (Grade 9) • Adult National Senior Certificate	R3500 per month
	NQF Level 2	• National Certificate Vocational 2	
	NQF Level 3	• National Certificate Vocational 3	
	NQF Level 4	• National Senior Certificate (Grade 12) • Adult National Certificate • National Certificate Vocational 4	R4000 per month
	NQF Level 5	• Higher Certificate • Advanced National Certificate Vocational 5 • National Certificate Vocational 6	R4500 per month
	NQF Level 6	• Diploma • Advanced Certificate	R5000 per month
	NQF Level 7	• Bachelor's Degree • Advanced Diploma	R5500 per month
	NQF Level 8	• Post Graduate Diploma • Honours Degree	R6500 per month
		• All 4-year and Professional degrees	R7000 pe month
	NQF Level 9	• Master's Degree	R7 500 per month
	NQF Level 10	• Doctoral Degree	R8 500 per month

45.1.3 ARTISAN TRAINING

Funding to be in line with the published artisan funding rates as amended by the Department of Higher Education from time to time. Current rate is up to maximum of R206 290 over 3 years.

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner
Artisans Programmes (Unemployed)	Grant amount includes the following: - Pre-Assessment - Stipend for up to 3 years (rate determined in line with Bargaining Council) - Medical Assessments - Toolbox & PPE	R206 290 The Grant amount excludes the following: - Rural learner support - Disability support - Accommodation

Programme and Funding Type	Programme Levels and Qualifications	Amount per Learner
	- Training (Skills Development Provider Fees, Learning Materials) - Trade Test Preparation - Trade Test fees	- Infrastructure
Artisans Programmes (Employed)	Grant amount includes the following: - Pre-Assessment - Medical Assessments - Toolbox & PPE - Training (Skills Development Provider Fees, Learning Materials) - Trade Test Preparation - Trade Test fees	R103 145 The Grant amount excludes the following: - Rural learner support - Disability support - Accommodation - Infrastructure
ARPL	Grant amount includes the following: - Stipend for up to 12 months (for unemployed learners) - Pre-Assessment Fees - Medical Assessments - Top-Up Training - Trade Test Preparation - Trade Test fees	R35 000 for employed learners. R55 000 for unemployed learners

a) The above includes at least one re-assessment opportunity for the Trade Test for each learner.
b) The stipend amount included above will be determined the by rates as agreed with the relevant Bargaining Council.
c) The grant amount paid for Employed learners will exclude stipends as the learners receive a salary from their employers.
d) The stipend will cease to be paid from the date the learner passes a Trade Test.

45.1.4 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

An additional allowance of 20% may be paid to the employer/ training Skills Development Provider for unemployed PWD on SETA funded programmes.

Employers may apply, with motivation and supporting documents, for a once-off allowance to modify the learning environment to accommodate learners living with disabilities.

45.1.5 GRADUATION CEREMONIES

A once-off graduation cost of up to R750 per learner who completes a full Learnership, Occupational Qualification and a Strategic Project may be granted.