
Call for applications: ALC Scholarship/Bursary support
2026

The African Laser Centre initiative (ALC) is an **open, non-exclusive partnership** to stimulate innovation, research and technology development **in lasers and their applications** across Africa. In support of this broad objective, it **seeks local, continental and global partnerships**. The ALC is recognised as an **AU-NEPAD Flagship Programme**. To reach this objective, the ALC has an active ALC Research Collaboration support programme, a conference, workshops and topical school programme (the ALC Training Programme), an ALC Knowledge Exchange Programme and an ALC Scholarship Programme for African students to enrol and do postgraduate degrees at a South African tertiary institution in a laser- and laser application-related research field.

The CSIR Photonics Centre is managing the funding allocation from the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation in support of the objectives of the ALC.

The CSIR hereby invites applications from researchers in South Africa or across Africa with active collaborations with researchers at South African universities for bursary support for their non-South African students¹, who intend to further their postgraduate studies in laser and laser application-related disciplines, and who will be registered at a South African university in 2026.

Support for all ALC activities is subject to funding availability. For master's level studies, the ALC Scholarship value for 2025 will be R 100 000 per annum. For doctoral studies, the annual value is R 140 000 per annum. For master's level studies, only two years of funding support will be allowed, and for doctoral studies, three years of funding support will be allowed.

It is important to note that students who presently hold an ALC Scholarship, and who have not yet completed their studies, also need to apply for continuation of funding.

Who may apply?

- Students working within an existing funded ALC collaboration project who wish to pursue laser and/or laser applications-related master's or doctoral research studies at a South African university will get preference; and
- Master's and doctoral students from Africa who wish to pursue their studies in laser and/or laser applications-related disciplines at South African universities can also apply.

¹ Students from African countries excluding the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Only a few RSA students may be considered under exceptional circumstances and subject to funding availability.

Note: The application for an ALC Scholarship must be submitted via a supervisor at a South African university where the student is or will be enrolled. A strong motivation is required by the student's South African-based supervisor.

Evaluation criteria:

The decision to award the bursary will be final and the following criteria will be used:

- Student's performance gleaned from academic record and motivated by the research supervisor;
- Relevance of research project in which the student will be involved (it must be laser- and/or laser applications-based research);
- Acceptance of the student by a South African university (a letter of acceptance from the university is a requirement). Applications where students are registered at a non-South African University will not be considered;
- Preference will be given to applications where the student's studies are aligned with an existing ALC research collaboration project;
- A certified copy of the student's full tertiary academic record is required. Not submitting this will **disqualify** an application; and
- For continuation students, a detailed Annual Progress Report must also be submitted. A template for the report is available from the CSIR Photonics Centre. Continuation funding will not be allocated without a fully signed ALC Scholarship Application **and** a signed ALC Scholarship Annual Progress Report at the closing date for applications.

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Closing date for applications: **Friday, 17 October 2025**

Scholarship application forms and templates for progress reports are available from the CSIR Photonics Centre.

For enquiries, contact 012 841 3511 or send an email to NLCRentalPool@csir.co.za.