General Application Guide 2023

Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)

Version 2

17 March 2022

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1. Background

During the last few years the National Research Foundation (NRF) has embarked on a process designed to enhance and simplify the NRF administrative interface with Researchers, Students and Designated Authorities. This has been done by streamlining its application templates and its Call Opening process, in line with the forthcoming Research Support Strategies by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and the NRF. These changes will create enhanced efficiency in receiving and processing applications and be more effective in prioritizing funding to best serve the NRF mandate.

2. Application Categories

As a result of the streamlining, the NRF will publish the One Call for Applications for funding in March 2022 (Review Period 1) and others later in Review Period 2 under the following categories. Refer to Appendix 1 for the Review Periods.

1) **Concept Notes**
    a) Concept Notes (JINR) (Offline)
2) **Infrastructure Bridging Finance**
3) **Infrastructure Grants**
    a) National Equipment Programme (NEP)
4) **Institutional Grants**
    a) African Institute for the Preparedness and Prevention of Pandemics
    b) National Institute for Theoretical Physics and Computational Science (NITheCS) Call for Nodes and separate Call For NIThECS Director Appointment
    c) NRF / DHA SARChI CoP
    d) NRF / PCC SARChI CoP
    e) NRF / SAIMI Co-funded Chair
    f) NRF / SAIMI Co-funded CoP
    g) NRF / Sasol Co-funded Chairs x 2
    h) NRF / Swiss Bilateral Research Chair
    i) NRF / UCT Co-funded Chairs x 2
    j) NRF / UKZN Co-funded Chair
    k) NRF / UL Co-funded Chairs x 2
    l) Replacement Chairs – Review Period 1
    m) Replacement Chairs – Review Period 2

n) SAIAB Chair

5) Non-funding opportunities

a) NRF Awards

b) NRF Rating

6) NRF Postgraduate Scholarships

a) Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Studies

b) First-time Doctoral Scholarships (Including SARAO Doctoral Scholarships)

c) First-time Masters Scholarships (Including SARAO Masters Scholarships)

d) Honours Scholarships (Including SARAO Honours Scholarships)

e) NRF / Nuffic Doctoral Scholarships (Split site)

7) Other Grants

a) Fulbright / NRF Visiting Student Research (Offline)

b) Japan Hope Meeting (Offline)

c) MITACS (Offline)

d) YSSP (Offline)

8) Postdoctoral Grants

a) Postdoctoral Fellowships

b) SARAO Postdoctoral Fellowships

9) Research Grants

a) Black Academics Advancement Programme

b) BRICS Multilateral Joint Science and Technology Research Collaboration

c) BRICS Multilateral Joint Science and Technology Research Collaboration ***(Closed call)***

d) FBIP Small Grants

e) Global Research Council (GRC) SDG Pilot – Full Proposals ***(Closed Call)***

f) Italy / South Africa (ISARP) Joint Research Programme

g) New Earth Observation Frontiers (NEOFrontiers) – Product Development

h) New Earth Observation Frontiers (NEOFrontiers) – Innovation Support

i) NRF / CNRS / IRD / Cirad Collaboration ***(Closed Call)***

j) NRF / DFG International Research Training Groups (IRTGs)

k) SA / Belgium (BELSPO) Joint Research

l) SA / China (MOST) Joint Research

m) SA / France (PROTEA) Call for Joint Proposals

n) SA / Netherlands (NWO) WEF Nexus ***(Closed Call)***

o) SA (NRF) / Switzerland (Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) Lead Agency
p) SA / USA (NSF) Biodiversity on a Changing Planet (BoCP)
q) Support for Rated and Unrated Researchers
r) Support for Y-rated Researchers
s) Thuthuka
t) Trans-Atlantic Platform (T-AP) Multilateral Research Call

10) SARAO Undergraduate and Diploma Scholarships

a) SARAO Undergraduate and Diploma Scholarships
b) SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant

11) Targeted Grants

a) DSI / NRF Research Development Grants for New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) Scholars **(Closed Call)**

12) Travel, Training and Conference Grants

a) DSI / NRF Conference Fund
b) Equipment-related Travel & Training
c) ERC Mobility
d) Germany (IRTGs) Preparatory Workshop
e) ISC Grants for Travel & Hosting of Events
f) JINR Student Practice (Offline)
g) Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration (KIC)

3. Cut-off dates and Review Periods

The NRF will accept applications for processing until the DA cut-off date for each Funding Opportunity as indicated in Appendix 1.

The **Applicant Cut-off Date** is reintroduced this year and applicants must submit their applications before or on this date. Applicants will not be able to create or submit applications after this cut-off date. They will be able to amend applications which were submitted by the Applicant Closing Date if/when the institutional Designated Authority opens the application for amendment.

Some institutions set their own internal closing dates and applicants should therefore ensure that **the institutional deadlines are strictly followed**.

Applications submitted by institutions after the DA Cut-off Date, will not be considered.

Institutional Cut-off Dates: Internal

The cut-off dates for submission of applications to institutions are dependent on the internal cut-off dates of individual institutions. Institutions may wish to set their own internal cut-off dates for submission of applications to their Researchers/Students, to ensure applications are not submitted late.

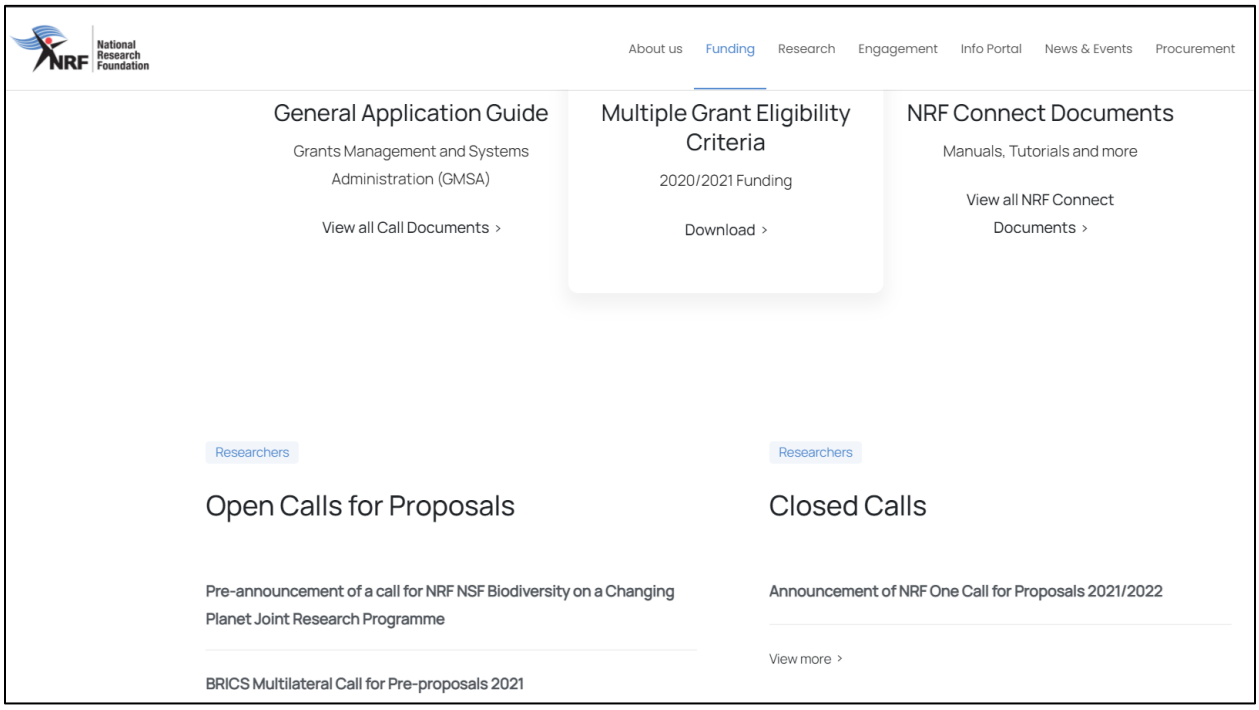
Applicants are **strongly advised** to adhere to the institutional cut-off dates so as NOT to miss the opportunity for their applications being submitted to the NRF for review.

4. How to Apply

Applications must be submitted electronically on the *NRF Connect* system at https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za unless otherwise indicated.

Manuals on how to use the system is available on the NRF website at: https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding

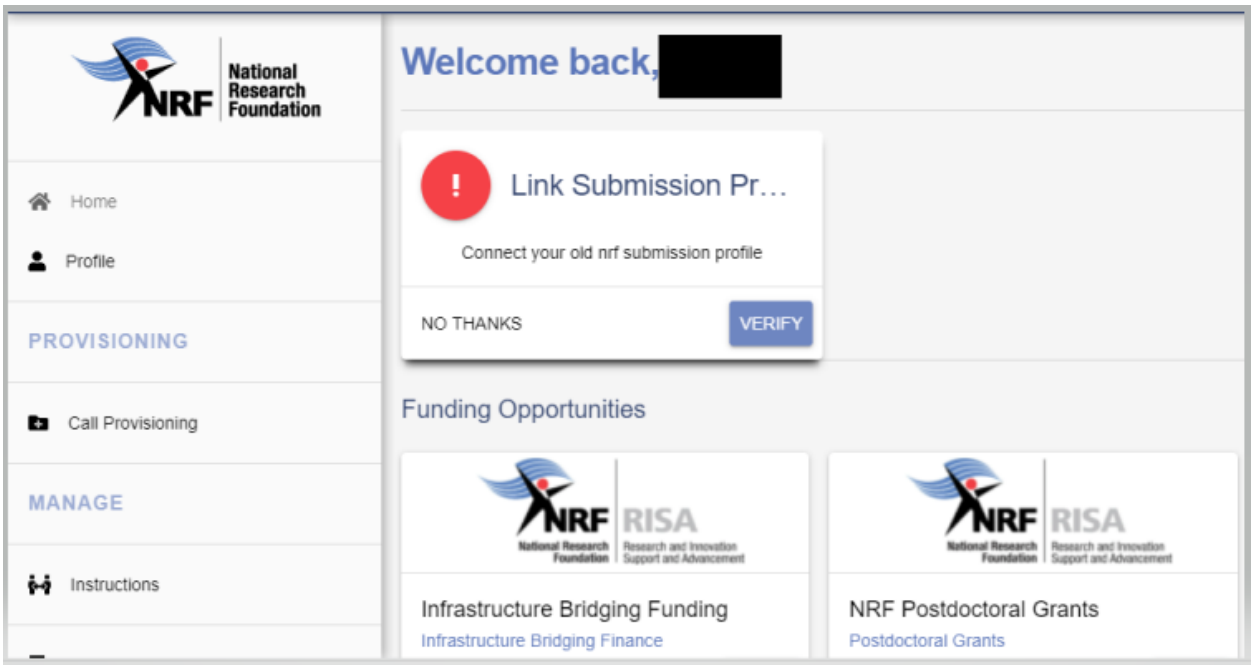
It is important to read the relevant documents before deciding on which funding opportunity to apply to. All eligibility criteria, as well as the applicable requirements, must be taken into consideration. All Framework and Application and Funding Guide documents are available on the NRF website at https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding

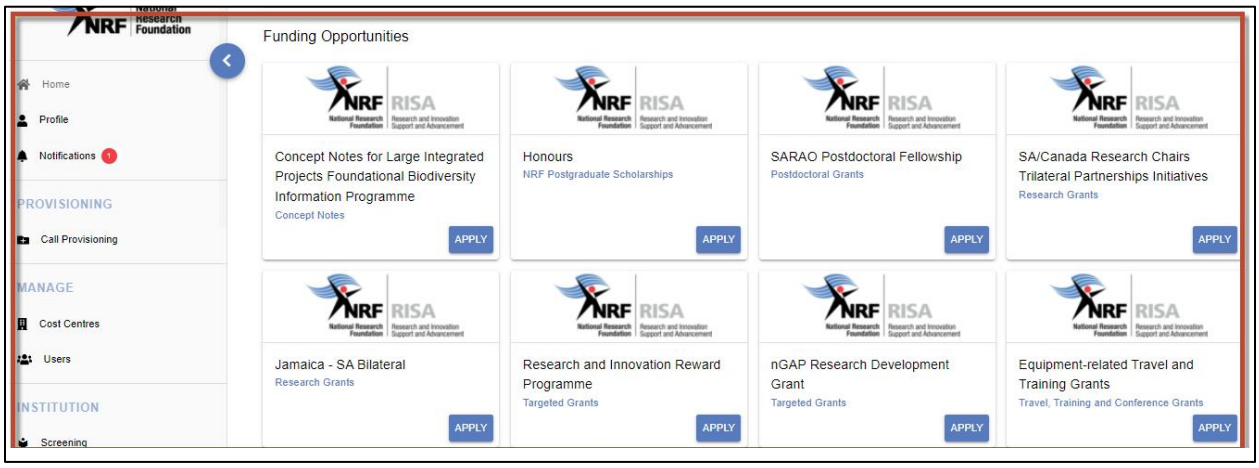


Please note that Framework documents for Bilateral and Multilateral Research Grants (Review Period 2) will be published on the website as they become available.

Instructions to Applicants

- Go to https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za
- Register with your ORCiD credentials. Should you not have any, please register on ORCiD to gain access.
- **Remember t**o 'Synch' your CV with the NRF Online Submission CV, should you have one, first.





Click Apply to create an application and start completing your application. For more instructions you may like to use the Application Guide at https://www.nrf.ac.za/funding.

- Complete all the compulsory sections of the application as well as the non-compulsory sections which are relevant to you.
- Attach all the required documents in PDF format.
- Submit the application on completion.
- Complete applications will go to the Research/Postgraduate Office of the applicant's institution for processing.

Number of Applications Allowed within a Category within a Call Year

Category	Applications per Category	Applications per Funding Opportunity
Concept Notes	1	1
Infrastructure Bridging Funding	1	1
Infrastructure Grants	1	1
Institutional Grants	2	1
Non-funding Opportunities	1	1
NRF Postgraduate Scholarships	1	1
Other Grants	1	1
Postdoctoral Grants	1	1
Research Grants	2	1
SARAO Undergraduate and Diploma Scholarships	1	1
Targetted Grants	1	1
Travel, Training and Conference Grants	2	1
Travel, Training and Conference Grants: • Equipment-related Travel and Training • Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration	Per Review Period 2 2	Per Review Period 2 2

The following applications <u>will not</u> be considered for funding:

- Incomplete applications;
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in the call documents;
- Applications submitted outside the NRF Connect System, unless indicated otherwise;

- Applications submitted in hard copies; and/or
- Applications in a language other than English.

Only applications endorsed by the Research/Postgraduate Office at Higher Education Institutions, or their equivalent at declared NRF Recognised Research Institutions, as gazetted, will be accepted. Please contact the relevant Research/Postgraduate Offices, or equivalent, at your institution if you have any queries.

Instructions to Research/Postgraduate Officers (or equivalent)

Please ensure that you prepare adequately for the advertised cut-off dates.

Designated Authorities (DAs) are the gatekeepers of quality applications to safeguard the reputation of institutions in accessing funds. As such they should:

- Provide guidance and advice to potential applicants, researchers, grantholders and students in the choice of funding opportunities available to them;
- Review applications for completeness and correctness before submission to the NRF. This includes ensuring that all compulsory attachments are uploaded and are correct;
- Open applications for amendment if/when required and indicate where revisions are required;
- Ensure that applications meet all the Funding Opportunity eligibility criteria before submitting to the NRF.
- Decline applications that do not comply with the eligibility criteria and provide feedback to the applicant;

Please Note:

- Under no circumstance should DAs submit applications to the NRF if not all the eligibility criteria are met. This includes the correct attachments as required.
- For the Thuthuka funding opportunity, DAs are requested to enter the preferred Funding Track in the "Comments" block provided.

5. Evaluation of Applications

All applications received by the NRF are screened for eligibility and for compulsory documentation to be submitted with the application. Applications that are deemed not eligible or do not have **ALL** the required attachments will not be processed further.

Reviewing of most applications for funding will be through a one-stage or a two-stage process.

One-stage review is when specialist reviewers are asked to review applications virtually **OR** convene as a panel to share their reviews of the applications, score them, generate a collective outcome, and provide a recommendation to the NRF. This process therefore entails the panel engaging the applications directly, and not receive and deal with postal reviewer reports.

Two-stage review is when applications are sent to remote, specialist reviewers who submit review reports on the application. Thereafter, the review reports are primarily considered by a panel/committee in scoring and generating collective outcomes and recommendations.

6. Outcomes

After considering the recommendation from the review process, the NRF makes awards according to the recommendations, set criteria and objectives of the various funding opportunities, and funds available.

7. Contact Details

Applicants are encouraged to first engage their institutional authorities, i.e. Research/Postgraduate Office (or equivalent) for information and advice.

For Funding Instrument-related queries

Please contact the relevant contact persons as indicated in the Framework and Funding and Application Guides.

For technical support the NRF Support Desk can be contacted at the following e-mail address:

Email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za

Appendix 1

Category	Opportunity	Open	Applicant Cut-off date	DA Cut-off date	NRF Screening Completed	Reviews & Evaluation Completed	Funding Decision Completed
Concept Notes	Concept Notes (JINR) (Offline)	10 Aug 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	15 Nov 2022	30 Nov 2022
Global Knowledge Partnerships	MITACS (Offline)	Set by MITACS	Set by MITACS	NA	NA	Set by MITACS	Set by MITACS
	YSSP (Offline)	Set by YSSP	Set by YSSP	NA	NA	Set by YSSP	Set by YSSP
	Japan Hope Meeting (Offline)	Set by Japan Hope	Set by Japan Hope	NA	NA	Set by Japan Hope	Set by Japan Hope
	Fulbright - Visiting Student Research (Offline)	Set by Fulbright	Set by Fulbright	NA	NA	01 Sep 2022	Set by Fulbright
Infrastructure Bridging Finance	Infrastructure Bridging Finance	15 Mar 2022	23 Mar 2022	23 Mar 2022	24 Mar 2022	25 Mar 2022	25 Mar 2022
Infrastructure Grants	National Equipment Programme (NEP)	01 Apr 2022	17 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	30 Oct 2022	30 Nov 2022
Institutional Grants	NRF / Swiss Bilateral Research Chair	22 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	23 May 2022	28 Oct 2022	23 Nov 2022
	NRF / UKZN Co-funded Chair	22 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	23 May 2022	28 Oct 2022	23 Nov 2022
	Replacement Chairs – Review Period 1	22 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	23 May 2022	28 Oct 2022	23 Nov 2022
	Replacement Chairs – Review Period 2	03 Aug 2022	30 Aug 2022	05 Sep 2022	16 Sep 2022	25 Nov 2022	30 Jan 2023
	NRF / UCT Co-funded Chairs x2	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / SAIMI Co-funded Chair	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / SAIMI Co-funded CoP	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / PCC SARChI CoP	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / DHA SARChI CoP	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / Sasol Co-funded Chairs x2	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	SAIAB SARChI Chair	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	NRF / UL Co-funded Chairs x2	01 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022	28 Oct 2022	15 Dec 2022
	African Institute for the Preparedness and Prevention of Pandemics	NA	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
	National Institute for Theoretical Physics and Computational Science (NITheCS) Call for Nodes *	01 Apr 2022	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
NRF Postgraduate Scholarships	Extension Support for Masters and Doctoral Studies	01 Apr 2022	15 Aug 2022	30 Sep 2022	11 Nov 2022	Done by HEIs	15 Dec 2022
	First-time Doctoral Scholarships (Including NRF-SARAO, NRF-DAAD, NRF-MINDS, NRF-TWAS and NRF-SASOL FOUNDATION Scholarships)	01 Apr 2022	08 Jul 2022	02 Sep 2022	11 Nov 2022	Done by HEIs	15 Dec 2022
	First-time Masters Scholarships (Including NRF-SARAO, NRF-DAAD, NRF-MINDS and NRF-SASOL Foundation Scholarships)	01 Apr 2022	08 Jul 2022	02 Sep 2022	11 Nov 2022	Done by HEIs	15 Dec 2022
	Honours Scholarships (Including NRF-SASOL Scholarship)	01 Apr 2022	20 Nov 2022	23 Dec 2022	27 Jan 2023	Set by HEIs	03 Feb 2023

Category	Opportunity	Open	Applicant Cut-off date	DA Cut-off date	NRF Screening Completed	Reviews & Evaluation Completed	Funding Decision Completed
Postdoctoral Grants	Postdoctoral Fellowships	15 Mar 2022	06 May 2022	13 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	31 Oct 2022	14 Nov 2022
Research Grants	Black Academics Advancement Programme	15 Mar 2022	25 Apr 2022	03 May 2022	30 Jun 2022	30 Nov 2022	03 Dec 2022
	BRICS Multilateral Joint Science and Technology Research Collaboration – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	27 Jan 2023
	BRICS Multilateral Joint Science and Technology Research Collaboration ***(Closed call)***	15 Mar 2022	22 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	13 May 2022	29 Jul 2022	30 Sep 2022
	Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) - Small Grants	15 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	05 Jun 2022	06 Jul 2022	15 Jul 2022
	Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) - Small Grants – *Review Period 2*	28 Jul 2022	19 Sep 2022	26 Sep 2022	04 Oct 2022	02 Dec 2022	09 Dec 2022
	Global Research Council (GRC) SDG Pilot full proposals **(Closed call)**	19 Aug 2022	30 Sep 2022	NA	07 Oct 2022	18 Nov 2022	25 Nov 2022
	New Earth Observation Frontiers (NEOFrontiers) Innovation support	15 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	01 Oct 2022	15 Oct 2022
	New Earth Observation Frontiers (NEOFrontiers) Product Development	15 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2022	01 Oct 2022	15 Oct 2022
	Support for Rated and Unrated Researchers	15 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	06 Jun 2022	04 Nov 2022	02 Dec 2022
	Support for Y-rated Researchers	15 Mar 2022	09 May 2022	16 May 2022	06 Jun 2022	04 Nov 2022	02 Dec 2022
	NRF / DFG International Research Training Groups (IRTGs) main research – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	14 Jan 2023	01 Feb 2023
	NRF/CNRS/IRD/Cirad Collaboration ***(Closed Call)***	15 Mar 2022	27 May 2022	31 May 2022	TBC	TBC	TBC
	SA / Belgium (BELSPO) Joint Research – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	01 Feb 2023
	SA / China (MOST) Joint Research Programme (JRP) – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	27 Jan 2023
	SA / France (PROTEA) Call for Joint Proposals	15 Mar 2022	23 May 2022	31 May 2022	17 Jun 2022	09 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022
	SA / USA (NSF) Biodiversity on a Changing Planet (BoCP)	15 Mar 2022	31 Mar 2022	07 Apr 2022	22 Apr 2022	09 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022
	SA / Italy (ISARP) Call for Joint Proposals	01 Apr 2022	23 May 2022	31 May 2022	17 Jun 2022	09 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022
	SA / Netherlands (NWO) WEF Nexus Call ***(Closed Call)*** – *Review Period*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	01 Feb 2023
	SA / Switzerland Lead Agency – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	27 Jan 2023
	SA/Tunisia Joint Research Infrastructure – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	27 Jan 2023
	Trans-Atlantic Platform (T-AP) Multilateral Research Call – *Review Period 2*	01 Jul 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	13 Jan 2023	01 Feb 2023
	Thuthuka	15 Mar 2022	25 Apr 2022	03 May 2022	30 Jun 2022	03 Nov 2022	15 Dec 2022

Category	Opportunity	Open	Applicant Cut-off date	DA Cut-off date	NRF Screening Completed	Reviews & Evaluation Completed	Funding Decision Completed
SARAO Doctoral Scholarships	SARAO Doctoral Scholarships	01 Apr 2022	08 Jul 2022	02 Sep 2022	11 Nov 2022	01 Dec 2022	15 Dec 2022
SARAO Honours Scholarships	SARAO Honours Scholarships	01 Apr 2022	20 Nov 2022	23 Dec 2022	27 Jan 2023	NA	03 Feb 2023
SARAO Masters Scholarships	SARAO Masters Scholarships	01 Apr 2022	08 Jul 2022	02 Sep 2022	11 Nov 2022	01 Dec 2022	15 Dec 2022
SARAO Postdoctoral Fellowships	SARAO Postdoctoral Fellowships	1 Jun 2022	31 Aug 2022	13 May 2022	20 Jun 2022	31 Oct 2022	14 Nov 2022
SARAO Undergraduate and Diploma Scholarships	SARAO Undergraduate and Diploma Scholarships	01 Jun 2022	15 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	15 Oct 2022	25 Nov 2022	05 Dec 2022
SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant	SARAO Undergraduate Block Grant	01 Jun 2022	15 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	15 Oct 2022	25 Nov 2022	05 Dec 2022
Targeted Grants	DSI/NRF Research Development Grants for New Generation of Academics Programme (GAP) Scholars	15 Mar 2022	06 Apr 2022	15 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	13 May 2022	16 May 2022
Travel, Training and Conference Grants	Equipment Related Travel & Training Review Period 1	15 Mar 2022	08 Apr 2022	15 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	15 Jun 2022	15 Jul 2022
	Equipment Related Travel & Training Review Period 2	01 Jun 2022	22 Jul 2022	29 Jul 2022	15 Aug 2022	21 Oct 2022	11 Nov 2022
	JINR Student Practice (Off-line)	10 Aug 2022	12 Sep 2022	19 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	15 Nov 2022	30 Nov 2022
	DSI / NRF Conference Fund	15 Mar 2022	01 Apr 2022	08 May 2022	29 May 2022	04 Jul 2022	11 Jul 2022
	National Research Foundation /European Research Council (ERC) Partnership	15 Mar 2022	25 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	20 May 2022	04 Jul 2022	11 Jul 2022
	Germany (IRTGs) Preparatory Workshop Review Period1	15 Mar 2022	25 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	20 May 2022	04 Jul 2022	11 Jul 2022
	Germany (IRTGs) Preparatory Workshop Review Period 2	15 Mar 2022	23 Sep 2022	30 Sep 2022	21 Oct 2022	30 Nov 2022	08 Dec 2022
	ISC Grants for Travel & Hosting of Events	15 Mar 2022	08 Apr 2022	15 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	13 May 2022	16 May 2022
	Knowledge Interchange & Collaboration (KIC) Review Period 1	15 Mar 2022	08 Apr 2022	15 Apr 2022	29 Apr 2022	13 May 2022	16 May 2022
	Knowledge Interchange & Collaboration (KIC) Review Period 2	01 Aug 2022	23 Aug 2022	30 Aug 2022	23 Sep 2022	04 Nov 2022	18 Nov 2022