NSFAS Weekly-Post

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The NSFAS tale "misses no middle"

NSFAS officials exhibiting to students during one of the recent Career Expos.

Written by
Tshepo Boshiane

The peculiar tale of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and government's apatite to make a positive contribution in the lives of many ordinary South Africans through education; has been poorly narrated if not distorted in the last three decades.

By offering both bursaries and loans, government has been able to unlock many doors of learning in the post school education and training (PSET) sector; producing teachers, engineers, doctors, nurses, plumbers, and accountants, to mention but a few.

In 1999, when the government took full control of NSFAS, R441 million in loans and bursaries were made available to students. The budget of NSFAS grew through the years, seeing many beneficiaries enter the doors on higher learning and training.

From a budget of R3.6 billion in 2010, the NSFAS funding budget had increased to R5.6 billion in the 2011 academic year. This escalated to R9 billion in 2014 and R10 billion in 2016. By end of 2014, NSFAS had disbursed R7 billion to assist university students and R2 billion to assist TVET college students.

The growing need of access to higher education and high cost of education sparked the #FeesMustFall protests which started in mid-October 2015. In 2017, NSFAS fully adopted a news Student Centred Model whereby NSFAS students applied for funding directly from NSFAS and received funding outcomes directly and not through institutions.

For the 2017 academic year, NSFAS funded 460 341 students, with 200 339 at the 50 TVET colleges and 260 002 students at 26 public universities. On 16 December 2017, the former President announced that government would be phasing in "fully subsidised free higher education and training for poor and working-class South Africans."

With the bursary qualification cap for the household income now set at R350 000 per annum, following the presidential announcement, concerns over the none support of the "Missing Middle" escalated. The Missing Middle as determined by the department, refers to those who fall beyond the funding threshold of R350 000 – R600 000.

With the department's commitment to making education more accessible, further intervention has been made to assist all those who otherwise not qualify for financial assistance. NSFAS through the Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation has in 2024 introduced a New Loan Scheme to assist the Missing Middle.

Almost R3.8 billion has since been allocated to support the new loan scheme in 2024. The loan scheme is set to support both undergraduate and postgraduate students who fall under the Missing Middle cohort; seeking to study Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as well as Humanities programmes.

Our Key NSFAS Projects:

- Student Accommodation
- The Recoveries project
- New Loan Scheme
- The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Fundisa Abanye —Educate Others

Written by
Tshepo Boshiane

"Fundisa Abanye — Educate Others," this is a message by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to encourage past beneficiaries to repay their loans through a Loan Repayment Campaign.

The campaign seeks to outline the importance of paying back their loans, that in turn will assist future beneficiaries to also have the opportunity to study further.

Debtors are encouraged to use the below account details to make repayments through Direct Deposit or Stop Order method.

Name of Account: NSFAS
Branch Code: 210554
Bank: First National Bank
Account Number: 500 600 28203
Ref Number: Must be the debtor's
ID NUMBER

For enquiries, debtors are encouraged to contact the NSFAS Contact Centre Mondays to Fridays from 08H00 - 17H00 on telephone number 0800 067327 or email collections@nsfas.org.za.

NSFAS in talks with institutions over student accommodation challenges

Written by
Maduvha Maseda

On Monday March 25, 2024, the NSFAS Management led by Acting Chief Executive Officer Mr Masile Ramorwesi engaged management of institutions in matters relating to student accommodation for NSFAS beneficiaries.

These includes Walter Sisulu University and University of Fort Hare, which are part of the NSFAS student accommodation pilot project. The engagements were to allow the NSFAS and institutions to reflect on the pilot journey thus far, identify challenges and how they can be mitigated through joint efforts.

Amongst issues raised were those of strengthening communication between both NSFAS and institutions and accommodation providers, as well as working together to improve the number of accredited beds. The engagements further focused on finding solutions to ensure the seamless registration of beds and the payment of registered accommodation providers.

NSFAS set to open 2024 TVET Walk-In Applications

Written by
Anele Ntswayi

In a Circular dated 20 March 2024, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) announced the dates for opening and closing of the 2024 TVET Walk-In Applications.

The opening and closing dates for 2024 NSFAS TVET Walk-In applications are aligned as closely as possible to the TVET academic calendar as issued by the Department of Higher Education and Training. Colleges that are participating in the Centres of Specialisation programmes, should encourage participating students to also apply during the available application window.

Trimester 2 to open from the 13th of May 2024 and close on the 31st of May 2024.

Semester 2 to open from the 09th of July 2024 and close on the 26th of July 2024.

Trimester 3 to open from the 02nd of September 2024 and close on the 20th of September 2024.

NSFAS funding lies at the heart of the available opportunities

Written by
Anele Ntswayi

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) was invited by NYDA to participate in a Career Expo on March 20, 2024, at Tafelkop Stadium in Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality, Limpopo, to provide young people with opportunity to improve their lives.

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) recognised the need of empowering youth by providing them with the resources and support they need to better their lives.

By offering carrer expo program and initiative, NYDA aimed to address the challenges faced by the youth in education, employment, and personal development.

"The National Student Financial Aid Scheme is fostering a generation of confident, talented, and self-sufficient individuals who are ready to contribute to society," said Siphe Matomela, NSFAS Outreach Officer.

"I encourage young people to continue taking advantage of the opportunities that we have provided for them." As the NYDA's Executive Chairperson, Ms. Asanda Luwaca emphasises the necessity of grabbing these possibilities to advance their growth and development.