



THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMICS PIPELINE

Among the graduate students in the top fifty economics PhD programmes in the United States, two are South African and 47 are Brazilian.

The constraint is not talent. South Africa has many students with strong quantitative records; what they lack is a route from that record into the world's leading doctoral programmes, together with the externally legible signals admissions committees rely on. The Pipeline is a five-year programme of bursaries and intensive training that aims to provide both.

Source: a count of African PhD students across the top 50 US economics departments, October 2025.

THE PROGRAMME

A small cohort, two stages, an annual Summer School.

Each year we admit a small group of top-performing students from any South African university, support them through honours and, for some, a master's, and prepare them for doctoral study at leading economics departments abroad.

Selection

Cumulative 70% over the last two years, with one full year each of mathematics and statistics at 70% or above. References, a blind-marked statement and a structured interview.

Honours

Six to eight bursars per cohort. Full bursary of R200,000, the departmental core, two further honours modules and a Pipeline Skills series.

Master's package

An eighteen-month package for the strongest students. Twelve months of advanced coursework and PhD application preparation; six months of research or international exchange.

Summer School

Two weeks each November. Four one-week PhD-level short courses taught by visiting scholars; capped at thirty; compulsory for bursars. Topics rotate.

Evaluation

A 24-month external review in April 2029. A prospective matched-controls design tracks outcomes for both admitted and unsuccessful applicants.

Cohort 1

Recruitment opens 1 July 2026. Offers in early November. The first cohort arrives in February 2027 and attends the first Summer School that year.

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

A direct stake in one of South Africa's most selective economics talent programmes.

A donor may fund **one bursary** or several, on identical terms. Each commitment carries the recognition below, and donors may direct their support within the programme's own selection standards.

- ✓ **A named bursary** – “the [Donor] Pipeline Bursar” – or fully anonymous, your choice.
- ✓ **Invitations** to the November Summer School and the PSG–SU Economics PhD Workshop.
- ✓ **An annual one-page report** on the bursar you support, or on cohort outcomes for anonymous gifts.
- ✓ **Direction:** attach within-Pipeline criteria – field, partner university or region of origin – provided the academic bar is not lowered.

ONE BURSAR, ONE YEAR

R200,000

= US\$15,000 · escalating 5% p.a.

Current funding from **The Millennium Trust** covers five bursars per cohort; our target is ten to fifteen, on identical terms. A full five-year commitment to one bursar through honours and master's comes to **approximately R1.1 million**. Section 18A tax-deductible receipts are issued via Stellenbosch University's Development & Alumni Relations office.