



***COMPETITIVE SUPPORT FOR
UNRATED RESEARCHERS (CSUR)***

**KNOWLEDGE FIELDS DEVELOPMENT
Framework Document**

April 2017

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1 FUNDING INSTRUMENT TITLE AND DESCRIPTION

1.1 Name

COMPETITIVE SUPPORT FOR UNRATED RESEARCHERS

1.2 Description of Funding Instrument

The Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) is a highly competitive discipline-based funding instrument which supports both basic and applied research as the foundation of knowledge production in the disciplines of the Humanities, Social and Natural sciences.

Eligibility criteria are:

- Established researchers who do not hold an NRF rating at the time of submission but may have been previously rated and lost their rating due to various circumstances and/or have never subjected themselves for rating assessment.
- Scientific merit and quality of the research proposal

Although the funding instrument ostensibly has a broad and non-directed theme and structure, funding will be prioritised to the top scoring applications within each broad-field/discipline that are not supported through other NRF funding instruments such as African Origin Platforms, South African Research Chairs Initiative, Global Change Grand Challenge, South African National Antarctic Programme, etc. Emphasis will be on basic and as appropriate, applied research in disciplinary fields, and will allow for multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary enquiry along the basic-applied research continuum.

Other than in the case of dedicated or ring fenced funding that support identified fields, disciplines and funding instruments, the NRF through CPRR does not drive and does not plan to drive a particular research agenda, nor attempt in any way to “dictate” the direction of research, but research into national priorities like those identified through BRICS partnership would be of particular interest in the context of making a contribution to wider system objectives. Having said this, it should be noted that the NRF has not top-sliced funds to specifically fund the BRICS issues.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NRF recognises that in order for South Africa to be internationally competitive and to meaningfully contribute to the global economy, the country must have the capability to understand the knowledge produced by others. This understanding can best be developed through producing knowledge and translating existing knowledge. Publicly funded basic and applied research is viewed as a source of new ideas, opportunities, methods, and most importantly, the means through which problem solvers can be trained. Basic research is considered critical for innovation and potentially, international competitiveness.

The NRF views support for basic disciplinary, multi- and transdisciplinary research as an investment in the country’s learning and knowledge production capabilities and capacities. The CSUR is a discipline- and transdisciplinary based, and demand-driven funding instrument. It is

restricted to persons who **are established researchers but do not currently hold an NRF rating**. This is not a developmental funding instrument. Rather, it is anticipated that these individuals, as established researchers (that may either have lost their rating due to various circumstances or have never subjected themselves to the rating system) will continue to produce quality and impactful research, contributing to South Africa's global research and development output. It is envisaged that this funding instrument will enable these established researchers to (re) enter the rating stream. Thus an **APPLICANT WILL BE FUNDED ONLY ONCE** as principal investigator (PI) through the CSUR funding instrument.

3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The mandate of the NRF is to support and promote research through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities so as to facilitate the creation of knowledge, 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 recently launched the *NRF Strategy 2020* that aims at contributing to the development of, *a vibrant and globally connected national system of innovation*, and anchored by five Strategic Outcomes, namely:

- An internationally competitive, transformed and representative research system;
- Leading-edge research and infrastructure platforms;
- A reputable and influential agency shaping the science and technology system;
- Scientifically literate and engaged society; and
- A skilled, committed and representative NRF and technical workforce

3.1 Environmental scan

The CSUR resonates with the NRF mandate by being cognisant of the role that research plays in the innovation and the commercialisation value chain, and hence the socio-economic development of the country.

While it is recognised that the innovation value chain requires basic, strategic and applied research, the emphasis in **this** funding instrument will primarily be on the support of both basic and applied research¹. In order to participate in an international system of innovation, a nation needs to produce knowledge and understand the knowledge produced by others. Support for basic disciplinary research is thus seen as an investment in a society's learning capabilities (Salter and Martin, 2001).

¹ The *Frascati Manual* (OECD, 2002) defines **Basic research** as experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundation of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view. It further defines **Applied research** as also original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective.

At the same time, this funding instrument acknowledges that basic and applied research are a continuum and inter-dependent (ICSU, 2004) and that increasingly, the notion of “frontier research” is gaining purchase internationally, as it transcends the distinction of basic and applied research and refers to leading edge research which is risky and often across different disciplines.

Social Sciences, Law and Humanities applications are encouraged, just like those in the natural sciences, engineering and health science that have traditionally been supported. The NRF continues to support self-initiated bottom-up research ideas and research that address national strategic initiatives as reflected in national strategies like the National Development Plan, the 10-year Innovation Plan and those that are embedded in our geographic advantage areas. In respect to the social sciences and humanities however, the NRF would like to highlight the fact that it is supportive and committed to working closely with the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) on the advancement of social sciences and the humanities scholarship in South Africa. The Department of Higher Education has appointed NIHSS to drive the humanities and social sciences related BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) initiatives on its behalf. The first NIHSS-BRICS workshop identified the following broad areas of common interest and cooperation. These broad themes should be addressed within the specific South African context:

- The study of violence
- Social cohesion
- Poverty
- Inequality

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the funding instrument are:

- To contribute to the development of a sound fundamental basis to scientific and scholarly endeavour in South Africa, in the Humanities, Natural and Social Science disciplines;
- To contribute to knowledge production across the research spectrum;
- To achieve world-class research and to develop the associated human capacity; and
- To advance or develop paradigms, theories and methodological innovation across the research spectrum.

3.3 NRF Perspective

The CSUR is a discipline- and transdisciplinary based, demand-driven funding instrument that focuses on basic disciplinary and cross-disciplinary research while allowing (where appropriate) for the “continuum of knowledge” approach alluded to above. This is in line with the NRF’s view that support for basic disciplinary research is an investment in South Africa’s learning capabilities. The CSUR directly, and in part, addresses the following strategic objectives of the *NRF Strategy 2020*:

- Promote globally competitive research and innovation;

- Enhance strategic international engagement;; and
- Entrench science engagement.

3.4 Institutional structure

The strategic direction and outcomes of the funding instrument are managed by the Knowledge Fields Development (KFD) Directorate. The Reviews and Evaluation (RE) Directorate is responsible for the review processes up to the recommendations of grant awards. The Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Directorate's responsibilities include posting of the research call, disbursement of grant funds and ensuring adherence to the conditions of the grant.

3.5 Financing support

The CSUR is made possible through the NRF's Parliamentary Core Funding. As a demand driven funding instrument, there is no limit to the amount an applicant can request. However, the financial requests need to be in line with requirements and accurately reflect the financial needs of the proposed work. Excessive budget requests are not well received by the review panels. Applications will be scored according to a scorecard (see **Annexure 1**), and the top scoring applications within broad-field/discipline groupings and panels will be supported until the available resources are exhausted. The financial requirements of the top scoring applications within each broad-field/discipline will determine the final number of applications supported.

3.6 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders involved in the CSUR are persons based at public research institutions that are recognised by directive of the Minister of Science and Technology. These include mainly, Public Universities, Museums, National Research Facilities and Science Councils and other research institutions.

3.7 Information sources

International Council for Science (ICSU) 2004. The value of basic scientific research, Accessed 10/12/2009

<http://www.icsu.org/Gestion/img/ICSU_DOC_DOWNLOAD/549_DD_FILE_Basic_Sciences_1_2.04.pdf>

OECD 2002. *Frascati Manual*: Proposed standard practice for surveys on Research and Experimental Development. Paris, OECD.

Schneider, R. 2007. Science Impact: Rethinking the impact of basic research on society and the economy. *Bridges*, 14, accessed 10/12/2009

<http://www.ostina.org/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id+2324>

The Department of Science and Technology, 2013. *The ministerial guidelines for improving equity in the distribution of DST/NRF bursaries and fellowships.*

South Africa. 2015. *2015 Strategic Plan of the National Research Foundation: NRF Vision 2020.* Pretoria. National Research Foundation

4 **MODUS OPERANDI**

4.1 **Call for proposals**

All application materials **must** be submitted electronically via the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>

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 himself / herself with the **internal closing dates**, set by institution in order to meet the NRF closing date.

Incomplete OR late submissions will not be accepted.

Call opens: 06 April 2017

Call closes: 31 May 2017

4.2 **Eligibility**

- CSUR grant holders will only qualify for **ONE** CSUR grant cycle (3 years). Thereafter, they will be expected to enter the rated stream and or apply for funding to other NRF instruments that do not necessarily require an applicant to hold a rating. Current or previous CSUR grant holders are **ineligible** for further CSUR funding. Funding in this round will support successful applications for a maximum period of 3 years, 2018 – 2020.

2016 APPLICANTS

- **In an effort to support as many fundable proposals across all fields and spectrum of researchers as possible, minimise duplication of effort and increase the country's levels of international competitiveness in research and innovation, the NRF would like to advise all those applicants who submitted proposals in the last round of the CPRR/CSUR call in 2016 for funding in 2017, and received communication that their research projects were fundable but could not be funded due to insufficient funds, not to re-apply/resubmit the same proposals for this call. Instead, NRF will in parallel to this call send personal communication to the above applicants (copied to their Designated Authorities) requesting them to confirm whether or not their research projects should still be considered for funding in 2018 in the final decision making process of this open 2017 call.**

- Each new Principal Investigator (PI) **may only submit ONE** CSUR application to this call. However, a researcher may participate either as a co-investigator or collaborator in more than one project.
- Full time employees at an NRF recognized research institution in South Africa, **who are eligible to apply and who do not hold a valid NRF rating at the time of application**, are invited to apply.
- NRF unrated part-time employees on contract at an NRF recognized research institution (as defined above) in South Africa who do not currently hold a CSUR grant may apply, on condition their appointment at the South African institution 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. The primary employment of the individual concerned must be at that institution. A contract researcher appointed at a research institution on behalf of a third party to fulfill a very specific function for the latter does not qualify for support.
- Successful unrated applicants will be eligible for funding **for the duration of their awarded grant**, to a maximum period of 3 years. The grant allocation will be allowed to run for the duration of the award, even if the principal investigator is awarded an NRF rating during this period. Once rated, the principal investigator will be expected to enter the CPRR funding stream.
- Retired unrated academics/researchers, provided that they meet all set criteria as stipulated below:
 - are resident in SA;
 - are formally affiliated to a South African Higher Education Institution (e.g., appointed as an 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.

4.3 Application assessment

The assessment of applications will be guided by a Panel Assessment Scorecard (**see Annexure 1**), and scored according to the Proposal Grading (**see Annexure 2**). Application assessment will occur by way of a two-tiered process:

- **Remote peer review**

The remote peer reviewers will be specialists in the ambit of the respective proposals. Requests for written reviews will be solicited electronically, or through appropriate media / means from peers located at remote locations from the NRF. Applicants will be requested

to provide between 6 to 10 possible reviewers. It is in the applicant's best interest to ensure that the selected reviewers are aware of the submission and are thus likely to respond. It is also in the applicant's best interest to ensure that selected reviewers have no possible conflict of interest in submitting a review; as such review reports are dismissed without consideration. On average, a 30% response rate is achieved by the NRF in requesting postal peer reviews.

- **Panel-peer review**

The adjudication panel will be broadly constituted to include senior academics, selected based both on their respective knowledge fields and their research standing. The panel meeting will be held at central location or by way of tele- or video-conferencing. Panel members will deliberate on submitted written reviews and will be expected to offer their own expert opinions.

NB: Applicants must ensure that their Curriculum Vitae are updated on the NRF OnlineSubmission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za>.

These Curriculum Vitae are used in the assessment processes, and incomplete or outdated inputs will jeopardise the application.

4.4 Rules of participation

a) Principal Investigator

Only unrated researchers based at NRF recognized research institutions in South Africa (as defined above) are eligible to apply as principal investigators (PI) 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 required in its pursuit, and the communication of results. The PI 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. The PI will take responsibility for the management and administration of resources allocated to the grant award, and for the meeting of reporting requirements.

The principal investigator may not hold a current CSUR grant.

The principal investigator may submit only one CSUR application to this call for proposals.

The research team may also include:

b) Co-investigators

A co-investigator (CI) is an active researcher who provides significant commitment, intellectual input and relevant expertise into the design and implementation of the research application. The CI will be involved in all or at least some well-defined research activities within the scope

of the application. Only South Africa-based co-investigators will be eligible for funding in successful grant applications.

It is important to note that post-doctoral fellows, students, technical and support staff DO NOT qualify as co-investigators

c) Research Associates / Collaborators

These individuals or groups make a relatively small, but meaningful contribution to the research endeavours outlined in the application, but do not participate in the research design. They are not considered a part of the core research team, and are not eligible to receive NRF funds from the grant if the team's application is successful.

4.5 Data management and use

A data management Plan (DMP) is a formal document that describes the data you expect to acquire or generate during the course of a research project, how you will manage, describe, analyze, and store those data, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) you will use at the end of your project to share and preserve your data.

Research data sharing that underlies the findings reported in a journal article/ conference paper/thesis as set out in the NRF Open Access Statement.

The findings reported in a journal article or conference paper should be deposited in accordance with the NRF Open Access Statement. It is acknowledged that some data generated are more sensitive than others. Before initiating the research, it is the grant holders' responsibility to consider the following: confidentiality, ethics, security and copyright. Possible data sharing challenges should be considered in the DMP with solutions to optimise data sharing.

Researchers should note that publicly funded research data should be in the public domain, with free and open access, by default. Collaborators and co-investigators in the research project should be informed by the applicant that due to public funding and funder mandate, one is expected to share research data as openly as possible. The Data Management Plan should indicate which data will be shared. If (some) research data is to be restricted, an appropriate statement in the DMP and subsequent publication should explain why access to data is restricted.

The National Research Foundation has adopted and is given permission to use the DCC Checklist for Data Management Plan, and this can be used as a guide for developing the DMP. (http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/resource/DMP/DMP_Checklist_2013.pdf)

4.6 Timelines

The CSUR grants will be awarded for a period of no more than three years (2018 – 2020). Successful applicants may not resubmit applications to CSUR, but are rather encouraged to

enter the rating stream and submit new grant applications in the 2021 Competitive Call for Rated Researchers call for proposals.

4.7 Management of funding instrument

The **KFD Directorate** of the NRF – Research and Innovation Support and Advancement (RISA) manages the CSUR funding instrument, and is responsible for:

- Strategic oversight and management of the funding instrument;
- Conceptualizing and developing the funding instrument;
- Coordinating and facilitating activities of the funding instrument;
- Compiling funding instrument research and evaluation reports;
- Stakeholder engagement; and
- Ensuring that the funding instruments delivers on its intended goal(s).

The **RE Directorate** of the NRF – RISA is responsible for managing the adjudication process including:

- sourcing of reviewers both for remote reviews and panels;
- managing the peer review process;
- organizing and managing the review panels as and where appropriate;
- providing feed-back as appropriate; and
- awarding of grants

The **GMSA Directorate** of the NRF – RISA is responsible for

- Managing the call process, that is,
 - Posting the call;
 - Receiving and assessing applications eligibility;
- Coordinating and facilitating the granting processes
- Managing the granting including the administration of awards;
- Administering grant payments; and
- Ensuring adherence to conditions of grants

4.8 Lines of authority

The CSUR Director in the KFD Directorate manages the funding instrument. The Director responsible for this instrument reports to the Executive Director of the KFD Directorate. Directors from RE and GMSA manage the review and granting processes. The Directors in both RE and GMSA report to their respective Executive Directors

5 FINANCIALS

5.1 Funding model

The grants of this funding instrument are to be primarily used for **research purposes** and for the development of associated human resources under the auspices of the NRF standard grant and finance policies. The money is 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.

5.2 Funding ranges

The allocation of funds is demand driven, and as such there is no maximum or minimum proposal request. The number of applications that will be supported overall will depend on the availability of resources and the financial requirements of those successful applications. If successful applications have high financial requirements, fewer applications will be supported.

Successful applications will receive funding that accommodates the following budget items:

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

The application assessment process will consider proposed budget items in terms of cost, risk and reward ratios. Decisions relating to budget items will also be governed by the overall funding instrument funds available for the period. Awards will be made in line with the NRF funding rules and guidelines as outlined in **Section 5.3**.

5.3 Funding support

The NRF funds the CSUR funding instrument on an ongoing basis. Science councils, public universities, museums, national research facilities and other NRF-recognized institutions are the primary beneficiaries of this funding instrument. The NRF has systems in place to ensure that there is no double funding of projects that are already funded by the Medical Research Council and those funded by the NIHSS.

a) Grant holder-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). The distribution for these bursaries is targeted at the ratios:

- Final year Undergraduate and Honours/BTech student assistantships: 100% SA citizens with a minimum ratio² of 1:1 for Black³ 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; and
- Postdoctoral bursaries: Open to all who undertake research in South Africa.

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

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

Values of Student Assistantships

- Final year Undergraduate (Full-time) R 8 000 pa for one year
- Honours / BTech (Full-time) R 20 000 pa for one year

Values of Bursaries & Fellowships

- Masters degree (Full-time) R40 000 pa for two years
- Doctoral degree (Full-time) R60 000 pa for three years
- Postdoctoral (*pro rata* per month) R150 000 pa for two years

b) 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.

² With the emphasis on Black students

³ Inclusive of Africans, Indians and Coloureds

c) 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.

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.

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) and local post-graduate students.
- 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.
- Local conference attendance: Generally the NRF restricts expenditure against this item to R 5,000 per person (all costs). Support for local conference attendance could be requested for all listed co-investigators and post-graduate students. The applicant should clearly motivate for the benefit to attend more than one local conference per annum, and for the number of people attending each local conference.

- 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 instrument **does not provide funding for salaries**.
- 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. The NRF will not pay for students to undertake research. This guideline however does not apply when specific and/or highly specialised research/technical expertise is required. This should be **CLEARLY** motivated for in the application.

Administrative assistance does not qualify as technical assistance.

Research Equipment

Funding for equipment will be limited to R 200 000 per application. Requisitions for large equipment items should be submitted through the NRF's Equipment Programme.

d) Funding to cater for disabilities

Additional funding support to cater for disability will 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.

5.4 Financial control and reporting

Upon receipt of the signed Conditions of Grant letter, the NRF will release the awarded amount for the year. Grant holders will then be required to comply with the standard NRF financial management procedures, including the submission of an Annual Progress Report. These are to be submitted before the end of March of the following year, and are a prerequisite for the release of the subsequent year's funding. Failure to submit an Annual Progress Report will result in the cancellation of the grant award.

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE FUNDING INSTRUMENT

The NRF is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the CSUR.

6.1 Reporting

The KFD Director is responsible for reporting quarterly on the contribution of the CSUR funding instrument to the KFD Directorate's Key Performance Indicators. In addition, the Director is responsible for reviewing and reporting on the progress of the funding instrument.

6.2. Timeframes for funding instrument review

The CSUR funding instrument will be evaluated by an appropriate external reviewer as appointed by the RE Directorate. In consultation with this directorate, KFD will agree to and set timeframes for the review in line with existing guidelines.

6.3 Broad terms of reference for the funding instrument review

The broad terms of reference for the programme review of the CSUR funding instrument will be determined by the KFD Directorate prior to the evaluation taking place, and in accordance with tenets set in the RE Directorate's Guidelines

6.4 Utilisation of funding instrument review findings and recommendations

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

QUERIES

Funding rules related queries	Application process related queries
Dr Zolani Dyosi Director: Knowledge Fields Development Tel: 012 481 4131 Email: zolani@nrf.ac.za	Ms Tebogo Raphetane Liaison Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration Tel: 012 481 4195 Email: trapetane@nrf.ac.za

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CI	Co-investigator
CSUR	Competitive Programme for Unrated Researchers
DST	Department of Science and Technology
GMSA	Grant Management and Systems Administration
ICSU	International Council for Science
KFD	Knowledge Fields Development
NIHSS	National Institute for the Humanities and Social Science
NRF	National Research Foundation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PI	Principal Investigator
RE	Reviews and Evaluation
RISA	Research and Innovation Support and Advancement

ANNEXURE 1: Panel Assessment Scorecard – UnRated Researchers

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)	Weighted score (Total = 4)
Proposals	Scientific merit and feasibility	Reflect on the proposed rationale, approach and methodology.		48%	0.00
		Reflect on the scientific, ethical ⁴ logistics and technical feasibility as proposed			
Track record of the applicant	Past research	Reflect on past contributions to knowledge production (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, designs, performances, etc.)		5%	0.00
Equity	Of applicant	Race / Gender		12%	0.00
	Of students supervised	M and D degrees.		5%	0.00
Collaboration	International, national and institutional collaborations	Are the appropriate collaborations proposed in the application?		5%	0.00
		Are the roles of the proposed collaborators clearly indicated?			
Impacts	Impact on knowledge production	Will the proposed work significantly advance discovery and understanding in the field?		10%	0.00
	Wider impact	Has the possibility for economic, societal or environmental impact been appropriately embedded in the proposal? Is it clear how such impact will be measured?		5%	0.00
Data management and use	Plans for digital data storage, usage &/or dissemination	A data management plan (DMP) is a formal document that describes the data you expect to acquire or generate during the course of a research project, how you will manage, describe, analyze, and store those data, and what mechanisms (including digital data storage) will be used at the end of your project to share and preserve your data		10%	0.00
Totals				100%	0.00

⁴ 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.

ANNEXURE 2: Proposal Grading

Score	Meaning 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 under consideration
3	Above average	Application demonstrates evidence of above average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field under consideration
2	Average	Application demonstrates evidence of average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to the knowledge field under consideration
1	Below average	Application demonstrates evidence of below average performance across all the stated criteria, as determined by panel and relative to knowledge field under consideration
0	Poor	There are major shortcomings or flaws as relates to the scientific / scholarly merit and feasibility of the proposed work, as determined by the panel.

Context:

Proposal grading is done with sensitivity to the context within which each application is submitted. The score of each criterion for each application will be contextualised to accommodate variability in such things as knowledge fields, institutional capacity, etc. Should a criterion not be applicable to a specific application (e.g. plans for digital data storage; collaborations; etc.), the weighting of that specific criteria will be made to equal zero, and the overall score normalised.