National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa
National Eligibility and Funding Regulations

Indicative Budget: R7.2 mill (total budget)

Funding Programme:

- A total of 8 projects/consortia will be funded.
- Each project will be provided a max of R900 000 for over 36 months to be paid in annual instalments of R300 000 per annum per project.

National Contact Points:

contact person:	email:	telephone:
Nombuso Madonda	NP.Madonda@risa.nrf.ac.za	+27 124814143
Jan Phalane	JR.Phalane@risa.nrf.ac.za	+27 124814157

Eligibility Criteria

Only working researchers/scientists residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised South African public higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology or science council are eligible to apply. Researchers based at private higher education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. Researchers from SMEs, private companies/industries, and NGOs cannot serve as a PI but can form part of the research consortium. NGO and/or industry/ SME participants are expected to meet their own participation costs in the joint project. ***South African researchers are not allowed to serve as a research partner on more than 1 project proposal.***

It is "*mandatory*" for South African PIs based at historically advantaged institutions to include, as part of the consortium, a research partner from a historically disadvantaged institution. Proposals submitted by an applicant based at a historically advantaged institution without a research partner from a historically disadvantaged institution will be ineligible (and will not be submitted for review). The research collaborator from the historically disadvantaged institution in this case, can serve as a co-applicant in the proposal. Applicants based at historically disadvantaged institutions, South Africa's two new universities, science councils and the NRF research facilities can act as PIs and submit proposals without the involvement of and/or partnering with researchers based at historically advantaged institutions if they so wish. Please note that only the following eight universities are recognized as historically disadvantaged in line with the Department of Higher Education and Training Statement on university funding: University of Limpopo (UL), University of Fort Hare (UFH), University of Venda (Univen), Walter Sisulu University (WSU), University of the Western Cape (UWC), University of Zululand (UniZulu), Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT), and Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU).

In terms of human capital development, PIs are encouraged to ensure the involvement of young scientists (i.e. doctoral and postdoctoral students) and pay attention to race and gender equality (a balanced involvement of female and male researchers) and previously disadvantaged individuals.

Eligible Research Activities

NRF funds can be used to cover the following costs:

Research-related costs: Activities to be supported may include expenses relating to conducting research such as field work (e.g. conducting interviews / surveys / laboratory experiments), research-related trips, small equipment (consumables), etc. Airfare, accommodation, ground transport and subsistence should be calculated using rates as stipulated in institutional travel policies.

Exchange programmes: To support short-term mobility or travel expenses (i.e. transport and accommodation costs) of the research team between the partnering countries.

Doctoral research placements: The placements should enable the postgraduate students within the project to learn valuable new skills or techniques; access facilities or resources not readily available at home; build relationships with potential new collaborators; and advance complementary collaborative research. The duration of each placement is expected to be 1-3 months with flexibility to split the placement into several shorter visits. Longer placements may be undertaken where this would add value and these should be justified within the application. Placements must enhance, not replace, the standard training and study support that the postgraduate students receive. These placements must be managed to fit within the original funded period of the studentship. Additional funding will not be made available through this Call to support studentship extensions for those undertaking international placements. Applicants should include information about how these exchanges will be managed within their proposal.

Knowledge sharing costs: In support of activities organised by the partners, such as joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecture presentations, capacity building sessions, meetings, local/regional dissemination of results aimed at involving stakeholders, and/or end-users from outside the consortium. Airfare, accommodation, ground transport and subsistence should be calculated using rates as stipulated in institutional travel policies.

T-AP DGT Call Conferences: It's mandatory for researchers to make budgetary provisions (travel and accommodation) to participate at conferences organised by the T-AP Funders as part of the reporting requirements.

NRF funds can only be used to support research activities executed by the South African members of the consortium. The following will **NOT** be funded from this grant allocation:

- Salaries (including temporary staff fees, consultant's fees and project management fees).
- Large equipment (costing more than R200 000).
- Educational expenses (i.e. scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.). The NRF has phased out the block grant nomination process as well as the grant-holder-linked modalities of funding postgraduate students. Therefore, PIs interested in supporting doctoral students as part of their projects should encourage their students to apply for the NRF Postgraduate Free Standing Scholarship on the NRF Online Submission System by accessing the link: https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/.

Call topic priority

The NRF will support all interdisciplinary research projects focusing on the three pillars of this call, i.e. Democracy, Governance, and Trust.

All the ten cross-cutting themes for investigating these three pillars are supported by the NRF:

1) Concepts, understandings, and models of democracy, governance
2) Challenges to, democracy, governance and trust
3) Education
4) Media, information, and communication
5) Economies and economic systems
6) Identities, discrimination, marginalization, and inequalities
7) Ecosystems and environments
8) Epistemologies, knowledge, and expertise
9) History and culture
10) Power, authority, and conflict

Researchers are encouraged to consult the call framework for further details on these cross cutting themes.

Application Procedure

Procedure for Submitting a Notice of Intent (NOI):
Applicants must submit their Notice of Intent (NOI) (*mandatory*) directly to the Call Secretariat, using the SAGe platform. Queries on using this online platform can be directed to the Call Secretariat. The deadline for the submission of the NOI to the Call Secretariat is **Friday, 15 September 2023**. The Lead PI of the project should complete and submit the NOI on behalf of the research team. South African applicants requesting funding from the NRF **are not expected** to submit their NOI to the NRF. The NRF online submission system (i.e. NRF-Connect) will only open for the submission of full proposals. Refer to the next paragraph.

Procedure for Submitting a Full Proposal:
Full proposals should also be submitted to the Call Secretariat, using the SAGe platform, no later than **Monday, 6 November 2023**. South African applicants requesting funding from the NRF **are also expected and required** to submit their full proposals through to the NRF online submission system using the following 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/. The NRF system will open in mid-September for the submission of full proposals and close on **Monday, 6 November 2023**.

Please note that failure to submit a full proposal to the NRF will make the application ineligible compromising the entire project consortium.

South African applicants **must** attach the required **compulsory documents** in PDF format in the following order:

- CVs of partner Principal Investigators.
- Budgets of partner Principal Investigators.
- Budget division of the South African team, particularly budget sharing between the historically advantaged and HDIs.

Please note:

- Failure to submit compulsory documents will result in the disqualification of the application and will make the entire project consortium ineligible.
- Only one application is allowed per South African applicant. Should more than one application be received, only one will be submitted for review at the discretion of the NRF

Science Engagement

Science engagement refers to scientific and initiative activities, events, interventions, 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. It is an overarching term for all aspects of public engagement through suitable communication channels with science, science awareness, science education, science communication, and science outreach, aiming to develop and benefit individuals and society. The NRF supports science engagement by coordinating and implementing 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, and technology) all aspects of the innovation chain and indigenous knowledge. Therefore, researchers funded through the NRF programmes must contribute to science engagement and report the related outputs in their project's progress report.

Intellectual Property

The researchers of each country, particularly the leaders, must take adequate steps to ensure protection and sharing of the intellectual property that could result from the joint projects.

Ethical Considerations

In conjunction with the institution, it is the responsibility of the grant-holder 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 prior to the commencement of the research and acceptance of the grant. The awarded amount will not be released for payment if a copy of the required ethical clearance certificate, as indicated in the application, is not attached to the Conditions of Grant. 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/.

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 Connect (https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za/). The National Research Foundation will protect the personal information provided by applicants or the third party against misuse, loss, unauthorized 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.

NRF Contact Details for Queries

Queries on the NRF online submission system (NRF-Connect) can be forwarded to the NRF Support Desk on email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za and tel. +27 12 481 4202.

The following NRF officials can also be contacted for further information:

For programme-content related queries	**For technical and grant related queries**
Mr Nombuso Madonda Professional Officer Knowledge Advancement and Support (KAS) Tel: +27 (0) 12 481 4285 Email: NP.Madonda@risa.nrf.ac.za	**Mr Jan Phalane** Professional Officer Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Tel: +27 (0) 12 481 4157 Email: JR.Phalane@risa.nrf.ac.za