

SOUTH AFRICA / IRAN JOINT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH COLLABORATION

JOINT CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

CLOSING DATE: 31 July 2017

A MAXIMUM OF SIX (6) JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS WILL BE FUNDED FOR THIS CALL

On 31 May 2000, the South African Department of science and Technology (DST) and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran (MSRT) signed an Agreement with the objective of enhancing scientific relations between South Africa and Iran. With this Agreement, the Parties intend to support research and development activities and other forms of scientific and technical cooperation between South African and Iranian 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.

The South African National Research Foundation (NRF) and the MSRT, as the implementing Agencies of this Agreement, are pleased to announce the launch of a first joint call for research projects in the following agreed areas of cooperation:

- Biotechnology
- Oceanography

Aims of the Programme:

- ❖ To collaborate on research projects selected within joint calls for proposals
- ❖ 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 engage;
- ❖ To support the advancement of basic research; and
- ❖ To contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

In terms of human capital development, both the South African and Iranian applications from previously disadvantaged individuals are encouraged, as is the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions.

Duration of projects:

The projects will be supported for a period of three years.

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. The South African applicants must be in possession of a PhD.

Iran: Iranian applicants must be in possession of a Masters or PhD as a researcher or faculty at a university/research institute/science and technology Parks in Iran that are eligible to receive Grants-in-Aid for scientific research and technology. However, there are cases when a researcher not employed in a full time position may be eligible. Such persons must be eligible to apply for a grant-in-aid and his/her affiliated institution must judge them able to implement the project and to provide an appropriate research environment (e.g., laboratory, equipment, personnel) for it.

An application must designate two Principal Investigators, one in South Africa and one in Iran, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme.

How do I apply?

South Africa: Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted electronically to the NRF on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID number and password.
- Go to “My Applications” and select “Create Application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **South Africa/Iran 2017 Joint Call for Proposals**.
- Complete all compulsory sections and the non-compulsory sections (i.e. CV sections) applicable to you. Please attach the required documents in PDF format in the following order: CV of partner, budget of partner and the signed page of the partner.
- Remember to submit your application on completion.
- Complete applications will go to the host institutions 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.
- Please contact your research office or Designated Authority if you have any queries.

Please note:

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.

Iran: Application forms for Iranian applicants may be downloaded from the MSRT website: www.techno.msrt.ir.

The onus is on the applicant to find their own research partner. **Proposals must be received in both South Africa and Iran.** Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or Iran, but not 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 the MSRT will not be held responsible for non-submission, administration or evaluation of the application in the partner country.

Which activities may I apply for?

The purpose of this call is to support the research projects and mobility of researchers, scientists, post-docs and doctoral students between the two countries. Funding will be made available for the following joint research activities undertaken as part of the joint research project:

- Workshops, seminars or networking events: holding meetings alternately in South Africa and Iran
- Joint research: this collaboration includes visits and exchanges of leading and young scientists, technical personnel or other experts on general or specific subjects.

In the case of meetings, research visits and exchanges of scientists, personnel and experts, 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, each side will follow the principle of “sending side pays”. ***The sending side, in this regard, will cover international airfares, visas, medical insurance, accommodation and living allowances for their researchers. The receiving side will cover the costs of arranging the activity (venue, catering, audio-visual equipment, etc.) and ground transportation*** from their allocation of the joint funding.

The following will **NOT** be funded from the funds allocation:

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

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.

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 get funding support from the two parties 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.

How much may I apply for?

South Africa: The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed R250 000. Funding will be made available for a maximum of three years, to be paid in annual instalments (**R83 000 per year**) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2018. 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 upon selection for funding.

Iran: The total amount requested from Iranian MSRT should not exceed **\$US**.

Please do take note that:

- should you be successful you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of the guidelines;
- a **maximum of 6 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 are applications evaluated?

Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to both a postal and a panel review. The panel will include recognised local experts in the various fields of research represented by the proposals received. These experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the call, added value expected from the bilateral research collaboration
- Scientific quality and innovativeness of the joint research plan
- Feasibility of the joint research plan
- International significance
- Value addition by the collaboration on national priorities
- Potential for promoting equity and redress/capacity building
- Capacity building (i.e. student involvement)

Particular emphasis is to be placed on the training of students and young researchers achieved through research and the transfer of knowledge and know-how aimed at socio-economic development. The integration of young researchers and students, and the exchange of post-doctoral researchers are encouraged, as is the involvement of students and researchers from previously-disadvantaged communities.

Following local evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and the MSRT based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries. A final funding decision will be agreed upon by the two Parties and signed-off at the Joint Technical Committee Meeting. 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.

Project follow-up and reporting:

- A final scientific and financial report will be submitted in English by both the South African and the Iranian project leaders no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- The report will mention the outputs of the projects compared with the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The joint publications by the researchers will mention the support from the NRF and MSRT.

Intellectual property:

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

When is the closing date for applications?

Applications for both South Africa and Iran must be submitted by **31 July 2017**. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding.

Please note that the NRF or MSRT will not be held responsible for applications that were not received. Researchers are also advised to ensure that their research partners' applications are submitted and have also been received in the partner country.

Where can I obtain more information?

At Stellenbosch University: Riana Coetsee - mjc@sun.ac.za

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