

From: Faro_S_Mey@sun.ac.za
Cc: Fouche_Malene_Mrs@sun.ac.za
Subject: 2022 Request for Applications: Self-initiated Research Grants
Date: Monday, 16 May 2022 14:22:01
Attachments: Call for applications SIR-2022.pdf
SIR Proposal Template 2022.doc
Grant Approval form SIR.doc

Let asb daarop dat hierdie inligting aan 'n verspreidingslys van alle US-navorsers gestuur word. Dit mag dus wees dat hierdie spesifieke oproep nie van toepassing is op u studieveld nie. Ons vertrou dat toekomstige oproepe wel relevant mag wees./ Please note that this information is sent to a distribution list of all SU researchers. It may, therefore, be possible that this specific call is not applicable to your specific research field. We trust that future calls will be relevant.

Dear Researcher,

Kindly see below the 2021 Request for Applications:

Please see the attached RFA documents and follow this link for more details: <http://www.samrc.ac.za/funding/self-initiated-research>.

Funding Opportunity	Disciplines	Categories to be funded	Eligibility / Special Conditions	Funding	How to apply	Closing dates
South African Medical Research Council – SAMRC Self-Initiated Research (SIR) Grants	<p>The project must focus on the following priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Health HIV TB Pandemic Preparedness Nutrition in Pregnancy and Early Childhood Adolescent Health Climate and Health Water, Wastewater and Society Global Surgery (for more information: https://gh.bmj.com/content/4/5/e001808) Cancer Brain, Behaviour and Mental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumables or running costs (materials and supplies, laboratory and/or field work, payment for specialised services, office supplies, stationery and printing) (Research) Travel (maximum of R40 000). This includes travel to sites, participant /patient transport, conference attendance, and other travel to be specified (Research) Assistantships to a maximum of R20 000 per year Minor equipment (maximum value R20 000) Bursary supplementation to a maximum value of R20 000 per year 	<p>This call is specifically targeted at Early Stage investigators, however, Mid-level to Established may also submit proposals (such proposals require a 'strong capacity building' focus).</p>	<p>R200,000 per year, for three years</p> <p>R600,000 total budget</p>	<p>Final applications, including all required documents (see application checklist below), must be sent to both Shannon Faro (sbrooks@sun.ac.za) and Malene Fouche (mfouche@sun.ac.za) for institutional approval by 16h00 on 15 June 2022.</p> <p>Application Checklist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed SIR Grant application form including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIR Grant Budget Form SIR Milestone Table SIR Grant Reviewer Nomination Form Completed and signed SIR Grant Approval Form Applicant's Curriculum Vitae – maximum length of 5 pages, including a biographical sketch (professional work experience, qualifications, research activities) and publications in the last 3 years of active research Ethics Clearance Certificate or a letter indicating that the proposal has been submitted to the institution's Ethics Committee. Where ethics approval is not required, applicants are required to submit a letter Institution's Research Office stating why it is not required. 	<p>Internal Closing date:</p> <p>16h00 on 15 June 2022.</p>

Contact person at SU:

Queries, general proposal guidance and institutional approval (to be contacted **very** early in the application process): Shannon Faro (sbrooks@sun.ac.za).

This notice was sent to you by the Division for Research Development (DRD) of Stellenbosch University.
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SAMRC-RFA-SIR-2022

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS/PROPOSALS 2022
SELF-INITIATED RESEARCH GRANTS**

The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) is pleased to announce the 2022 call for applications for funding under the **Self-Initiated Research (SIR)** Grants Programme. The SIR Programme is designed to support original research initiated by a researcher at a recognized research institution in selected priority health areas.

Eligibility

The primary target of the 2022 SIR call is early-stage investigators; however, applications are invited from both early-stage investigators and mid-level to established researchers, as defined in the table below. Applications from mid-level and established researchers are expected to have a strong focus on capacity building. Applications are limited to South African citizens and permanent residents.

Category 1: Early stage investigators	Category 2: Mid-level and established researchers
Minimum MBChB, BDS, BChD or PhD	Minimum MBChB, BDS, BChD or PhD
1-5 years (conducting research/in a research post) since completion of PhD, BDS, BChD or MBChB (post-graduate students are not eligible to apply)	>5 years (conducting research/in a research post) since completion of PhD, BDS, BChD or MBChB – preferably PI or study coordinator on at least 3 studies
Must have secured a commitment from the host university or research institution listed in the application to host the applicant and project for the length of the grant	Must be in an established academic post, i.e. permanently employed, or in a long-term contract of employment (at least for the duration of the project) salaried by the university or research institution

Applicants that are deemed by the SAMRC to be incorrectly classified into category 1 or 2 may be requested to alter their classification. If you are uncertain, please contact the SAMRC.

For the purposes of the SIR Programme, a research institution is defined as a legally constituted institution or organization wherein research is one of the primary purposes for

its existence, including the training of postgraduate students. The broad thrust of the organisation's research, basic or applied, should be towards the advancement of knowledge. Research institutions include universities, science councils and other organisations whose core business is conducting research and/or training postgraduate students.

Only **one** research proposal will be considered for funding per individual applicant and once granted, only one such grant may be held by an individual until the project has been completed. Preference will be given to individuals who have not previously been a recipient of an SIR grant. Recipients of other SAMRC grants, including individuals working within SAMRC extra-mural research units, may apply for an SIR grant; however, all such grants must be declared in their application. Research grant applications that are proposing work on behalf of commercial entities will not be considered. Individuals working within SAMRC intra-mural research units are not eligible to apply for an SIR grant.

SIR Grant Details

SIR grants are awarded up to **R200 000** per year for a maximum period of **three years**. These funds provide support for research expenses (materials and consumables; support to attend scientific meetings; small items of equipment, etc.). See ***Terms and Conditions for the Acceptance, Utilization and Management of SAMRC Self-initiated Research Grants*** for details. It is expected that the researchers/applicants already have in place the necessary equipment and facilities required for the proposed research.

Research Priority Areas

Research priority areas that will be considered in the 2022 SIR call are as follows:

- Digital Health
- HIV
- TB
- Pandemic Preparedness
- Nutrition in Pregnancy and Early Childhood
- Adolescent Health
- Climate and Health
- Water, Wastewater and Society
- Global Surgery (for more information: <https://gh.bmj.com/content/4/5/e001808>)
- Cancer
- Brain, Behaviour and Mental Health

Please ensure that your application is correctly classified. Applications that are incorrectly classified or are deemed by the SAMRC to fall outside these priority areas will be rejected as being non-responsive.

The research should ideally be geared towards generating high quality new knowledge, new medical products, improved or enhanced medical/health practice, effective health promotion strategies or improved health policy and/or functioning of the national health

systems. Applications from mid-level and established researchers must include a clear focus on capacity development.

Application Process

All eligible applications must be submitted using the dedicated e-mail address SIApplications@mrc.ac.za and must:

- Be signed off by the applicant
- Be approved or validated by an authorized person in the research administration office of the institution
- Reach the SAMRC by midnight on **30 June 2022**. **Late applications will NOT be accepted.**

It is the responsibility of host institutions to verify and certify the appropriateness, completeness and correctness of all information submitted by their researchers to the SAMRC as part of their applications for SIR funding. By co-signing applications, institutions commit themselves to administering the allocated funding according to the ***Terms and Conditions for the Acceptance, Utilization and Management of SAMRC Self-initiated Research Grants***.

Timelines for the application and review process are as follows:

Steps or actions	Timeline
Call/Request for proposals	06 May 2022
Closing date for applications	30 June 2022
Peer review process	July 2022 – October 2022
Grants Committee/Review panel meeting(s)	November 2022
Approval by the SAMRC's EMC	January 2023
Communication of outcomes to applicants	January 2023
Acceptance of SIR grants conditions by awardees	March 2023
Payment of grants to institutions	April 2023

Application Checklist

- Completed SIR Grant application form including:
 - SIR Grant Budget Form
 - SIR Milestone Table
 - SIR Grant Reviewer Nomination Form
- Completed and signed SIR Grant Approval Form
- Applicant's Curriculum Vitae – *maximum length of 5 pages, including a biographical sketch (professional work experience, qualifications, research activities) and publications in the last 3 years of active research*
- Ethics Clearance Certificate or a letter indicating that the proposal has been submitted to the institution's Ethics Committee. Where ethics approval is not

required, please submit a letter from the Institutional Research Office stating why it is not required.

Applications will not be processed until authorization by the institution has been completed. Incomplete applications and applications without an Ethics Clearance Certificate, or a letter from the Institution's Research Office stating why it is not required, will not be considered.

The SAMRC's Grants, Innovation and Product Development Division will provide technical support to applicants and respond to all queries during the application process (refer to contact details).

Review of Proposals and Selection of Awardees

The SIR Grants Programme is highly competitive and has limited funds available. The primary consideration in determining the success of a funding application is the quality of the research proposal. However, equally important to the SAMRC is transformation and building the capacity of, particularly, black and women scientists as well as resource-limited institutions. Thus, proposals that are from principal investigators or institutions meeting these criteria and/or involve a component of capacity building of or partnership with such individuals and/or institutions will be preferred. These factors are taken into consideration in the review and selection process.

1.) Eligibility screen

After the closing date, all proposals received will be screened for eligibility, responsiveness and compliance with the grant and submission criteria. Proposals that do not meet the criteria will not be processed further.

2.) Peer review

All eligible proposals will be submitted for peer review. Peer reviewers are asked to review proposals according to the criteria listed below. In submitting a research proposal for funding, researchers should therefore make every effort to ensure that the proposals address these aspects comprehensively. It must be emphasized that several proposals were unsuccessful in previous calls due to a lack of detail on the research design and methodology.

Criterion	What the reviewer is asked to comment on
Overall Merit	<i>What field, health issue or policy, medical care or treatment is addressed by the application? What is the relative importance of the scientific issue(s) raised? How and to what degree will the application generate advancements in science or evidence-based clinical practices? Is the research likely to succeed with respect to the qualifications of the research team, the design of the research, the general feasibility of the techniques employed and the environment including the availability of equipment and</i>

infrastructure?

Research Design and Methods	<i>Is the design and experimental plan sound, feasible, and relevant to the questions being asked? Is the approach proposed appropriate and likely to accomplish the goals of the project? Are potential problems recognized and addressed with alternative approaches? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?</i>
Significance of Proposed Research	<i>How important is the science to improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields? Will the research advance basic biomedical concepts, unmet needs in human health, improve or enhance the health care system of South Africa, or contribute to health care policy or towards the development of important new products such as medicines, devices, or therapies? Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions. To what extent will the results of the project contribute to health advancements or to solving barriers to progress in the field?</i>
Investigator (s)	<i>Is the training and research experience of the project leader and collaborators appropriate for the project? Is there sufficient expertise and level of accomplishments within the research team to generate confidence in success? Is the project leader capable of leading the team to conduct the research efficiently and effectively?</i>
Ethical considerations	<i>Will human subjects be utilized in the project? If so, will they be appropriately protected from potential research risk? Is there a plan for inclusion of multiple races and ethnicities, members of both sexes/genders, and/or children? Is the inclusion/exclusion of each of these groups appropriate in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy? Will vertebrate animals be utilized in the project? If so, will they be appropriately and ethically treated?</i>

Based on the above criteria, peer reviewers will score the quality of the proposals according to the categories below and make recommendations on fundability.

Proposal quality description	Quality score
Exceptionally high quality research that is pushing the boundaries in its field internationally while addressing highly significant scientific/health questions or challenges.	10
Research of excellent quality at the forefront in its field internationally and likely to result in high impact outcomes for science, medical practice, and the health system or health policy.	9

Research of very good quality that is at the forefront nationally (and possibly internationally), addresses an important health research question and is likely to result in tangible outcomes for science, medical practice, the health system or health policy. 8

Research of average to good quality and is likely to have a modest impact in addressing an important health research question. 5 – 7

Poor quality research with major flaws in its conceptual frameworks, research methods and design and unlikely to be successful OR research which is technically flawless, but of minimal significance, innovation, or interest could fit in this score band. 1- 4

Proposals submitted in categories 1 and 2 will be reviewed according to the same criteria; however, ranking of proposals by score will be done against proposals within the same category only. Further, a lower cut-off score will be used for evaluation and selection of proposals in category 1.

3.) Grants Committee or Panel Review

After peer review, the top scoring proposals in each of the categories will be submitted to one or more Grants Committees or Review Panels for assessment. The role of the panel(s) is to assess the overall quality of the proposals, based on expert opinion and the peer review reports, also considering transformation imperatives and the spread of priority areas.

The panel members will score and categorize the applications according to the categories below.

Recommendation	Score range	Rating*
Highly fundable, worth prioritizing	8 -10	A
Fundable on condition that funds are available	6-7	B
Not fundable	1-5	C

4.) Executive Management Committee approval

The outcome of the Grants Committee/panel meeting(s) will be a ranked list of proposals for each category (1 and 2), which will be submitted to the SAMRC's Executive Management Committee (EMC) for final approval. The spread of awards between category 1 (early stage investigators) and category 2 (mid-level and established researchers) and the final approved list of awardees will be at the discretion of the EMC, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Grants Committee(s).

POPIA Statement

As of 1 July 2021, the new [Protection of Personal Information Act \(POPIA\)](#) came into effect. The law is designed to protect how all juristic persons use, store and process data.

The SAMRC, as a responsible statutory science council, will comply with POPIA. The SAMRC will receive personal information through applications submitted to the SAMRC in response to this call. The personal information requested on the submission template is necessary for the SAMRC to fully evaluate the application. This information could be shared with external reviewers, members of Review Panels and/or Grant Committees of the SAMRC as well as the SAMRC management for the purposes of processing the applications. The SAMRC will process this personal information strictly in accordance with POPIA. The SAMRC undertakes specifically to process the personal information on the basis that (a) it was provided voluntarily and (b) the information will be processed only as far as may be necessary and within the limitation and ambit of the purpose of evaluating the applications for potential funding (i.e., the purpose with which the personal information was received). The SAMRC confirms that it is lawfully processing the information since the purpose of processing is to facilitate research and innovation which the SAMRC is mandated to do in terms of Section 4 of the SAMRC Act 58 of 1991, thus the SAMRC is fulfilling its legislated and lawful mandate, and strategic objectives as provided for in the SAMRC Act.

By submitting your completed application to the SAMRC you acknowledge and agree to the use of your personal information as outlined above. Should you not approve of such use of your personal information then please refrain from applying.

Contact details: (Questions and clarifications)

Mr Clive Glass at

Email: clive.glass@mrc.ac.za

Tel no.: +27 21-938-0225



GRANTS, INNOVATION AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

SAMRC SIR PROPOSAL TEMPLATE 2022

SECTION 1: Summary Proposal Information

Title of project			
Proposed Start date of project			
Proposed End date of project			
Research Priority Area:	(Please see call document for a list of approved areas for 2022)		
Details of Principal Investigator			
Title, First Name, Surname			
ID Number			
Host Organization/Institution			
Organization Address			
PI E-mail Address			
PI Telephone Number			
PI Gender	Male/Female		
PI Ethnic Group	African/Coloured/Indian/White/Other (please specify)		
Highest Degree(s)		Year	
Other Degrees			
Career Stage:	Early Career/Mid-career to Established		
Research Sites:	Where research is to be conducted?		

SECTION 2: Scientific Details

Short description: Scientific abstract of project (150 words)

Specific Aims: State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s).

Background, Rationale, Significance, and Innovation: Describe the problem under investigation as a factor which contributes to global, regional, or national health challenges and why the proposed study is important to the science necessary for solving this problem.

Research Design and Methods: Provide the research design and project or experimental plan that will be utilized to answer the questions being asked. Address the feasibility of the plan and how the approach will accomplish the goals outlined in the Specific Aims.

Environment and Resources: Describe the scientific environment in which the work will be done and institutional and community support or investment in the success of the research.

Preliminary Data (If available): Discuss pilot studies and outline how the proposed research would build on previous research.

Research capacity development: Indicate how the execution of the research project will contribute to the training of postgraduate students, junior research/academic staff, health personnel or community members where the research will be undertaken and how it will contribute to transformation at individual and/or institutional level.

Expected outputs, outcomes and impact: Outline the expected direct and indirect outputs/outcomes/impact of the research on the advancement of scientific/health knowledge or what contributions the research will make to improvements in either health or health outcomes.

Dissemination and implementation of research results: Indicate the main avenues through which the results of the research will be disseminated to the scientific/academic and public audiences.

References Cited

Other SAMRC Awards: Please indicate any other awards from the SAMRC received in the last 3 years and/or currently held, including the grant mechanism (e.g. Flagship, SHIP, Extra-mural Unit etc.), value of award, award period and project title.

Other Funding: Please list any other funding you have applied for and/or received for the proposed project.

Provide contact information of Key Personnel. Key Personnel (if applicable) are defined as individuals who contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project in a substantive, measurable way. Typically these individuals have doctoral or other professional degrees, although individuals at the masters level should be included if their involvement meets the definition of Key Personnel. Consultants should also be included if they meet the same definition

Role	Name	Title	Institution	Email	Phone

SAMRC Self-Initiated Research Grants Budget Form

Budget (itemized list of financial requirements to carry out the research successfully, with a substantive motivation for the listed requirements or levels of funding). The SAMRC can only support projects up to R200 000 per annum for a maximum of 3 years. Proposals requesting more than the stipulated amount will be rejected.

YEAR 1 (or applicable calendar year)

Item	Description	Unit cost	No. of Units	Total cost	Total Amount requested from the SAMRC
Consumables					
1. Materials and supplies					
2. Laboratory/field costs					
3. Specialized services					
4. Office supplies, printing and reproduction					
5. <i>Ad hoc</i> research support					
6. Bursary supplementation					
TOTAL					
Research travel					
1. Travel to sites					
2. Participant/patient transport					
3. Other, specify					
TOTAL					
Research assistantship					
Minor research equipment					
TOTAL					

YEAR 2 (indicative)

Item	Description	Unit cost	No. of Units	Total cost	Amount requested from the SAMRC
Consumables					
Research Travel					
Research Assistantship					
Minor Research Equipment					
Conference attendance					
TOTAL					

YEAR 3 (indicative)

Item	Description	Unit cost	No. of Units	Total cost	Amount requested from the SAMRC
Consumables					
Research Travel					
Research Assistantship					
Minor Research Equipment					
Conference attendance					
TOTAL					

Budget Justification:

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SAMRC Self-initiated Research Grants - Milestone Table

Milestone 1: <i>(Include a short description/title of the milestone here)</i>		
Key Tasks	Duration (Start-End Date)	Deliverable(s)*
Milestone 2: <i>(Include a short description/title of the milestone here)</i>		
Key Tasks	Duration (Start-End Date)	Deliverable(s)*
Milestone 3: <i>(Include a short description/title of the milestone here)</i>		
Key Tasks	Duration (Start-End Date)	Deliverable(s)*

*Please include scientific/product deliverables here and not publications, presentations or personnel capacity development

SAMRC Self-Initiated Research Grants Reviewer Nomination Form

A. Nomination of potential reviewers (nomination of 4 experts, preferably 2 national and 2 international, who you believe will be able to provide a fair and objective review of your proposal). Current and former collaborators should not be nominated. The SAMRC reserves the right to utilize some, most, all or none of the nominated reviewers.

Name	
Title	
Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

Name	
Title	
Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

Name	
Title	
Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

Name	
Title	
Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

B. Reviewers to be excluded (Please specify with or without reason, reviewers that should not be approached to review your proposal). **Completion of this section is optional.**

Name	
Title	
Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	
Reason for exclusion	

Name	
Title	

Highest qualification	
Area of expertise	
Position held	
Affiliation	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	
Reason for exclusion	

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By submitting your completed application to the SAMRC you acknowledge and agree to the use of your personal information as outlined above. Should you not approve of such use of your personal information then please refrain from applying.

Research priority areas that will be considered in the 2022 SIR call are as follows:

- Digital Health
- HIV
- TB
- Pandemic Preparedness
- Nutrition in Pregnancy and Early Childhood
- Adolescent Health
- Climate and Health
- Water, Wastewater and Society
- Global Surgery (for more information: <https://gh.bmj.com/content/4/5/e001808>)
- Cancer
- Brain, Behaviour and Mental Health

Documents to attached:

- SIR Grant Approval Form
- Ethics Clearance Certificate or letter from Research Office
- Principal Investigator Curriculum Vitae (maximum 5 pages in length)

Email address for completed applications: SIRapplications@mrc.ac.za

SAMRC Self-Initiated Research Grants - Approval Form

Section A: Certification by applicant and organization

I herewith declare that to the best of my knowledge:

- The work outlined in this proposal is my own original work and that the inputs, contributions and the work of others have been appropriately acknowledged where relevant.
- I have undertaken due diligence to ensure that the work proposed has not been done elsewhere in a manner identical to or having an identical process and outcome as that which I propose to do.
- I have permission from the Head of Department/Division/Faculty to undertake the proposed work within the precincts of said entity and will have access to all required facilities and other forms of support.
- The work will be undertaken strictly according to accepted ethical and professional research practice, within the provisions and regulations of my host institution and any other applicable national or international prescriptions. I undertake to notify the SAMRC should there be a change in this status, and I accept that the SAMRC has the right to cancel or withdraw any awarded grant monies if and when there is a transgression of any law, legal and/or ethical provision/requirements governing good research practice in the execution of the proposed work.
- The information provided in this proposal is true, correct, and accurate and I understand and accept that the SAMRC reserves the right to cancel any grant awarded on the basis of false or inaccurate information.
- I accept that the SAMRC reserves the right to reject incomplete, inappropriate, or inadequate proposals/applications.
- I also acknowledge that I have read and concur with the POPIA statement contained in the Call for Applications and the SIR Proposal Template.

Full name (print).....

ID number.....

Place.....Date.....

Institutional approval

This is to certify that this research proposal (tick applicable box)

				Reference no., date or comment
Has been approved by the applicable research committee or authorized structure	YES		NO	
Is hereby approved for submission to the SAMRC for funding	YES		NO	
Name of authorizing official				
Designation of authorizing official				
Signature of authorizing official				
Date of authorization				
Place				