

## South Africa / France Science and Research Collaboration

### PROTEA+ Cross Mobility Programme (CMP)

#### Call for Proposals

*South African applicants **must** consult their institutions for internal closing dates.  
A total of 50 South African Postgraduate students will be jointly funded through this call*

#### 1. Aims of the programme

*The PROTEA+ Cross Mobility Programme (CMP) is an expansion of the bilateral France-South Africa PROTEA Programme, which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022 during the France-South Africa higher education and research week which took place in France from 27 June to 2 July 2022.*

Since its conceptualisation in 1997, the PROTEA Programme has served as a bilateral incentive programme dedicated to strengthening collaborative research between France and South Africa, and has also served as a springboard for initiating, developing, and expanding research projects between researchers of the two countries. The development of the PROTEA Programme is based on a shared conviction regarding the importance of science, technology and innovation in building and sustaining a knowledge-based economy.

The participation and exchange of the next generation researchers has always been central in the PROTEA funded projects and will continue to be emphasised with future calls. The expansion of the programme into the new PROTEA+ CMP, with its separate call for proposals, will support, on a competitive basis, reciprocal exchange of cohorts of postgraduate students (Master and PhD) that will take place between South African and French higher education institutions which are willing to develop a long-term institutional partnership, including (and not limited to) the exchange of students. The new PROTEA+ CMP target is to fund 50 South African students every year. The funding of French students mechanism is described below.

#### 2. Duration of the funding

Successful applications will be supported for one year and will be automatically renewed for additional two years, depending on the availability and confirmation of funds every year.

#### 3. Eligibility criteria

Applications to the PROTEA+ CMP must be submitted by one French and one South African Higher Education Institution that are willing to enhance their institutional partnership in the long-term and that agree to exchange a cohort of postgraduate students (Master and PhD) every year, for one semester, both ways, in one or several disciplines.

The mobility of the students must be credit-bearing and considered as part of their study programme in their original institution. The mobility must not result in extending the duration of the study programme in the original institution.

The modalities and terms of the exchanges should be agreed upon by the partnering institutions prior to their application to the PROTEA+ CMP.

An application must designate two Principal Investigators (PIs), one in the South African partnering institution and one in the French partnering institution, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as technical and financial reporting to the funders.

#### 4. Application procedure

The onus is on the applicants to find their own partners. Applications must be received in both South Africa and France. Applications which have only been received in either South Africa or France, but not both, will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive; therefore, submission of an application does not guarantee funding.

##### South Africa:

- Applications must be submitted through an online application process on the NRF-Connect link: <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>

##### France:

- The French institutions must submit their applications (not more than 10 pages) to [moncef.meddeb@diplomatie.gouv.fr](mailto:moncef.meddeb@diplomatie.gouv.fr) before 9 June 2023.

The application should clearly outline:

- The activities of the students during their visits (research activities, course-work, etc.).
- Coordination mechanism between the two partnering institutions.
- Credit validation rules.
- Process followed for the nomination of the students.
- Timelines and relevant periods of the year for the exchanges.
- Commitment and financial contribution of the partnering institutions.
- Expected outcomes in the mid- and long-term (e.g. further research collaborations, implementation of joint degrees, etc.).

Applicants should also **attach** the following **compulsory** documents:

- List of the nominated postgraduate students to be exchanged for the first year of the programme. For the two subsequent years of the programme, depending on the availability of funds, a *closed call* will be opened to only successful applicants to allow partnering institutions to submit the list of the nominated students for 2024 and for 2025 respectively.
- For each student, it is compulsory for applicants to include:
  - Each student's résumé (curriculum vitae)
  - An invitation letter from the partner institution
  - A copy of the South African passport.
- Signed inter-institutional agreement (or a draft if not signed yet).
- Letter indicating co-funding and support by the partnering institutions.

#### 5. Funding modalities

The programme is funded jointly by:

- The National Research Foundation (NRF), as part of its Global Knowledge Partnerships (GKP) Framework. International exposure, collaboration and mentorship for early career researchers are an integral component of the NRF's strategic goal to create an internationally competitive, transformed and representative researcher cohort. This mandate is clearly outlined in the NRF's GKP Framework. The short-term exchange programme with France forms part of the implementation plan for this Framework.
- The French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Higher Education and Research, as part of the cross-mobility programme with the African Continent which was conceptualised following the Africa – France Summit that took place in Montpellier on 8 October 2021 and was test-run in 2022.

The programme will only cover costs related to the international mobility as follows:

For South African students:

The funding is allocated by the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the NRF. The scholarships will be managed by the agency Campus France. Each scholarship will provide the following services for the mobility:

- Direct payment of the round-trip economy class airfare.
- Assistance and priority for student housing.
- Payment of a monthly stipend (master's/doctorate general rates apply) for the duration of the mobility (one semester).
- Social security coverage for the duration of their stay.

For French students:

The funding mechanism for French students relies on the existing International Mobility Grant (AMI) which is awarded by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research through the international office of the relevant higher education institution, to students who receive a higher education grant based on social criteria.

The student must also be enrolled in a national degree, as defined by the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research. If awarded, the amount of the monthly payment is set by ministerial decree. The grant is managed by the French higher education institution. For the academic year 2022-2023, the amount was 400 € per month. Within the framework of this programme, the student cannot benefit from a cumulative mobility grant of more than one semester. This grant will be supplemented, if necessary, by the schemes offered by the regional councils under their programme of grant for student mobility abroad.

## **6. Review and funding decision making procedure**

Following the closing date, applications will be reviewed internally based on the following broad criteria:

- Purpose and motivation for the proposed exchange programme.
- Coordination mechanism between the two partner institutions.
- Potential impact of the proposed exchange programme on the long-term institutional partnership.
- Track record of the Principal Investigators.
- Nomination mechanism and academic record of nominated postgraduate students.
- Transformation and equity considerations.
- Financials (co-investment by partnering institutions).

See attached the score card that will be used by the Panel for reviewing submitted eligible applications. Please note that other national criteria may be applicable in line with the national policies and regulations of the partnering countries.

The final decision to be made jointly by the NRF and the Embassy of France to South Africa will include:

- The list of the selected partner institutions.
- The list of the South African postgraduate nominees approved as beneficiaries for funding, for the first year, and then in 2024 and 2024 through a closed call, depending on the availability of funds.

The submitted list of South African nominees will be communicated to the implementing agency, Campus France.

The international office of the French institution will coordinate the potential funding of the awardees with the Ministry of Higher Education and Research.

The participating French and South African students will be contacted as necessary and they will need to follow all the procedures in place to prepare their departure.

## 7. Online information meeting

The Embassy of France to South Africa, in collaboration with the NRF, will organise an online information meeting. The meeting will consist of a Q&A session regarding the current call and is open for all interested stakeholders. The meeting will take place on Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 15:00 (France and South Africa time). See below the information to joining this meeting:

- Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89389030636?pwd=YW1PaHNGRVJhRXBJZkp5RnI2WkxjQT09>
- Meeting ID: 893 8903 0636
- Passcode: 139344

## 8. Protection of personal information

The National Research Foundation ensures compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), Act 4 of 2013, committing to ensure the privacy of those submitting applications and proposals to the NRF on the NRF Online Submission System (<https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za/>). The National Research Foundation will protect the personal information provided by applicants or the third party against misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification, or disclosure. The Privacy Policy of the NRF outlines the practices relating to the protection of personal information and can be accessed on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/privacy-policy>.

## 9. Submission deadline

Applicants are encouraged to consult their institutions for internal closing dates. Applications submitted after Friday 9 June 2023, will not be considered for funding. Institutions are also advised to ensure that their partners' applications are submitted and have also been received in the partner country in time. Both the French and the South African funders will not be held responsible for applications that were not received on the either side.

## 10. Contact details for queries

South Africa	France
National Research Foundation (NRF)  <b>For programme queries:</b> Teuns Phahlamohlaka Tel: +27 12 481 4385, Email: <a href="mailto:T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za">T.Phahlamohlaka@risa.nrf.ac.za</a>  <b>For submissions:</b> Stephen Dlamini Tel: +27 12 481 4037, Email: <a href="mailto:SM.Dlamini@risa.nrf.ac.za">SM.Dlamini@risa.nrf.ac.za</a>  <b>For system or technical queries:</b> <a href="mailto:supportdesk@mrf.ac.za">supportdesk@mrf.ac.za</a>	French Embassy in South Africa  <b>For programme and submission queries</b> Mr Moncef MEDDEB Attaché for Science and Technology Ambassade de France en Afrique du Sud  Email: <a href="mailto:moncef.meddeb@diplomatie.gouv.fr">moncef.meddeb@diplomatie.gouv.fr</a>

## Annex 1: Score Card highlighting the review criteria, description and the weighting.

No	Review Criteria/Weight /	Descriptions
1.	<b>Track record of applicant (main applicant/student's supervisor)</b> 15%	<p><u>Institutional support (10%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there a signed inter-institutional agreement.</li> <li>- Did the applicants 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 exchange programmes?</li> <li>- Is the infrastructure/equipment available to support the hosting of maximum 25 students?</li> </ul> <p><u>Track record of main applicant (5%)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main applicant has produced research outputs: peer reviewed articles/journal articles, conference presentations/proceedings, book chapters, patents, national and international oral presentations, etc.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Academic record of nominated postgraduate students participating in the exchange programmes</b> 20%	<p><u>The students' CVs to be used for assessing this criteria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do the exchange programmes include a good mixture of both Master and PhD students from both the South African and the French side?</li> <li>- The academic track record of the nominated students, i.e. are they high performing students?</li> <li>- Do the nominated students have the ability to independently undertake a research project?</li> </ul>
3.	<b>Purpose and Motivation for the proposed exchange programme</b> 30%	<p><u>Critically assess:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The activities of the students during their visits (research activities, course-work, etc.).</li> <li>- Coordination mechanism between the two partnering institutions.</li> <li>- Credit validation rules.</li> <li>- Process followed for the nomination of the students.</li> <li>- Timelines and relevant periods of the year for the exchanges.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Transformation and equity considerations amongst the nominated postgraduate students</b> 10%	<p><u>Does the exchange programme take into consideration equity redress? (10%) -</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Black female (BF)</li> <li>- White female (WF)</li> <li>- Black male (BM)</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Potential impact of the proposed exchange programme</b> 15%	<p><u>Build strong national and regional networks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate evidence of potential for new initiatives and use of networking to influence the strategic direction in research areas of national importance.</li> <li>- Evidence that the Project will foster international partnerships and collaboration and enhance networking within the science system.</li> <li>- Satisfactory evidence that the students' projects will focus on high quality scientific research that has potential for socio-economic impact.</li> <li>- Expected outcomes in the mid- and long-term (e.g. further research collaborations, implementation of joint degrees, etc.).</li> </ul>

<b>6.</b>	<b>Financials (co-investment by partnering institutions).</b> <b>10%</b>	<u>Co-investment and other source of funding</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Is there co-investment by the partnering institutions?</li><li>- Did the researchers include a detailed proof of co-investment and other source of funding?</li></ul>
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