



# **NRF-FAPESP ISS**

## **I**nternational **S**cientific **S**eminars

Focusing on  
Humanities and Social Sciences

**2023 Call for Joint Applications**



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## 1. Background

In early 2023, the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) renewed its bilateral cooperation by entering into a 5-year inter-agency agreement for supporting scientific collaborative activities between South African researchers and researchers based in the State of Sao Paulo in Brazil. This Call for Application serves as the first Joint Call under this renewed agreement. This first Joint Call centers on supporting **International Scientific Seminars (ISS)** as an initial stage towards the implementation of this agreement.

Initiating the implementation with scientific meetings will encourage and facilitate a more focused interaction between the wider research communities for subsequent Joint Calls aimed at supporting collaborative consortia research projects. Therefore, the NRF-FAPESP ISS are considered as tools to prepare the ground for the development of cooperative research projects between research teams. The main outcome of the ISS should be clearly defined collaborative research project ready to be submitted for multi-year funding.

## 2. Aim and Structure of the International Scientific Seminars (ISS)

The aim of the NRF-FAPESP International Scientific Seminars (ISS) is to fund the organisation of a small 3-day scientific meetings to bring together groups of Early Career Researchers (ECR) and Established Researchers from South Africa and the State of Sao Paulo in Brazil for the purpose of scientific discussion, to promote collaboration and knowledge transfer by encouraging interaction within the wider research community. The overall aim of the ISS is not only to build on existing, outstanding and established research partnerships but also to foster new linkages and engagements with small cohorts of emerging researchers for new links between South Africa and Brazil.

ISS offers two different Funding Schemes both implemented on a co-funding model between the NRF and FAPESP. The two schemes to apply for are:

- **Established Researchers' International Scientific Seminar (ER-ISS) Funding Scheme**  
Only senior researchers, i.e. professors at universities or science councils who are also experienced supervisors for postgraduate students, are eligible to apply under this Funding Scheme in order to facilitate the development of sustainable institutional links between the two countries. Applicants must therefore, demonstrate relevant experience in their field of knowledge, such as publication, international collaborations and supervision. Applications under the ER-ISS Scheme should be based on already existing scientific interaction with clearly defined goals and innovative approaches. Applicants are encouraged to ensure that the collaborative research to be advanced through this

Scheme has relevance and potential for impact beyond the academic world, such as in societal, technical, economical, or cultural realms.

- **Early Career Researchers International Scientific Seminar (ECR-ISS) Funding Scheme**

Only Early Career Researchers (ECR), i.e. researchers with doctoral degrees and working towards their postdoctoral research or are employed as academics in universities, are eligible to apply under this Scheme. Applicants applying under the ECR-ISS Scheme do not need to have an already existing joint research project but should have a conceptual framework outlining a potential joint project. The applicants are expected to come up with a clear joint research project that could be submitted for a multi-year funding support post the meetings.

The scientific meetings under both of the above-mentioned Schemes should demonstrate a clear strategy for a longer-term collaboration for the continuation of a joint research post the meetings.

All the scientific meetings should be held physically in either South Africa or Brazil. The NRF-FAPESP ISS award holders are responsible for all aspects of organising and delivering the scientific content of the meetings, as well as finding a suitable venue and accommodation for all participants.

The number of participants who are invited to the meeting (including the South African and the Brazilian award holders) should not exceed more than 20 attendees (5 from the visiting country and up to 15 from the host country).

One of the expected outcomes of this program is to foster the establishment of a Community of Practice (CoP) in Humanities and Social Sciences fields encompassing South Africa and São Paulo, Brazil. This CoP will serve as a research-led alliance, where researchers can collaborate to shared knowledge and expertise emanating from their research projects; to produce solution-oriented research findings with an intention to translate research outputs into tangible outcomes and influence policy and practice; and engage with policy-makers, practitioners and other stakeholders to co-design and co-produce these research outputs.

Therefore, the programmes of all the scientific meetings should include a session on key prerequisites for the establishment of such a CoP. The results of these sessions will be reviewed and used as an input by NRF and FAPESP in developing this program.

Further details on each funding scheme, including priority research areas, are given in the following text.

### 3. Eligible Thematic Areas

Only applications submitted within the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) theme, for both the ER-ISS and the ECR-ISS Funding Schemes, will be considered for support. See further details per funding scheme below:

- **ER-ISS Funding Scheme**

Thematically open to provide resources to scholars already established in their fields in South Africa and the State of Sao Paulo to interact. Therefore, applications submitted under any discipline or multidisciplinary area within Humanities and Social Sciences will be eligible for funding support under the ER-ISS Funding Scheme.

- **ECR-ISS Funding Scheme**

Only applications submitted within the below-mentioned areas of HSS will be eligible for funding support under the ECR-ISS Funding Scheme:

- Race, Gender and Social Inequalities
- Democracy and Citizenship in South Africa and Brazil
- Social Violence, Crime, Policing and Public Safety
- Space, Place, Built Environment and Identity in Townships, Informal Settlements and Favelas

### 4. Duration of Funding Support

All ISS should not exceed 3 days in duration. The NRF and FAPESP have set-aside 12 months for the hosting of ISS. Therefore, all meetings must take place anytime between **November 2023** (or anytime from the date of award) **and October 2024**.

### 5. Eligibility Criteria

Each ISS application must have one main applicant based in South Africa and one main applicant based in the State of Sao Paulo; they are the **Principal Investigators (PI)** on the South African and Brazilian sides respectively. They bear the main responsibility for the organisation and coordination of the ISS as well as timely delivery of scientific and financial reports to the NRF and FAPESP. The following eligibility criteria also apply:

### General Eligibility Criteria

- Applications for both the ER-ISS and ECR-ISS must be written in English as funds cannot be used for simultaneous translation.
- All participants (South African and Brazilian), who are invited to the ISS must have completed their PhD by the time the application is made.
- When deciding upon whom to invite to the meeting, the co-PIs should bear in mind that the sole purpose of the ISS is to initiate and encourage scientific networking by bringing together small groups of researchers from South Africa and the State of Sao Paulo to develop new and enduring partnerships. These meetings are not intended as a forum for presenting papers.
- The number of participants who are invited to the meetings may vary, but it should not exceed 20 attendees (5 from the visiting country and up to 15 from the host country).
- Meetings under both the ER-ISS and the ECR-ISS must be maximum of 3-days.
- All meetings, in both ER-ISS and ECR-ISS applications, must take place anytime between November 2023 and October 2024. No ISS will be supported after October 2024.
- The 3-day meetings should consist of a structured programme covering all topics that the award holders wish to be covered with thought given to how the decision will be reached. The co-PIs may also wish to allocate time at the end of the meeting to discuss how they plan to take their networking collaboration forward.
- Each PI is allowed to submit only one application and apply to only one Funding Scheme.
- Both the NRF and FAPESP follow an equal opportunities policy. PIs are expected to strive towards as equal a balance as possible and to ensure that no applicants are excluded from participation due to disability, race, ethnicity, gender, religious belief, or sexual orientation.

### NRF Eligibility Criteria for South African Based Applicants

- This call is open to working researchers residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology, science council, museum or other research institutions as declared by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI).
- As indicated above PIs and all invited South African participants must be in possession of a PhD to be eligible.
- Researchers based at private higher education institutions are not eligible to apply.
- Researchers from SMEs, private companies/industries, and NGOs cannot serve as PIs but can participate in the ISS and will be expected to meet their own costs of participation. The NRF grants cannot be used to support these researchers.
- South African applicants are urged to ensure a mixture of historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged institutions in their ISS.

### **FAPESP Eligibility Criteria for Applicants Based in the State of Sao Paulo**

- ECR-ISS applicants must be affiliated to a recognised higher education or research institution from the State of Sao Paulo.
- ECR-ISS applicants are expected to have published in peer reviewed journals and demonstrate independent research experience.
- PIs under the ER-ISS Funding Scheme should be or should have been PIs or Co-PIs of research projects funded by FAPESP within at least one of the following FAPESP funding lines: Thematic Projects, Regular Grants, Young Investigator Grant (JP), Research, Innovation and Dissemination Centers (CEPID), Initial Project Grants (Pi), Engineering/Applied Research Centers (CPA/CE), or Research Partnership for Technological Innovation Program (PITE).

## **6. Funding Regulations**

Researchers should ensure that all expenses are calculated and covered in line with the rules and regulations of their respective funding agency.

### **The ISS grant will support the costs of:**

- International (economy return) airfares for up to 5 researchers
- Local travel costs for attendees (e.g. within South Africa or in Sao Paulo)
- Accommodation for all external attendees for up to 4 nights
- Organisational support, for example, venue, meeting rooms, audio visual equipment, etc.

The grant will **NOT** cover conference fees, departmental costs, excess baggage costs, and expenses relating to accompanying dependents or contributions towards salaries. This grant should **NOT** be used to fund any large international scientific conference which involves participation from other countries or other participants who have **NOT** been named in the application.

### **Cost share arrangements**

The cost of the grant will be shared between the NRF and FAPESP on the principle that the sending side paying for international travel and the receiving side paying for costs associated with the meeting e.g. venue hire, accommodation, local travel and subsistence costs for all participants to the meeting. FAPESP grants must follow guidelines and requirements available at <https://fapesp.br/auxilios/organizacao>.

For example, if the meeting takes place in South Africa, the costs are split as follows:

<b>NRF pays</b>	<b>FAPESP pays</b>
Internal travel costs for attendees ( <i>train fare or internal flight, taxi to and from the meeting venue</i> )	International airfares for those attendees from the State of Sao Paulo ( <i>up to 5 participants</i> )
Organisational cost, including hire of audio-visual equipment, program publication, booklets, etc.	
Local accommodation for South African attendees based outside the province in which the seminar is being held ( <i>up to 4 nights</i> )	Accommodation for those attendees from the State of São Paulo ( <i>up to 4 nights for maximum of 5 participants</i> )
A per diem for each seminar day for the South African attendees.	A per diem for each seminar day.

For example, if the meeting takes place in Sao Paulo, the costs are split as follows:

<b>FAPESP pays</b>	<b>NRF pays</b>
Internal travel costs for attendees ( <i>train fare or internal flight, taxi to and from the meeting venue</i> )	International airfares for those attendees from South Africa ( <i>up to 5 participants</i> )
Organisational cost, including hire of audio-visual equipment, program publication, booklets, etc.	
Local accommodation for São Paulo attendees based outside the city in which the seminar is being held ( <i>up to 4 nights</i> )	Accommodation for those attendees from South Africa ( <i>up to 4 nights for maximum of 5 participants</i> )
A per diem for each seminar day for the attendees from the state of São Paulo	A per diem for each seminar day

### **Value of the ISS grant**

The cost of the grant will be shared between the NRF and FAPESP. Please note that the total value of the grant cannot exceed US\$30,000 in total. Co-PIs should clearly indicate how much of the grant is requested from the NRF and how much from FAPESP.

## **7. Application Procedure**

It is up to the applicants to find co-PIs and participants. Applications must be received in both South Africa (NRF) and the State of Sao Paulo (FAPESP). Applications which have not been submitted to both funding agencies will not be considered for review and for funding. Only one research proposal is allowed per PI. Proposals that do not comply with the terms of these guidelines will not be eligible for review.

The call process is highly competitive therefore application does not guarantee funding. The evaluation of applications should have positive ratings from both sides before consideration for funding. Both the NRF and FAPESP will not be held responsible for non-submission, administration or evaluation of the application in the partner country.



### **NRF Application Procedure for South African PIs**

Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the NRF through the link: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>. Please make use of the ‘*General Application Guide 2023*’ for assistance on the steps to follow when applying for international research grants. The link to the guide can be accessed here: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-call-for-proposals-for-funding-in-2023-and-2024/>.

### **FAPESP Application Procedure for PIs based in Sao Paulo**

Applications must submit the proposal exclusively through the SAGE system. IMPORTANT: the PI from South Africa must be registered in the SAGE system. This can be done by accessing SAGE in the English language and choosing the option “Not registered?” The researcher must fill in all mandatory fields, indicated with an asterisk (\*). After successfully registering, the PI from South Africa may be nominated as a member of the research project and then must access the proposal in SAGE to confirm her/his participation in it. More instructions are available on the FAPESP website at the following link:

[https://sage.fapesp.br/SAGE\\_WEB/jsp/loginAdm.jsp?siteLanguage=en&popup=false](https://sage.fapesp.br/SAGE_WEB/jsp/loginAdm.jsp?siteLanguage=en&popup=false).

## **8. Attachments**

Co-PIs **must** attach the required **compulsory documents** as follows:

- CVs of the two PIs and local and international invited speakers/participants to participate in the ISS.
- Letters of support from the PIs’ institution.
- Budgets of partnering co-PIs.
- A 3-day tentative Programme of the ISS.

Failure to submit compulsory documents will result in the disqualification of the application and will make the entire consortium ineligible.

## **9. Review and Selection Procedure**

Following the closing date indicated in Section 11, all applications will undergo formal eligibility check before moving to the two-step review process. The first step will be performed at the national level, by each funding agency, separately, to identify a shortlist of applications. The funding agencies will use the same review criteria as follows:

**The main criteria for the assessment of applications:**

- Quality of the science outlined in the proposal.

- Potential of the ISS to promote discussion that will ultimately result in future collaboration within South Africa and Brazil.

**The primary consideration will be:**

- The research background of the South African and Brazilian PIs.
- The strength of the PIs in the proposed area of research.
- The quality of participants to the meeting and their area of expertise.
- The strength of the proposal.

See **Annex 1** for the NRF review criteria descriptions.

Following the national review, the second step of the evaluation process will be performed at the bilateral level, through a joint sitting. In this step, the two funding agencies will evaluate the results of their independent assessments and arrive at a final decision on which (and how many) applications to fund.

**Please Note:**

Although the two funding agencies undertake to execute the review and selection process as quickly as possible so as to notify applicants of the results as soon as possible, the nature of the bilateral process requires the alignment of the commencement of each phase of the process with the partnering country, whose schedules may differ significantly.

## 10. Expected Outcomes of the ISS

PIs are to ensure that their applications include details of what is expected as a result of the meeting and include how they plan to develop any new partnerships. PIs should try to be as specific as possible. A report, with a succinct outline of a collaborative research proposal, should be submitted to the NRF and FAPESP shortly after the meeting has taken place.

## 11. Submission Deadline

Applications for both the NRF and FAPESP must be submitted by **31 July 2023 (South Africa: 23:59 SAST/ State of Sao Paulo: 18:59 UTC -3)**. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Neither the NRF nor FAPESP will be responsible for applications that were not received. PIs are also advised to ensure submission of their applications by their counterparts in the partner country.

## 12. Contact Details

### NRF, South Africa

#### For programme-content related queries

**Mr Teuns Phahlamohlaka**

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Knowledge Advancement and Support (KAS)

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Email: [T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za)

#### For technical and grant related queries

**Mr Stephen Dlamini**

Professional Officer: Grants Management and Systems  
Administration (GMSA)

Tel: +27 12 481 4037

Email: [SM.Dlamini@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:SM.Dlamini@risa.nrf.ac.za)

### State of Sao Paulo, FAPESP

#### For any inquiry concerning the NRF-FAPESP ISS call, please contact:

Meritxell Zurita Turk  
Program Officer FAPESP  
[Chamada-nrf-sa@fapesp.br](mailto:Chamada-nrf-sa@fapesp.br)

## Annex I: NRF Review Criteria Description

1	<b>Track record of Applicant (20%)</b>	<u>Research background and expertise of ER-ISS (20%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does the applicants demonstrate relevant experience in their field of knowledge, such as publication, international collaborations and supervision?</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <u>Research background and expertise of ECR-ISS (20%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does the applicant's research background match the research theme of the outlined project concept?</li> </ul>
2	<b>Institutional Support (10%)</b>	<u>Institutional support for the seminar (5%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did the applicants (PIs) include letters of support from the hosting institutions?</li> <li>- Do the letters of support clearly state endorsement from the host institution and provide additional information on how they are going to assist/support the scientific seminar?</li> <li>- Is the infrastructure/equipment (venues and technical equipment) available to support the scientific seminar clearly listed/mentioned?</li> </ul> <u>Scientific seminars are co-organised with relevant international partners (5%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there evidence that the scientific seminar is co-organised with relevant international partners?</li> </ul>
3	<b>National and Global Relevance (30%)</b>	<u>The theme for the scientific seminars are aligned to the themes prioritised for this call (5%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the theme of the seminar aligned with the priorities of this call?</li> <li>- Is there any additional/convincing justification provided for hosting the seminar?</li> </ul> <u>Nature and importance of the seminar in the field(s) within which it is located (5%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is motivation on the nature and objectives of the seminar provided?</li> <li>- Are convincing statements on the importance of the seminar in the scholarly/professional field(s) within which it is located, clearly articulated.</li> </ul> <u>Impact and collaboration of the scientific seminar (10%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there satisfactory evidence that the scientific seminar will focus on high quality scientific research concept that has potential for socio-economic impact and is this accompanied with motivation?</li> <li>- Is there evidence that the scientific seminar will foster international partnerships and collaboration and enhance networking within the science systems of both countries?</li> </ul> <u>Benefits to the broader South African/Brazilian research communities (10%)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are there anticipated benefits to the broader South African and Brazilian research communities, partnering higher education institutions and researchers in hosting the scientific seminar?</li> <li>- Does the programme of the scientific seminar take into consideration the discussions on the establishment of a Community of Practice in the humanities and social sciences fields?</li> </ul>
4	<b>Partnership and Collaboration</b>	<u>Equal involvement of the partnering researchers (10%)</u>



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DO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO

	(20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there an equal sharing of responsibilities between the partnering researchers?</li> <li>- Does the list of local and international invited speakers/participants and CVs demonstrate diversified distribution of relevant and renowned participants?</li> </ul> <p><u>Involvement of Postgraduate students (10%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the evidence of human capacity building clearly indicated and well motivated in the project concept?</li> </ul>
5	<b>Transformation: Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI)</b> (10%)	<p><u>EDI consideration in scientific collaboration (10%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there consideration for the potential impact that factors such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age and mental or physical disability, may have on the experience of the individual?</li> <li>- Is the suggested collaboration sensitive to sex and gender as well as many other identity factors, like race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability?</li> <li>- Has a rationale been provided in cases where partnering researchers believe that no aspect of their research collaboration may benefit from an analysis in consideration of sex, gender or other identity factors?</li> </ul>
6	<b>Financials</b> (10%)	<p><u>Proposed budget (max of US\$30,000 per scientific seminar) (5%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there a detailed and well justified budget with requested amounts that are within the specified limits?</li> <li>- Are the budget line items listed in line with the criteria for which funds can be utilised?</li> </ul> <p><u>Cost sharing and co-investment and other source of funding (5%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there reasonable cost sharing by the institutions of the partnering researchers?</li> <li>- Did the researchers include a detailed proof of co-investment and other source of funding? (If applicable)</li> </ul>