



FBIP APPLICATION INSTRUCTION GUIDE

Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) Large Grant for Large Integrated Team Projects

Call year: 2023

Applicants applying for FBIP grants must read the FBIP Call Framework document to make sure that all the essential information is submitted through the proposals.

Applications must be completed on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. FBIP-specific instructions are provided below for some of the categories. It is recommended that applicants follow the FBIP-specific instructions along with the standard NRF application instructions. We also recommend that applicants pay special attention to the review criteria and scoring system outlined in the FBIP Call Framework document when writing the proposal.

FBIP instructions for some of the categories on the NRF online application template:

Details of Research:

-Potential Impact

NRF instruction: Impact" refers to both the tangible and intangible influence derived and/or caused by the research outcomes/outputs. "Impact" statements indicate what the researcher hopes to achieve, without introducing any bias, through his/her research (i.e. impact on Global Change and/or Bio-economy, etc.).

FBIP instruction: Indicate the relevance of the proposed activities in relation to the impact on DST's grand challenges, namely Global Change understanding and /or the Bio-Economy knowledge field(s). Describe what will change because of the project, who will use the knowledge and information and for what purpose, and in what way users will be able to access the information / knowledge.

-Problem Statement

NRF instruction: The "research problem" statement refers to an area of concern, a condition to be improved upon, a challenge to be explored, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a scholarly question that requires further interrogation to ground theory and praxis, that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

FBIP instruction: Provide a brief introduction to the proposed project and indicate why the project is needed (what problem will be solved by doing the project?). (see Programme Framework document).

-Rationale and Literature review

NRF instruction:

- The rationale for the research is a set of reasons offered by a researcher for conducting more research into a particular subject. This could take a number of forms such as descriptive research, experimental research, etc.
- A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. It is a review of existing corpus of literature to affirm/amplify diverse theoretical underpinnings.

FBIP instructions:

- Provide the context of the proposed project together with a brief review of the literature and other relevant resources.
- Explain or describe what the conceptual or theoretical framework is for the project.
- State the strategic importance of the project and how it is relevant to this call.

-Aims and Objectives

NRF instructions:

- Aims are the broad statements of desired outcomes/ the general intentions of the research, which 'paint a picture' of an envisaged research project.
- The objectives of the research provide an accurate description of the specific actions the researcher intends to take in accomplishing research aims.

FBIP instruction: Provide details on the aim/s and objectives of the project. Project aims and objectives should be achievable in the three year time frame.

-Methodology and Proposed Research plan

NRF instructions:

- The research methodology describes the rationale for the application of specific procedures or techniques used to identify, collect, select, and analyse information applied to understanding the research problem, thereby, allowing the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability.
- Please ensure that a full proposed research plan outlining activities, who will be involved in each activity, where they will be done (with details of how many individuals / samples / sites etc.) and timelines is included in this section and this should substantiate the requested budget.

FBIP instructions:

- Reflect and detail the proposed approaches/methods or techniques that will be explored/ utilized in the execution of the project.
- Describe exactly what activities will be done in order to achieve each objective, how these activities will be done, and where they will be done (with details of how many individuals / samples / sites etc.), as well as who will be involved in each activity, and what the timeframes are for starting and completing each activity). This information must also be summarized in an attachment (see charts at the end of the document). Sufficient detail must be provided to allow an assessment of both appropriateness of the activities relative to the objectives and the feasibility in terms of scale of the proposed work, timeframes and capacity.

Notes: Different institutions should be represented (minimum of five team members from a minimum of four institutions) and relevant expertise should be involved.

Applicants could consider budgeting for technical support to assist with the data capture and data management aspects of the project. For the compilation of species pages, these could be included as an appendix in postgraduate student theses in order to ensure that they are compiled.

-Transformation

NRF instructions: Give a brief description of how your research complies with transformational objectives relevant to the particular Call. Some or all of the following transformation contributions may be highlighted:

- Summary of the young researchers who will be involved in the project;
- General or specialist training to be offered to postgraduate students and young researchers;
- Support for postgraduate students and young researchers to attend and present at science meetings;
- Collaborative initiatives with HDIs;
- Involvement of women and black students and researchers in the project;
- Special support offered to disadvantaged students.

FBIP instructions:

- Indicate the young researchers who will be involved in the project and whether there are any plans for their development (project teams must include at least two young researchers, younger than 40 at the time of application).
- Identify possible postgraduate training opportunities and indicate the potential number of postgraduate students that could realistically be trained over the three year duration of the project.
- Provide details of support for postgraduate students and young researchers to attend science meetings.
- Provide information on any other capacity development activities such as training workshops planned.
- Outline the impact this proposal has on human resource development in terms of: (1) Nature and significance of co-investigators and research collaborators; (2) Nature and significance of inter-institutional collaborations (specify collaborative initiatives with HDIs).
- Outline the impact of this proposal on redress and equity (in terms of race and gender).

Note: Contributions to redress and equity (race and gender) and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions (leadership by, or participation in the project) of HDIs will be an advantage.

-Anticipated outputs

NRF instruction: This refers to the envisaged output ("product") of the research project in line with the Funding Instrument objectives and may take the form of publications, public presentations, data, patents, artefacts, exhibitions, design, etc. The outputs should be detailed and quantified as far as possible.

FBIP instruction: What will be produced by the project in line with the FBIP objectives (i.e. how many publications, how many species will be covered by the project (estimate), how many species pages will be produced, how many species occurrence records will be collected and / or mobilised / digitised, how many DNA barcodes will be produced and how many species will be barcoded and how many students trained)? Please quantify the data outputs as far as possible (eg. 1,000 primary records, barcode data for 50 species etc.).

Note: The achievement of the targets in the FBIP's Key Performance Areas (KPA's) is dependent on projects funded through the FBIP. The extent (quantity) of data in line with these targets is an important consideration in the assessment of proposals.

-Alignment to National Imperatives

---Alignment to National Strategies

NRF instruction: Please outline how this research project will contribute/is aligned to one or more national priorities/strategies/imperatives

FBIP instruction: FBIP projects must explicitly align with and contribute to the implementation of one of the following national strategies: The Bioeconomy Strategy of the Department of Science and Technology (2013); Biodiversity Economy Strategy (Bes) for the Department of Environmental Affairs (2015); or South Africa's 2nd National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2025.

In cases where the FBIP required national strategies are not listed in the drop-down list, the contribution/alignment must be explained under "Potential Impact".

-Data Management and Utilisation

NRF instruction: Provide a summary of what processes and systems will be used to compile and manage data for the project. This could include a list of data fields that will be included in the data set, the software that will be used, how data will be captured, who will be responsible for the data capture and management, and whether any data quality checking and upgrading will be carried out. If there are other plans for long term data management and dissemination, briefly discuss these.

FBIP instruction: Provide a list of data fields that will be included in the data set, the software that will be used, how data will be captured, who will be responsible for the data capture and management, and whether any data quality checking and upgrading will be carried out. Please note that grant holders are required to submit data sets to the FBIP. If there are other plans for long term data management and dissemination, briefly discuss these.

Note: It is essential that applicants consider the resources required to ensure that data meet the standards specified and that they are delivered within the Programme timeframes. Applicants could consider budgeting for technical support to assist with this aspect of the project. For the compilation of species pages, these could be included as an appendix in postgraduate student theses, in order to ensure that they are compiled.

Attachments

NRF instruction: Please consult with the Call documents to determine what attachments are compulsory. Please note that if they are not attached, the application will not be processed for reviewing.

FBIP instruction: The two charts presented at the end of the document must be completed and attached as supplementary information for the "Methodology and Proposed Research plan" subdivision:

- Activities Breakdown Structure chart
- Workplan/Responsibility or resource allocation chart
- Ethical clearance and/or permitting documents can be uploaded, if available.

Ethical clearance

NRF instruction:

°Select whether this project requires ethical clearance from an international or national research ethics committee.

°If this project requires ethical clearance, select whether it has been obtained and add any relevant comments.

°Upload proof of granting of ethical clearance, if available, in the Attachments section.

FBIP instruction: Under "Ethical clearance", please also indicate that due consideration has been given to all permitting requirements for implementation of the project. Upload proof, if available, in the Attachments section.

If permits will only be applied for if the application is successful, indicate which permits will be required (provincial or national collecting permits, Animal Disease Control Act Section 20 permits, Threatened and Protected Species permits, CITES permits, Biodiscovery or Bioprospecting permits, export permits), who the permitting authority is and how long the permits will take to obtain.

FBIP management reserves the right to request copies of the permits from the Principle Investigator (PI). Ethical considerations should also include impacts of the project on populations of rare or threatened species,

Note: Any material sent outside the country for analysis must have the required Material Transfer Agreements and export permits.

Financials & Student Resources

FBIP instruction: The total amount of funding requested should not exceed R4.5 million in total. This total excludes costs for student bursaries. Funding will be made available in annual instalments (maximum of R1.5 million per year) commencing in 2024.

Financials: Operating Costs

NRF instruction: Please ensure that you read all the information on the call document and abide by the eligibility rules.

FBIP instruction: FBIP funds can be used for research-related costs such as consumables, research equipment (small equipment), expenses relating to field work, research-related trips, etc. Funds may be used as a payment for technical support for data mobilisation / cleaning, or student assistants for laboratory or field work if this is well motivated. **Please note:** In cases where an applicant wishes to send samples overseas for DNA / other analyses, a sound rationale for this must be provided, explaining why the analysis cannot be done in South Africa. In such cases the international payment for services may not exceed 30% of the budget. Supplementary barcodes (in addition to the standard core DNA barcodes) will be accepted if motivation is provided and this indicates how the additional genes could improve the project and DNA diagnostics.

The following research expenses will **not be funded** through the FBIP grant allocation:

- salaries of team members who are already employed
- consultant's project management and administration fees
- computers (only specialised computers if well motivated and funded to a maximum of R25 000)
- large research equipment
- sabbaticals
- publication page charges
- DNA sequencing services rendered by overseas companies if similar services are available in South Africa. These costs will only be approved with a strong motivation and where the expense does not exceed 30% of the total grant,

There may be other items that are excluded according to NRF conditions. More information is provided in the FBIP Call Framework document, Page 25 & 26.

Science engagement

NRF instruction: For the purposes of this application/report, the use of the overarching term science engagement is inclusive of all aspects of public engagement with science, science communication, science literacy as well as science outreach and awareness. It includes all participation by targeted groups of society in a programme aimed at generating mutual understanding and responses to science, including but not limited to awareness, accumulation of knowledge, enjoyment, opinion formulation and scientific literacy.

FBIP instruction: Applicants are encouraged to contribute to this initiative, and to contribute to science communication efforts for the FBIP or more broadly.

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Attachment 1

Activities Breakdown Structure chart

Please complete the chart below, outlining proposed activities and their associated timeframes and deliverables/milestones.

Objective	Activities to meet objective	Duration	Start date	Completion date	Responsible person/s	Deliverables/milestones	Risks that may hamper delivery and mitigation of risks
1.	1.1.						
	1.2.						
	1.3.						
2.	2.1.						
	2.2.						
	2.3.						
3.	3.1						
	3.2						
	3.3.						

