

Call for Joint Research Project Proposals 2019

SA (NRF) / Russia (RFBR) Joint Science and Technology Research Collaboration

Closing Date: 6 July 2018

A maximum of 15 joint projects will be funded for this call

The National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). 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 Russian universities and research institutions. The cooperative programmes, projects, and research and development activities will be aimed at the implementation of joint research projects, human capital development, and student and staff exchanges.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

This Programme aims to:

- contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint research activities in specified research fields;
- provide an opportunity for researchers to cooperate in an international setting and to develop their scientific careers, especially for early-stage, mid-career as well as female researchers;
- support the advancement of basic research; and
- contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

AREAS OF COOPERATION

Joint research proposals may be submitted in the following designated broad thematic areas prioritised by both funding agencies:

- Astronomy research and space technologies
- High performance computing and information and information technologies;
- Renewable energy
- Agriculture
- Humanities and social sciences

PLEASE NOTE:

Joint projects with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral co-operations will be favourably considered. Also, the joint projects by young scientists and those that pay particular attention to a balanced involvement of female and male researchers (gender equality) will be positively considered.

DURATION OF PROJECTS

The projects will be supported for a period of three years (projects starting in 2019 and ending 2021).

WHO MAY APPLY?

SOUTH AFRICA:

This call is open to working researchers residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology or science council. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD. In terms of human capital development, South African applications from previously disadvantaged individuals and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions will be prioritised.

RUSSIA:

The Russian applicant must be employed by a Russian Scientific organization. The applicant for the call can participate in no more than two projects submitted in the framework of the joint NRF-RFBR Programme, being PI on only one project.

HOW DO I APPLY?

The onus is on the applicant to find their own research partner. Proposals must be received in both South Africa and Russia. Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or Russia, but not both, will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive; therefore submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The availability of funds and the evaluation of applications from both countries should be positive for projects to be considered for funding. The NRF and RFBR will not be held responsible for non-submission, administration or evaluation of the application in the partner country.

SOUTH AFRICA:

Applicants 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: **NRF/ RFBR 2019 Call for Joint Research 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 University 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 as outlined in this document 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 the university research office if you have any queries.

RUSSIA:

Instructions for the Russian applicants are available on the RFBR website.

WHICH ACTIVITIES MAY I APPLY FOR?

The purpose of this call is to support joint research and exchange mobility of researchers, scientists, postdoctoral and doctoral students between South Africa and Russia. Funding will be made available for the following joint activities undertaken as part of the joint research project:

- Research expenses (e.g. research fieldwork, publication costs, etc.) to be borne by each Party for their respective researchers. All other expenses, including operational running costs and research materials, may be financed from the allocation accorded in terms of this call. Up to 10% of the funds may be used for consumables. Should the allocated funds allow – researchers may also make use of these for joint publication costs.

- International and domestic travel between and within South Africa and Russia. Human capital development which involves the training of postgraduate students (doctoral and postdoctoral students) through short-term exchange and placement programs within funded projects. These short-term student exchanges/placements should enable young researchers to learn valuable new skills or techniques; access facilities or resources not readily available at home; build relationships with potential new collaborators; and advance complementary collaborative research. The exchanges/placements must enhance, not replace, the standard training and study support that both the students receive. The exchanges/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 exchanges/placements. Applicants should include information about how these exchanges will be managed within their proposal.
- Remuneration to scientists (applies only to Russian researchers).

In the case of meetings, research visits and exchanges of scientists, personnel, experts, students as well as reciprocal visits undertaken as part of joint research projects and the attendance of seminars, workshops and other meetings funded under this agreement, **each Party will bear the costs of its participation following the principle of “sending side pays”.** **The sending side, in this regard, will cover international airfares and living allowances for visiting participants. The receiving side will cover the costs of arranging the activity.** Local travel and fees relating to the organisation of events (venue, catering, audio-visual equipment etc.) will be the financial responsibility of the host investigator which is to be paid from his / her allocation of the joint funding.

PLEASE NOTE:

The following will **NOT** be funded by the NRF from the grant:

- Consultant’s fees
- Educational expenses (scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.)
- Large equipment
- Project management fees
- Salaries and temporary staff fees.

FUNDING MODALITIES

Funding will be available for a maximum of three years for 3-year collaborative research projects jointly developed and completed by researchers on both sides. In both countries, all the approved projects will receive funding support from the two funders in terms of the cost of activities mentioned above. Apart from the financial support from the two parties, institutions and universities in both countries are encouraged to solicit other funding resources.

FUNDING LIMITS

SOUTH AFRICA:

The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed R900 000 per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of three years, to be paid in annual installments (R300 000 per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2019.

RUSSIA:

The total amount requested from RFBR should not exceed Russian Rubles 1 300 000 PER project per fiscal year. Visit the RFBR website for further details.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The funders will organise a **“Concluding workshop”** (maximum 2-days) towards the end of the 3-year funding with all the funded researchers. This workshop would attempt to review achievements of all funded projects; share the information about results; draw lessons from recommendations provided by researchers; and explore different approaches that may require policy makers and funders to refocus the partnership going forward. The workshop will be organised in either South Africa or Russia depending on the planning and schedules of both the NRF and RFBR. Partnering institutions are requested to include the cost of attending this concluding workshop from the allocation of their grants. Partnering institutions are also welcome to make use of this concluding workshop to organize their own individual project-specific wrap-up meetings.
- Should you be successful you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of this guideline.

- Scientific and financial reporting on the project is **OBLIGATORY**.
- Research stays in both countries are **OBLIGATORY**.
- Only a maximum of 15 joint projects will be funded for this call.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Depending on specific national rules and procedures:

Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to expert reviewers in the various fields of research represented by the eligible proposals received. The experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

- The fundamentality of research.
- The novelty of the proposed research.
- The agreement of the expected results with the world level.
- The ability to implement the proposed project.
- The skill level of the team members, the already available research results and the general understanding of the current status of the problem.
- From the South African side particular emphasis will be placed on the training of students/ young researchers through the exchange/ placement of postgraduate students.

Following local evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and RFBR based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries. Please note that, although the two funding agencies 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. As such applicants are urged not to expect notification by a certain date, nor to make concrete logistical arrangements before having been thus notified.

PROJECT FOLLOW-UP AND REPORTING

- A final scientific and financial report has to be submitted in English by both the South African and the Russian PIs no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- Please note that successful submission of the first annual report is an **OBLIGATORY** condition of funding in subsequent years.
- All project reports must mention project outputs as compared to the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The funders reserves the right to make the final reports available to researchers within and outside this Programme in similar disciplines.
- The joint publications by researchers must mention the support from the funders (i.e. NRF and RFBR).

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 projects.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted by **6 July 2018**. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding. Researchers are also advised to ensure that their research partners' applications are submitted and have also been received in the partner country in time. Both the NRF and RFBR will not be held responsible for applications that were not received in either side.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR QUERIES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

For South Africa	For Russia
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