



**KNOWLEDGE INTERCHANGE AND COLLABORATION**  
**PORTFOLIO OF OPPORTUNITIES**  
**(TRAVEL GRANTS)**

*Version 3: March 2006*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. KNOWLEDGE INTERCHANGE AND COLLABORATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. TRAVEL GRANTS</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 GRANT-LINKED TRAVEL GRANTS	3
3.1.1 NRF PROGRAMMES	3
3.2 BLOCK GRANTS	3
3.2.1 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE	4
3.2.2 VISITS ABROAD (LESS THAN 2 MONTHS)	4
3.2.3 SHORT COURSES ABROAD (LESS THAN 2 MONTHS)	4
3.2.4 FOREIGN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS (LESS THAN 2 MONTHS)	4
3.2.5 MANAGEMENT OF GRANTS	5
3.3 FREE-STANDING TRAVEL GRANTS	5
3.3.1 LONGER-TERM TRAVEL GRANTS (LONGER THAN 2 MONTHS)	6
3.3.1.1 <i>Research Visit Abroad</i>	6
3.3.1.2 <i>Foreign Research Fellowships</i>	7
3.3.2 SHORT-TERM TRAVEL GRANTS (LESS THAN 2 MONTHS)	8
3.3.2.1 <i>Equipment-related Mobility Grants</i>	8
3.3.2.2 <i>Equipment-related Training Grants</i>	8
3.3.2.3 <i>Short-term travel grants for applicants based at Science Councils, Museums or National Facilities</i> <sup>9</sup>	
3.3.3 PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF GRANTS	11
3.4 DIRECTED TRAVEL GRANTS	12
3.4.1 FOCUS ON AFRICA PROGRAMME	12
3.4.2 SYNCHROTRON CAPACITY BUILDING FUND	14
3.4.3 BI-NATIONAL AGREEMENTS	15
3.4.4 AGENCY-TO-AGENCY AGREEMENTS	15
3.4.5 HUMBOLDT/SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH AWARDS	16
3.4.6 SA ICSU	17
<b>4. SCIENTIFIC EVENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1 ORGANISATIONAL COSTS	18
4.2 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS FROM ABROAD	18
4.3 FOREIGN COURSE PRESENTERS	19
4.4 SPONSORSHIP OF ATTENDEES	20

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A free flow of ideas and information is vital to the process of scientific enquiry, and in turn to our ability to address economic, environmental and social development issues both nationally and globally. Many of the challenges facing society, researchers and academe are global and do not respect national boundaries. Science crosses international boundaries to provide strong, positive connections between individual scientists, institutions and nations. Such exchanges contribute to the expansion of the global knowledge base to which we are linked.

It is in our national interest to participate in international scientific activities when one considers the relatively low level of spending on research and development in the country. Participation in the international arena facilitates access to the knowledge and information it needs to succeed in the global economy. This is vital for South African research and innovation as it improves the quality of knowledge produced by our researchers and it provides access to the world's best facilities, equipment and talent.

Furthermore, internationally the escalating cost of research forces countries to use scarce resources and institutional infrastructure effectively. International collaboration maximises these outputs. Added to this is the relatively low level of research equipment/infrastructure available in the country. This requires a high level of collaboration in order to increase the usage of existing equipment and facilities.

The NRF has a history of encouraging and supporting "knowledge interchange and collaboration", through a variety of interventions across various NRF programmes. These interventions are based on some fundamental principles, viz:

- All domains of science, research and innovation benefit from international collaboration.
- The essential purpose of these interventions is to build and maintain excellence in South African research, rather than to only facilitate international collaboration.
- The South African science system should reap the maximum benefit from international organisations and opportunities.

## 2. KNOWLEDGE INTERCHANGE AND COLLABORATION

The purpose of the grants available within this portfolio of opportunities is:

- to enable researchers to interact and build strong ongoing collaborations with their international counterparts;
- in so doing to build South African research capacity by enhancing existing and developing new collaborations;
- to facilitate the exposure of local researchers to top international expertise;
- to build and develop networks;
- to strengthen the international research experience for young researchers;
- to assist in the arrangement of high level scientific events; and
- to facilitate multi-use of research equipment and the training of individuals in the use of sophisticated research equipment.

NRF support for "Knowledge interchange and collaboration" can be divided into two primary clusters:

- Travel Grants:** These grants are intended to assist researchers to travel (primarily internationally) and to bring in foreign visitors – in order to foster the exchange of information, collaboration and optimum use of facilities and opportunities. Within the Travel Grants cluster, the following mechanisms of support exist:
  - NRF Grant-linked Travel Grants
  - Block Grants
  - Free Standing Travel Grants
  - Directed Travel Grants.
- Scientific Events:** These grants are intended to provide support for the organisation of conferences, workshops and training courses.

These mechanisms can be illustrated as follows:

# Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration (Travel Grants)

## Travel Grants

## Scientific Events

Are you at a Museum or National Facility needing a

Are you at a Science Council needing a

Are you at a University needing a

Short or long term travel grant

Short term travel grant

Short term travel grant

Long term travel grant

**NRF Grant-linked Travel Grants**

- o Travel grants as component of allocation in NRF programmes e.g. FAP; THRIP; IRDP; Thuthuka; Centre of Excellence; Chairs of Entrepreneurships

**Block Grants**

- o International Conferences
- o Short term visit abroad
- o Short course abroad
- o Short term foreign visitor

**Free-Standing Longer-term Travel Grants**

- o Research Visit Abroad
- o Foreign Research Fellowships

**Free-Standing Short term Travel Grants**

- o Equipment related travel grant
- o Short term visit: (Science Council, Museum or National Facility)

**Directed Travel Grants**

- o Focus on Africa Programme
- o Synchrotron Capacity Building Trust
- o Bi-national Agreements
- o Agency-to-Agency Agreements
- o Humboldt/South African Research Awards
- o SA ICSU

**Organising Scientific Events**

Conferences/Workshops/Training Courses

- o Organisational costs
- o Keynote speakers
- o Student sponsorship

### 3. TRAVEL GRANTS

#### 3.1 GRANT-LINKED TRAVEL GRANTS <sup>1</sup>

The initial and primary source of funding for travel for the purpose of knowledge interchange and collaboration should be through existing NRF grants. These include the following:

##### 3.1.1 NRF Programmes

Various NRF grant-making programmes include grant items that can be used to support knowledge exchange and collaboration (e.g. for conference attendance, visits abroad, etc). For current NRF grant holders this should be the primary source of funding for travel, and applicants are encouraged to include requests of this nature within their annual applications.

The following NRF programmes include travel related grant items. Applicants should familiarise themselves with the eligibility criteria, and/or the listed contact person should be approached for further information.

Programme	Contact person	Contact details
Centres of Excellence	Dr Rob Drennan	<a href="mailto:robd@nrf.ac.za">robd@nrf.ac.za</a>
Focus Area Programmes	Mr Lebusa Monyooe	<a href="mailto:lebusa@nrf.ac.za">lebusa@nrf.ac.za</a>
Institutional Capacity Development	Mrs Anthipi Pouris	<a href="mailto:anthipi@nrf.ac.za">anthipi@nrf.ac.za</a>
Research Chairs	Dr Rob Drennan	<a href="mailto:robd@nrf.ac.za">robd@nrf.ac.za</a>
Royal Society Programme	Mrs Anthipi Pouris	<a href="mailto:anthipi@nrf.ac.za">anthipi@nrf.ac.za</a>
THRIP	Dr Mphekgo Maila	<a href="mailto:mphekgo@nrf.ac.za">mphekgo@nrf.ac.za</a>
International Science Liaison	Ms Eugenia Ndhundhumba	<a href="mailto:eugenia@nrf.ac.za">eugenia@nrf.ac.za</a>
Thuthuka	Mrs Anthipi Pouris	<a href="mailto:anthipi@nrf.ac.za">anthipi@nrf.ac.za</a>

#### 3.2 BLOCK GRANTS

The NRF will award annual block grants to South African universities for various types of short-term travel grants. Block grants are awarded on the basis of previous applications to the NRF as well as the amount previously awarded towards the travel grants. These amounts are adjusted at regular intervals in accordance with changes in demand and merit. Each university and museum allocated a block grant will allocate and manage the grants based on criteria and requirements set by the NRF. These grants are intended to supplement funds provided by other sources (e.g. the applicant's institution and/or other agencies or foundations).

This process allows for greater flexibility than in NRF processed grants in that it short-circuits the decision making process, enabling institutions to take timely decisions and respond to requests in the most appropriate manner for a particular set of circumstances.

In all types of grants in this category, the institution receiving the block grant must apply the following criteria:

- The institution is expected to contribute up to 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- In nominating applicants, the university must guarantee that the scientific and technical merit of the application have been scrutinised and found to be of an acceptable standard.
- The applicant should have a record of postgraduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development. This will not be considered a prerequisite if the applicant is a

---

<sup>1</sup> The order of the portfolio has been altered in order to reflect the "first port of call" for applicants.

- young member of staff or a postgraduate/postdoctoral student.<sup>2</sup>
- The applicant should have a record of collaborative initiatives within the South African higher education system. This requirement will not be a prerequisite for young staff and post graduate/post doctoral students.<sup>4</sup>
- Each applicant is eligible for only one such grant every two years.
- Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department.
- The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- Other criteria relevant to the different types of awards, are listed where relevant.

3

The institution may also apply any other internal criteria, provided these are not in conflict with the NRF criteria and conditions.

The following awards may be allocated:

### 3.2.1 International conference attendance

- Grants in this category are primarily awarded to enable local researchers to present their research findings at reputable conferences abroad. However, grants may also be granted for researchers to present their findings at international conferences held in South Africa.
- Eligibility: The applicant must be a full-time staff member at the institution, or a full-time registered postgraduate (Masters or Doctoral) student or a post doctoral fellow.
- Worthy post graduate students may also accompany the staff member to the conference as part of the grant.
- The applicant must present a paper or poster at the conference.

### 3.2.2 Visits abroad (Less than 2 months)

- Grants in this category are awarded to enable local researchers to visit research institutions abroad, for periods of **less than 2 months**. For longer periods applicants should apply directly to the NRF (see Free Standing Travel Grants – item 3.3.1.1).
- The applicant must be a full-time staff member at the institution or a full-time registered post graduate (Masters or Doctoral) student or a post doctoral fellow.
- Worthy post graduate students may also accompany the staff member to the conference as part of the grant.
- The institution must be satisfied of the status of the foreign host, and the authenticity of the invitation.

### 3.2.3 Short courses abroad (Less than 2 months)

- These awards are to enable researchers from the university to attend research-related short courses abroad, which are not offered in South Africa.
- The applicant must be a full-time staff member at the institution, or a full-time registered post graduate student (Masters or Doctoral) or a post doctoral fellow.<sup>4</sup>



### 3.2.4 Foreign research fellowships (Less than 2 months)

- These awards are intended to enable South African universities to invite researchers of recognised scientific standing from abroad to spend a short period (**less than 2 months**) in South Africa to enrich local expertise in their field and to promote current and future collaboration. For visits exceeding two months applicants (host) should apply directly to the NRF (see Free Standing Travel Grants – item 3.3.1.2).
- The visiting fellow will be expected to not only benefit the host institution, but also the broader

<sup>2</sup> Changed explanatory note.

<sup>3</sup> The condition relating to “preference to NRF grantholders” has been taken out

<sup>4</sup> The previous eligibility criteria indicated that only staff members were eligible for these awards. The option for allowing postgraduate and postdoctoral students to be eligible has been included.

- South African scientific community.
- The applicant (host) must be a full-time staff member at the university.
- The programme for the foreign fellow should contribute to the broadening of the South African research system via mechanisms such as: conference presentations; research visits to other institutions; post graduate and/or other research training seminars/workshops/courses.
- The applicant must ensure that the fellow visits other relevant research institutions in South Africa.

### 3.2.5 Management of Grants

The NRF makes the block grant available to a single representative at the institution (usually the person with overall responsibility for research and/or research management). Thereafter the institution can make awards from the amount allocated, based on the criteria set by the NRF (as outlined above).

The Block Grant is treated like any other NRF grant and as such audited information will be required from the institution annually, to be submitted to the NRF on the dates to be communicated by the NRF on a yearly basis but no later than the end of February.<sup>6</sup> The following information is required:

- i) Names, Gender and Race of awardees
- ii) Amount contributed by the institution
- iii) Any collaborative research opportunities resulting from the travel grant
- iv) For conference attendance the following information is required: Conference attended; title of paper/poster presented; nature of presentation (e.g. invited, keynote, plenary, short course presenter).

### 3.3 FREE-STANDING TRAVEL GRANTS

This category comprises support for:

- longer-term international travel (**longer than 2 months**),
- short term international travel (**less than 2 months**) incl.;
  - equipment related travel or training grants, as well
  - Conference attendance, short term visits and short courses abroad, for staff members at Science Councils, Museums and National Facilities who do not have access to the “Block Grants” (see 3.2 above).

Free-Standing Travel Grants are intended to **supplement** funds provided by other sources (e.g. the applicant’s institution and/or other agencies or foundations). The host/applying institution is expected to contribute up to 50% of the total costs of the application – from own and other sources.

In endorsing an application, the host institution guarantees that the scientific and technical merit of the application have been scrutinised.

The grant holder must submit a final report (and, where applicable, papers presented) to the NRF within **two (2) months** of completion of the visit.

Applications must be submitted to the NRF via the host institution’s research office, as per the required format. Ad-hoc applications are discouraged and retrospective applications will **no longer** be accepted. Applications should be submitted in response to official Calls for Proposals issued by the NRF (in February and August each year). These Calls will also be posted on the NRF website ([www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)). All applications will be considered on merit by review panels.

Free-Standing Travel Grants include the following:

---

<sup>5</sup> The category for “Foreign course presenter” has been moved to the “Scientific Events” cluster

<sup>6</sup> The requirement for individual reporting (within three months of visit) has been removed in the interests of simplifying the process.

### 3.3.1 Longer-term Travel Grants (Longer than 2 months)

#### 3.3.1.1 Research Visit Abroad

Grants in this category are awarded to enable local researchers to visit research institutions abroad, for periods of longer than two months. For shorter periods, university- based applicants should apply directly to their research office (see Block Grants – Item 3.2.2).



Change

- Eligibility:
  - The applicant must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution (other than a science council).
  - The applicant must be in possession of a Doctoral degree, or registered for a Doctoral degree.
  - Post doctoral fellows may also apply for such grants.
  - Preference will be given to younger (under 45) applicants.
  - Applicants may only receive one such grant every two years. No funding for a second visit will be considered until there is proof of submission of a paper to an accredited journal based on the research emanating from the previous visit.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The visit should display scientific and technical merit which will contribute to broadening the knowledge base within the South African research system.
  - The applicant must have a record of post graduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development. In the case of younger staff members or post doctoral fellows, this criterion is not a prerequisite.<sup>7</sup>
  - The applicant should have a demonstrated record of collaborative initiatives within the South African higher education system. This is not a prerequisite for younger staff members nor for post doctoral fellows.<sup>9</sup>
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research office of the institution.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
  - The grant may not be held concurrently with a similar grant from an NRF administered bilateral/intergovernmental or inter-agency agreement.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be limited to an economy class return airfare, plus a contribution towards subsistence (daily allowance and accommodation) of R400 per day for a maximum of 6 months.
  - The institution **must commit to contributing at least 50%** of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - Application form.
  - Curriculum vitae of the foreign host.
  - Letter of invitation from the host institution.
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.
- Required outputs:

The following types of outputs are expected to emanate from the visit:

  - Publication in peer-reviewed journal (as main or co-author) and/or Conference paper (as author or co-author).
  - Planned collaborative projects.
  - Report to institution of research undertaken.
  - A final report submitted to the NRF **within two months** of conclusion of the visit.

---

<sup>7</sup> Qualification attached to criteria in order to accommodate eligible younger candidates

### 3.3.1.2 Foreign Research Fellowships

A number of fellowships are made available each year to enable South African universities and research institutions to invite researchers of recognised scientific standing from abroad to spend a period of longer than two months in South Africa to enrich local expertise in their field and to promote current and future collaboration. The visiting fellow will be expected to not only benefit the host institution, but also the broader South African scientific community. For visits of less than two months university-based applicants (host) should apply directly to their research office (see Block Grants – Item 3.2.4).

- Eligibility:
  - The applicant (host) must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution (other than a science council).
  - The applicant must have a record of post graduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development, as well as a record of collaboration within the South African higher education system.
  - The applicant (host) may apply only once each year. The invitee should preferably not be the same person every year. No funding for a second visit will be considered until there is proof of submission of a paper to an accredited journal based on the research emanating from the previous visit.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The invitee/fellow must be established in her/his field – as demonstrated by the CV.
  - The application must demonstrate that the proposed programme for the foreign fellow will contribute to the broadening of the South African research system via mechanisms such as conference presentations, research visits to other institutions, post graduate and/or other research training seminars/workshops/courses.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research office of the institution.
  - The applicant must ensure that the fellow visits other relevant research institutions in South Africa.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
  - The grant may not be held concurrently with a similar grant from an NRF administered bilateral/intergovernmental or inter-agency agreement.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - NRF support in this category will be limited towards an economy class return airfare, plus daily allowance and accommodation of R300 per day up to a maximum of 6 months.
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - Application form.
  - CV of invitee/fellow.
  - Letter of invitation/acceptance.
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.
- Required outputs:

The following types of outputs are expected to emanate from the visit:

  - Publication in peer-reviewed journal (as co-author with host) and/or conference paper (as author or co-author).
  - Student training.
  - Planned collaborative projects.
  - Report to institution of research undertaken.
  - A final report submitted to the NRF **within two months** of conclusion of the visit.

### 3.3.2 Short-term Travel Grants (Less than 2 months)

#### 3.3.2.1 Equipment-related Mobility Grants

Mobility grants are intended to enable researchers to have **access to research equipment** (within South Africa and abroad) that is not available to them in their own institutions or region.

The NRF may on occasion reserve portions of the mobility grant for stimulating specific cooperation that it identifies as being of strategic importance.

- Eligibility
  - The applicant must be a full-time staff member at a South African research institution (including science councils). Full-time registered post graduate (M & D) students and post doctoral fellows at South African universities are also eligible to apply.
- Applicable criteria:
  - **A maximum visit of 21 days** will be considered or alternatively up to 3 visits for a year totalling no more than 21 days.
  - Funds cannot be used to support conference/workshop attendance or investigative visits.
  - Adequate motivation and proof must be submitted that suitable equipment is not available in the applicant's own institution or another institution within the region.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research office of the institution. Applications from students must be approved by her/his supervisor.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be towards equipment operator and analyses costs, an economy class return airfare, plus daily allowance and accommodation of R400 per day for international visits or R300 per day for local visits.<sup>8</sup>
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - Application form
  - Confirmation of visit by host
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.
- Required outputs:

The following types of outputs are expected to emanate from the visit:

  - Knowledge transfer to the local research community
  - Training of students – particularly black and female students
  - A final report submitted to the NRF **within two months** of conclusion of the visit.



#### 3.3.2.2 Equipment-related Training Grants

These grants are intended for the training of technical staff and users of equipment. Initial training as part of the commissioning of new equipment (i.e. by the vendor) will not be covered by the Training Grant, but should be factored into the purchasing price of the equipment.

**Funding for the organisation of training courses or for block grants to sponsor attendance of students should be made within the category “Scientific Events” (Item 4.4).<sup>9</sup>**



- Eligibility

<sup>8</sup> The level of support has been altered in order to bring it in line with the other grants in this category

<sup>9</sup> The support for sponsorship of students to attend equipment related training courses has been incorporated into the “Scientific Events” cluster

- The applicant must be a full-time staff member at a South African research institution. In particular, technicians and/or operators are expected to apply for such grants.
- Post graduate (Masters and Doctoral) students and post doctoral fellows are also eligible to apply for such grants
- Applicable criteria:
  - **A maximum visit of 21 days** will be considered.
  - Funds cannot be used to support conference/workshop attendance or investigative visits.
  - Adequate motivation must be provided as to the need for the training.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research administration of the institution. An application from a student must be approved by her/his supervisor.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be towards course fees, an economy class return airfare plus daily allowance and accommodation of R400 per day for international visits or R300 per day for local visits.<sup>10</sup>
  - The institution must **commit to contributing at least 50%** of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - Application form
  - Proof of registration / acceptance
  - Curriculum / content of course
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.
- Required outputs:
 

The following types of outputs are expected to emanate from the visit:

  - Knowledge transfer to the local research community.
  - Training of students – particularly black and female students.
  - A final report submitted to the NRF **within two months** of conclusion of the training.



### **3.3.2.3 Short-term travel grants for applicants based at Science Councils, Museums or National Facilities**

Staff members at Science Councils, Museums or National Facilities who are either directly involved in training post graduate (Master's and Doctoral) students or who are themselves studying towards a higher post graduate qualification who do not qualify for awards within the Block Grants (see Item 3.2) may apply directly to the NRF for the types of grants outlined below. The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources) as these grants are intended to supplement funds provided by other sources.

Applications must be submitted via the applicant's institution, as per the required format, and in endorsing the application, the home institution must guarantee that the scientific and technical merit of the application have been scrutinised and found to be of an acceptable standard. No retrospective applications will be considered.

The grant holder must submit a final report (and, where applicable, papers presented) to the NRF within **two (2) months** of completion of the visit.

---

<sup>10</sup> The level of support has been altered in order to bring it in line with the other grants in this category

The following types of awards are available:

➤ **Conference attendance abroad**

Grants in this category are awarded to enable local researchers to present their research findings at reputable conferences abroad.

- Eligibility:
  - The applicant must be employed at a South African Science Council, Museum or National Facility and must be directly involved in training post graduate (Master's and Doctoral) students or her/himself registered for a post graduate qualification.
  - Applicants will be eligible for only one grant every two years.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The applicant must present a paper or poster at the conference.
  - The content of the paper to be presented should display a scientific and technical merit which will contribute to broadening the knowledge base within the South African research system.
  - The applicant must either have a record of post graduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development or her/himself be registered for a post graduate qualification.
  - The applicant should have a demonstrated record of collaborative initiatives within the South African higher education system.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the head of relevant department and the research office of the institution.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
  - The grant may not be held concurrently with a similar grant from an NRF administered bilateral/intergovernmental or inter-agency agreement.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be limited to an economy class return airfare, plus a contribution towards daily allowance and accommodation of R400 per day.
  - The institution must commit to contributing **at least 50%** of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - As detailed in the application form
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

➤ **Short Visits abroad**

Grants in this category are awarded to enable local researchers to visit research institutions abroad, for periods of **less than two (2) months**.

- Eligibility:
  - The applicant must be employed at a South African Science Council, Museum or National Facility and must be directly involved in training post graduate (Master's and Doctoral) students or her/himself registered for a post graduate qualification.
  - Candidates will be eligible for only one grant every two years.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The visit should display scientific and technical merit which will contribute to broadening the knowledge base within the South African research system
  - The applicant must either have a record of post graduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development or her/himself be registered for a post graduate qualification.
  - The applicant should have a demonstrated record of collaborative initiatives within the South African higher education system.
- Conditions:

- Applications must be supported by the head of relevant department and the research administration of the institution.
- The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- The grant may not be held concurrently with a similar grant from an NRF administered bilateral/intergovernmental or inter-agency agreement.
- Funding:
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be limited to an economy class return airfare, plus a contribution towards daily allowance and accommodation of R400 per day for a maximum of 6 months.
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - As detailed in the application form
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

### ➤ **Short courses abroad**

These awards are to enable researchers from South African institutions to attend research-related short courses abroad, which are not offered in South Africa.

- Eligibility:
  - The applicant must be employed at a South African Science Council, Museum or National Facility and must be directly involved in training post graduate (Master's and Doctoral) students or her/himself registered for a post graduate qualification registered for a post doctoral qualification.
  - Candidates will be eligible for only one grant every two years
- Applicable criteria:
  - The short course should display scientific and technical merit which will contribute to broadening the knowledge base within the South African research system
  - The applicant must either have a record of postgraduate student training (in particular black students) and staff development or her/himself be registered for a postgraduate qualification.
  - The applicant should have a demonstrated record of collaborative initiatives within the South African higher education system.
  - Attendance of the short course must have a very strong possibility that it will contribute to individual and institutional research development in South Africa.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the head of relevant department and the research administration of the institution
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- Funding
  - No application of **less than R10 000** will be considered.
  - The NRF contribution will be limited to an economy class return airfare, plus a contribution towards daily allowance and accommodation of R400 per day for a maximum of 6 months.
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application (from own and other sources).
- Required documentation:
  - As detailed in the application form
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

### **3.3.3 Processing of Applications and Management of Grants**

In February and August of each year the NRF will communicate a Call for Proposals, which will also be posted on the NRF website ([www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)). Interested persons should only respond on the Call –

according to the required format, **ad-hoc applications are discouraged**. Applications forwarded by e-mail attachment will be accepted, provided that the signature page and required attachments are forwarded by fax or mail. No retrospective applications will be considered.

All applications will be considered on merit by panels set up by the NRF. Membership of the panels will be largely NRF-based, with at least one external member. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the applications within two months of the closing date.

Grants will be managed according to established NRF processes and procedures.

Successful applicants will be expected to submit a report in the required format, to the NRF within **two (2) months** of completion of the visit.



### 3.4 DIRECTED TRAVEL GRANTS

The NRF administers various initiatives which are for specific types of collaboration/international travel. These vary from time to time and applicants should regularly consult the website ([www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)) for calls and announcements of opportunities. Different rules and criteria apply to each type of grant, and potential applicants are urged to carefully read the conditions that apply to each type of grant.

Currently the following opportunities exist:

#### 3.4.1 Focus on Africa Programme

The main objective of the programme is to provide support for South African researchers to establish links, networks and exchanges with their counterparts on the African continent. Any full-time permanent member of a South African research institution is eligible to apply for grants within this programme.

Applications must be submitted by the applicant's host institution, approved by the Head of the relevant department and the research administration of the institution concerned. By endorsing the application, the institution guarantees that the scientific and technical merit of the application have been scrutinised. Upon completion of the intervention, the grantee must submit a final report to the NRF. An awarded grant must be taken up within the financial year in which it is awarded.

In all cases involving a "visit out" – i.e. where the person travelling is a researcher based in South Africa travelling to another country in Africa, the application will be highly recommended if:

- its scientific and technical rationale has merit and will contribute to broadening the knowledge base within the African research system;
- the applicant demonstrates that s/he has a record of postgraduate student training, staff development, and in particular training of Black students;
- the applicant demonstrates collaboration initiatives within the African higher education system.

(Note: Criteria 2 and 3 are not prerequisites if the applicant is a young staff member or a postgraduate/postdoctoral student).

In those cases involving a "visitor" – i.e. where the person travelling will be someone invited to visit South Africa, the application must demonstrate that the proposed intervention will contribute to the broadening of the South African research system via mechanisms such as conference presentations, research visits to other institutions, postgraduate research training seminars.

The Programme supports travel expenses in the following categories:

#### **3.4.1.1 Conference, workshop and seminar participation**

These grants are awarded on a competitive basis to researchers at South African research institutions<sup>14</sup> who have been accepted as presenters of papers or as session chairpersons at conferences elsewhere in Africa. Full-time registered postgraduate students and postdoctoral students may also apply for these grants. Support in this category will be towards and economy class return airfare, conference fees plus subsistence and accommodation.

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Abstract of the paper
- Curriculum vitae
- Proof of paper acceptance
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

#### **3.4.1.2 Research visits to other countries in Africa**

Grants in this category are awarded to enable local research fellows to visit research institutions in other countries in Africa. Researchers at South African research institutions are eligible to apply<sup>14</sup>; full-time registered postgraduate students including postdoctoral students also qualify to be considered for these grants. Support in this category will be towards and economy class return airfare plus subsistence and accommodation.

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum vitae of applicant in South Africa
- Curriculum vitae of the foreign host
- Motivation
- Letter of invitation from the host (institution)
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

#### **3.4.1.3 Short courses attendance**

A limited number of grants are available in this highly competitive grant category for participation in short courses in Africa. Researchers at South African research institutions are eligible to apply<sup>14</sup>; full-time registered postgraduate students including postdoctoral students also qualify to be considered for these grants. Applications must demonstrate that the short course will contribute to individual and institutional research development in South Africa. Support in this category will be towards an economy class return airfare, course fees, subsistence and accommodation

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum vitae
- Details of the short course
- Motivation
- Details of the host institution
- Acceptance/admission letter
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

#### **3.4.1.4 Foreign research fellowships and Short course presenters**

A number of fellowships are made available each year to enable local universities, and other research organisations to invite researchers of indisputable scientific status from Africa to spend a short period in South Africa to enrich local expertise in their field and to promote future collaboration. Applicants must show that the visiting fellow will benefit not only the host institution, but also the broader scientific community.

Support in this category will be towards an economy class return airfare plus subsistence and accommodation.

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum vitae of the applicant in South Africa
- Curriculum vitae of the foreign research fellow
- Letters of invitation and acceptance
- Itinerary / programme
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

#### **3.4.1.5 Keynote Speakers from Africa**

Applications can be made to the NRF for financial assistance towards the cost of an invited international speaker at a conference / workshop / seminar hosted in South Africa. The applicant must be a representative of the local conference organizing committee. Support in this category will be towards an economy class return airfare plus subsistence and accommodation.

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum vitae of the applicant in South Africa
- Curriculum vitae of the invited speaker
- Letters of invitation and acceptance
- Conference call and programme
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

#### **3.4.1.6 Visits to establish long-term collaboration**

Applications can be made to the NRF for financial assistance towards costs to invite a researcher from any other country in Africa to meet and discuss long-term collaboration in a specified research area. Researchers at South African research institutions are eligible to apply.<sup>14</sup> Applications must demonstrate that the collaboration will contribute to individual and institutional research development in Africa. Support in this category will be towards an economy class return airfare plus subsistence and accommodation.

The following documentation is required:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum vitae of the applicant in South Africa
- Curriculum vitae of the collaborator
- Research proposal
- Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.

For further information on the “Focus on Africa Programme” contact:

Mrs Stephanie Harris [stephanie@nrf.ac.za](mailto:stephanie@nrf.ac.za)

#### **3.4.2 Synchrotron Capacity Building Fund**

The Synchrotron Capacity Building Fund is a strategically focused intervention that aims to develop capacity in South Africa for the use of synchrotron as a radiation source.

The Fund supports costs related to the use of Synchrotron Equipment, mainly travel and instrument time, within the limits of the budget made available for this purpose. The Fund does not support the purchase of equipment nor consumables.

All publicly funded research institutions that have strong links to postgraduate awarding institutions are eligible to apply for these grants. Thirty percent (30%) of the awards may be earmarked for non-South African researchers and students. Grants may not be used to support established researchers who are already receiving funding for the research requiring synchrotron usage. Honours and

undergraduate students are not eligible for these grants.

Funding may not be used for international speakers or for private enterprise and research that is aimed at supporting private enterprise.

As a general guide, costs for a typical international visit of two weeks should not exceed R30 000, unless strongly motivated.

For further information contact:

Mrs Stephanie Harris [stephanie@nrf.ac.za](mailto:stephanie@nrf.ac.za)

### 3.4.3 Bi-national Agreements

Bi-national agreements (STAF) are S&T co-operation agreements between South Africa (through the Department of Science and Technology) and another country. The NRF services and manages these agreements on behalf of the Department. They are intended to promote long-term co-operation to the mutual benefit of the scientific communities of both countries.

The funding that flows from these agreements comes from both partners to the agreement. South Africans therefore will receive funds from the NRF, while their foreign counterparts will receive funds from the partner organisation. Funding decisions are made jointly according to agreed-upon criteria, which form part of the agreement and are tailored to satisfy specific objectives.

Activities that are supported include the exchange of scientists for short periods; joint symposia and workshops; lectureships programmes; joint science and technology programmes. All scientists and scholars who are permanent members of scientific and scholarly communities of the countries involved may apply. Applicants must have full-time employment status at a higher education institution, museum, science council or accredited research institution.

Deadline dates will be announced annually through Calls for Proposals which are advertised widely as well as posted on the NRF website ([www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)).

Currently, South Africa has concluded agreements with:

Country	Typical Call dates		
		Open	Close
Czech Republic	Annual	July	August
Flemish Community	Bi-annual	January	February
France	Annual	June	July
Germany	Annual	March	April
Hungary	Annual	April	May
India	Annual	March	April
Italy	Irregular		
Japan		June	July
Norway	Irregular		
Poland	Annual	June	July
Sweden	Annual	January	February

For further information contact:

Ms Eugenia Ndhundhuma [Eugenia@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Eugenia@nrf.ac.za)

### 3.4.4 Agency-to-Agency Agreements

The NRF has concluded a number of agreements with organisations abroad; these are independent of country-to-country agreements. Servicing these agreements is funded from the NRF core grant. Under all these agreements South African researchers/scholars may request support from the NRF for:

- Exchange of researchers to participate in joint research projects, usually for a period of two to three months;
- Ad hoc grants for short orientation visits to research institutions abroad;
- Joint symposia on priority topics defined within each agreement;
- Lectureship programmes where eminent South African scientists are invited to undertake a lecturing tour in a collaborating country and vice versa.

The funding that flows from these agreements comes from both sides of the agreement. South Africans therefore will receive funds from the NRF while their foreign counterparts will receive funds from the partner organisation. Funding decisions are made jointly according to agreed-upon criteria, which form part of the agreement and are tailored to satisfy specific objectives.

Deadline dates will be announced annually through Calls for Proposals which are advertised widely as well as posted on the NRF website ([www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za)). Currently, the following agreements are in place:

Country	Agency	Typical Call dates	Typical Call dates	
			Open	Close
France	CNRS	Annual	January	March
Germany	DFG	Annual	All year	
Switzerland	NSFS	Annual	July	August
UK	Royal Society	Annual	All year	

For further information contact:

Ms Eugenia Ndhundhuma [Eugenia@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Eugenia@nrf.ac.za)

### 3.4.5 Humboldt/South African Research Awards

An agreement between the NRF and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany promotes collaboration in all fields of the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, mathematics, medicine, engineering or agriculture. The awards involve the exchange of two internationally renowned researchers between South Africa and Germany annually. In each case the nominations must be made by leading researchers in the host country; direct applications are not accepted.

The **Humboldt/South African Research Awards** (nominated by South African researchers) are for internationally renowned German scholars. The purpose of the awards is to promote research cooperation between South Africa and Germany and to contribute to research capacity building in South Africa. Only full or associate professors or scholars of equivalent standing outside universities, may be nominated for this award.

Nominations must be made by leading researchers in South Africa. The nominating South African scholar is required to guarantee that sufficient material and equipment are available for the research work envisaged by the award winner during her/his stay in South Africa, or – for humanities' scholars - that access to archives or libraries is assured.

The period of the award should be at least four months but not exceed twelve months. The research stay may, however, be split into several periods. Awardees will be assisted by the nominator and the NRF to include features relating to research capacity building in the envisaged research programme.

The value of the Humboldt-South African Research Award ranges from R48 000 to R144 000, depending on the length of stay. Two return air tickets (business class) will be made available once to the award winner for the travel between her/his permanent residence abroad and the South African host city. An additional grant will be made to contribute towards costs incurred for medical and accident insurance as well as accommodation. Hosts are expected to make all the necessary preparations for the award winner's research activities, to ensure that (s)he receives assistance in settling in and suitable as well as safe accommodation is found.

Nominations for the reciprocal **Humboldt Research Awards**, must be made by leading scientists in

Germany or by German research Institutes to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The award is granted only once to any one foreign researcher,

For further information contact:

Ms Eugenia Ndhundhuma [Eugenia@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Eugenia@nrf.ac.za)

Or visit the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation website at: [www.avh.de](http://www.avh.de)

### 3.4.6 SA ICSU

The South African ICSU Secretariat serves the South African scientific community and most of the ICSU unions and affiliates to which South Africa adheres; it is administered by the NRF as part of its science liaison activities. Its role is to promote and maintain close links between South African scientists and members of the worldwide community of the International Council for Science (ICSU), through the local national committee structure.

The SA ICSU Secretariat administers South African membership of ICSU and the ICSU National Board of SA advises the NRF, as the national adhering organisation to ICSU, on matters pertaining to international cooperation with ICSU and ICSU bodies with the goal of promoting effective South African involvement in the organisations of the ICSU family. South Africa is also a national member, via the NRF, of 19 of the 23 full ICSU Unions. At present South Africa participates actively in a number of the ICSU Special or Scientific Committees.

SA ICSU provides the following support to official South African delegates and others:

- General Assemblies, Congresses, General Meetings

The following are nominated by the National Committee and are eligible for financial support to attend assemblies, congresses and general meetings:

- National Voting Delegate
- Alternate Voting Delegate
- Capacity Building Delegate

- Commissions, working groups, study groups etc

Persons who are appointed to the above are eligible for funding. One capacity building delegate could be considered.

- Conferences, Workshops etc

This category is open to any established scientist who is interested in attending and presenting a paper at an ICSU related conference, workshop etc.

- Executive Members of ICSU Unions

Most executive members receive funding from their unions, however there are exceptions who are eligible to approach the SA ICSU for partial or full funding.

For further information contact:

Ms Masela Pillay [masela@nrf.ac.za](mailto:masela@nrf.ac.za)



## 4. SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

The NRF will make funding available to assist local researchers to organise various types of scientific events (conferences, symposia, workshops, training courses), which address topics which are of importance to South Africa. Preference will be given to conferences of an international standing and those involving student participation.

The NRF does not issue a prescriptive list of objectives for the type of scientific event, but adopts a flexible approach to allow the best response to a particular set of circumstances.

Researchers responsible for organising the event are eligible to submit proposals. In each case the primary organiser or course presenter should apply for the grant, to be administered by her/his institution on behalf of the organising committee.

Within this category, the following types and extent of funding are available:

### 4.1 Organisational costs

The NRF will consider contributing to the organisational costs of locally organised international conferences and symposia, and workshops and training courses which address topics of importance to the country.

- Eligibility
  - The applicant must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution.
  - The applicant must be a representative of the local conference organising committee.
  - The applicant will be eligible for only one such grant every year.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research administration of the institution.
  - There must be acknowledgement of the NRF within the conference documentation. The NRF logo should be included.
  - The NRF may reserve the right to include a speaker of its choice (usually an NRF representative) on the programme.
  - A report on the event must be submitted to the NRF within 3 months of it occurring.
- Funding
  - NRF support in this category will be limited to a maximum of R50 000.
  - Due to the longer lead-in time required for the organisation of such events, applications may be submitted a year in advance (e.g. in 2006 applications for 2007 may be submitted). Grants will automatically be carried forward to the year in which the conference is scheduled.
- Required documentation:
  - Application form
  - Provisional/latest conference programme

### 4.2 Keynote Speakers from Abroad



Applications can be made to the NRF to contribute towards the cost of an invited speaker from abroad at a conference/workshop/seminar hosted in South Africa.

- Eligibility
  - The applicant (host) must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution.
  - The applicant must be a representative of the local conference organising committee.
  - The applicant will be eligible for only one such grant every year.

- Applicable criteria:
  - The invitee must be established in her/his field – as demonstrated by the CV.
  - Interaction with other institutions, beyond the conference, is recommended – e.g. through postgraduate seminars, workshops.
  - The NRF will support a maximum of two speakers per conference.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research office of the institution.
  - There must be acknowledgement of the NRF within the conference documentation. The NRF logo should be included.
- Funding
  - NRF support in this category will be limited to a return economy class fare plus a contribution towards subsistence and accommodation of R300 per day for the duration of the conference plus two days.
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application.
  - The award must be taken up within the financial year in which it was awarded.
- Required documentation:
  - Completed application form
  - Curriculum vitae of the applicant in South Africa
  - Curriculum vitae of the invited speaker
  - Letters of invitation and acceptance
  - Provisional/latest conference programme
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.



#### 4.3 Foreign course presenters <sup>11</sup>

These awards are intended to enable South African universities and research institutions to invite reputable scientists from abroad to present courses in South Africa. There must be convincing arguments that the relevant expertise for such training is not available in South Africa, and for the necessity for such training/courses.

- Eligibility
  - The applicant (host) must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution.
  - The applicant must be a representative of the local course organising committee.
  - The applicant will be eligible for only one such grant every year.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The invitee must be established in her/his field – as demonstrated by the CV.
  - Interaction with other institutions, beyond the course, is recommended – e.g. through postgraduate seminars, workshops.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research administration of the institution.
  - There must be acknowledgement of the NRF within the course documentation. The NRF logo should be included.
  - The applicant must ensure that the visitor interacts other relevant research institutions in South Africa.
- Funding
  - NRF support in this category will be limited to a return economy class fare plus a contribution towards subsistence and accommodation of R300 per day for the duration of the conference plus two days.
  - The institution must commit to contributing at least 50% of the total costs of the application

---

<sup>11</sup> Originally part of Block Grants

- Required documentation:
  - Application form
  - CV of course presenter
  - Provisional/latest course programme
  - Recent quote for price of air ticket from a recognised IATA travel agent.



#### **4.4 Sponsorship of attendees**

Funding may be requested to contribute towards the registration costs of postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows attending locally organised international conferences, workshops, training courses.

This category also includes sponsorship of postgraduate students to attend locally organised equipment related training courses (formerly part of Equipment Training Grants).

- Eligibility
  - The applicant must be a full-time permanent staff member at a South African research institution.
  - The applicant must be a representative of the local course organising committee or course organiser
  - The applicant will be eligible for only one such grant every year.
- Applicable criteria:
  - The students involved must be at postgraduate level (Master's and Doctoral) or postdoctoral fellows.
  - Students must be registered at South African universities.
  - Applications should be submitted for a group of students (from various universities)
  - Preference will be given to groups primarily including black and/or female students.
- Conditions:
  - Applications must be supported by the Head of relevant Department and the research administration of the institution.
  - There must be acknowledgement of the NRF within the course documentation. The NRF logo should be included.
- Funding
  - NRF support in this category will be limited to a registration costs or course fees.