

## Call Guidelines 2019

# National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa and the Polish National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) Joint Research Programme

### Call for applications for 2019 – 2021 Joint Research Projects

**Closing Date: 9 July 2018**

**A Maximum of 10 Joint Projects will be funded for this call**

*The National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) of Poland signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 11 December 2014. The principle objective of the cooperation between the Parties is to foster scientific and technological cooperation by facilitating brain circulation between the two countries. The Parties intend to support research and development activities and other forms of scientific and technical cooperation between South African and Polish universities and research institutions. The cooperative programme will be aimed at the implementation of joint research projects, human capital development, and students and staff exchanges.*

#### **Aims of the programme**

The main aim of this Programme is to support (through a co-funding model) joint research projects between South African and Polish researchers. Grants for joint research projects within this Programme are aimed at facilitating the development of sustainable institutional links between the two countries. This Programme, therefore, will not only support existing, outstanding and established research partnerships but aims to also foster new linkages and engagements with small cohorts of young researchers for new links between South Africa and Poland. Please note that the basis of selection from both countries will be excellence. However, from the South African side, excellent joint projects with a clear intention to address diversity, will be favorably considered. The specific objectives of this Programme are:

- to support the advancement of basic and applied research;
- to contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint research activities in specified research fields;
- to provide an opportunity for young researchers in the two countries to meet and interact through the funding of researchers' mobility in the frame of joint research projects in specified research fields; and
- to contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

#### **Areas of cooperation**

Applications should be submitted in the following domains:

- Health sciences
- Agriculture
- Biosciences and biotechnology
- Environment and climate change
- Water and green technology
- Maritime economy

- Clean coal technology
- Information and communication technology

Proposals outside the above-mentioned broad thematic area of focus will not be accepted or considered for funding.

**Please note:**

- Cooperation projects with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the South African, Polish and European research programmes will be favourably considered.
- In terms of human capital development, joint projects that involve young scientists (i.e. doctoral students) and pay attention to gender equality (a balanced involvement of female and male researchers) will be positively considered (Poland and South Africa) and will receive a higher rating (South Africa).
- In terms of the South African transformation agenda, South African applications from previously disadvantaged individuals and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions will be prioritised.

**Duration of the joint projects**

The projects will be supported for a period of three years (projects starting beginning of 2019).

**Who is eligible to apply?**

Each proposal under this Programme must have one main applicant based in South Africa and one main applicant based in Poland; they are the **Principal Investigators (PIs)** on the South African and Polish sides respectively. The PIs bear the main responsibility for the project including its technical and administrative coordination as well as timely delivery of scientific and financial reports. Each PI shall submit only one project proposal. Additional partners (including postdoctoral researchers) based in South Africa and/or in Poland can also participate in the consortia. Applicants are allowed to collaborate with other partners such as NGOs or companies however, the participating NGOs and companies should cover their own costs of participation.

**South Africa:**

This call is open to working researchers residing in South Africa and affiliated with a public university, university of technology, research council, museum, national research facilities or other NRF Recognised Research Institution. Commercial institutions (i.e. industry e.g. SMEs) are also eligible as part of the research team and have to fund their own activities within a project. Private higher education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD.

**Poland:**

This call is open to public/private research institutions and higher education institutions. Commercial institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme.

**Which activities may I apply for?**

Support will be provided for collaborative basic and applied research projects. 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, research-related trips, and research equipment (small equipment). The funds can also be used for consumables, accessories, publication related costs, and any others expenses listed in the specific calls for each country.
- **Costs of personnel exchange** - short term visits of max. 1 month under the funded research project or travel expenses (i.e. transport and accommodation costs) of the research teams of the funded project between the two partnering countries.

- **South Africa: South African researchers are allowed to make use of a portion of their grants to support both doctoral and postdoctoral research placements** – The South African PI may organise short-term research placement for their young researchers at their Polish partner’s institution. The cost of placement will be covered from the NRF grant. The placements should enable young researchers to (1) learn valuable new skills or techniques; (2) access facilities or resources not readily available at home; (3) build relationships with potential new collaborators; and (4) 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 both the doctoral and postdoctoral researchers receive. The PhD placements must be managed to fit within the original funded period of the studentship. Additional funding will not be made available through this call or by the funders 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 consortium, 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 with a minimum of 10% of the grant budget.

In the case of meetings, research visits and exchanges of researchers, scientists, personnel, experts and students, as well as reciprocal visits undertaken as part of joint research projects and the attendance of seminars, symposia and other meetings funded under this agreement (except for doctoral and postdoctoral research placements of South African researchers), the **sending PI** will be responsible for financing international travel, visas, and medical insurance. Fees relating to accommodation, ground transport, living expenses, and the organisation of events (venue, catering, audio-visual equipment etc.) will be the financial responsibility of the **host PI** which is to be paid from his / her allocation of the joint funding.

Poland: The following may be funded by the NCBR from the funds allocation:

- personnel,
- equipment,
- consumables,
- travel,
- subcontracting,
- other costs,
- overheads.

Educational expenses (scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.) may not be funded by the NCBR. The detailed information about the cost categories is included in the national regulations.

**Please note:**

- The funders will also organise a “*Concluding*” workshop (maximum 2-days), at the end of the 3-year Programme with all the funded researchers. This workshop would attempt to (1) review achievements of all funded projects; (2) share the information about results; (3) draw lessons from recommendations provided by researchers; and (4) explore different approaches that may require policy makers and funders to refocus the partnership going forward. The workshop will be organised within 3-months after the end of Programme in either South Africa or Poland depending on the planning and schedules of both the NRF and NCBR. Partnering institutions are also welcome to make use of this concluding workshop to organize their own individual project-specific wrap-up meetings.

**Funding modalities**

**South Africa:**

The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed **R850 000** per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual installments (**R250 000** per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2019. This amount is inclusive of the PI’s cost (travel and accommodation) of attending the concluding workshop to be organized by the funders. The cost for the PI’s participation in this workshop is a top-up of a maximum amount of R100 000 per project and should be included in the project application – making the overall grant a total of R850 000 per project. PIs may make use of this top-up amount to also invite the young researchers (i.e. doctoral students) who will be involved in the joint projects and undertaking short-term placements.

**Poland:**

Total amount requested from NCBR should not exceed PLN 450 000 per project. Funding will be made available for three years and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2019. Note that a commitment to both scientific and financial reporting on the project following its completion is an obligatory condition of funding.

Please also note that the requested amounts do not necessarily imply that this amount will be awarded.

Participation of Polish partners in the concluding workshop will be financed additionally by NCBR in accordance with the national law and will not be included in funding for research activities of maximum PLN 450 000 per project.

**Please note:**

- should you be successful you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of this guideline;
- a maximum of 10 joint projects will be funded for this call; and
- scientific and financial reporting on the project is an **OBLIGATORY** condition of funding in subsequent years.

**How do I apply?**

It is up to applicants to find their own research partners. Proposals must be received in both South Africa (NRF) and Poland (NCBR). Joint proposals which have not been received in both countries will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive therefore application does not guarantee funding. The evaluation of applications from both countries should have positive ratings before consideration for funding. Both the NRF and NCBR will not be held responsible for non-submission, administration or evaluation of the application in the partner country.

**South Africa:**

South African PIs can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the NRF by accessing the link: <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID/passport number and password.
- Go to “My applications” and select “Create Application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **South Africa/ Poland 2018 Joint Call for Proposals**.
- Remember to complete all sections of the application as indicated on the online application form.
- Please attach the necessary documents in PDF file in the following order: CV of partner, budget of partner and the signed page of the partner.
- Remember to submit your application on completion.
- Completed applications will go to the host institution for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered.
- Applications submitted outside the NRF Online Submission System will not be accepted.
- No hard copies will be accepted and will automatically be disqualified by the NRF.
- Only applications endorsed by the research office or its equivalent at higher education or research institutions will be accepted.
- Please contact your research office or equivalent if you have any queries.

**Poland:**

Polish PIs can apply by following the steps below:

Applications must be submitted to the following e-mail: [konkursRPA@ncbr.gov.pl](mailto:konkursRPA@ncbr.gov.pl). No hard copies will be accepted and will automatically be disqualified by the NCBR.

**How are applications evaluated?**

Following the closing date indicated, **proposals will be peer reviewed according to the criteria** by the recognized national experts in the various fields. Both the South African and the Polish activities will be assessed against the same criteria but additional, country-specific application requirements may also apply. The experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance of the intended joint research project
- Feasibility of the joint research plan and adequacy of the scientific method
- Competence and expertise of the scientists/research teams concerned
- Relevance to the call, added value expected from the bilateral research collaboration
- Potential for further or future international cooperation
- Student / young researchers involvement

The following will also be taken into consideration during the review process:

- *Training Excellence:* doctoral and postdoctoral short-term visits within the research project and additional training activities are integrated appropriately into the student research projects to ensure that the student's research project and broader skills training is enhanced through engagement within this programme.
- *Management and Welfare:* There should be a clear, fair and transparent process for selecting doctoral and postdoctoral students who will participate in short-term visits within the research project through this programme, with a robust mechanism for managing the visits in both partner institutions to ensure student welfare is managed appropriately.
- *Strategic Links:* An indication of how the proposed exchange activities will benefit both partnering institutions over the lifetime of the programme. There should be suggestions of how this funding will facilitate new strategic links between the partners that will continue to exist and strengthen beyond the lifetime of this opportunity.

**Please note:**

- Following national evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and the NCBR based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries.
- The project selection will be carried out by both funders. The results of this selection will be announced presumably before December 2018.
- Please note that, although the two Parties undertake to execute the evaluation and selection process as quickly as possible so as to notify applicants of the results as soon as possible, the nature of the bilateral process requires the alignment of the commencement of each phase of the process with the partnering country, whose schedules may differ significantly.

**Projects follow-up and reporting**

- A final scientific and financial report has to be submitted by both the South African and the Polish PIs.

*South Africa:* A final scientific and financial report will be submitted in English by the South African project leader no more than 3 months after the end of the project.

*Poland:* A final scientific and financial report will be submitted by the Polish project leader after the end of the project according to project contract. During the course of the project the Polish project leader submits annual periodic reports.

- The report has to mention outputs of the projects compared with the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The joint publications have to mention the support from all Organisations financing the call.

**Intellectual property**

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

**Closing date for applications**

Applications for both South Africa and Poland must be submitted by **9 July 2018**. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Please note that neither the NRF nor the NCBR, will be responsible for applications that were not received. PIs are also advised to ensure submission of their proposals by their counterparts in the partner country.

**Where can I obtain more information?**

<b>National Research Foundation (NRF), South Africa</b>	
<b>For programme-related queries</b>	<b>For technical &amp; grant-related queries</b>
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