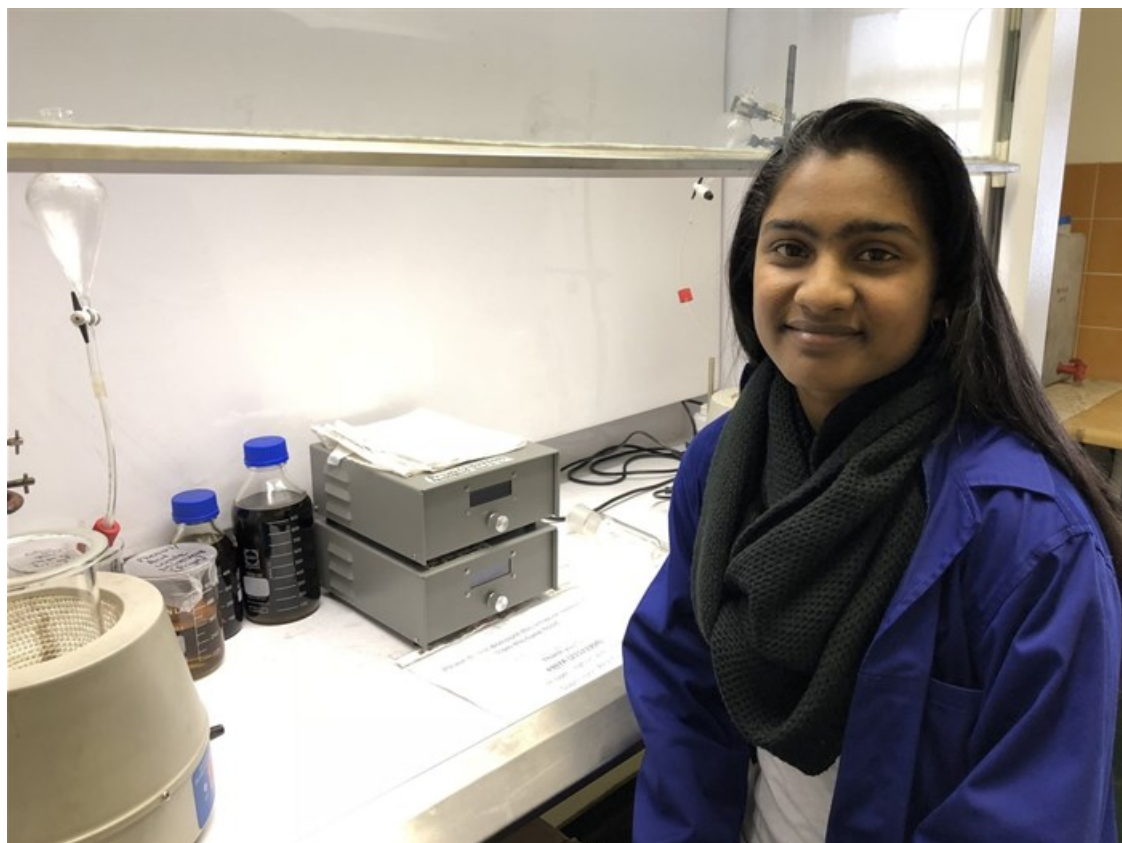


Pamsa bursary programme open for applications

Applications are now open for the 2022/2023 Paper Manufacturers Association of South Africa (Pamsa) Masters of Engineering bursary programme, offering students the opportunity to further their master's studies at participating universities by way of a R260,000 bursary over two years.



Priya Govender's Master's study focused on bioresources, specifically using a natural wood component called lignin, to try to make a "bio-friendly" wood glue.

For the past decade, Pamsa has presented a Masters of Engineering (MEng) bursary and research programme to eligible BSc chemical engineering final-year students or graduates with a good academic record and an interest in the bioeconomy, biotechnology, water efficiency, process engineering, waste valorisation and novel material development using wood or paper fibre. After their studies are complete, the students could find gainful employment within the industry.

"Working as a chemical engineer in the forest products sector not only helps people discover the science behind everyday things such as paper, tissue and packaging, but it also gives young people the chance to be the science behind a cleaner future," says Jane Molony, executive director of Pamsa.

"The pulp and paper sector is part of the bioeconomy which involves the production of renewable natural resources – in this case farmed wood from tree plantations – and the conversion of these resources and waste streams into value added products, such as food, feed, bio-based products and bioenergy."

As society seeks lower carbon, more sustainable solutions, the pulp and paper sector, which relies on commercial forestry and paper recycling for its raw materials, presents the country and the world with some unique opportunities for a greener economy, she points out.

The renewability and sustainability of farmed wood and the innovative science behind pulp, paper and process waste puts local and global pulp and paper sectors in an enviable position to address key environmental challenges such as climate change, greener packaging and the circular economy.

Molony says research, development and innovation are core to the sector's mandate, ensuring that it does more with less. "Trees, sustainably planted, grown and harvested, provide us with countless products that we use every day," she notes, adding that the circular economy is pushing them to use as much of the tree as possible – from the bark to the trunk, from branches to the leaves. This includes reusing the paper in recycling and beneficiating process waste into biochemicals or biofuels. Not only does less waste go to landfill, but this keeps carbon (absorbed by the trees) locked up for longer.

Terms, conditions and qualifying criteria apply. Deadline for applications is 30 June 2021, and applicants can apply via the [PAMSA website](#).

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