

2022/23

HSRC / USAF  
CEOs' AWARDS

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**



**CONCEPT NOTE**



science & innovation  
Department  
Science and Innovation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



UNIVERSITIES  
SOUTH AFRICA



HSRC  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and Universities South Africa (USAf), annually award and acknowledge scholars who have made an outstanding contribution to the social sciences and humanities through their research. The 2023 HSRC/USAf CEO's Awards aim to recognise research excellence under the "Social Justice" theme. Social sciences and humanities research influence and direct policymakers on how to improve socio-political and economic experiences. This year's theme seeks to identify innovative research projects that are centred on analysing social justice inquiry, theories and practice aimed at achieving transformative impact in communities – socially, scientifically and otherwise. As such, the awards will recognise scholars and researchers who approach social justice issues using sharpened analytical lenses, rigorous conceptualisation, and research methods characterised by meaningful engagement with their peers and the affected communities. These researchers focus on questions related to policies or interventions aimed at addressing inequities, inequalities, unemployment and poverty, and their work must include proposed solutions.

Marginalised and disadvantaged individuals and communities are disproportionately affected by social injustices; however, research frameworks often do not consider complex and unique local contexts. Dominated by Western paradigms, approaches often fail to consider that, even within these groups, narratives differ and so will the solutions. The current times require scholars, researchers and institutions to prioritise progressive and transformative discussions and debates aimed at truly understanding social issues, and how research in the area of social justice can be powerful and meaningful.

As inequality and poverty deepen, the gap between social classes widens. Social justice is a rallying cry for progressive thinkers and activists; and the HSRC/USAF 2023 Awards will celebrate and acknowledge scholars contributing toward achieving goal 10 of the 17 [Sustainable Development Goals](#) established by the United Nations in 2015, aimed at reducing inequality within and among countries.

## PREVIOUS WINNERS (2021/22)

### Established Researcher

Professor Deevia Bhana, a National Research Foundation B1-rated scholar.

### Emerging Researcher

Dr Witness Maluleke, a senior lecturer in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Limpopo.

### Research Team

Two teams won in this category:

- The University of Johannesburg Centre for Social Change in partnership with the Developmental, Capable and Ethical State division of the HSRC. This was led by Professors Carin Runciman and Narnia Bohler-Muller.
- The Africa Centre for Evidence at the University of Johannesburg. The team was led by Professor Ruth Jacqueline Stewart.

## PROPOSAL FOR THE 2022/23 AWARDS

- The 2022/23 HSRC/USAF CEOs' Awards will be held in April 2023.
- The event will allow for in-person attendance with live streaming for remote access.
- The theme for the awards will be "Social Justice" as outlined above.
- The following categories will be recognised:
  - Emerging Researcher
  - Mid-Career Researcher
  - Research Team
- A medal for lifetime achievement and research excellence will be awarded to the following category:
  - Established Researcher

### The Nomination Process

- The HSRC and USAF will distribute the call for entries in line with the theme outlined above.
- Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated to be endorsed by the deputy vice-chancellor for research at universities or their equivalent at science councils and other institutions
- Research consortia and teams may be nominated.
- We will consider applications from the HSRC, universities, science councils and other bodies under the USAF umbrella

### CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHED RESEARCHER MEDAL

For consideration, a nominee is required to meet the following:

- The medal recognises a lifetime of achievement and excellence in research.
- A record of sustained academic excellence in the social sciences and/or humanities, including publications and student supervision (master's and doctoral degrees)
- An international reputation for their scholarship, including international collaborations, leading research projects and evident visibility
- A strong record of contribution to the public's understanding of social sciences and/or humanities in the area/theme of their scholarship
- Evidence of meaningful, impactful work over an extended period, e.g. impact on public policy, research use, knowledge translation, social change, community interventions, etc.
- Contribution to the social sciences and humanities in terms of social justice scholarship
- Nominees are required to live and work in South Africa.

[Established Researcher Award Nomination Form](#)

### CRITERIA FOR MID-CAREER RESEARCHER AWARD

For consideration, a nominee must have the following:

- A record of sustained academic excellence in the social sciences and humanities of at least 10 years, including publications and student supervision (master's and doctoral degrees)
- A record indicative of international reputation for their scholarship
- A strong record of contribution to the public's understanding of social sciences and/or humanities in the area/theme of their scholarship
- Evidence of meaningful, impactful work over an extended period, e.g. impact on public policy, social change, community interventions etc.
- Contribution to the social sciences and humanities in terms of social justice scholarship
- Nominees are required to live and work in South Africa.

[Mid-Career Researcher Award Nominee Form](#)

## CRITERIA FOR EMERGING RESEARCHER AWARD

For consideration, a nominee must have the following:

- A record of sustained academic excellence in the social sciences and humanities of at least 5 years
- A record indicative of developing an international reputation for their scholarship
- A strong record of contribution to the public's understanding of social sciences and/or humanities in the area/theme of their scholarship
- Evidence of meaningful, impactful work over an extended period, e.g. impact on public policy, social change, community interventions etc.
- Contribution to the social sciences and humanities in terms of social justice scholarship
- Nominees are required to be under 35, reside and work in South Africa.

[Emerging Researcher Category Nomination Form](#)

## CRITERIA FOR THE TEAM AWARD

- Teams should be able to demonstrate their contribution to South Africa's understanding of social justice scholarship.
- Teams should demonstrate their contributions to diversity and inclusion in their science and research work.
- A record of sustained academic excellence in the social sciences and humanities, recent collaboration with outputs, and an international reputation for their scholarship
- A strong record of contribution to the public's understanding of the social sciences and/or humanities in the area/theme of their scholarship
- Evidence of meaningful, impactful work over a period, e.g. impact on public policy, community interventions etc.
- Contribution to the social sciences and humanities in terms of social justice scholarship

[Team Award Nomination Form](#)

## THE AWARDS PROCESS

- HSRC and USAf to distribute the call for nominations in line with approved criteria
- Adjudication panel to review nominations to compile a shortlist
- The shortlist to be considered to determine the awardees

**Closing date for submissions: 24 February 2022**

