

# Student Curriculum Lekgotla (SCL) National Funding Request and Programme Budget

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### National Funding Request and Programme Budget

#### 1. Overview

The Student Curriculum Lekgotla (SCL) proposes a **R500,000 annual funding envelope** to support the development and delivery of a coordinated national student platform for curriculum transformation, student engagement, research, capacity development, national dialogue and strategic representation.

The proposed contribution is:

**R50,000 × 10 participating institutions = R500,000**

The funding is intended to establish a shared national infrastructure rather than support isolated student activities. Through this model, participating institutions gain access to a coordinated network, shared digital systems, national engagement mechanisms, research and capacity-development opportunities, and structured pathways for student participation at important national, continental and international medical education events.

The proposal is built around a principle of:

▮ **Delegated operational responsibility within a clear institutional accountability framework.**

SCL would manage implementation of the approved annual programme, while participating institutions retain appropriate oversight through advance approval of the programme and budget, defined expenditure thresholds, institutional financial procedures, quarterly reporting and annual reconciliation.

The objective is to move from **ad hoc activity and funding requests towards an agreed annual plan, predictable funding, central coordination and measurable accountability.**

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## 2. Why SCL, Why a Shared National Model?

Curriculum transformation and meaningful student engagement are not confined to a single institution. Students experience common challenges, conduct related research, and increasingly need opportunities to collaborate across institutional and national boundaries.

At present, institutions may independently:

- organise student consultations;
- develop leadership programmes;
- identify students for conferences;
- support student research;
- organise curriculum discussions;
- coordinate student representation;
- develop educational resources.

This can result in duplication, uneven access and fragmented institutional learning.

SCL proposes a different model:

▮ **Build shared infrastructure once, coordinate nationally, and return the benefit to participating institutions.**

The network allows institutions to access capabilities that would be costly and inefficient to reproduce individually.

This includes:

- national student engagement;
- structured cross-institutional dialogue;

- research collaboration;
- student leadership development;
- coordinated conference participation;
- knowledge translation;
- shared digital infrastructure;
- a national student network.

### 3. What the R500,000 Will Fund

| Area                                               | Allocation      |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Digital platforms and collaboration                | <b>R30,000</b>  |
| Media, branding and marketing                      | <b>R52,000</b>  |
| Capacity development                               | <b>R50,000</b>  |
| Research dissemination and participation           | <b>R25,000</b>  |
| Meeting catering                                   | <b>R20,000</b>  |
| Events, Lekgotlas and SAAHE Conference partnership | <b>R50,000</b>  |
| Strategic conference participation                 | <b>R260,000</b> |
| Sundry / contingency                               | <b>R13,000</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                       | <b>R500,000</b> |

### 4. Digital Platforms for Shared Collaboration and Administration

#### R30,000

| Item                         | Allocation     | Purpose                                                                                 |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Google Workspace             | <b>R20,000</b> | Shared email, calendars, cloud storage and collaboration across multiple institutions   |
| Notion Plus and Shared Canva | <b>R10,000</b> | Central project management, workflow management, documentation and institutional memory |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>R30,000</b> |                                                                                         |

#### Why this investment is required

SCL operates across multiple institutions and therefore requires infrastructure that is independent of individual students’ personal accounts.

The digital environment will support:

- national communication;
- project management;
- central documentation;
- institutional onboarding;
- conference applications;
- student opportunities;
- event registration;
- research collaboration;
- reporting;
- continuity across leadership cycles.

The purpose is to create a functioning national administrative backbone rather than relying on fragmented systems across institutions.

## 5. Media and Marketing

R52,000

| Item                          | Allocation | Nature                                       |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Logo and artwork digitisation | R5,000     | Once-off                                     |
| Website set-up                | R5,000     | Once-off                                     |
| Website annual maintenance    | R15,000    | Annual                                       |
| Pull-up banners ×10           | R12,000    | Once-off                                     |
| Team merchandise              | R15,000    | Shirts/jackets, pins and team identification |
| TOTAL                         | R52,000    |                                              |

### Why this investment is required

A national network requires a coherent public identity and professional communication infrastructure.

The website would function as a central public-facing platform for:

- applications;
- opportunities;
- event registration;
- research outputs;
- network information;
- institutional participation;
- communication with students.

The pull-up banners and team identification provide reusable national assets for institutional events, Lekgotlas and conferences.

The emphasis is on creating **lasting infrastructure and visibility**, rather than recurring promotional expenditure.

## 6. Capacity Development

R50,000

| Item                            | Allocation | Purpose                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Short courses                   | R20,000    | Training in research, medical education, curriculum transformation, leadership and advocacy |
| Course development              | R10,000    | Development of reusable educational resources and training content                          |
| Steve Biko Fellowship Programme | R20,000    | Facilitator compensation, programme delivery and honoraria                                  |
| TOTAL                           | R50,000    |                                                                                             |

### Why this investment is required

SCL is intended not merely to create opportunities for students to speak, but to develop students capable of participating meaningfully in curriculum transformation.

Capacity-development activities will support students in developing:

- research skills;
- academic writing;

- facilitation skills;
- curriculum analysis;
- policy engagement;
- advocacy;
- leadership;
- medical education scholarship;
- institutional engagement.

The Steve Biko Fellowship programme provides an opportunity for deeper development of emerging student leaders who can contribute to SCL and their own institutional environments.

## 7. Research Dissemination and Participant Support

R25,000

| Item                                 | Allocation | Purpose                                                      |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Publication fees                     | R15,000    | Publication of relevant student-led research and SCL outputs |
| Research incentives for participants | R10,000    | Appropriate support for student research participants        |
| TOTAL                                | R25,000    |                                                              |

### Why this investment is required

SCL seeks to ensure that curriculum transformation is informed by evidence rather than anecdote alone.

The research function will support:

- student-led research;
- evidence generation;
- publication;
- dissemination of findings;
- development of research capacity;
- translation of findings into institutional conversations.

The purpose is to build a feedback loop:

| **Student experience** → **research** → **evidence** → **dialogue** → **institutional action**

## 8. Meeting Catering

R20,000

| Item                                   | Allocation | Purpose                                  |
|----------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------|
| National meetings and working sessions | R20,000    | Catering and basic participation support |
| TOTAL                                  | R20,000    |                                          |

### Why this investment is required

SCL is a distributed national network. Meaningful planning and coordination require regular meetings involving student representatives from multiple institutions.

This allocation supports the practical costs of bringing representatives together for:

- strategic planning;
- programme coordination;
- governance discussions;

- training;
- national working sessions;
- institutional engagement.

## 9. Events

R50,000

| Item                                     | Allocation | Purpose                                                             |
|------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National Lekgotlas                       | R15,000    | Structured national student dialogue on curriculum and education    |
| Annual National Symposium                | R20,000    | Student-sector dialogue, research dissemination and collaboration   |
| Institutional/regional Lekgotlas support | R10,000    | Support for decentralised engagement across the network             |
| Event materials and logistics            | R5,000     | Printing, basic technical/logistical requirements and dissemination |
| TOTAL                                    | R50,000    |                                                                     |

### Why Lekgotlas?

The Lekgotla is central to SCL’s purpose.

It provides a structured space in which students can:

- identify shared curriculum challenges;
- discuss experiences across institutions;
- engage with academic and institutional leadership;
- develop research questions;
- generate recommendations;
- share successful approaches;
- build relationships across institutions.

They are one of the mechanisms through which SCL gathers student insight and translates it into broader curriculum transformation work. In progress for 2027 are the interinstitutional Language and IPV Care Lekgotlas

## 10. Strategic Conference Participation and Representation

R260,000

Conference funding is included because strategic national and international participation is a major mechanism through which students gain exposure to new ideas, build networks, disseminate research and bring learning back into home institutions.

However:

A significant allocation is reserved for strategic conference participation because SCL views this as a **national representation and capacity-building function, not a student travel fund**.

The national pool allows SCL to identify and support students from across participating institutions based on transparent criteria, including academic contribution, accepted presentations or formal conference roles, demonstrated contribution to SCL, institutional engagement, leadership potential, and a clear commitment to bring learning back to their institution and the wider network.

This approach allows opportunities to be **distributed strategically and equitably**, rather than being determined by which institution happens to receive an opportunity or has the resources to respond first.

SCL would centrally manage selection, preparation, registration, travel and accommodation, which also allows opportunities to be identified and bookings made earlier, reducing costs and avoiding repeated ad hoc institutional processes.

All participation would be documented and followed by a defined knowledge-translation process. SCL is comfortable with additional institutional guardrails, staff involvement and approval requirements for significant expenditure, while retaining sufficient operational flexibility to respond efficiently to opportunities.

The purpose is therefore not simply to fund attendance, but to **invest in people who can represent the network, strengthen their institutions and return value to the wider SCL community.**

Conference budget

| Conference / Opportunity                | Allocation | Purpose                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAAHE                                   | R60,000    | Student Task Force management, student participation, travel, accommodation and related conference expenses       |
| MedEd Africa                            | R100,000   | Support for student delegates from participating institutions to present research and contribute to the programme |
| AMEE                                    | R80,000    | Support for South African students selected for the Student Task Force and/or presenting accepted work            |
| Emerging local conference opportunities | R20,000    | Strategically important local opportunities arising during the year                                               |
| TOTAL                                   | R260,000   |                                                                                                                   |

The MedEd Africa figure is deliberately capped at R100,000 within this funding request. Where participation costs exceed the allocation, SCL would seek co-funding, conference support, institutional contributions or sponsorship rather than automatically exceeding the approved budget.

11. SAAHE

R60,000

SCL proposes to centrally **manage the Student Task Force supporting the execution of SAAHE.**

This means SCL would not simply nominate students to attend.

SCL would coordinate:

- recruitment;
- selection;
- preparation;
- task allocation;
- student participation;
- communication;
- logistical coordination;
- post-conference knowledge translation.

The allocation includes:

- travel;
- accommodation;
- conference-related expenses;
- student participation support;
- task-force coordination.

Strategic alignment

**SAAHE:** Strengthens national student participation in health sciences education and creates a structured mechanism for students to contribute to the national medical education community.

## 12. MedEd Africa

### R100,000

SCL proposes that **a student delegate from each participating university may be considered** for representation, particularly where students are presenting research or contributing substantively to the programme.

Selection would consider:

- academic/research profile;
- relevance of work;
- contribution to SCL;
- contribution to their institution;
- planned participation at the conference;
- leadership potential;
- capacity to translate learning back into their institutional environment.

#### Strategic alignment

**MedEd Africa:** Builds African collaboration, strengthens continental exchange and positions student-led health sciences education work within an African medical education community.

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## 13. AMEE

### R80,000

The AMEE allocation would support South African students who:

- have been selected for the AMEE Student Task Force;
- have had research/work accepted for presentation;
- are contributing meaningfully to the conference;
- demonstrate a clear pathway through which their participation will benefit the wider SCL network.

This builds directly on the experience of SCL leadership in the AMEE Student Task Force environment.

#### Strategic alignment

**AMEE:** Connects South African students with international medical education developments while creating a mechanism to bring global learning back into local institutional spaces.

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## 14. Emerging Local Conference Opportunities

### R20,000

A small flexible allocation is retained for strategically important opportunities that arise during the year.

Potential examples include:

- national medical education meetings;
- curriculum transformation forums;
- student education conferences;
- research dissemination opportunities;
- partnership events.

The purpose is to ensure that an important opportunity does not automatically require a new funding request outside the approved annual programme.

Significant use of this allocation would remain subject to the agreed financial approval framework.

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# 15. Why Institutions Should Entrust Student Participation to SCL

SCL proposes that institutions use the national network as a **central mechanism for student participation**, rather than independently managing each opportunity.

This is based on the principle that participation is most valuable when it is:

- strategically selected;
- properly prepared;
- professionally represented;
- connected to a broader institutional purpose;
- followed by structured knowledge translation.

SCL would therefore manage a full participation pathway:

## 1. Selection

Applications would consider:

- student profile;
- academic/research record;
- contribution to SCL;
- contribution to their institution;
- relevance of proposed work;
- intended conference activities.

## 2. Preparation

Selected students would receive:

- conference briefing;
- expectations regarding representation;
- professional conduct guidance;
- support with presentations where relevant;
- guidance on networking and engagement.

## 3. Participation

Students would participate as representatives of:

- their institution;
- SCL;
- the wider South African student community.

## 4. Return to the Network

Students would have defined post-conference responsibilities, such as:

- presenting at a national Lekgotla;
- running a workshop;
- contributing to institutional dissemination;
- producing a reflection or resource;
- sharing conference learning with the network;
- contributing to future SCL programming.

This creates:

**| Selection → Preparation → Participation → Knowledge Translation → Institutional Return**

The aim is to ensure that a funded student does not simply return with a certificate and a tote bag.

## 16. SCL’s Operational Experience

The proposed level of delegated responsibility is grounded in existing experience.

SCL leadership has experience in:

- national student coordination;
- curriculum transformation;
- research;
- institutional governance;
- multi-stakeholder engagement;
- conference operations;
- student task-force management;
- financial and resource management.

SCL’s current leadership—Sayuran Pillay, Danika Govender and Sarah Philander—has experience delivering programmes together and using limited resources carefully. Through their work with the **African Research Society**, they **doubled programme output** while halving expenditure, achieving approximately **four times** the output per rand spent. Sayuran has also managed the AMEE Student Task Force within an operational budget of approximately **€27,000**, coordinating people, logistics and conference commitments. This experience gives SCL a capable leadership team to deliver the proposed work. Dr Dina-Ruth Lulua will serve as the staff partner supporting financial oversight and the institutional processes through which the fund is administered.

## 17. Financial Governance and Oversight

SCL recognises the importance of protecting institutional resources and is therefore proposing clear checks and balances.

### UCT cost-centre oversight

**Dr Lulua**, as SCL’s staff manager, would hold the relevant UCT cost centre and provide staff oversight of transactions, financial compliance and risk management.

### Proposed expenditure thresholds

| Level                                     | Proposed approach                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Up to R15,000</b>                      | Routine expenditure within the approved budget and UCT processes     |
| <b>R15,000–R50,000</b>                    | Written justification and appropriate SCL/staff approval             |
| <b>Above R50,000</b>                      | Prior approval through the agreed institutional governance mechanism |
| <b>Unbudgeted/exceptional expenditure</b> | Additional approval regardless of amount                             |
| <b>Conference participation</b>           | Subject to the central selection and participation process           |

SCL is willing to incorporate additional checks and balances requested by participating institutions, particularly around major expenditure.

The intention is to create **appropriate oversight without making routine operational execution unnecessarily slow**.

## 18. Annual Planning and Reporting

SCL proposes that the relationship operate through an annual cycle rather than ad hoc funding requests.

### Before the programme begins

SCL submits:

- annual strategic plan;
- programme of activities;
- detailed budget;
- proposed conference participation;
- governance and reporting framework.

### Participating institutions

Institutions approve:

- annual programme;
- annual contribution;
- reporting requirements;
- financial governance framework.

### During the year

SCL executes the programme within the approved budget.

### Quarterly

SCL provides:

- financial expenditure report;
- activity report;
- key outputs;
- remaining balances;
- upcoming significant expenditure.

### End of year

SCL provides:

- full financial reconciliation;
- annual impact report;
- institutional participation report;
- research outputs;
- conference participation outcomes;
- following year’s proposed workplan and budget.

This is intended to shift the relationship from:

“Can we please fund this?”

to:

“This is the approved programme, this is what has been delivered, this is what has been spent, and this is what is planned next.”

## 19. Sundry / Contingency

### R13,000

A limited contingency is retained for genuinely unforeseen minor costs.

Potential uses may include:

- unexpected event logistics;

- accessibility requirements;
- urgent printing;
- minor equipment;
- transport requirements;
- administrative costs;
- small co-funding requirements.

This is not intended to function as discretionary spending and remains subject to the same reporting and financial controls as the rest of the budget.

## 20. Final Budget

| Programme Area                                   | Allocation      |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Digital platforms                                | <b>R30,000</b>  |
| Media & marketing                                | <b>R52,000</b>  |
| Capacity development                             | <b>R50,000</b>  |
| Research dissemination                           | <b>R25,000</b>  |
| Meeting catering                                 | <b>R20,000</b>  |
| Events, Lekgotlas & SAAHE Conference partnership | <b>R50,000</b>  |
| Strategic conference participation               | <b>R260,000</b> |
| Sundry / contingency                             | <b>R13,000</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL REQUEST</b>                             | <b>R500,000</b> |

### Institutional contribution

**R50,000 × 10 institutions = R500,000**

## 21. Proposed Phased Contribution

To establish the system while allowing institutions to assess implementation, SCL proposes:

| Phase                              | Contribution per institution | 10 institutions |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Initial establishment contribution | <b>R10,000</b>               | <b>R100,000</b> |
| Remaining contribution             | <b>R40,000</b>               | <b>R400,000</b> |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>R50,000</b>               | <b>R500,000</b> |

The initial contribution would enable SCL to establish the core digital, administrative and programme systems.

The subsequent contribution would support delivery of the approved annual programme.

## 22. Expected Return for Participating Institutions

The R50,000 institutional contribution provides access to a shared national infrastructure supporting:

- structured student engagement;
- national Lekgotlas;
- curriculum transformation dialogue;
- research opportunities;
- capacity development;
- national symposium activities;
- structured SAAHE conference participation;
- access to MedEd Africa and AMEE opportunities;
- student research dissemination;

- national networking;
- shared digital infrastructure;
- structured student representation;
- knowledge translation back into institutions.

The value therefore extends beyond the individual activities directly funded.

The central principle is:

| **The network multiplies the value of each institutional investment.**

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## 23. Key Strategic Outcomes

The programme will be evaluated against five broad outcomes:

### Student engagement

Students across participating institutions have meaningful mechanisms through which to shape curriculum conversations.

### Research

Student perspectives generate evidence that contributes to curriculum and medical education scholarship.

### Leadership

Students develop the skills and experience required to participate meaningfully in institutional and national transformation.

### Representation

South African students participate more strategically in national, continental and international medical education spaces.

### Institutional return

Learning from research, conferences and national engagements is brought back into participating institutions through structured dissemination.

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## 24. Funding Request

SCL requests participating institutions to approve:

1. A shared national SCL programme and operating model.
  2. An annual institutional contribution of **R50,000 per participating institution**.
  3. A total programme budget of **R500,000 across ten participating institutions**.
  4. An initial establishment contribution of **R10,000 per institution**, with the remaining contribution aligned to the approved annual programme.
  5. Delegated operational responsibility for SCL within the agreed governance framework.
  6. The proposed conference selection and knowledge-translation mechanism.
  7. The proposed UCT cost-centre and staff oversight arrangement.
  8. Quarterly programme and financial reporting and annual reconciliation.
  9. Appropriate additional approval requirements for major or exceptional expenditure.
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## 25. Closing Statement

SCL is proposing an investment in **shared national infrastructure for student-led curriculum transformation**.

The R500,000 request is not intended simply to fund a collection of events or individual students.

It supports a system through which students can be:

**engaged → trained → involved in research → represented nationally and internationally → connected across institutions → and supported to bring that learning back home.**

The proposed model balances **student autonomy, institutional accountability and operational efficiency.**

The central proposition is:

**Build the infrastructure once, coordinate nationally, deliver through the network, and return the value to every participating institution.**