

ISFAP invested over R2-billion in higher education from 2017 to 2024

Press Release
Immediate Release
3 December 2024

Johannesburg, South Africa – The Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) is excited to share the profound impact it has made on the lives of South African students over the past seven years.

Since its inception following the #FeesMustFall movement in 2017, and with the help of its valued partners, ISFAP has invested over R2 billion into transforming the lives of 3 626 students across South Africa.

"From the very beginning, our mission has been to bridge the financial gap for students who are often overlooked," says Werner Abrahams, CEO of ISFAP. "We are thrilled to see the tangible outcomes of our efforts. Every rand spent is an investment in the future of our country", he added.

Funding Poor and Missing Middle Students:

ISFAP was established to bridge the financial gap for students whose family incomes are too high to qualify for NSFAS funding, but too low to afford tertiary education independently. ISFAP mainly aims to support missing middle students who come from households where the income ranges between R350 000 and R600 000 per annum. The programme also accommodates unfunded students with a household income of between R0 and R600 000 per annum.

Funding is focused towards students who are pursuing qualifications in higher education in fields that are identified as critical to South Africa's economic development. These include Accounting, Actuarial Science, Engineering, Medicine, Computer Science, Data Science and other Occupations in High Demand (OHDs), as defined by the Human Resources Development Council (HRDC).

The top three qualifications funded through ISFAP include MBChB (Medicine), Engineering and Accounting with the most supported students as per demand. Engineering has had the highest number of funded students, with 1 108 students, representing more than a third of the overall funded students.

Wrap-around Support:

In offering funding to students in need, ISFAP has also remained committed to providing comprehensive wrap-around support that ensures that students receive the psycho-social and academic support that is essential for their success. The programme includes extensive support services such as:

- Full Tuition Fees Coverage
- Accommodation and Meal Allowances

- Laptops for First-Year Students
- Psycho-Social Support and Counselling
- Life Skills and Financial Literacy Training

"ISFAP is dedicated to supporting deserving students in obtaining tertiary qualifications that meet the demand in our economy. Our efforts are not simply focused on providing funding, we offer wrap-around psychosocial support that helps ensure that our students make it across the finish line," Abrahams elaborated.

"We don't just provide financial aid; we walk the journey with our students," Abrahams said. "From mental health support to life skills training, our goal is to ensure they have everything they need to succeed."

Graduate Success

Throughout the 2017 and 2024 academic years, the ISFAP supported 1 263 graduates, with most graduates coming from below universities: We are also pleased to announce that we received over 70 000 applications from across the country, for the 2025 academic year.

"Seeing our students graduate and move into successful careers is incredibly rewarding," Abrahams added. "It's a testament to the holistic support we provide, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges ahead."

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For more information about ISFAP, or to arrange an interview with a representative, contact:

Anneke Burns
ISFAP Publicist
Email: media@isfap.org.za
Phone: +27 71 423 0079

About ISFAP

The Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme Foundation NPC (ISFAP) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to funding and supporting the higher education of South Africa's missing middle students. Established in 2017, ISFAP partners with various universities and private sector entities to ensure that students in need can access and succeed in higher education, contributing to the nation's economic development.

Since 2017, we have maintained a balanced 50% gender split among our students. Notably, female students lead in numbers within the Accounting, Health Sciences, and other specialised Science fields, although their representation is lower in Engineering and IT fields.