UK – South Africa Researcher Links

Grants for Travel and Hosting of Scientific Events

2015 – First Call

Closing date: 30 June 2015
In a globalised world, researcher collaboration is imperative for the competitiveness of any country. While international collaboration has always been an intrinsic part of the research and innovation (R&I) endeavour, the forces of competitiveness and globalisation are accelerating the scope, pace and importance of cross-border R&I, strengthened by directed partnerships both within and outside of South Africa. Stakeholders around the world are working to internationalise their R&I efforts, driven by the need to establish a competitive reputation, to access global knowledge and expertise, and to mobilise new resources.

The United Kingdom and the South African government have signed an agreement (UK-South Africa Newton Fund) with the aim to develop scientific capacity and long-term sustainable economic growth. This will be achieved through:

i. Research capacity building – assisting partners to undertake and disseminate scientific research; and
ii. Broader scientific capacity building – supporting the ability of developing countries to both engage with and make proper use of research and other outputs of science (all inclusive).

Overview of the Researcher Links funding opportunity
Under the UK-South Africa Newton Fund agreement, the National Research Foundation (NRF) has partnered with prominent UK academies (i.e. the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Royal Society) and the British Council to support workshops and travel grants for research visits in order to enhance and strengthen collaboration, build research capacity and enhance career opportunities for researchers in South Africa and the UK. The programme will support mobility and hosting of workshops, and is designed to provide financial support for researchers (early-career researchers and established researchers) in the UK and South Africa. These Newton-South Africa Researcher Links grants are intended to provide small-scale seed funding to:

- Support the research and innovation capacity of South Africa for their long-term sustainable economic development and social welfare;
- Expand and maximise cooperation in research and innovation, between policy makers in government, government agencies, research organisations, higher education institutions, companies and enterprises;
- Promote increased research and collaboration that support long-term sustainable partnerships between the UK and South Africa;
- Enhance networking within the UK and South Africa science systems;
- Foster collaboration in order to improve the quality of research outputs by UK and South African researchers;
- Contribute to economic growth by addressing the major challenges faced by South Africa;
- Contribute to capacity building of early and established researchers in South African and the UK.

Applications will be accepted in any discipline-multidisciplinary area (including from the natural sciences, social sciences, engineering, arts and humanities). For this call, the NRF contribution for mobility grants will be...
approximately R1 800 000 (i.e. to support a maximum of 45 grants) while R1 200 000 has been allocated to support grants for hosting workshops. Each applicant will be eligible to apply for up to a maximum of R40 000 for mobility grants and a maximum of R200 000 for conference support.

**TYPES OF SUPPORT**

The investment in support for travel and participation in scientific events are focused in three categories:

i. **Travel grants for South Africa-based Researchers.** Travel grants are intended to:
   - Support researcher mobility in order to foster areas relevant to the economic development and welfare of South Africa and the UK;
   - Establish new research collaboration or significantly develop an existing collaboration, with the potential for longer term sustainability;
   - Contribute to capacity building of individual researchers and research groups.

ii. **Travel grants for visiting UK Researchers.** Travel grants are intended to:
   - Support researcher mobility in order to foster areas relevant to the economic development and welfare of South Africa and the UK;
   - Establish new research collaboration or significantly develop an existing collaboration, with the potential for longer term sustainability;
   - Contribute to capacity building of individual researchers and research groups.

iii. **Support for Local Scientific Events:**
    The applicants in this category are South Africa or UK-based researchers requesting financial support to organise or host small scientific events in South Africa.

**CATEGORY DETAILS**

**Travel grants for South Africa-based Researchers**

*Purpose*

The purpose of this category is to support travel by researchers employed by recognised institutions and science councils and advanced PhD students (supervisors to apply) registered in South Africa and enrolled for at least 2 years, to attend conferences scientific events or workshops in the UK. **Please note that only Supervisors may apply on behalf of advanced PhD students.**

*Criteria*

Applications meeting the following criteria will be prioritised:

- Illustrated value to be derived from participation in the event and the potential of new initiatives;
- Use networking to influence strategic direction in areas of national importance;
- The application must be accompanied by an official acceptance of an abstract, or confirmation of a presentation;
- The NRF will consider supporting visits to foreign institutions only if the events (conference and visit) are held concurrently, and in the same vicinity;
- Applications that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.
Travel grants for visiting UK Researchers

Purpose
The purpose of this category is to enable local researchers to invite UK researchers to attend conferences, work sessions or workshops in South Africa in order to enrich local expertise in their field, promote future collaboration and/or strengthen existing collaboration.

Criteria
- Support of visits by researchers with institutional and individual scientific relevance;
- The invited researcher must be a leader in their field of research;
- Illustrated value to be derived from the visit and the possibility of the start of new initiatives;
- Involvement of other South African scientists and engagement with more than one institution other than the host/applicant;
- It is obligatory that the invited researcher present a public lecture/seminar at the institution, or at a partner institution;
- Applications that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.

Support for Local Scientific Events

Purpose
The purpose of this category is to promote excellence in research through financial support for small international research events hosted in South Africa such as conferences and workshops. The word conference is used in its broadest sense and includes all types of scientific meetings including symposia, congresses, colloquia, and workshops.

Criteria
Applications meeting the following criteria will be prioritised:
- Events in this category must have international involvement (plenary speaker[s] or international participation), must involve South African students, and have oral and/or poster presentations;
- The event proposal must clearly define the overall objectives and programme of activities;
- The event should be a platform aimed at creating new contacts in its area of expertise/discipline and may be connected to other networks;
- The event should offer the potential of establishing institutional cooperation in relevant areas;
- A copy of the invitation to the keynote speaker(s) and a copy of provisional acceptance of invitation from the keynote speaker(s) must be included;
- A student register is required to be made available during the event according to the format as shown in the application form. This should include detailed information providing name, department, institution, study level and demographics;
- The funding will include costs for invited international keynote speaker(s’) air travel, publication of conference proceedings or abstract books;
- Applications that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.
WHO MAY APPLY

i. Advanced PhD students (at a minimum, in the second year of research) registered at South African or UK public universities. PhD students should apply through their supervisors;

ii. Postdoctoral, early career and established researchers. Researchers have to be full-time employees or on a fixed-term contract at any of the following institutions are eligible to apply:
   - South African and UK universities/universities of technology;
   - Recognised national research institutions such as the national facilities (in the case of South Africa);
   - Science councils.

The applicants must be in possession of at least a Master’s degree. **Students and researchers from private/commercial institutions are not eligible to apply.** Student involvement in local events is highly encouraged.

WHICH ACTIVITIES MAY I APPLY FOR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Item</th>
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| Travel Grants for South Africa-based Researchers | ▪ Flights  
▪ Visa costs  
▪ Accommodation  
▪ Ground transport  
▪ Conference registration fees |
| Visiting Researchers                         | ▪ Flights  
▪ Accommodation  
▪ Ground transport |
| Local Events                                 | ▪ Flights  
▪ Accommodation  
▪ Ground transport  
▪ Venue  
▪ Publication of conference proceedings, abstract or books |

PROCESSING AND DECISIONS

In line with the NRF’s endeavour for a fair and objective granting process, all applications are subjected to the following:

▪ Applications will be considered for support for travel/events taking place between **1 August 2015 to 31 March 2016**;

▪ Only one event/activity per applicant will be supported with no exceptions;

▪ Applications by South Africa-based researchers need to be endorsed by the applicant’s Institutional Research Office. The application must be accompanied by a confirmation of the scheduled visit from the host organisation/institution/person being visited or an official acceptance of conference presentation/poster, whichever might be applicable;
A panel consisting of external and internal reviewers will assess and select applications according to the stipulated criteria;

- **The Researcher Links grants will not cover all expenses requested, and co-investment from own/other sources are essential. This should be clearly indicated in the application;**
- Given the competitive nature of the programme and budgetary limitations, funding is not guaranteed.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the National Research Foundation (NRF):
  - **UK – South Africa Researcher Links Grants for Travel and Hosting of Scientific Events 2015**
  - [https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/](https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/)
  - Register/Login using your ID number and password
  - Select *create new application* from the list of existing calls
  - Select the call for which you are applying for: **UK – South Africa Researcher Links Grants for Travel and Hosting of Scientific Events 2015**
  - Remember to complete all sections of the application
  - Please attach the necessary documents in **PDF format**
  - Should you not follow the guidelines for attaching the necessary supporting documents, your application may not be considered
  - Remember to **submit** your application on completion
  - Complete applications will go to the host university for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing
  - Incomplete applications will not be considered
  - Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered
  - Please contact your Institutional Research Office if you have any queries
  - All applications for grants should be submitted by 30 June 2015. **No application will be accepted beyond this date**
  - The NRF will not be held liable for server/IT problems experienced by any institution for non-submission of applications
  - **Applications submitted as hard copies or by email will not be accepted and will automatically be disqualified.**

**Feedback to the applicants**

The granting process following the closing date of applications entails screening of all applications for eligibility, taking eligible applications to the review panel, announcing the outcomes, and awarding of grants. This process could take up to 4 weeks from the call closing date.

Feedback will be communicated to all the institutions’ Designated Authorities in the form of a list/spreadsheet of all successful and unsuccessful applicants per institution. During this time, feedback letters are prepared by Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA).
Acceptance of Grant Conditions (AoC)

An appropriate hard copy of the AoC will accompany each formal letter of award. This should be signed by both the grant holder and the Designated Authority at the institution. The AoC should be returned to the NRF within 30 days of receipt. Failure to comply may result in the NRF cancelling the award. Funding can only be disbursed once the signed AoC have been received.

Reporting and Payments

- The NRF’s and the Partners’ support should be acknowledged in all publications (including World Wide Web pages) and presentations (oral or poster). Use of the NRF logo should be according to the branding policies of the organisation (contact Mr Thabiso Nkone at thabiso.nkone@nrf.ac.za for further details).
- A student attendance register is required to be made available during the event according to the format as shown in the call guide. This should include detailed information providing name, department, institution, study level and demographics.
- Each event should be reported on no later than 30 days after the event. A post-visit online questionnaire and a final report template will be sent to successful applicants and will include a financial and a narrative part.
- Applicants who have not submitted previous reports to the NRF will not be considered for future funding.
- Grant payments will be made directly to the institution of the applicant.

Contacts

All queries or comments about this call should be addressed to:

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