



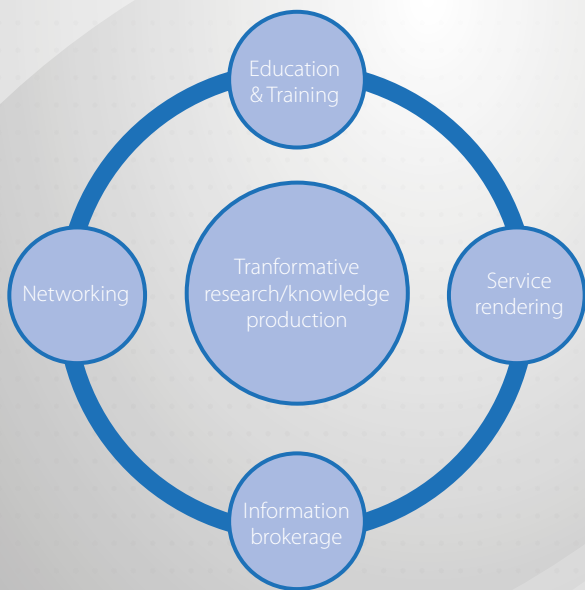
science
& technology
Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National
Research
Foundation

Guide for DST-NRF Centres of Excellence: Grants and Reporting

Managed by the Research Chairs
and Centres of Excellence



The Key Performance Areas of the DST-NRF Centres of Excellence

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Strategic Context.....	3
3. Key Activities and Services of CoEs	3
4. The Funding Cycle and Evaluation	4
5. Funding	5
5.1. Transfer of Funds.....	5
5.2. Expenditure.....	5
5.3. Bursaries	6
5.4. Income.....	6
5.5. Auditing	7
5.6. Evaluation.....	7
6. Student Reporting (NRF online).....	8
7. Annual Progress Reporting (NRF Online)	8
8. NRF contact persons	9

1. Executive Summary

Centres of Excellence (CoEs) are physical or virtual Centres of research which concentrate existing capacity and resources to enable researchers to collaborate across disciplines and institutions on long-term projects that are locally relevant and internationally competitive in order to enhance the pursuit of research excellence and capacity development

2. Strategic Context

The National Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) of 2002 identifies the need to create “Centres and networks of excellence” in science and technology. It is envisaged that such Centres will stimulate sustained distinction in research while simultaneously generating highly qualified human resource capacity in order to impact meaningfully on key national and global areas of knowledge. The CoE programme is envisaged to exploit the competitive advantage vested in outstanding researchers and it focuses on established researchers.

3. Key Activities and Services of CoEs

Each CoE is expected to produce annual progress report based on the management and the five key activities as listed below:

- Research
- Education and training
- Information brokerage
- Networking
- Service rendering
- Effective funding

4. The Funding Cycle and Evaluation

Funding for CoEs is applied within the following parameters:

- i. Seed funding for development;
- ii. Seed funding for establishment, where appropriate;
- iii. Core funding for 10 years, where appropriate, to ensure continuity and longer- term research;
- iv. Standard costing model (full declaration of costs);
- v. Equipment grants;
- vi. Support based on principles of equivalence
 - refer to post-doctorates
 - ~ lecturers; grant holder-linked bursaries ~ prestigious scholarships; centre staff
 - ~ senior lecturers, associate professors, professors;
- vii. Salary subsidy for the Centre Director and Node Head;
- viii. Contributions by the host institution; and
- ix. Project income and other methods of raising funds to ensure longer-term sustainability.

The CoE is to be initially (Phase 1) funded for 10 years:

- CoEs are to be annually monitored by suitably appointed Steering Committee. Of particular interest will be the CoE's strategic direction and financial control. Steering Committee can recommend the closure of Centres if progress is not satisfactory and aims and targets are not met.
- Stringent external renewal/continuation evaluation is to be performed in year five indicating outputs, outcomes and (expected) impact of NRF support.

5. Funding

5.1. Transfer of Funds

The transfer of funds will be made biannually in January and July of each year to the host institution (in two equal instalments).

The transfer of funds is subject to:

- Steering Committee approval of business and/or activity plan;
- Cash flow statement (quarterly for old CoEs and Monthly for new CoEs in the first year of funding)
- Availability of funds;
- Presentation of an unqualified audit report.
- Satisfaction of all NRF requirements (including submission of Annual Progressreports)

5.2. Expenditure

The funding will be based on the standard costing model involving the full declaration of costs.

Funding will cover:

- Salaries (Director, Node head, Admin staff and research associates),
- Student support (bursaries),
- Operational costs and running expenses
- Limited equipment purchase costs (capped at R1 Million).

The details of the funding limitations are presented in the Handbook.

5.3. Bursaries

The cost of student bursaries will be covered by the support of the CoE or other NRF student funding stream. Student nominations will be made through the NRF student nomination online system.

The payment of the bursaries will be subject to:

- The provision of a list (and other relevant data/information) of registered students;
- Proof of registration for each nominated student
- Verification of the data by the institutional administrations;
- Verification by the NRF that these students are not being paid other bursaries;
- Adherence to the principles contained in the Ministerial Policy Document on bursaries, Scholarships and Fellowships.
- Signed contract by the student

Recommended NRF bursary amounts (this may differ according to each institution but these amount are the recommended lowest range)

Honours	R40 000
Masters	R70 000
Doctoral	R100 000
Post-Doctoral fellowships	R200 000

5.4. Income

It is vital that the host and participating institutions make contributions to the cost of running the CoE. Other sources of income to ensure longer term sustainability are also strongly encouraged.

It is imperative, though; that all sources of income are declared in full in the financial records of the CoE and that the CoE Steering Committee oversight role is also extended to the CoE leveraged funds.

5.5. Auditing

The proof and test of appropriate expenditure will be carried out by external auditors, appointed and paid for by the CoE at the end of each developmental stage.

5.6. Evaluation

The funding cycle [Phase 1] will be for a period of 10 years where appropriate, based on the ongoing evaluation of the progress and success of the CoE. Evaluation will be focused on the management and five Key Performance Areas (KPA) presented in the Guide, i.e. research; education and training; information brokerage; networking and service rendering.

The KPA on management will look at the effectiveness of the CoE, including structure and function.

- Annual progress reports (APRs)
- External audit reports
- Stage/gate reviews (SLA targets)
- Final report
- Post funding report

The assessment will be carried out by the DST-NRF CoE Steering Committee and independent advisors appointed by the NRF, if necessary.

The Steering Committee can recommend closure of a CoE if progress is not satisfactory as indicated by the failure to meet specific aims and targets as laid out in the MoA or the associated SLA. The closure of a CoE will be subject to the provisions made in the MoA under Breach and Termination

6. Student Reporting (NRF online)

The students supported and trained by the centre will be reported on the NRF online submission system for each year of funding.

The requirement for the completion of the nomination process will be the attachment of the student's proof of registration and ID copy. A signed contract by the student for the funds received should be kept with the Centre and furnished to the NRF upon request.

7. Annual Progress Reporting (NRF Online)

All CoEs will be required to submit annual progress reports covering the management of the CoE and the five key performance areas. This will be done online via the NRF online submission system.

Supporting documents required and should be attached to the APR:

- Current SLA
- Unqualified audit report
- Statement of compliance
- Business Plan

8. NRF contact persons

Dr Makobetsa Khati

Executive Director: Research Chairs and Centres of Excellence
phone: 012 481 4022
email: makobetsa.khati@nrf.ac.za

Dr Bernard Nthambeleni

Executive Director: Grants Management and Systems Administration
phone: 012 481 4182
email: bernard@nrf.ac.za

Dr Nthabiseng Taole

Director: Research Chairs and Centres of Excellence
phone: 012 481 4245
email: Nthabiseng.taole@nrf.ac.za

Mr Lebusa Monyooe

Director: Grants Management and Systems Administration
phone: 012 481 4230
email: lebusa@nrf.ac.za

Ms Pamela Mteto

Liaison Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration
phone: 012 481 4122
email: pamela@nrf.ac.za

Ms Lynn Erasmus

Professional Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration
phone: 012 481 4042
email: lynn@nrf.ac.za



science
& technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**National
Research
Foundation**

www.nrf.ac.za



science
& technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National
Research
Foundation

Guide for DST-NRF Centres of Excellence: Grants and Reporting

Managed by the Research Chairs
and Centres of Excellence (RCCE)
