SOUTH AFRICA / JAPAN JOINT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH COLLABORATION

2020 Call for Joint Research Project Proposals

DA Closing Date: 30 September 2020
Researchers must consult their institutions for internal closing dates

A maximum of four joint projects will be funded for this call

On 28 August 2003, South Africa signed an agreement on cooperation in science and technology with Japan, followed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) two years later. The implementation of the NRF/JSPS MoU led to annual cycles of joint research funding between the two countries. Following fourteen successful joint calls for proposals, between 2005 and 2019, the NRF is pleased to announce the 15th call in 2020, and herewith invite all interested parties to submit their applications, no later than indicated above.

Aims of the Programme

This Programme aims to:
- contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint research activities in specified research fields;
- provide an opportunity for young researchers in the two countries to meet and interact;
- support the advancement of basic research; and
- contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

Areas of Cooperation

Joint research proposals may be submitted in the following designated thematic areas prioritised by both countries:
- Humanities
- Social Sciences
- Natural Sciences

Please note for South Africa:
Joint projects with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral co-operations will be favourably considered. Also, joint projects by Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) and individuals which involve young scientists and pay attention to a balanced involvement of female and male researchers (gender equality), will be positively considered and will receive a higher rating.

Duration of projects

The projects will be supported for a period of two years from January 2021 to December 2022.

Who may apply?

An application must designate two principal investigators, one in South Africa and one in Japan, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme.
**South Africa:**
This call is open to working researchers residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology or science council. The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD.

**Japan:**
Japanese PIs must hold a full-time or equivalent position as a researcher at a university or research institute in Japan that is eligible to receive Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research - KAKENHI. However, there are cases when a researcher not employed in a full-time position may be eligible. Such persons must be eligible to apply for a KAKENHI grant-in-aid and his/her affiliated institution must judge them able to implement the project and to provide an appropriate research environment (e.g., laboratory, equipment, personnel) for it.

**How do I apply?**

The onus is on the applicant to find their own research partner. Proposals must be received in both Japan and South Africa. Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or Japan, but not in both countries, will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive therefore application does not guarantee funding. The evaluation of applications from both countries should have positive ratings before consideration for funding. Neither the NRF nor JSPS will be held responsible for non-submission of the application in the partner country.

**South Africa:**
Applications must be submitted on the NRF Online Submission System at: [https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/](https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/). Applicants must attach the required documents in PDF format in the following order:
- CV of partner principal investigator and the budget of the partner principal investigator.

Failure to submit compulsory documents will result in the disqualification of the application.

Applicants are advised to consult the NRF General Application Guide 2021 available at [https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents/funding-framework-documents](https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding/framework-documents/funding-framework-documents) for further details on how to apply for this opportunity (and for making use of the NRF Online Submission System).

**Japan:**
Applications must be submitted making use of the JSPS online submission system as follows: [https://www-shinsei.jsps.go.jp/topkokusai/top_kokusai.html](https://www-shinsei.jsps.go.jp/topkokusai/top_kokusai.html) (In Japanese Only)
Login is at [https://www-shinsei.jsps.go.jp/topkokusai/top_kokusai.html](https://www-shinsei.jsps.go.jp/topkokusai/top_kokusai.html). ID and Password should be issued by his/her affiliated institution.

Japanese applicants are advised to consult the JSPS Application Guidelines for FY2021 Call for proposals available at [https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-bilat/call.html](https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-bilat/call.html) for further details.

**Which activities may I apply for?**

The purpose of this call is to support research projects and mobility of researchers, scientists, post-docs and doctoral students within joint research projects. Funding will be made available for the following activities:

- **Research-related operating costs**: Activities to be supported may include expenses relating to sabbaticals, materials and supplies, research, technical, or ad hoc assistants for field work (such as conducting interviews / surveys / laboratory experiments), research-related trips and small research equipment (up to 15% of the budget for small equipment and consumables).
- **Mobility**: The exchange visits of researchers, postdocs and doctoral students including support for research field work.
- **Workshops, seminars or networking events**: Holding meetings alternately in South Africa and Japan.
In the case of meetings, research visits and exchanges of scientists, personnel and experts, as well as reciprocal visits undertaken as part of joint research projects and the attendance of seminars, symposia and other meetings funded under this agreement, the sending side will be responsible for financing international travel, visas, and medical insurance, while the receiving party will be responsible for financing the accommodation and subsistence of their international partners. Local travel and fees relating to the organisation of events (venue, catering, audio-visual equipment etc.) will be the financial responsibility of the host investigator which is to be paid from his / her allocation of the joint funding.

The following may NOT be funded from the funds allocation:
- Consultant’s fees
- Large equipment
- Project management fees
- Salaries and temporary staff fees
- Educational expenses (scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.).

How much may I apply for?

Funding will be available for a maximum of two years for activities within collaborative research projects jointly developed and completed by researchers on both sides. In both countries, all the approved projects will obtain funding support from the two parties in terms of the cost of activities mentioned above. Apart from the financial support from the two parties, institutions and universities in both countries are encouraged to solicit other funding resources.

South Africa:
The total amount of funding requested from the NRF should not exceed R800 000. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 2 years to be paid in annual installments (i.e. R400 000 per project per annum for networking and mobility of researchers within joint research projects).

Japan:
The total amount requested from JSPS should not exceed JPY 2,500,000 per fiscal year (up to JPY 5,000,000 in total) per project.

Please note:
- should you be successful you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of the guidelines;
- a maximum of 4 joint projects will be funded for this call; and
- scientific and financial reporting on the project is an obligatory condition of funding in subsequent years.

How are applications evaluated?

Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to recognised national experts in the various fields of research represented by the proposals received. These experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

- Scientific quality of the joint research project including the competence and expertise of the scientists/research teams involved especially in supervising postgraduate students.
- Alignment with national priorities in each country.
- Feasibility of continuing the partnership beyond the 2-year funding period of this programme.
- Human Capacity Development.

Particular emphasis is to be placed on the training of students and young researchers achieved through research and the transfer of knowledge and know-how aimed at socio-economic development. The integration of young researchers and students, and the exchange of postgraduate students are encouraged.

Following local evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and JSPS based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries. Please note that, although the two Parties undertake to execute the evaluation and
selection process as quickly as possible so as to notify applicants of the results, the nature of the bilateral process requires the alignment of the commencement of each phase of the process with the partnering country, whose schedules may differ significantly.

Project follow-up and reporting

- A final scientific and financial report will be submitted in English to the NRF by the South African project leader no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- The report will mention the outputs of the projects compared with the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The joint publications by the researchers will mention the support from the NRF and JSPS.

Intellectual property

The researchers of each country, particularly the leaders, must take adequate steps to ensure protection and sharing of the intellectual property that could result from the joint projects.

Ethical Clearance

It is the responsibility of the grantholder, in conjunction with the institution, to ensure that all research activities carried out in or outside South Africa comply with the laws and regulations of South Africa and/or the foreign country in which the research activities are conducted. These include all human and animal subjects, copyright and intellectual property protection, and other regulations or laws, as appropriate. A research ethics committee must review and approve the ethical and academic rigor of all research prior to the commencement of the research and acceptance of the grant. The awarded amount will not be released for payment if a copy of the required ethical clearance certificate, as indicated in the application, is not attached to the Conditions of Grant. Please also refer to the “Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices” on the NRF website at https://www.nrf.ac.za/media-room/news/statement-ethical-research-and-scholarly-publishing-practices.

When is the closing date for applications?

- The deadline for submission to JSPS is 02 September 2020.
- The deadline for DA submission to the NRF is 30 September 2020. Researchers must consult their institutions for internal closing dates.

- Applications received after the closing dates will not be considered for funding. Please note that neither the NRF nor JSPS will be held responsible for applications that were not received. Researchers are also advised to ensure that their research partners’ applications are submitted and have also been received in the partner country.

Where can I obtain more information?

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<th>National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa</th>
<th>Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Japan</th>
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