



***COMPETITIVE SUPPORT FOR  
UNRATED RESEARCHERS (CSUR)***

**KNOWLEDGE ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT  
Framework Document**

**March 2023**

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## 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE FUNDING INSTRUMENT

The Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) is an instrument to support ring-fenced, once-off grants that is competitive and discipline-based in nature. 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 applicant who does not hold a valid NRF rating**
- ii. **Scientific merit and quality of the research proposal.**

Although the funding instrument ostensibly has a broad and non-directed theme and structure, funding will be prioritized to the top scoring applications within each broad field/discipline that are not supported through other NRF funding instruments, such as African Origin Platforms (Palaeosciences), the Global Change Grand Challenge, the South African National Antarctic Programme, and Marine 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.

Other than in the case of dedicated or ring-fenced funding that support identified fields, disciplines and funding instruments, the NRF through the CSUR does not guide the direction of research of the applicants. However, research informed by the national priorities would be of particular interest in the context of contributing to wider system objectives.

This is not a developmental funding instrument. Rather, it is anticipated that applicants who are established researchers that may either have lost their rating due to various circumstances or have never subjected themselves to the rating system will be afforded the support to continue to produce quality and impactful research, contributing to South Africa's global research and development output. It is envisaged that this funding instrument will enable these established researchers to (re-) enter the rating stream having had the opportunity to rebuild and or strengthen their research portfolios.

## 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, in order 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 CSUR 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 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 CSUR 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 to be funded will be determined by the available budget.

### 2.4 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders involved in the CSUR are persons based at public research institutions that are recognised by directive 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 applications must be submitted electronically via the NRF Connect system at <https://nrconnect.nrf.ac.za/>. All applications must be endorsed by the research office 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 his/ her institution in order to meet the NRF closing date included in the "General Application Guide 2023".

### 3.2 Eligibility

- i. CSUR grantholders will only qualify for **ONE** CSUR grant cycle (3 years). Thereafter, they will be expected to enter the rated stream and or apply for funding to other NRF instruments such as Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers (CPRR). Current or previous CSUR grantholders are **ineligible** for further CSUR funding. Funding in this round will support successful applications for a maximum period of 3 years, 2024 - 2026. A project with a duration of one year or less does not qualify.
- ii. Each new Principal Investigator (PI) **may only submit ONE** CSUR application to this call. However, a researcher may participate either as a co-investigator or collaborator in more than one project. Postdoctoral fellows, students, technical and support staff are NOT eligible to apply.
- iii. Full-time employees at an NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa, **who do not hold a valid NRF rating at the time of application**, are invited to apply.
- iv. NRF unrated part-time employees on contract at an NRF recognized research institution (as defined above) in South Africa who do not currently hold a CSUR grant may apply, on condition 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 form. 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 unrated applicants will be eligible for funding **for the duration of their awarded grant**, to a maximum period of 3 years. The grant allocation will be allowed to run for the duration of the award, even if the principal investigator is awarded an NRF rating during this period. Once rated, the principal investigator will be expected to enter the CPRR funding stream.
- vi. Applicants who are completing their projects that were funded through the Thuthuka rating track will not be considered for CSUR funding and are therefore advised to apply for rating so that they will be eligible to apply either to the Development Grant for Y-rated researchers or to the CPRR.

### **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 in accordance with institutional ethical policies and procedures. The ethical clearance approval should be held by the institution and the grantholder and should be accessible on request.

*Please also refer to the “Statement on Ethical Research and Scholarly Publishing Practices” on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/statement-on-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 platform from 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 application.**

### **3.5 Rules of participation**

#### **i. Principal Investigator**

- Only unrated researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa (as defined above) are eligible to apply as PI in this funding instrument.
- The PI (i.e., the applicant) must be an active researcher who takes intellectual responsibility for the project, its conceptualization, 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 PI may not hold a current CSUR grant.
- The PI may submit only one CSUR application to this call for proposals.

#### **ii. Co-investigators/partner principal investigator**

A co-investigator/partner principal 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/partner principal 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-investigator/partner principal investigator 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 a 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 expected to be acquired or generated during the course of a research project, how data will be managed,

described, analyzed, and stored, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) will be used at the end of the project to share and preserve the data. 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 of the data generated is 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 Data Management Plan 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](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 aims to develop and benefit individuals and society. Researchers funded through the NRF programmes are required to contribute to science engagement and report the related outputs in their project's Progress Report.

## **4. FINANCIALS**

Applicants are to ensure that a budget is included in the application. Failure to submit budget will automatically disqualify the application. Applicants are to prepare budget in line with the funding ranges and the amounts thereof.

### **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
- 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

Applicants may apply for Staff Development grants for South African **staff members** at their own and other institutions, and who are not NRF grantholders in their own right. These staff members must be registered for either a Masters, or Doctoral degree, supervised by the applicant or a co-investigator of the application 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 student in relation to the supervisor. Applicants themselves are **not** eligible for Staff Development Grants. **The maximum period of funding is three years.**

### 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:

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

### Travel and subsistence

- i. 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 (local only);
- ii. 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;
- iii. 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;
- iv. 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; and
- v. 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. Generally, the NRF would encourage 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.

#### Science Engagement

Pre-planned science engagement events can be awarded additional funds limited to a maximum of R30 000 per annum, and only events that are motivated upfront will be funded.

### **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 of 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://nrconnect.nrf.ac.za/>. This single-entry point allows 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 highfliers achieving a distinction or first-class pass will also be eligible for funding at FCS. International students as well as any other South African student who is not eligible to be funded at FCS will be eligible for PCS funding.

The students are expected to meet the NRF minimum entry requirement in order 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"> <li>• ≥ 75% Mark in Final Year of study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study</li> </ul>
	<b>Honours students</b> must be <b>28</b> years of age or younger in the year of application. Non South African Citizens are not eligible for Honours Scholarships.		
Masters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 75% Mark for Honours</li> <li>• Completed Honours in one year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark for Honours</li> <li>• Completed Honours in one year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark for Honours</li> <li>• Completed Honours in one year</li> </ul>
	<b>Masters students</b> must be <b>30</b> years of age or younger in the year of application.		
Doctoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 75% Mark for Masters</li> <li>• Completed Masters in two years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark for Masters</li> <li>• Completed Masters in two years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≥ 65% Mark for Masters</li> <li>• Completed Masters in two years</li> </ul>
	<b>Doctoral students</b> must be <b>32</b> years of age or younger in the year of application.		

**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 Southern African Development Community 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 student's 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 are a prerequisite for the release of the subsequent year's funding. Failure to submit a Progress Report will result in the cancellation of the grant award.

#### 5. ENQUIRIES

Funding rules related queries	Application process related queries
Mrs Zodwa Mbuyazi Professional Officer: Knowledge Advancement and Support Tel: 012 481 4310 Email: ZM.Masinga@risa.nrf.ac.za	Ms Jane Mabena Professional Officer: GMSA Tel: 012 481 4067 E-mail: JS.Mabena@risa.nrf.ac.za

## 6. LIST OF ACRONYMS

CPRR	Competitive Programme for Rated Researchers
CSUR	Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers
DMP	Data Management Plan
GMSA	Grants Management and Systems Administration
KAS	Knowledge Advancement and Support
NRF	National Research Foundation
PI	Principal Investigator
RE	Reviews and Evaluation
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

## 7. ANNEXURE 1: Panel Assessment Scorecard for Unrated Researchers

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)
<b>Proposals</b>	Scientific merit and feasibility	Reflect on the proposed rationale, approach and methodology. Reflect on the scientific, ethical <sup>1</sup> logistics and technical feasibility as proposed		45%
	Wider impact	Has the possibility for economic, societal or environmental impact been appropriately embedded in the proposal?		10%
<b>Equity</b>	Of applicant	Race / Gender		20%
	Of students graduated	M and D degrees.		5%
<b>Collaboration</b>	International, national and institutional collaborations	Are the appropriate collaborations proposed in the application?		10%
		Are the roles of the proposed collaborators clearly indicated?		
<b>Data management and use</b>	Plans for digital data storage, usage &/or dissemination	A data management plan (DMP) is a formal document that describes the data expected to be acquired or generated during the course of a research project, how data will be managed, described, analyzed, used and stored, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) will be used at the end of your project to share and preserve the data		10%

## 8. ANNEXURE 2: Proposal Grading

Score	Meaning of score	Notes
4	Excellent	Application demonstrates evidence of <b>outstanding</b> 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 <b>above average</b> 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 <b>average</b> 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 <b>below average</b> performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by panel and relative to knowledge field under consideration
0	Poor	There are <b>major shortcomings or flaws</b> 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.