



Funding Instrument: Competitive Support for
Unrated Researchers

Functional Domain: GRANTS MANAGEMENT &
SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Document: Funding Guide

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|--|
| CSUR | Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers |
| DST | Department of Science and Technology |
| GMSA | Grants Management and Systems Administration |
| HEIs | Higher Education Institutions |
| NRF | National Research Foundation |
| PC | Personal Computers |
| RE | Reviews and Evaluation Directorate |

CONTACT DETAILS

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- **The Grants Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of grant administration processes.**

The Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Directorate of the National Research Foundation (NRF) process the applications. Full details of application procedures are explained in this document.

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours on:

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Manual

This Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) Funding Guide is intended to inform potential applicants and existing grantees in the CSUR Programme, of the strategic context and the operational procedures for participation in the Programme.

The document provides an overview of the CSUR Programme, including eligibility, the application process, and funding guidelines and review procedures. It does not, however, constitute a complete set of the policies, procedures or systems used by the NRF.

1.2 The CSUR Funding Instrument

1.2.1 Aim

The aim of the CSUR programme is to provide support to researchers who do not hold a current NRF rating at the time of submitting a CSUR application or receiving a grant if successful. grantees may not simultaneously hold a grant in any of the NRF capacity development funding instruments such as Thuthuka.

1.2.2 Strategic Objectives

The objectives of the funding instrument are:

- To contribute to the development of a sound fundamental basis to science and scholarly endeavour in South Africa, in the Humanities, Natural, Engineering and Social Science disciplines;
- To contribute to knowledge production across the research spectrum and innovation value chain;
- To achieve world-class research and the development of the associated human capacity;
- To advance or develop paradigms, theories and methodological innovation across the research spectrum;
- To afford established researchers who may have lost their rating, and not been rated the opportunity to rebuild, re-consolidate and or re-establish their research portfolios and apply/re-apply for rating; and
- To increase the number of rated researchers.

2 APPLICATIONS

2.1 Call for proposals

All application material **must** be submitted electronically via the NRF's Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/nrfmkii/>

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.

All outputs entered onto the NRF Online system were migrated to the current 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 inputs **will be used in all the detailed assessment processes**.

Call opens: 22 August 2013

Call closes: 4 October 2013

Outcome and awards: January 2014

2.2 Criteria for Applications

Applications are invited from researchers who do not hold an NRF rating and do not receive support from the Thuthuka Programme. The applicants must be employed at a publicly funded South African University, Museum, Science Council, National Laboratory, NRF National Facility or any other NRF approved research institution on a full-time permanent or full-time contract basis. The contract appointment should cover at least the duration of the funding period of the project.

CSUR funding is available in 3-year cycles and projects will be approved for funding for one cycle at a time, on a competitive basis, following a peer review process. Applications must be submitted to the NRF electronically at the beginning of the 3-year cycle. If a grantholder acquires a valid NRF rating whilst in the Programme, funding will be provided until the end of the funding cycle and no further applications will be considered unless the grantholder loses his/her valid rating. Funding decisions are based upon a rigorous peer review process, the recommendations by the review panels, the objectives of the Programme and the budgetary constraints.

The table below states the following:

- Eligibility Criteria
- Application Criteria
- Types of Support
- Expected outputs

| Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers | |
|---|--|
| | |
| Eligibility | Active researchers with no NRF rating. |
| | Applicants may be of any nationality. |
| | Applicants should hold a research doctorate. |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| | Employed at a publicly funded South African university, Museum, Science Council, National Laboratory, NRF National Facility or any other NRF approved research institution on a permanent or contract basis. |
| | Contract appointments should cover at least the duration of the funding period of the project. The term of the contract should be clearly stated in the application. |
| | A contract researcher appointed at a research institution on behalf of a third party to fulfill a specific function for the latter does NOT qualify for support |
| | Applicants who do not receive support from the Thuthuka Funding Instrument. |
| | Retired academics/researchers that meet all set criteria as stipulated below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not hold a current and valid NRF rating; • Are resident in RSA; • Are formally affiliated to a South African Higher Education Institution (HEI) (i.e. Emeritus professor, honorary research associate/professor, supernumerary/contract employee); • Are active researchers with a distinguished track record in research and postgraduate student supervision; • Are actively mentoring/training postgraduate students/young research staff; and • The institution ensures that a minimum of reasonable time (6 months minimum) is spent at the facility for the purpose of research and research capacity development. |
| | Involvement of women, black and disabled researchers and students within the proposed project is highly encouraged. |
| | The Designated Authority (DA) of their employing institution must endorse all proposals. |
| | |
| Applications | CSUR grantholders may hold only ONE grant at the same time. Therefore grantholders with current CSUR grants that run beyond the end of 2013 may NOT apply. |
| | Funding in this round will support successful applications for a max period of three years (2014-2016). |
| | Each applicant may submit only one application. Any additional applications will not be considered. |
| | |
| Types of support | Research materials and supplies (consumables). |
| | Grantholder-linked Student Support. |
| | Provision for staff development grants for staff members, <u>other than the applicant</u> , who will obtain a Masters or Doctoral degree by participating in the grantholder's NRF/CSUR funded project, and who are (co-) supervised by the applicant. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Research instrumentation or equipment. Maximum contribution from the NRF will be R200 000 (two hundred thousand rand), once in a 3-year cycle. Requests for more expensive equipment should be forwarded to the Infrastructure Funding Instruments (IFIs) at NRF. |
| | One local conference per annum for the applicant, and/or team member through the project, to present a paper or poster. |
| | One conference abroad per annum. Support for attendance of a conference abroad in subsequent years will be considered only if the paper presented in the preceding year has been published in a peer reviewed publication. |
| | No application with a total research-operating budget requested of less than R25 000 (twenty five thousand rand) per annum will be considered for funding by the NRF. |
| | Local travel for research purposes, e.g. field visits, use of research facilities, etc. |
| | Sabbatical and study visits, both local and abroad. |
| | Visiting scientists. |
| | <i>Ad hoc</i> research/technical assistance. |
| | |
| Minimum expected outputs at end of each support cycle (3 years) | A minimum of three publications on the funded project in peer-reviewed journals, or any other recognised equivalent research output as dictated by the field/discipline. |
| | At least two postgraduate students at Masters and/or Doctoral level supervised or co-supervised. |

2.3 Rules of participation

2.3.1 Principal Investigator/Applicant

Only researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa (as defined above) are eligible to apply as principal investigators in this funding instrument.

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 also take responsibility for the management and administration of resources allocated to the grant award.

The research team may also include:

2.3.2 Co-investigators

A co-investigator is an active researcher who provides significant commitment, intellectual input and 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.

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

2.3.3 Research Associates / Collaborators

These are individuals or groups who are anticipated to make a relatively small, but meaningful contribution to the research endeavours outlined in the application, but who have not actively participated in the research design. They are not considered a part of the core research team.

3 FUNDING GUIDELINES

The CSUR is a highly competitive Programme with a limited budget, and particular care should be given when budgeting for the various items in the proposal.

The requested budget items must correlate with the proposed research activities. This implies, *inter alia*, that expenditure already incurred cannot be considered for funding. In the drawing up of a research budget and its evaluation, financial realism should always prevail.

Applicants should take the following into consideration when preparing their applications for submission to the NRF:

- The proposal should be well detailed to facilitate efficient assessment thereof by peers.
- Budgets should be realistic with detailed motivations and adherence to budget guidelines.
- **Institutional internal deadlines and NRF closing dates and policies should be strictly adhered to as no late applications would be accepted by the NRF.**

The CSUR grants will be awarded for a period of no more than three years (2014-2016). 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. No preferential treatment will be given to those who have previously received NRF funding.

The grants of this funding instrument are to be primarily used for **research purposes** and development of associated human resources under the auspices of the NRF standard grant and finance policies. The funds are released upon acceptance of the conditions of grant, both by the applicant and his/her employing institution. These grants will fall under the NRF audit requirements of beneficiary institutions.

3.1 Funding categories

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

These items must be directly related to the project and are generally considered the 'running costs' or 'consumables' required for the proposed research. Items must be clearly specified and motivated.

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 or the applicant/team member is based at a museum.
- Basic office stationery, photocopying costs, printing costs unless these items form part of the research tools or the applicant/team member is based at a museum.
- Journal publication costs, journal subscription, book costs etc, unless the applicant/team member is based at a museum.

Contributions towards telephone and fax or internet costs will only be considered if these items form part of research tools, e.g. telephonic interviews or questionnaire-based research. However, in this case a detailed motivation needs to be provided.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

The NRF will contribute towards the attendance of reputable local conferences and conferences abroad, provided that the applicant presents a paper or a poster. No paper may be presented at more than one conference.

In all cases, **a detailed motivation should be submitted**, including information such as the name, place and date of the conference; whether the applicant will present a paper or a poster; and the relevance to and impact of the presentation on the NRF/CSUR-funded project, etc.

Conference abroad funding is restricted to R50 000 for principal investigators, co-investigators (local only) and local postgraduate students. The amount may be reduced proportionally if there is no team member and/or postgraduate student involvement.

Local conference funding is set at R5 000 per person all costs. Support for local conference attendance could be requested for all listed co-investigators and postgraduate students. The applicant should motivate for

- The value of attending more than one local conference per annum if so requested
- The number of people that should be funded to attend local conferences

RESEARCH EQUIPMENT

In general, due to limited resources, the NRF will only be able to make limited contributions to research equipment.

- Grantholders may apply for dedicated research equipment (or a contribution to this) needed specifically for the proposed research. These items should not include standard laboratory equipment.

- The NRF will support research equipment in this Programme, to a maximum total value of R200 000 (two hundred thousand rand) over the 3-year period of the funding cycle.
- The NRF **does not** contribute to the purchase of PCs, laptops, notebooks, cell phones, software licences or renewals thereof, or the maintenance of equipment.
- Specialised software and/or hardware will be funded depending on the nature of research conducted. A detailed and strong motivation should be submitted.

Requests for equipment costing between R1 000 000 and R10 000 000 should be directed to the NRF's Infrastructure Funding Instruments (IFIs). Information can be obtained at http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding_overview.php.

STUDY OR TRAINING VISIT

The NRF will contribute towards a study or training visit undertaken by the grantholder. The contribution will depend on a detailed motivation and budget. Study visits should be used as an opportunity for the researcher to undertake research in a well-developed research environment locally or abroad. Applicants are encouraged where possible, to link these visits, if abroad, with the attendance of an international conference to maximise the opportunity and to reduce costs.

In all cases, study visits should be integral to the research plan and a detailed motivation should be submitted, including information such as the host, institution, country and dates; as well as the nature of the research to be undertaken, and the relevance to and impact on the project, etc.

All study or training visits will be considered depending on the availability of funding.

AD HOC RESEARCH AND/OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Applicants may apply for funding a research or technical assistant. The following criteria will apply:

- The NRF **will not pay** for any salaries in this funding instrument.
- Those who are involved as *ad hoc* research/technical assistants must have a minimum of a BTech/Honours qualification and be able to make a substantial contribution to the research activities (motivation to specify).
- Applicants are encouraged to engage students to undertake the research rather than employing research consultants. This does not apply when specific and/or highly specialised research/technical expertise is required, and this should clearly motivated.
- Maximum NRF contribution will be R40 000 per annum and should be applied for on a *pro rata* basis (duration specified in the budget motivation).
- Assistance for administrative or secretarial duties will not be considered.
- Research assistant grants may not be held concurrently with an NRF bursary or Staff Development grant.

- NRF does not provide funding for salaries for research or technical assistants.

VISITING SCIENTIST

Visiting scientists are scientists of repute who have special skills that can add value and capacity to the project through the transfer of techniques, skills and knowledge. They should be individuals of good standing in their research fields and may be drawn from institutions in South Africa or abroad. The period of stay should be appropriate for the purpose of the visit up to a maximum of 12 months. The NRF will fund a maximum of R60 000 *pro rata* per annum. Repeated invitations to the same visiting scientist will not be considered for funding.

In all cases a detailed motivation should be submitted, including information such as the name, institution and country of the scientist; dates as well as the nature of research to be undertaken; and the relevance to and impact on the project, etc.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Applications for subsistence and travel related to fieldtrips for research purposes should be fully motivated in this category (including details on the number of trips and destinations, accommodation, travel costs, etc). The way in which these fieldtrips will contribute to the proposed research project should be stated.

The NRF does not stipulate for any rate for mileage, this will depend on the research institutions' rates, which vary. 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 three-star rating establishment, per night per person.

BUDGETING GUIDELINES OF MAXIMUM SUPPORT PER FUNDING CATEGORY

| FUNDING CATEGORY | MAXIMUM LEVEL OF NRF SUPPORT |
|--|---|
| Research, technical and <i>ad hoc</i> assistance | R40 000 p.a. |
| Local conference | R5 000 p.a. |
| Conference abroad | R50 000 p.a. |
| Equipment | R200 000 per funding cycle |
| Study/training visit (abroad) | R6 000 per week for a maximum of six weeks |
| Extended study visits (abroad) | R10 000 per month up to a maximum of six months, plus airfare |
| Materials and Supplies | Not specified |

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Visiting Scientist | R60 000 p.a. |
| Local travel | R10 000 p.a. |

GENERAL

- All grants will be subject to compliance with the NRF Conditions of Grant as specified in the attachments to the award letter.
- The recommendations of the reviewers, NRF budgetary constraints and the discretion of NRF management, influence the final awards.
- In order to realistically gauge the full extent of the proposed research, details of other sources of financial support for the research proposed are required. This in no way compromises or disadvantages the proposal; to the contrary, it rather gives a better understanding of the feasibility of the research project. In particular, the extent of the commitment and contribution of such sources of support (where applicable) is important in determining the feasibility of the proposed research.
- Once the grantholder has notified the NRF of the acceptance of the Conditions of Grant, and providing that any other pre-set conditions have been met, the NRF will release the awarded Operating Costs. Approved student support will be released on receipt of an NRF approved nomination for each candidate, submitted online. Payments will only be made by the NRF once the released funds have been expensed by the grantholder and subsequently claimed by the relevant host institution.

3.2 Grantholder-linked Student Support

Grant holder-linked student support will be awarded in accordance with eligibility criteria as detailed in the *Ministerial Guidelines for Improving Equity in the Distribution of DST/NRF Bursaries and Fellowships* (January 2013).

Grantholder-linked student support is made available for allocation to students linked to the applicant's research plan. Students, for whom grantholder-linked support is requested **must be directly involved** in the grantholder's NRF-funded project. Greater participation of women and black students is being specifically encouraged.

The equity distribution for these bursaries is targeted at the ratio:

- 80% Black
- 55% Female
- 4% Disabled

The citizenship distribution for these bursaries is targeted at the ratio:

- 87% South African (including permanent residents)
- 5% SADC
- 4% Rest of the African continent
- 4% Non-African

The awarding of postdoctoral fellowships will not be guided by, but not governed by, equity targets.

Postdoctoral fellowships will not be governed by citizenship targets, and remain open to all who undertake research in South Africa.

The grantholder is expected to provide mentoring and supervision, and for this reason it is important that the number of students per grantholder be carefully monitored in accordance with the experience of the grantholder.

Student support is available within the following four categories:

- Student Assistantships (Final year Undergraduate and BTech/Honours)
- Postgraduate Bursaries (Masters and Doctoral)
- Postdoctoral Fellowships (within five years of obtaining a Doctorate)
- Staff Development Grants (Masters and Doctoral level)

Grantholders may not hold an NRF grant and an NRF bursary concurrently.

STUDENT ASSISTANTSHIPS

Grantholder-linked Student Assistantships are available to South African citizens only, who are registered full-time for a final year undergraduate diploma/degree or Honours/BTech. These students should show potential for postgraduate study and research; should participate in the grantholder's research project in addition to their normal study; and had to maintain acceptable grades. The grantholder nominating such students will thus be responsible for mentoring and supervising these students. The purpose of these assistantships is both to provide assistance to the grantholder and to attract promising students into postgraduate studies.

For Student Assistantships at least 50% of the students nominated **by each grantholder** must be Black (Black, Indian or Coloured) South African citizens.

POSTGRADUATE BURSARIES

Grantholder-linked postgraduate bursaries are available to South African citizens and permanent residents, who are studying full-time or part-time at Doctoral or Masters level. Grantholders may, however, with the approval of the relevant NRF/GMSA director, allocate postgraduate bursaries to particularly meritorious foreign students at Masters and Doctoral level. At Masters level, the NRF will limit such support to 90:10, that is South African:African (other than South African); and at Doctoral level the ratio is 80:15:5, that is South African:African (other than SA):International (not on the African continent) within the Programme. Masters by Coursework will be supported provided that the research component of the degree comprises 50% or more, and that the research component is evaluated externally.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Doctoral graduates who are not employed may hold grantholder-linked Postdoctoral Fellowships, provided that the Doctoral degree was obtained within the five years prior to first nomination. They are normally tenable at institutions other than the one where the Doctoral degree was obtained. (A strong motivation is otherwise required.) The period of support will be for a maximum period of two years, with a minimum period of three months at any one of the institutions. Postdoctoral Fellowships can be awarded to all citizens of and permanent residents in South Africa as well as international non-citizens.

Staff Development Grants

Applicants/grantholders **are not** eligible for Staff Development grants for themselves. The following criteria and rules apply:

- Staff members at any HEI who are not grantholders in their own right and who will receive a higher qualification (Masters/Doctoral) through their direct involvement in the grantholder's project.
- The grantholder should be either the supervisor or the co-supervisor of the staff member for whom a staff development grant is requested.
- Staff Development grants will be awarded up to a maximum value of R30 000, based on the approved motivated budget submitted with the nomination, and depending on the nature of the research and the proximity of the student in relation to the supervisor.
- The funding should contribute towards the staff member's running costs for research, and/or costs for travel and accommodation to visit his/her external supervisor only. It should not be used for registration fees, conference attendance abroad, books, computer hardware, stationary, etc. (Refer to the 'Use and Management of Funds' attached to the award letter for further detail.)
- The maximum period of support available under this category is three years for a Masters degree and five years for a Doctorate.

Staff Development grants, Postgraduate bursaries and Student Assistantships will be awarded for a full calendar year or for a semester, as per the table below, depending on the date of registration of the student and for the period for which the award is requested. Postdoctoral Fellowships are awarded on a *pro rata* basis within a calendar year, and nominations may therefore be submitted on an *ad hoc* basis. Staff members of institutions are not eligible for bursaries. Grantholder-linked student support may also not be held simultaneously with any NRF bursary or Research/Technical Assistantship.

If an application is successful and student support has been awarded, refer to the 'Conditions for the Award of Grantholder-linked Student Support for 2014' attached to the award letter for further conditions in these categories.

AWARDS AND MAXIMUM PERIOD OF SUPPORT

| LEVEL | VALUE OF SUPPORT per annum (Rands)* | MAX PERIOD OF SUPPORT (Years) |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Student Assistantships | | |
| Final year undergraduate degree/diploma (f/t) | R8 000 | One |
| BTech/Honours (f/t) | R20 000 | One |
| Postgraduate bursaries | | |
| Masters full-time | R40 000 | Two |
| Masters part-time | R10 000 | Three |
| Doctoral full-time | R60 000 | Three |
| Doctoral part-time | R12 000 | Five |
| Fellowships | | |
| Postdoctoral Fellowships | R150 000 | Two |
| Staff Development Grants | | |
| Masters level | R30 000 | Three |
| Doctoral level | R30 000 | Five |

* Proportional amounts are available per semester, however, fellowships are awarded on a *pro rata* basis within a calendar year for the period of appointment; and Staff Development grants *pro rata* based on an NRF approved budget.

3.3 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.

4 APPLICATION, ASSESSMENT AND GRANT PROCESS

4.1 Applying for funding

Application forms will be accessible on-line at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za> on **Thursday 22 August 2013**. Applicants are advised to complete their proposals as soon as possible to avoid overloading the IT system as the closing date approaches. Internal closing

dates should also strictly be adhered to for timely validation of applications by the institutions' internal research committees and the respective research offices' DAs before submission to the NRF.

All applications, validated by the DA at the institution's research administration, must be submitted to the NRF electronically no later than [Friday 11 October 2013](#). Please note that this date includes the validation and submission of the application by the research office. **No late applications, additional supporting documentation or information will be accepted or considered by the NRF after the closing date.**

Applications must be comprehensive and contain sufficient detail to allow for proper assessment of the research proposed.

It is important that all proposals are screened and approved by internal institutional processes for scientific merit and content before being submitted to the NRF to ensure good quality proposals. The research administration should take particular care regarding the eligibility of the applicant and the budgeting information included in the applications. Applicants should provide a detailed motivation for each item for which funds are requested. It will be assumed that the institutional authority is satisfied with the standard of the proposal and the research being proposed of all proposals validated and submitted to the NRF.

4.2 Assessment of Proposals

All proposals will be assessed in a three-tiered process:

- GMSA staff screen the applications to ensure that all eligibility criteria have been met and the applications have all necessary and compulsory attachments.
- A postal peer review process where proposals will be sent to six or more reviewers with the intention to receive a minimum of three review reports per proposal. The postal peer reviewers will be specialists within the ambit of the respective proposals.
- An assessment panel process where the specialist reviewers' recommendations will be considered. The panel provides motivations that may be different from that of the specialist reviewers. The panel funding recommendations to the NRF regarding the fundability of each proposal.

The postal peer reviewers and panel members will assess the proposals and make recommendations to the NRF using the following criteria with a score from 0-4.

| CSUR: Panel Assessment Scorecard | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Criteria | Sub-Criteria | Details | Score (out of 4) | Weight (Total = 100) | Weighted score (Total = 4) |
| Track record of applicant | Past students (graduated) | M and D degrees. | | 5% | 0.00 |
| | Past research | Publications, patents, designs, performances, etc. | | 8% | 0.00 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|-------------|---------------|
| Proposal | Alignment with funding instrument | Does the proposal meet the objectives of the funding instrument? | | 0% | Hurdle |
| | Scientific merit and feasibility | Reflect on the rationale, approach and proposed methodology. | | 55% | 0.00 |
| Equity and redress | Of applicant | Black, female, young (five years after obtaining a PhD) or disabled. | | 5% | 0.00 |
| | Of students supervised | M and D degrees. | | 5% | 0.00 |
| Collaboration | With other individuals (Do they add value?) | This will include collaborations at both an international and national level. Are the roles of these collaborators clearly indicated in the proposal? | | 2% | 0.00 |
| | Within a team (Is it appropriate?) | Are the roles of these team members clearly indicated in the proposal? | | 2% | 0.00 |
| Impacts | Expected research outputs | Scientific products, e.g., publications, patents, etc. relevant in each case. | | 6% | 0.00 |
| | Impact on knowledge production/field | How does the research advance discovery and understanding in the field? | | 10% | 0.00 |
| | Plans for digital data storage, usage and/or dissemination | If relevant, are the proposed plans appropriate? | | 2% | 0.00 |
| Other | Ethical research | If relevant, have ethical considerations been addressed? ¹ | | 0% | Hurdle |
| Totals | | | | 100% | 0.00 |

¹ Ethical considerations and clearances for grant proposals are the responsibility of the research institute and/or institution of the applicant. Where such ethical considerations and clearances are required, grant applicants will be expected to submit to the NRF signed statements and/or copies of clearance certificates before any grant funds are released.

The outcome of the applications will be communicated to applicants after the review and assessment processes have been completed. Feedback from the review process will be forwarded to the applicant for attention and information.

PROPOSAL GRADING

Each criterion (where applicable) is graded on a sliding scale of 0-4. The score of each criterion for each proposal will be contextualised to accommodate variability in knowledge fields, institutional capacity, etc.

| SCORE | INTERPRETATION OF SCORE | NOTES |
|-------|-------------------------|--|
| 4 | Excellent | Application demonstrates evidence of outstanding performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field. |
| 3 | Above average | Above average performance across all criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field. |
| 2 | Average | Application demonstrates average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field. |
| 1 | Below average | Below average performance across all the criteria, as determined by panel and relative to the knowledge field. |
| 0 | Poor | There are major shortcomings or flaws within and across the stated criteria, with particular emphasis on the scientific/scholarly merit. |

4.3 Funding Decision Process

In general, the NRF's funding decisions are informed by the review panel's accumulative grading of each assessed application as per the above assessment criteria.

The final funding decisions and level of funding are subject to the budget available.

4.4 Feedback

In principle, feedback on the assessment of the proposal is regarded as a crucial value-adding function of the NRF. In a limited number of cases, feedback will be sent from either the reviewers and/or panel members who evaluated a proposal. 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.

5 GENERAL

5.1 Financial Control and Reporting

These grants are to be used for research purposes under the auspices of the NRF standard grant and finance policies. The money is released on acceptance of the Conditions of Grant, both by the applicant and his/her employing institution. The funds will be awarded against a number of items as outlined in the award letter. Bursaries are awarded as per the NRF rules.

Successful applicants need to submit Annual Progress Reports (APRs) by **31 March in the year following the grant year**. This is a prerequisite for the release of the subsequent year's funding. Failure to submit the APR will result in the cancellation of the grant. These grants will fall under the NRF audit requirements of beneficiary institutions.

A Final Project Report will need to be submitted by **31 March of the year following the final year of funding** or the last year of the funding cycle. Failure to do so will result in the grantholder not being funded by any other NRF programme as that will be in breach of the Conditions of Grant.

5.2 Other information

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Intellectual Property generated by NRF funded research must be appropriately protected and exploited for the benefit of South Africa. This condition should not interfere with the intellectual property rights arrangements already made, on condition that the majority of the benefits arising from the Intellectual Property accrue to South Africa and its citizens. The Grantholder and students have to undertake to comply with the Institution's policy on Intellectual Property disclosures as envisaged in Clause 13 of the *Master Funding Administration Agreement* between the employing institution and the NRF.

DATA STORAGE, USAGE AND DISSEMINATION

Should the outputs of the research project not be protected, conscious plans need to be made to make the data available to the larger research community through existing databases, some of which can be specific to the research field and others generic.

ETHICS

A grantholder is required to maintain the highest ethical and safety standards when conducting research, particularly when human and animal subjects are involved. It remains the responsibility of the project leader to comply with all relevant regulations in this respect, including those laid down by the institution concerned.

DISABILITY

Funding to cater for a disability can be considered for people with disabilities as specified in the '*Code of Good Practice on Employment of People with Disabilities*' as stated in the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute that arises will be resolved according to the provisions in the contractual agreement. Within the NRF, the following hierarchy will be followed in the resolution of disputes:

- Director: Capacity, Infrastructure and SARChI
- Executive Director: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA)
- Executive Director: Knowledge Fields Development (KFD)
- Deputy Chief Executive Officer: Research and Innovation Support Agency (RISA) of the NRF
- Chief Executive Officer of the NRF

ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE NRF

The responsibility for the effective management and administration of grants for the aforementioned funding instruments lies with the Director: GMSA, who is responsible and accountable to the Executive Director: GMSA.