



CHRISTOF HEYNNS HUMAN RIGHTS SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are invited for the award of the first Christof Heyns Human Rights Scholarship.

Applications are open to current or prospective doctoral candidates
studying towards a doctoral degree in human rights at the University of Pretoria.
The Scholarship is for study in 2026.

ABOUT CHRISTOF HEYNNS

The Christof Heyns Human Rights Scholarship (the Scholarship) is instituted in memory of renowned human rights scholar, Christof Heyns, who was professor of human rights law at the University of Pretoria (UP) until his untimely death in March 2021. Christof was the Director of the Centre for Human Rights from 1999 to 2006; Dean of the Faculty of Law from 2007 to 2010; and was the founding Co-Director of the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa at UP. He was United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions from 2010 to 2016; and was a member of the UN Human Rights Committee from 2017 to 2020. Prof. Heyns pioneered and supported numerous human rights education initiatives in the course of his life, including by providing opportunities to deserving students to pursue human rights education.

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

The Scholarship is established to continue the legacy of Prof. Heyns in expanding human rights scholarships and giving opportunities to deserving but economically disadvantaged African students to undertake human rights related postgraduate studies in human rights at UP.

The amount of the Scholarship is **R270 000**. It is provided for a maximum of three calendar years for doctoral studies. The Scholarship award is reviewed annually, for continued funding, on the basis of satisfactory academic progress by the recipient.

**CLOSING DATE for applications is
30 January 2026.**

CONTACT DETAILS

Enquiries related to the scholarship can be directed to carole.viljoen@up.ac.za

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must:

- meet all the requirements for admission to doctoral studies in human rights at UP;
- be a citizen of an African country;
- have an excellent academic record, based on previous tertiary studies; and
- demonstrate the need for economic support to achieve their academic goals.

(If the Scholarship is awarded to a student who is not currently registered for doctoral studies at UP, the award will be provisional on the student being successfully registered with UP.)

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must consist of:

- a letter of motivation setting out how the applicant meets the eligibility criteria;
- at least two letters of support, with referees' contact details indicated;
- for prospective doctoral students: a brief proposal of around five pages, setting out the research problem, locating the proposed research in the existing scholarship; the research question(s); and the proposed research method/methodology;
- for currently registered doctoral students: a progress report by the supervisor; and
- the applicant's most recent academic results.

Submit applications to carole.viljoen@up.ac.za

