NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (NRF) / SWEDISH FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION (STINT) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH COLLABORATION

2015 JOINT CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

CLOSING DATE: 18 September 2015
A MAXIMUM OF SEVEN (7) JOINT PROJECTS WILL BE FUNDED FOR THIS CALL

Background

The National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 13 April 2015. The principle objective of the cooperation between the parties is to foster scientific and technological cooperation by facilitating brain circulation between the two countries. The parties intend to support research and development activities and other forms of scientific and technical cooperation between South African and Swedish universities and research institutions. The cooperative programmes, projects, and research and development activities will be aimed at the implementation of joint research projects, human capital development, and student and staff exchanges.

Aims of the programme

- To collaborate on research projects selected within joint calls for proposals;
- To exchange scientific and technical information and personnel;
- To have joint seminars, workshops and networking events;
- To contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint research activities in specified research fields; and
- To contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

Areas of cooperation

Joint research proposals can be submitted in all academic disciplines:

In terms of human capital development, South African applications from historically disadvantaged researchers are encouraged, as is the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education institutions.

Duration of projects

The projects will be supported for a period of three years.

Who may apply?

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. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. An application must designate two principal investigators, one in South Africa and one in Sweden, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting.
How do I apply?

**South Africa:**
Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted electronically to the NRF on the NRF Online Submission System at https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/
- Register/Login using your ID number and password.
- Go to “My Applications” and select “Create Application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: NRF-STINT 2015 Joint Call for Proposals.
- Complete all compulsory sections applicable to you. Please attach the required documents in PDF format in the following order: CV of partner, budget of partner and the signed page of the partner.
- Remember to submit your application on completion.
- Complete applications will go to the host institutions 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.
- Please contact your research office or Designated Authority if you have any queries.

Please note:
Applications submitted outside the NRF Online Submission System will not be accepted. No hard copies will be accepted and will automatically be disqualified by the NRF. Only applications endorsed by the research office or its equivalent at higher education or research institutions will be accepted.

**Which activities may I apply for?**

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

- Joint workshops, seminars or networking events: holding meetings of equal numbers of researchers from each side alternately in South Africa and Sweden.
- Joint research: this collaboration includes visits and exchanges of leading and young scientists, technical personnel or other experts on general or specific subjects.
- Industrial research and development work.

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, each Party will bear the costs of its participation following the principle of “sending side pays”. The sending side, in this regard, will cover international airfares and living allowances for visiting participants. The receiving side will cover the costs of arranging the activity. 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.

**Eligible costs**

**South Africa:** The following may **NOT** be funded by the NRF from the grant:

- Consultant’s fees
- Educational expenses (scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.)
- Large equipment
- Project management fees
- Salaries and temporary staff fees.

All other expenses, including operational running costs and research materials, may be financed from the allocation accorded in terms of this call. Up to 10% of the funds may be used for consumables. Should the allocated funds allow – researchers may also make use of these for joint publication costs.
Funding Modalities

Funding will be available for a maximum of three years for 3-year collaborative research projects jointly developed and completed by researchers on both sides. In both countries, all the approved projects will get 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. For seminars and workshops, each Party will bear the costs of its participation following the principle of “sending side pays”. The sending side, in this regard, will cover international airfares and living allowances for visiting participants. The receiving side will cover the costs of arranging the activity. **Please note that there will be two (kick-off and closing) workshops in 2016 in Stockholm, Sweden and in 2018 in South Africa which must be budgeted for accordingly.**

**How much should I apply for?**

**South Africa:**
The total amount applied for from the NRF should not exceed R900 000. Funding will be made available for a maximum of three years, to be paid in annual installments (R300 000 per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2016. Note that a commitment to both scientific and financial reporting on the project following its completion is an obligatory condition of funding. Please also note that the requested amounts do not necessarily imply that this amount will be awarded upon selection for funding.

Please do take note that:
- you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of the guidelines should you be successful;
- only a maximum of seven (7) 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?**

Depending on specific national rules and procedures:

**South Africa:** Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to both a postal and a panel review. The panel will include recognised local experts in the various fields of research represented by the proposals received.

**Sweden:** Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to a formal assessment and then peer-reviewed by independent experts.

These experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

- Scientific and technical merit
- Suitability and feasibility
- International significance
- Value addition by the collaboration / national priority
- Possible impact of the research / national priority
- Potential for promoting equity and redress / capacity building
- Student involvement.

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 post-doctoral researchers are encouraged, as is the involvement of students and researchers from previously-disadvantaged communities (refers to South Africa).

Following local evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and STINT based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries. Please note that, although the two funding agencies undertake to execute the evaluation and selection process as quickly as possible so as to notify applicants of the results as soon as possible, 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. As such applicants are urged not to expect notification by a certain date, nor to make concrete logistical arrangements before having been thus notified.

**Projects follow-up and reporting**

- **South Africa:** A final scientific and financial report will be submitted in English by the South African project leader no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- The reports will mention the outputs of the projects compared with the objectives targeted in the submission.
- The joint publications will mention the support from the NRF and the STINT.
**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.

**When is the closing date for applications?**

Applications for both South Africa and Sweden must be submitted by **18 September 2015**. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding. Please note that neither the NRF nor STINT 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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