



COMPETITIVE PROGRAMME FOR

RATED RESEARCHERS (CPRR)

KNOWLEDGE ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT

Framework Document

February 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

The NRF views support for basic disciplinary, multi-, inter and transdisciplinary research as an investment in the country's learning and knowledge production capabilities and capacities. Such research is considered critical for innovation and potentially, international competitiveness. The Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers (CPRR) is a discipline- and transdisciplinary-based, and demand-driven funding instrument. It is restricted to persons who hold a **current NRF rating**. It is anticipated that these individuals, as established researchers, will continue to produce quality, high impact research, contributing to South Africa's global research and development output.

1.1 Description of Funding Instrument

The Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers (CPRR) is a highly competitive discipline-based funding instrument which supports both basic and applied research as the foundation of knowledge production in the disciplines of the Humanities, Social and Natural sciences. The instrument is aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the National Research Foundation (NRF) to drive transformation consistently and strategically through supporting primarily basic research as the foundation of knowledge production in the disciplines of the Humanities, Social and Natural Sciences.

As a competitive funding instrument, the chief eligibility criteria are:

- i. **A principal investigator (applicant) who has a valid NRF rating at the time of application**
- ii. **Scientific merit and feasibility of the research proposal.**

Although the funding instrument ostensibly has a broad and non-directed theme and structure, funding will be prioritised to the top scoring applications within broad field/discipline that are not supported through other NRF mission-driven funding instruments, such as African Origin Platform (Palaeosciences), Global Change Grand Challenge, South African National Antarctic Programme, Marine and Coastal Research, among others. The emphasis will be on basic and as appropriate, applied research in disciplinary fields, and will allow for multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary enquiry along the basic-applied research continuum.

Unlike some funding instruments, the NRF through the CPRR funding instrument does not dictate the direction of the research considered for support. However, research informed by

national priorities as described in the National Development Plan would be of particular interest in the context of contributing to wider system objectives.

2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The objective of the NRF is to contribute to National Development by:

- i. Supporting, promoting, and advancing research and human capacity development through funding and the provision of the necessary research infrastructure, to facilitate the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including humanities, social sciences and indigenous knowledge.
- ii. Developing, supporting, and maintaining national research facilities.
- iii. Supporting and promoting public awareness of, and engagement with science; and
- iv. Promoting the development and maintenance of the national science system and support of government priorities.

Vision 2030

The overall objectives for 2030 are to shape, influence, and impact the national research system; to establish the NRF as a thought leader and source of knowledge within the science sector; to create a clear causal relationship between research and national development; to have a transformative effect on the national research enterprise and the relationship between science and society; and to enable, initiate, facilitate and perform excellent research with direct and indirect impact, whether immediate or long-term, that extends the frontiers of knowledge and addresses national challenges.

Strategy 2025

NRF Strategy 2025 is an implementation framework for the ten-year vision. This strategy is centred on the NRF's desire to contribute to national development through research with an impact. The strategic outcomes include:

- i. A transformed (internationally competitive and sustainable) research workforce.
- ii. Enhanced impact of the research enterprise.
- iii. Enhanced impact of science engagement, and
- iv. A transformed organisation that lives its culture and values.

2.1 Environmental scan

The CPRR resonates with the NRF mandate by being cognisant of the role that research plays in the innovation and the commercialisation value chain, and hence the socio-economic development of the country.

While it is recognised that the innovation value chain requires basic, strategic, and applied research, the emphasis in *this* funding instrument will primarily be on the support of both basic research and applied research. Support for basic disciplinary research is seen as an investment in a society's learning capabilities. At the same time, this funding instrument acknowledges that basic and applied research are a continuum and inter-dependent and that increasingly, the notion of "frontier research" transcends the distinction of basic and applied research and refers to leading edge research which is risky and often across different disciplines.

Social Sciences, Law and Humanities applications are important, just like those in the natural sciences, engineering and health science that have traditionally been supported. The NRF continues to support self-initiated bottom-up research ideas and research that address national strategic initiatives as reflected in national strategies like the National Development Plan, and those that are embedded in geographic advantage areas. At the International level the NRF is keen to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Agenda 2063 priorities.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the funding instrument are to:

- i. contribute to the development of a sound fundamental basis to scientific and scholarly endeavour in South Africa, in the Humanities, Natural and Social Science disciplines.
- ii. contribute to knowledge production across the research spectrum.
- iii. achieve world-class research and to develop the associated human capacity, and
- iv. advance or develop paradigms, theories, and methodological innovation across the research spectrum.

2.3 Financing support

The CPRR is made possible through the NRF's Parliamentary Core Funding. As a demand-driven funding instrument, there is no limit to the amount an applicant can request. However, the financial requests need to be in line with requirements and accurately reflect the financial needs of the proposed work. Excessive budget requests are not well received by the review

panels. The final number of successful applicants that will be supported will be determined by the available budget for 2023.

2.4 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders involved in the CPRR are persons with a valid NRF rating based at public research institutions that are recognised by directive of the Minister of the Department of Science and Innovation. These include Public Universities, Museums, National Research Facilities and Science Councils.

3 *MODUS OPERANDI*

3.1 Call for proposals

All application materials must be submitted electronically via the NRF Connect System at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za> . All applications must be endorsed by the research office or equivalent of the principal applicant before submission to the NRF. It is the responsibility of each applicant to familiarise himself / herself with the internal closing dates set by the institution to meet the NRF closing dates included in the “General Application Guide 2023”.

3.2 Eligibility

- i. CPRR grantholders may hold **ONE** CPRR grant as a Principal Investigator at a time. CPRR grantholders with current grants that run beyond the end of 2022, are thus **ineligible** for funding in this round. CPRR grantholders with current grant awards that run to the end of 2022 are **eligible** for funding in this round. Funding in this round will support successful applications for a maximum period of 3 years, 2023-2025. A project with a duration of one year or less does not qualify.
- ii. Each new Principal Investigator **may only submit ONE** CPRR application to this call. However, a researcher may participate either as a co-investigator or collaborator in more than one project.
- iii. Full-time employees at an NRF recognized research institution in South Africa, **who hold a valid NRF rating at the time of application**, are invited to apply. Postdoctoral fellows, students, technical and support staff are NOT eligible to apply.
- iv. NRF rated part-time employees on contract at an NRF recognized research institution (as defined above) in South Africa who do not currently hold a CPRR grant may apply,

on condition that their appointment at the South African institution is for (at least) the duration of the project applied for. The length of the contract should be stated in the application. The primary employment of the individual concerned must be at that institution. A contract researcher appointed at a research institution on behalf of a third party to fulfill a very specific function for the latter does not qualify for support.

- v. Successful rated applicants will be eligible for funding **for the duration of their awarded grant**, to a maximum of 3 years. The grant allocation will be allowed to run for the duration of the award, even if the principal investigator loses his/her rating status during this period. However, once the grant period has expired, the principal investigator will not be able to reapply to the CPRR funding stream until a new rating is obtained.
- vi. Retired unrated academics/researchers, provided they meet all set criteria as stipulated below:
 - are resident in South Africa;
 - are formally affiliated to a South African Higher Education Institution (e.g., appointed as an emeritus professor, honorary research associate/professor, supernumerary/contract employee);
 - are active researchers with a distinguished track record in research and postgraduate student supervision;
 - are actively mentoring/training postgraduate students/young research staff; and
 - the institution ensures that a minimum of reasonable time (6 months minimum) is spent at the facility for the purpose of research and research capacity development.

3.3 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 until a copy of the required ethical clearance certificate, as indicated in the application, is submitted. **All CPRR grant awards without ethical clearance certificates on 1 June 2023 will be cancelled.**

Please refer to the “Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices” at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/statement-on-ethical-research-and-scholarly-publishing-practices/?hilite=Statement+Ethical+Research+and+Scholarly+Publishing+Practices>.

3.4 Application assessment

The assessment of applications will be guided by a Panel Assessment Scorecard (see Annexure 1) and scored according to the Proposal Grading (see Annexure 2). Application assessment will occur by way of a two-tiered process.

Remote peer review

The remote peer reviewers will be specialists in the ambit of the respective proposals. Requests for written reviews will be solicited electronically, or through appropriate media platforms peers located at remote locations from the NRF. Applicants will be requested to provide between 6 to 10 possible reviewers. It is in the applicant’s best interest to ensure that the selected reviewers are aware of the submission and are thus likely to respond. It is also in the applicant’s best interest to ensure that selected reviewers have no possible conflict of interest in submitting a review. Should that be the case, review reports will be dismissed without consideration.

Panel peer review

The adjudication panel will be broadly constituted to include senior academics, selected based both on their respective knowledge fields and their research standing. The panel meeting will be held at a central location or by way of tele- or videoconferencing. Panel members will deliberate on submitted written reviews and will be expected to offer their own expert opinions.

NB: Applicants must ensure that their Curriculum Vitae are updated on the NRF Connect System at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za> . These Curriculum Vitae are used in the assessment processes, and incomplete or outdated inputs will jeopardise the success of the application.

3.5 Rules of participation

i. Principal Investigator

- Only rated researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa (as defined above) are eligible to apply as principal investigators (PI) in this funding instrument.
- The PI (i.e., the applicant) must be an active researcher who takes intellectual responsibility for the project, its conception, any strategic decisions required in its pursuit, and the communication of results. The PI must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to the project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others. The PI will take responsibility for the management and administration of resources allocated to the grant award, and for the meeting of reporting requirements.
- The principal investigator may submit only one CPRR application to this call for proposals.

ii. Co-investigators

A co-investigator is an active researcher who provides significant commitment, intellectual input and relevant expertise into the design and implementation of the research application. The co-investigator will be involved in all or at least some well-defined research activities within the scope of the application. Only South Africa-based co-investigators will be eligible for funding in successful grant applications. It is important to note that postdoctoral fellows, students, technical and support staff do not qualify as co-investigators.

iii. Research Associates / Collaborators

These individuals or groups make a relatively small, but meaningful contribution to the research endeavours outlined in the application, but do not participate in the research design. They are not considered as part of the core research team and are not eligible to receive NRF funds from the grant if the team's application is successful.

3.6 Data management and use

A data management Plan (DMP) is a formal document that describes the data you expect to acquire or generate during a research project, how you will manage, describe, analyze, and store those data, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) you will use at the end

of your project to share and preserve your data. This may be included as an attachment to the application, or the information can be placed into the application template text, as preferred.

Research data sharing that underlies the findings reported in a journal article/conference paper/thesis as set out in the NRF Open Access Statement.

The findings reported in a journal article or conference paper should be deposited in accordance with the NRF Open Access Statement. It is acknowledged that some data generated are more sensitive than others. Before initiating the research, it is the grantholder's responsibility to consider the following: confidentiality, ethics, security, and copyright. Possible data sharing challenges should be considered in the DMP with solutions to optimise data sharing.

Researchers should note that publicly-funded research data should be in the public domain, with free and open access, by default. Collaborators and co-investigators in the research project should be informed by the applicant that due to public funding and funder mandate, one is expected to share research data as openly as possible. The DMP should indicate which data will be shared. If (some) research data is to be restricted, an appropriate statement in the DMP and subsequent publication should explain why access to data is restricted. The NRF has adopted and is given permission to use the DCC Checklist for Data Management Plan, and this can be used as a guide for developing the DMP.

http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/resource/DMP/DMP_Checklist_2013.pdf)

3.7 Science Engagement

The NRF supports science engagement through its coordination and implementation of the Department of Science and Innovation's Engagement Strategy. The strategy embraces a broad understanding of science, encompassing systematic knowledge spanning natural and physical sciences, engineering sciences, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, mathematics, social sciences and humanities, technology, all aspects of the innovation chain and indigenous knowledge. Within this context, science engagement refers to activities, events, or interactions characterised by mutual learning and dialogue among people of varied backgrounds, scientific expertise, and life experiences, who articulate and discuss their perspectives, ideas, knowledge, and values. Science engagement is an overarching term for all aspects of public engagement with science, including science awareness, science education, science communication and science outreach, which aim to develop and benefit individuals and society. Researchers funded

through NRF programmes are required to contribute to science engagement and report the related outputs in their project's annual Progress Report.

4 FINANCIALS

4.1 Funding model

The grants of this funding instrument are to be primarily used for research purposes and for the development of associated human resources under the auspices of the NRF standard grant and finance policies. The allocation of funds is demand-driven, and as such there is no maximum or minimum proposal request. The number of applications that will be supported overall will depend on the availability of resources and the financial requirements of those successful applications. If successful applications have high financial requirements, fewer applications will be supported. The funds are released upon acceptance of the conditions of grant, both by the applicant and their employing institution. These grants will fall under the NRF audit requirements of beneficiary institutions.

4.2 Funding ranges

Successful applications will receive funding that accommodates the following budget items:

- i. Staff development grants and Postdoctoral bursaries, and
- ii. Research-related operating costs, including:
 - Sabbaticals.
 - Materials and Supplies.
 - Travel and subsistence.
 - Research / Technical / *Ad hoc* Assistants.
 - Research Equipment.
- iii. Funding to cater for disabilities.

i. Staff development grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships

Applicants may apply for Staff Development grants for South African **staff members** at their own and other institutions, and who are not NRF grantees. These staff members must be registered for either a Masters or Doctoral degree, supervised by the applicant or a co-investigator of the applicant and must be directly involved in the NRF-approved project. These grants can be used to contribute towards the operating costs for research undertaken at the supervisor's facility, as well as the cost of travel and accommodation to enable staff members to meet with (co)supervisors. Grants usually range between R15

000 and R30 000 depending on the nature of the research and the proximity of the staff member in relation to the supervisor. Applicants themselves are **not** eligible for Staff Development Grants. **The maximum period of funding is three years.**

Postdoctoral fellowships, subject to budgetary constraints, are open to all who undertake research in South Africa. The value for Postdoctoral fellowships (pro-rata per month) amounts to R200 000 per annum.

ii. **Research-related operating costs**

These costs include materials and supplies, travel (including conferences) and subsistence, equipment and research/technical/*ad hoc* assistance and sabbaticals to other research organisations and institutions of higher learning may be included within the context of the project applications. These costs should be justified and commensurate with the planned outputs, as they will be assessed on this basis. The amount awarded within this framework can be used at the discretion of the applicant.

General guidelines

Sabbaticals

Sabbaticals will be considered for a period from two to six months. The maximum sabbatical amount requested should not exceed R80 000 for six months. Funding for sabbaticals of less than six months will be reduced pro-rata. Principal investigators and co-investigators are eligible to apply for sabbatical funding.

Materials and Supplies

Generally, the NRF does not provide financial support for:

- Basic office stationery, photocopying costs, and printing costs are excluded unless these items form part of the research tools.
- Basic office equipment including computers and consumables unless a specialised computer is required for the research itself.
- Journal publication costs, journal subscription costs and book costs.
- Telephone and internet costs.

Travel and subsistence

- International conference attendance: Generally, the NRF restricts this amount to R25 000 per person to a maximum of R50 000 per application per year for a team i.e., for principal investigators and co-investigators (South African-based only)
- International visits: These will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such visits must be integral to the research plan and strong motivations should accompany these requests. Realistic funding allocations will be based on the requested activities. Only outgoing visits will be considered depending on the availability of funding.
- Local conference attendance: Generally, the NRF restricts expenditure against this item to R5 000 per person (all costs). Support for local conference attendance could be requested for all listed co-investigators and postgraduate students. The applicant should clearly motivate for the benefit to attend more than one local conference per annum, and for the number of people attending each local conference.
- Local travel: The NRF does not stipulate any rate for mileage as this will depend on the rate which varies per institution/organisation. Applicants are requested to provide details of this rate as well as the estimated distance to be travelled within the given year. This travel should be well-motivated and exclude travel to the conferences mentioned above.
- Local accommodation costs should not exceed a 3-star establishment. This relates to local travel for research purposes and an estimation of accommodation costs for each trip should be clearly presented in the motivation.

Research / Technical / Ad hoc Assistants

This instrument **does not provide funding for salaries**. Requests for research/technical/*ad hoc* assistance should be treated with caution. The NRF strongly encourages applicants to engage students to undertake the research rather than employing research consultants. The NRF will not pay for students to undertake research. This guideline however does not apply when specific and/or highly specialised research/technical expertise is required. This should be **clearly** motivated for in the application. Administrative assistance does not qualify as technical assistance.

Research Equipment

Funding for equipment will be limited to R200 000 per application. Requisitions for large equipment items should be submitted through the NRF's Research Equipment Programme.

iii. Funding to cater for disabilities

Additional funding support to cater for disability will be allocated to people with disabilities as specified in the Code of Good Practice on Employment of People with Disabilities as in the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998.

4.3 Postgraduate student support

The NRF has developed a new Postgraduate Student Funding Policy that will use postgraduate student funding as a lever to address the challenges of inequity of access, success, and throughput. The policy is underpinned by the pursuit of research excellence in all its dimensions and has transformation of the postgraduate cohort as the core objective. Its purpose is to retain high academic achievers in the system to pursue postgraduate studies up to the doctoral level, as part of a national drive to grow the next generation of academics to sustain South Africa's knowledge enterprise. The NRF is prioritising postgraduate students with research inclination, with the aim to grow the pool of early career researchers. Another motivation for this policy is to fast-track the development of postgraduate students in high-impact, priority, and vulnerable disciplines critical for national socio-economic development.

From the 2021 academic year onwards, the NRF began phasing out the block grant nomination process as well as the grant-holder-linked modalities of funding postgraduate students. All the postgraduate students are required to apply on the NRF Connect System by accessing the link: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za> . This single-entry point will allow the NRF to co-ordinate the applications that have not yet had the financial means test conducted. This financial means test will be conducted by Ikusasa Students Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP). Postgraduate students will be funded either at Full Cost of Study (FCS) or Partial Cost of Study (PCS) under the new policy. To ensure equity of access to postgraduate studies, financially needy students (i.e., those whose combined household income is R350 000 per annum or less) and students with a disability will be funded at FCS. Academic "*high-fliers*" achieving a distinction or first-class pass will also be eligible for funding at FCS. International students as well as any other South African students who are not eligible for FCS will be eligible for PCS funding.

The students are expected to meet the NRF minimum entry requirement to be eligible for FCS or PCS as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Eligibility criteria for NRF postgraduate funding for FCS and PCS.

Study Level	Full Cost of Study <i>(South African Citizens and Permanent Residents only)</i>		Partial Cost of Study <i>(South African Citizens; South African Permanent Residents and 5% Non-South African Citizens)</i>
	Exceptional Achievers	Financially Needy & Students with Disability	Other
Honours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 75% Mark in Final Year of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study
	<p>Honours students must be 28 years of age or younger in the year of application. Non-South African Citizens are not eligible for Honours Scholarships.</p>		
Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 75% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year
	<p>Masters students must be 30 years of age or younger in the year of application.</p>		
Doctoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 75% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 65% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years
	<p>Doctoral students must be 32 years of age or younger in the year of application.</p>		

In cases where a grade is not indicated, the application will not be considered for funding by the NRF.

The NRF will allocate all postgraduate bursaries under its management control as follows:

- 95% South African citizens and permanent residents.
- 5% students from SADC countries and from the rest of the world, and
- 55% women.

The NRF disaggregates these targets for South African citizens and permanent residents as follows:

- 90% Black (African, Coloured, and Indian).
- 10% White; and
- 1% students living with a disability.

Applicants are encouraged to identify postgraduate students that have a potential to complete their honours and Masters' degree with a minimum pass mark of 65%, and who are interested in pursuing research in the area of the proposed project. The interested students must apply on the NRF Connect system by accessing the link: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>, and should include the reference number of your application in their applications. This will enable the identification of the students' applications for consideration for funding by the NRF. Should your application be unsuccessful, the students' chances of being funded will not be affected. In a situation where the students are not successful, you may contact the Postgraduate Office at your institution to identify students who succeeded to get the NRF bursaries, and who may require a supervisor. The success of the applications for your targeted students is not a guarantee that all of them will receive NRF bursaries. Student bursary approval will depend on the available budget and will be made in consideration of the NRF's key performance targets.

4.4 Financial control and reporting

Upon receipt of the signed Conditions of Grant, the NRF will release the awarded amount for the year. Grantholders will then be required to comply with the standard NRF financial management procedures, including the submission of a Progress Report. These are to be submitted by 15 February of the following year and is a prerequisite for the release of the subsequent year's funding. Failure to submit a Progress Report will result in the cancellation of **ALL current awards held by the Principal Investigator.**

5 ENQUIRIES

Funding rules related queries	Application process related queries
<p>Mr Katleho Ralehoko Professional Officer: Knowledge Advancement and Support Tel: 012 481 4188 E-mail: K.Ralehoko@risa.nrf.ac.za</p>	<p>Ms. Jane Mabena Professional Officer: Grants Management & Systems Administration Tel: 012 481 4067 E-mail: JS.Mabena@risa.nrf.ac.za</p>
<p>Applicants may also contact the NRF Support Desk via email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za</p>	

6 LIST OF ACRONYMS

CI	Co-investigator
CPRR	Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers
DMP	Data Management Plan
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation
FCS	Full Cost of Study
ISFAP	Ikusasa Students Financial Aid Programme
KAS	Knowledge Advancement and Support
NRF	National Research Foundation
PCS	Partial Cost of Study
PI	Principal Investigator
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

7. ANNEXURE 1: Panel Assessment Scorecard for Rated Researchers

ANNEXURE 1: Panel Assessment Scorecard – CPRR					
Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight	Weighted score
Proposals	Scientific merit and feasibility	Reflect on the proposed rationale, approach and methodology.		45%	0.00
		Reflect on the scientific, ethical ¹ logistics and technical feasibility as proposed			
Track record of the applicant	Past research	Reflect on past contributions to knowledge production (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, designs, performances, etc.)		5%	0.00
Equity	Of applicant	Race / Gender ²		15%	0.00
	Of students supervised	M and D degrees.		5%	0.00
Collaboration	International, national and institutional collaborations	Are the appropriate collaborations proposed in the application?		5%	0.00
		Are the roles of the proposed collaborators clearly indicated?			
Impacts	Impact on knowledge production	Will the proposed work significantly advance discovery and understanding in the field?		10%	0.00
	Wider impact	Has the possibility for economic, societal, or environmental impact been appropriately embedded in the proposal? Is it clear how such impact will be measured?		5%	0.00
Data management and use	Data management plan	A data management plan (DMP) is a formal document that describes the data you expect to acquire or generate during a research project, how you will manage, describe, analyse, and store those data, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) you will use at the end of your project to share and preserve your data.		10%	
			Totals	100%	0.00

¹ Ethical considerations and clearances for grant proposals are the responsibility of the research institute and/or institution of the applicant. Where ethical clearance is required, grant applicants will be expected to submit to the NRF signed statements and/or copies of clearance certificates before any grant funds are released.

² This is a preset score inserted by the NRF. See Annexure 3

7. ANNEXURE 1: Panel Assessment Scorecard for Rated Researchers

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight
Proposal	Scientific merit and feasibility	Reflect on the proposed rationale, approach and methodology Is the proposal feasible as proposed? Has knowledge of relevant literature been adequately articulated?		45%
Equity	Of applicant	Race / Gender / Years post PhD ³		10%
Transformation	Early career researchers/ postgraduates	Reflect on the historical compliance with transformational objectives		10%
Science Engagement	Plans for science engagement	Is there evidence of a science engagement strategy? Are the appropriate target groups adequately articulated?		10%
Impact	Wider Impact	Has economic/ societal/ environmental impact been embedded in the proposal? Is it clear how such impact will be measured?		15%
Data management and use	Plans for digital data storage, usage and/or dissemination	Has appropriate consideration been given to digital data storage, usage and/or dissemination beyond the immediate project team?		10%
			Total	100%

³ This score is predetermined in accordance with an NRF-approved scale – see Annexure 3

8 ANNEXURE 2: Proposal Grading

ANNEXURE 2: Proposal Grading		
Score	Meaning of score	Notes
4	Excellent	Application demonstrates evidence of outstanding performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field under consideration
3	Above average	Application demonstrates evidence of above average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field under consideration
2	Average	Application demonstrates evidence of average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field under consideration
1	Below average	Application demonstrates evidence of below average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by panel and relative to knowledge field under consideration
0	Poor	There are major shortcomings or flaws as relates to the scientific / scholarly merit and feasibility of the proposed work, as determined by the panel.

Context:

Proposal grading is done with sensitivity to the context within which each application is submitted. The score of each criterion for each application will be contextualised to accommodate variability in such things as knowledge fields, institutional capacity, etc. Should a criterion not be applicable to a specific application (e.g., plans for digital data storage; collaborations; etc.), the weighting of that specific criteria will be made to equal zero, and the overall score normalised.

It should be noted that non-South African citizens will be scored as White females or males, as appropriate.