



National Funding Regulations SOUTH AFRICA – National Research Foundation (NRF)

Indicative Budget: R7.5 mill (around \$ 498.000) total budget

Funding Programme:

- ❖ A total of 10 projects/consortia will be funded.
- ❖ Each project will be provided a max of R750 000 for over 36 months to be paid in annual instalments of R250 000 per annum per project.

National Contact Point:

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ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Who can apply?

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 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 will be recognized as historically disadvantaged in line with the Department of Higher Education and Training November 2015 Ministerial 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 gender equality (a balanced involvement of female and male researchers) and previously disadvantaged individuals.

What type of activities are eligible for funding?

NRF funds can be used to cover the following costs:

Research-related costs: Activities to be supported may include expenses relating to field work such as 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 3-6 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.

Joint T-AP COVID-19 RRR Conferences: It's mandatory for researchers to make budgetary provisions (travel and accommodation) to participate at conferences organised by the T-AP COVID-19 RRR 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://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>. The NRF call for Student Support opened on 1 Apr 2021 (and will close on 30 Jul 2021) for bursaries in 2022. Further instructions on the Student Support application process can be accessed through the *Application and Funding Guide for the Masters and Doctoral Scholarships* for full-time studies:

<https://www.nrf.ac.za/bursaries/framework-documents/bursaries-framework-documents>

National topic priorities

The NRF will support all interdisciplinary research projects focused on the five challenges of this call, i.e.

- 1) Reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities
- 2) Building a more resilient and sustainable society
- 3) Fostering democratic governance and political participation
- 4) Advancing responsible and inclusive digital innovation
- 5) Ensuring effective and accurate communication and media

Proposals may emphasise historical, theoretical developments, cross-national and cross-regional comparisons, meta-analyses, qualitative and quantitative longitudinal or cross-sectional surveys, case studies, randomised-controlled studies, cultural analysis, audience insights, discourse analysis, experimental development, prototyping, and simulation models, among others. **Applicants are encouraged to consult the main T-AP COVID-19 RRR Call framework for an in-depth description of the five challenges.** In addition to these five challenges, the T-AP COVID-19 RRR Call encourage applicants to consult the [UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery](#) when developing their proposals, and if applicable/appropriate, to complement the project's research questions by utilising the Roadmap recommendations.

How to apply?

For the full proposal, applicants should submit their applications by **12 July 2021** via the SAGe submission website. The South African applicants (i.e. main Principal Investigators) should also submit their applications electronically to the NRF via the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>. ***South African Principal Investigators MUST consult their institutions for internal closing dates. Designated Authorities must submit to the NRF no later than 19 July 2021.***

The following steps should be followed when submitting full proposals via the NRF Online Submission System:

- Applications must be submitted under the “2021 Research Grants (International)” – “T-AP COVID-19 RRR Call”.
- All compulsory sections and the CV sections on the NRF Online Submission System must be completed in full and the required compulsory documents should be attached in PDF format in the following order:
 - Copy of the full proposal submitted on the SAGe website.
 - CVs and budgets of the partners.
- Failure to submit compulsory documents will result in the disqualification of the application.
- Complete applications will go to the host institutions for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing. No hard copies will be accepted. Hard copies will automatically be disqualified by the NRF.
- Only applications endorsed by the designated authority (DA) at the research office or its equivalent at higher education institutions will be accepted. Applicants are therefore encouraged to contact your research office or Designated Authority if you have any queries.

Please note that South African full proposals not submitted via the NRF Online Submission System will not be eligible for reviews.