



25 May 2009

COMMUNIQUÉ REGARDING THE BLUE SKY RESEARCH PROGRAMME

In September 2008 the NRF issued a call for Blue Sky Research Programme applications. The call closed at the end of October 2008 and 286 applications were submitted to this programme. The assessment process was concluded in April 2009 and 23 applications were approved for support.

The introduction of any new programme cannot be without challenges and the NRF recognizes that there are issues that need to be clarified and processes that need to be improved.

Some of the issues arising from the implementation of this programme in 2008/09 include:

- The definition of novelty within the ambit of different knowledge fields
- The parameters of blue sky research
- The objectives of the programme
- The adjudication process

As a knowledge and learning organization, the NRF continuously strives to achieve excellence and the NRF plans to engage with research community on this programme. A two-staged process will be followed which includes:

- an open invitation to researchers in South Africa to input into the refinement of the programme by email
- and
- a workshop (taking into the comments received from the above step) for invited participants to finalise the refined shape of the programme.

Given that the above process needs to be implemented from June-December 2009, the NRF plans to make the next call for the Blue Sky Research Programme in early 2010. The NRF will communicate further details to the research community in due course.

Sincerely

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