



***BLUE SKIES
RESEARCH PROGRAMME***

**KNOWLEDGE FIELDS DEVELOPMENT
Framework Document**

17 SEPTEMBER 2012

ENDORSEMENTS

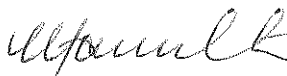
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

1 PROGRAMME AND DESCRIPTION

1.1 Name

BLUE SKIES RESEARCH PROGRAMME

1.2 Description of Programme

Blue skies research should be considered as a multidimensional concept that can be defined from different perspectives viz. that of the researcher, the funding agency, the object of the research, the research approach, and/or the contribution to the knowledge base.

Defined from the *perspective of the researcher*, it refers to **self-initiated, curiosity-driven** research (i.e. seeking to explore knowledge beyond the horizon).

Defined from the *perspective of a funding agency*, blue skies research funding implies a willingness to take calculated **investment risks**.

Defined in terms of the *object of research*, it focuses on exploring **important and/or new phenomena** - rather than run-of-the-mill themes - as defined by peers in the specific research community.

Defined from the perspective of the *research approach*, it is **novel**¹ in terms of one or more of the following components: theoretical framework, methodological approach or research context (for example, shifting paradigms or research technology innovation).

Defined in terms of the contribution to *the knowledge base*, blue skies research is expected to **push the frontiers of knowledge** and possibly become a point of gravity for subsequent research.

Furthermore the programme recognises that the epistemological, methodological and other differences between the respective science cultures (e.g. economic, medical, social, engineering and natural sciences) must be acknowledged and therefore the assessment process should take cognisance of this differentiation. However care should be taken to ensure that multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary blue skies research is not stifled through this differentiation.

¹ Novel research is about leveraging existing ideas in new ways however the paradigms/boundaries/directions must shift (either completely or partially).

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Blue Skies Research Programme can be described as multi-dimensional self-initiated, curiosity-driven inquiry that necessitates high investment risks, addresses new phenomena, as well as push the frontiers of knowledge. Blue Skies-type of research is associated with fundamental and basic research programmes.

The objectives of the Blue Skies programme are:

- To provide space and time for research to push the frontiers of knowledge and to encourage imagination through scientific and scholarly endeavours
- To support and sustain communities of critical and free thinkers
- To promote and encourage diversity² in research for re-imagining³ disciplines or academies.
- To bring about new and unpredictable scientific / technological / scholarly discoveries / interpretations / understandings / knowledges.

The NRF is cognisant of the complexities of dealing with this multi-dimensional concept and has structured the programme as follows:

- Call for Concept Notes (call to open on the 20th September 2012)
- Fund successful Concept Notes for one year only to a maximum of R 200,000 each (applicants will be informed in February 2013)
- Invite successful Concept Note applicants to submit Full proposals (invitations will be made in February 2014)
- Fund successful full proposals for a three-year period (applicants will be informed in April 2014)
- Full proposals must address :
 - a. New phenomena
 - b. Push frontiers of knowledge
 - c. Multi-dimensionality, and show
 - d. Proof of concept (clear evidence of progress made and milestones achieved during the Concept Note funding phase).

See Table 1 for specific details regarding the modus operandi of these processes and see Figure 1 for a schematic representation of the application, assessment and funding processes.

² Diversity in research in this context refers to theoretical frameworks, approaches and methodologies.

³ To imagine again or anew especially: to form a new conception of (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2010. Merriam-Webster Online. 28 May 2010. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reimagining>

3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The National Research Foundation's (NRF) purpose is to support and promote research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, and innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including indigenous knowledge and thereby to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the Republic (NRF Act, 1998).

A review of the Focus Area Programme (FAP) was conducted in 2007. This review recognized that the rationale behind FAP and model underpinning it remained valid. The review also acknowledged that the focus area programme came at the right time, had been partially successful and that a focused research programme should be continued, even if in an amended form. The review recommended the provision of a programme dedicated to promoting discipline-oriented, self-initiated research. Hence, the Blue Skies Research Programme was initiated in 2008 to provide space for novel fundamental enquiry, curiosity-driven and basic research.

The launch of the NRF's Blue Skies Research Programme in 2008 had challenges which included:

- Insufficient time for broader consultation on the definition of novelty within the ambit of different knowledge fields and on the parameters of blue skies research
- The adjudication process which unfortunately was amended midstream due to unforeseen circumstances
- The phasing out of the FAP with limited opportunities for researchers to apply to other NRF funding programmes for their research that was previously funded through the FAPs. The confusion and anxiety resulted in a misconstrued understanding of the intended purpose and nature of the Blue Skies Research Programme.

The NRF acknowledged that it was important to engage with the research community on the refinement of this programme. A two-staged process was followed which included:

- an open invitation to researchers in South Africa to input into the refinement of the programme via an online questionnaire, and
- a workshop held on 16 March 2010 in Pretoria (taking into account the comments received from the above step) for invited participants to finalise the refined shape of the programme (see <http://www.nrf.ac.za/files/Final%20report-28%20April%20'10.doc> for workshop report).

The Blue Skies Research Programme has been refined based on the outcomes of the above process- which are reflected in this call for research funding.

3.1 Environmental scan

The National Research Foundation's (NRF) purpose is to support and promote research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities in order to facilitate the creation of knowledge, and innovation and development in all fields of science and technology, including indigenous knowledge and thereby to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the Republic (NRF Act, 1998). In support of its purpose the NRF launched Vision 2015 that aims to promote world-class research, and create a transformed society and sustainable environment. Soon after its founding in 1999, the NRF took a strategic decision to organise its support and promotion of research in terms of nationally relevant focus areas. These focus areas represented a significant attempt by the NRF to steer the research funding away from the traditional comfort zone of self-initiated research, important as that zone may have been throughout the history of science – until the late nineteen eighties. The focus area approach at this time was partially in line with the strategies of other comparable national funding agencies across the world.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the programme are:

- To provide space and time for research to push the frontiers of knowledge and to encourage imagination through scientific and scholarly endeavours
- To support and sustain communities of critical and free thinkers
- To promote and encourage diversity⁴ in research for re-imagining⁵ disciplines or academics.
- To bring about new and unpredictable scientific / technological / scholarly discoveries / interpretations / understandings / knowledges.

3.3 NRF Perspective

The Blue Skies Research Programme creates space to push frontiers of knowledge, enable unpredictable discoveries as well as promote high impact research within disciplines. This is in line with the NRF's Vision 2015 which envisages the following for South Africa:

- World-class research
- Transformed society; and
- Sustainable environment

3.4 Institutional structure

⁴ Diversity in research in this context refers to theoretical frameworks, approaches and methodologies.

⁵ To imagine again or anew especially; to form a new conception of (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2010. Merriam-Webster Online. 28 May 2010. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reimagining>)

The programme is hosted in the Knowledge Fields Development Directorate (KFD) and managed under the Strategic Knowledge Fields Grant Programme of the Grants Management Systems and Administration (GMSA). SKFG facilitates the realisation of the NRF's mandate to 'promote and support research and research capacity development in all fields of knowledge and technology' through grant making and paying.

3.5 Financing support

The Blue Skies Research Programme is made possible through the National Research Foundation's Core Funding.

3.6 Key stakeholders

Science Councils, Universities and Museums

4 MODUS OPERANDI

The Blue Skies Research Programme *modus operandi* are described in Table 1 while the flow diagram, Figure 1, depicts the application, assessment and funding processes with appropriate timelines.

4.1 Call for proposals

A call for Blue Skies Research Programme proposals is made once a year. All application materials **must** be submitted electronically via the NRF's Submission system at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>

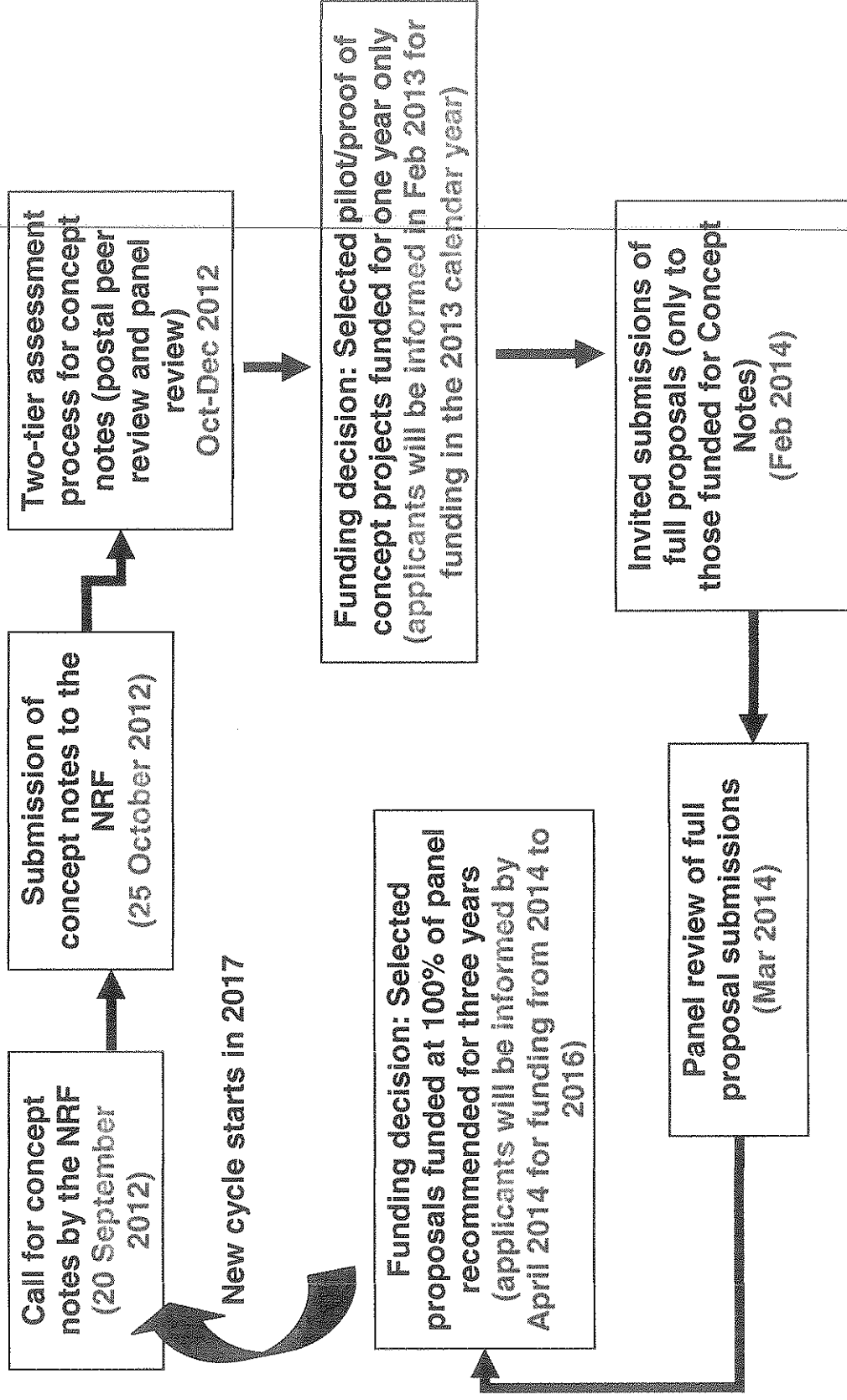
The **NRF closing date** for endorsed Concept Notes applications is **25 October 2012**. All applications **must** be endorsed by the research office of the principal applicant before submission to the NRF. It is the responsibility of each applicant to familiarise themselves with the internal closing date, set by their institution in order to meet the NRF closing date. Incomplete OR late submissions will not be accepted.

NB: At each phase (Concept note and Full proposal) of the Blue Skies Programme application process, applicants must ensure that their Curriculum Vitae are updated on the NRF Submission system at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>.

All outputs that were entered by researchers on the NRF Online system were migrated to the NRF Submission system. When logging on to the NRF Submission system, researchers are requested to verify their outputs on the Landing Page by selecting the type of output under the heading "To be Reviewed" and verifying each output individually until there are none left to be reviewed.

These Curriculum vitae will be used in the assessment processes

FIGURE 1: The NRF's application, assessment and funding process for the Blue Skies Research Programme



4.2 Eligibility

TABLE 1: Application, assessment and funding details for concept notes and full proposal submissions

	CONCEPT NOTES	FULL PROPOSALS
Who may apply	<p>Only researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa (6) are eligible to apply as the principal investigator. Their affiliation must be either as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time employees • Part-time employees on contract but on condition that the appointment is for (at least) the duration of the project applied for in the submission. The length of the contract should be stated in the application form. Salaries must be paid by the research institution and the primary employment of the individual concerned must be at that institution. A contract researcher appointed at a university or university of technology on behalf of a third party to fulfil a very specific function for the latter does not qualify for support. <p>Retired researchers provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is proof of institutional support in the form of an employment contract, office space, administrative support, access to research equipment and space. The institution will have to ensure that a minimum of six months are spent at the facility for the purpose of research and research capacity development. • the researcher must have a research publication track record and must be actively supervising postgraduate students at present. 	<p>Only researchers who have been funded in Year 1 of that cycle for pilot/proof of concept projects will be invited by the NRF to submit full proposals submissions.</p>

⁶ An NRF recognized Research Institution meets all of the following minimum requirements in that it:-

	CONCEPT NOTES	FULL PROPOSALS
Assessment Process	<p>A two tiered peer- review assessment process will be followed, which includes:</p> <p><u>Postal-peer review:</u> The postal-peer reviewers will be specialist in the ambit of the respective proposals.</p> <p><u>Panel-peer review:</u> Panels will be broadly constituted based (i.e. Social Science, Humanities, Law, Fine Arts, Engineering and Natural Sciences (Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Biological Sciences etc). These areas may be merged or further disaggregated as appropriate depending on the submission demands.</p> <p>At least one panel will be constituted for multi/inter/trans-disciplinary research (if required).</p> <p>Panel members will be selected based on their broad overview of the respective knowledge field and their research standing.</p>	<p>The assessment process will include:</p> <p><u>Panel-peer review:</u> One panel will be constituted to assess all the full proposal submissions. This panel will comprise of members with reputable research standing who represent different broad spectrum knowledge fields</p>

- Conducts basic or applied research
- Contributes to the Research and Development of the country (i.e. the results of this research should be freely available in the public domain)
- Undertakes research that is for the public good, is of a pre-competitive nature and is for the benefit of the long-term knowledge base of the country
- Is involved in the training of postgraduate students
- Is committed to human resource capacity development
- Is committed to equity and redress

Non NRF recognised research institutions (e.g. NGOs) involved in research, who meet all the requirements above, may contact the NRF at supportdesk@nrf.ac.za to ask about applying to get NRF recognition.

<p>Assessment criteria</p>	<p>Postal-peer reviewers will provide qualitative comments on the concept notes in terms of whether the research concept proposes to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important and/or new phenomena - as defined by peers in the specific research community. • Novel approaches in terms of the theoretical framework(s), methodological approach (es) or research contexts. • The extent to which, the research proposes to push the frontiers of knowledge production. <p>The panel-peer reviewers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate the postal-peer review reports and grade each concept note as per the same assessment criteria employed for the postal-peer review process. • Assess the track record of the applicant and team members (if relevant) in terms of the capacity to undertake the proposed research. • Advise the NRF on the appropriateness of the budget request. • (see <u>APPENDIX 1</u> for scorecard details) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The panel-peer reviewers will assess the full proposal submissions in terms of its: • Feasibility: • This will be based on the progress made to date (Year 1) • proposed approaches and activities planned for the research project • availability of required resources. • Envisaged contributions to human resource capacity development (including, issues of equity and redress). • The panel will also advise the NRF on the appropriateness of the budget request. • (see <u>APPENDIX 2</u> for scorecard details)
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Proposal grading	Assessment Criterion is graded on a scale as follows:		
	Scoring scale to be used		
	Score	Meaning of score	Notes
	4	Excellent	It is clear that the achievement could not be improved within the specific context.
	3	Above average	The achievement is exceeding average but could still be improved within the specific context.
	2	Average	This is an average achievement within the appropriate context.
	1	Below average	The achievement is not meeting average expectations within the appropriate context however this could be improved with minor amendments/revisions.
	0	Poor	There are major shortcomings or flaws in the submission.
	Context		
	Note: The scoring process must be made with sensitivity to the context in which the proposal is made. The context will include the research field or discipline. It will also include other relevant influences such as societal and institutional textures		
	If the criterion is not applicable to an application, the weighting of the criterion will equal zero. The score of each criterion for each application will be contextualised to accommodate variability in knowledge fields, institutional capacity etc.		
Where to apply	<p>The application system for Concept Note submissions will open on the 20 September 2012. All applications must be submitted via the NRF Submission system at https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za.</p> <p>Select the Blue Skies Concept Notes Call 2012 under Create New Application. The research office of the principal applicant MUST endorse each application. Incomplete and late submissions will not be accepted.</p>		
Closing dates	<p>The NRF closing date for proposals is 25 October 2012.</p> <p>All applications must be endorsed by the research office of the principal applicant.</p> <p>Applications will not be accepted by the NRF if any of the below parameters apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required formats are not adhered to • incomplete submissions are made (see below for required documentation) 		
	<p>The NRF closing date for validated applications will be in March 2014.</p> <p>Applications will not be accepted by the NRF if any of the below parameters apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual progress reports (APR) have not been submitted to the NRF. • applications are not validated or endorsed by the research office of the principal applicant. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the closing date has expired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incomplete and/or late submissions will not be accepted by the NRF (see below for required documentation) required formats are not adhered to
Required documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the documentation below must be submitted online at https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and validated application form Updated CV Uploaded letters from co-investigators confirming their participation in the proposed research, if relevant Any additional supporting documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the documentation below must be submitted online at https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and validated application form Updated CV Uploaded letters from co-investigators confirming their participation in the proposed research, if relevant Any additional supporting documents
Funding decision process	<p>The NRF's funding decisions are informed by the review panels' accumulative weighted score of each assessed application.</p> <p>Only applications scoring accumulative scores of "3" and above across all panels will be considered for funding by the NRF.</p> <p>The NRF will fund the top-scoring applications across all panels within the programme specific budget.</p>	
Feedback	<p>In principle, feedback on the assessment of the application is regarded as a crucial value-adding function of the NRF. In a limited number of cases, feedback from either the reviewers and/or panel members who evaluated your application will be sent. These selected comments will be provided to give insight into some of the peer thinking that informed the grant decision-making process, and to give constructive support to applicants. In general, no feedback will be sent where the assessment was positive unless specific conditions are attached to the funding.</p>	

4.3 Rules of participation

Only researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa are eligible to apply as a principal investigator.

For both the Concept Notes and Full Proposal applications, phases of the Blue Skies Research Programme, the core research team consists of a principal investigator and a co-investigator(s). In addition, the **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR** (i.e the applicant) must be an active researcher who takes intellectual responsibility for the project, its conception, any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit, and the communication of results. The principal investigator must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to the project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others. S/he will take responsibility for the management and administration of resources allocated to the application.

A **CO-INVESTIGATOR** is an active researcher who provides significant commitment, intellectual input, relevant expertise into the design and implementation of the research application. S/he will be involved in all or at least some well-defined research activities within the scope of the application. South African-based co-investigators are eligible to receive NRF funds from the grant if the team's application is successful.

Post-doctoral fellows, students, technical and support staff should NOT be listed as co-investigators.

The project may also include:

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES/COLLABORATORS

These are individuals or groups who are anticipated to make relatively small but meaningful contribution to the research endeavours outlined in the application. Research Associates/collaborators will not actively participate in the design and implementation of the research application. They are not considered a part of the core research team.

4.4 Timelines

Blue Skies Research Programme grants will be awarded for a period of three years. Successful applicants who wish to apply for further funding upon completion of a three-year funding cycle must submit new applications. All applications will be assessed on a competitive basis. The Blue Skies Research funding cannot be automatically renewed. Preferential treatment will not be given to those who have previously received NRF funding.

4.5 Management of Programme

The Knowledge Fields Development (KFD) Directorate of the RISA-NRF hosts the Blue Skies Research Programme and is primarily responsible for:

- Strategic oversight and management of the programme
- Conceptualizing and developing the Programme
- Coordinating and facilitating activities of the programme
- Compiling programme research and evaluation reports

- Stakeholder engagement

The Grant Management Systems Administration (GMSA) Directorate is responsible for:

- Managing review and assessment processes for the programme
 - Coordinating and facilitating the granting processes
 - Providing application assessment evaluation and feedback processes
-

4.6 Line of authority

Programme Director, in the Knowledge Fields Development Directorate manages the Blue Skies Research Programme with the assistance of a Programme Officer. The Programme Director reports to the KFD Executive Director. A Grants Director, in the Grant Management Systems Administration manages the granting processes with the assistance of a Grant and Liaison Officers. The Grant Director reports to the Executive Director of the GMSA Directorate.

5 FINANCIALS

5.1 Funding model

The Blue Skies Funding Programme is made possible through the Core Funding model of the National Research Foundation.

5.2 Funding ranges

A maximum budget of R 200,000 (Two hundred Thousands Rands) per Concept Note applications will be considered. Concept Note funding will not be extended beyond one year. Student bursary support will not be provided. Applicant must provide a detailed, high-level operational expense budget with motivations.

Successful Full Proposals will receive funding that accommodates the following budget items:

- a. Grant holder-linked student support
- b. Staff development grants
- c. Research-related operating costs
 - o Sabbaticals
 - o Materials and Supplies
 - o Travel and subsistence
 - o Research / Technical / *Ad hoc* Assistants
 - o Research Equipment

For more detail on budgets, refer to the funding guideline, Appendix 3.

5.3 Funding support

The NRF funds the Blue Skies Research programme on an ongoing basis. Science councils, universities, museums and other NRF-recognized institutions are the primary beneficiaries of this programme.

5.4 Programme budget

The budget for this programme originates from the NRF's Core Funding.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The National Research Foundation is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Blue Skies Research Programme. Since its inception in 2008, the Blue Skies Research programme has been once in 2010, following extensive consultation with the research community. A URL link for the report detailing the proceedings of this workshop is on page 6 of this Framework document. The Blue Skies Research Programme will be monitored every seven years.

6.1 Reporting

The Programme Director is responsible for reporting twice annually on the contribution of the Blue Skies Programme to the Knowledge Fields Development Directorate's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). In addition, the programme Director is responsible for reviewing progress and reporting two quarterly on the Blue Skies Research Programme.

6.2. Timeframes for evaluation

The Blue Skies Research Programme will be evaluated every seven years by a team of reviewer who will be appointed by the National Research Foundation. The NRFs' Knowledge Fields Directorate in consultation with the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate will agree to and set Timeframes for the review in line with the existing guidelines.

6.3 Broad terms of reference for evaluation

The broad terms of reference for the evaluation of the Blue Skies Programme will be determined by the Knowledge Fields Development prior to the evaluation taking place and in accordance with the tenets set in the NRF's Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate's Handbook.

8.4 Utilisation of the results of the evaluation

The results of the evaluation will be used in line with the purpose set in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation as well as for programme improvement and development.

REFER QUERIES TO	
Grant officer:	Liaison Officer:
Name: Mmamokete Mabuela Telephone: 012 481 4882 e-Mail: Mabuela@nrf.ac.za	Name: Singathwa Mbangeni Telephone: 012 481 4269 e-Mail: Singathwa.mbangeni@nrf.ac.za

LIST OF ACRONYMS

1. APRs- Annual Progress Report
2. CV- Curriculum Vitae
3. FAP- Focus Areas Programme
4. GMSA- Grant Management Systems Administration
5. KFD- Knowledge Fields Development
6. NRF- National Research Foundation
7. SKFG-Strategic Knowledge Fields Grants

APPENDIX 1: PANEL ASSESSMENT SCORECARD: CONCEPT NOTES

Blue Skies Research Programme					
Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)	Weighted score (Total = 4)
Quality of the "Concept Note"	The "Object" of the research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How important and/or new - as defined by peers in the specific research community- are the phenomena being investigated? 		20%	
	Research approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are novel approaches in terms of the theoretical framework(s), methodological approach(es) or research contexts being explored? 		30%	
	Contribution to the knowledge base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the proposed research push the frontiers of knowledge production? 		30%	
Track record of applicant	Past research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the applicant's output in terms of publications, patents, designs, performances etc? 		10%	
	Students trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has the applicant's contribution been in terms of training M and D students? This includes the training of black and/or females students. 		10%	
	100%	0.00		100%	

APPENDIX 2: PANEL ASSESSMENT SCORECARD: FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Blue Skies Research Programme					
Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)	Weighted score (Total = 4)
Feasibility of the research	Progress made to date (in Year 1)	Has sufficient progress been made in Year 1 in order for further investments to be made?	A minimum score of 2 is required for the proposal to be considered for funding	40%	
	Proposed approaches and activities planned for the research project	Are the proposed research design, methods and data analyses appropriate for the proposed research? Is the work plan achievable within the timeframe and available resources?	A minimum score of 2 is required for the proposal to be considered for funding	15%	
	Inclusion and availability of the required resources	Is the relevant expertise included? Are the activities of the students embedded in the work plan (if relevant)?	A minimum score of 2 is required for the proposal to be considered for funding	10%	
Human research capacity development	Plans for human research capacity development (HRCD)	Are students appropriately and clearly embedded in the research proposal? i.e. M and D students only.		20%	
Equity & redress	Of applicant	Black, female, young (five years after obtaining a PhD). or disabled		5%	
	Plans for training black and/or female students	M and D degrees		5%	
Data storage and usage	Plans for digital data storage, usage &/or dissemination	If relevant, are the proposed plans appropriate?		5%	
Totals				100%	

APPENDIX 3: FUNDING DETAILS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS

GRANT HOLDER-LINKED STUDENT SUPPORT

The distribution for these bursaries is targeted at the ratio:

- Final year Undergraduate and Honours/BTech student assistantships: 100% SA citizens with a minimum ratio⁷ of 1:1 for Black⁸ and White participants
- Masters bursaries: 90% to South Africans and 10% to candidates from other African countries
- Doctoral bursaries: 80:15:5, SA: Other African: Rest of the World
- Postdoctoral bursaries: Open to all who undertake research in South Africa.

Values and period of support for Student Assistantships

- | | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| • Final year undergraduate (Full-time) | R 8 000 pa |
| • Honours / BTech (Full-time) | R 20 000 pa |

Values and period of support for Bursaries & Fellowships

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|
| • Masters degree (Full-time) | R 40 000 pa |
| • Masters degree (Part-time) | R 10 000 pa |
| • Doctoral degree (Full-time) | R 60 000 pa |
| • Doctoral degree (Part-time) | R 12 000 pa |
| • Postdoctoral (<i>pro rata</i> per month) | R 80 000 pa |

RESEARCH-RELATED OPERATING COSTS

These costs include materials and supplies, travel (including conferences) and subsistence, equipment and research/technical/*ad hoc* assistance and sabbaticals to other research organisations and institutions of higher learning may be included within the context of the project applications. These costs should be justified and commensurate with the planned outputs, as they will be assessed on this basis. The amount awarded within this framework can be used at the discretion of the applicant.

General guidelines

Sabbaticals

Sabbaticals will be considered for a period from two to six months. The maximum sabbatical amount requested should not exceed R 80,000 for six months. Funding for sabbaticals of less than six months will be reduced pro-rata. Only principal investigators and co-investigators are eligible to apply for sabbatical funding.

⁷ With the emphasis on Black students

⁸ Inclusive of Africans, Indians and Coloureds

APPENDIX 3: FUNDING DETAILS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS

Materials and Supplies

Generally, the NRF does not provide financial support for:

- Basic office equipment including computers and consumables unless the computer is required for the research itself.
- Basic office stationery, photocopying costs, printing costs unless these items form part of the research tools.
- Journal publication costs, journal subscription costs and book costs.
- Telephone, fax and internet costs.

Research Equipment

Funding for equipment will be limited to R 50,000 per year. Requisitions for large equipment items (> R 200,000) should be submitted through the NRF's Equipment Programme.

Travel and subsistence

- International conference attendance: Generally the NRF restricts this amount to R 25,000 per person to a maximum of R 50,000 per application per year for a team application i.e. for principal investigators and co-investigators (local only). The NRF does not pay for students to attend international conferences.
- International visits: These will be considered on a case by case basis. Such visits must be integral to the research plan and strong motivations should accompany these requests. Realistic funding allocations will be based on the requested activities. Only outgoing visits will be considered depending on the availability of funding. Funding requests for students for international visits will not be considered.
- Local conference attendance: Generally the NRF restricts expenditure against this item to R 4,000 per person (all costs). Support for local conference attendance could be requested for all listed co-investigators and post-graduate students. The applicant should motivate for:
 - the benefits to attend more than one local conference per annum if so requested
 - the number of people that should be funded to attend local conferences.
- Local travel: The NRF does not stipulate any rate for mileage as this will depend on the rate which varies per institution/organisation. Applicants are requested to provide details of this rate as well as the estimated distance to be travelled within the given year.
- Local accommodation costs should not exceed a 3* establishment

Research / Technical / Ad hoc Assistants

- This programme does not provide funding for the salaries of the core team members if they are based at organisations/institutions where the salaries are state funded. In cases where the salaries are not state funded, the total salary amount for all core team members will be limited to up to 20% of the overall grant amount. A strong motivation for the salary component must accompany the request.
- Requests for research/technical/ad hoc assistance should be treated with caution. Generally the NRF would encourage applicants to engage students to undertake the research rather than employing research consultants. This guideline however does not apply when specific and/or highly specialised

APPENDIX 3: FUNDING DETAILS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS

research/technical expertise is required. This should be **CLEARLY** motivated for in the application.

- ~~Administrative assistance does not qualify as technical assistance.~~

STAFF DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Applicants may apply for Staff Development grants for South African staff members at their own and other institutions, and who are not NRF grant-holders in their own right. These staff members must be registered for either a Masters or Doctoral degree, supervised by the applicant or a co-investigator of the application and must be directly involved in the NRF approved project. These grants can be used to contribute towards the operating costs for research undertaken at the supervisor's facility, as well as the cost of travel and accommodation to enable staff members to meet with (co)supervisors. Grants usually range between R 15,000 and R 30,000 depending on the nature of the research and the proximity of the student in relation to the supervisor. Applicants themselves are **not** eligible for Staff Development Grants. The maximum period of support is three years for a Masters degree and five years for a Doctoral degree.

FUNDING TO CATER FOR DISABILITIES

Additional funding support to cater for disability will only be allocated to people with disabilities as specified in the Code of Good Practice on Employment of People with Disabilities as in the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998.