



CALL FOR JOINT RESEARCH ACTIVITY PROPOSALS (2009)

Introduction and Background

The first agreement on cooperation in scientific research between the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the National Research Foundation (then FRD) was signed in 1997, renewed four years later after the corporate restructuring giving rise to the current NRF, and again in 2005. Operating within the framework of the bi-national agreement on cooperation in the fields of education, culture, sport, science and technology signed between South Africa and France in 1994, the current NRF/CNRS agreement has as aim to intensify the existing collaboration between the two institutions and to develop an ever closer, long-term cooperation between the scientific communities in the two countries. It does this through the funding of joint research activities between South African and French researchers in the fields of the natural sciences, the social sciences, engineering and the humanities.

The current call is for the funding of new joint activities starting in 2010 and terminating after two or three years depending on the type of funding requested.

Types of Funding

In order to accommodate NRF administrative agencies, it has been agreed that all relevant CNRS international funding mechanisms would be addressed by a single NRF/CNRS call for proposals in South Africa. This means that the following applications should be submitted in response to this call:

- Applications for NRF/CNRS Bilateral Exchange funding (maximum 2 years), to assist researchers in initiating scientific collaboration.
- Applications for NRF/CNRS International Scientific Cooperation Programme (PICS) funding (maximum 3 years), to support pre-existing joint research.
- Applications for funding research undertaken as part of an International Research Network (GDRI) (maximum 4 years), designed to create a flexible partnership between several research teams on a specific research topic.
- Applications for funding of research undertaken as part of an International Associated Laboratory (LIA) (maximum 4 years). Such a “laboratory without walls” brings together one South African and one CNRS team on a jointly defined project.

Note that no other NRF/CNRS calls will be issued for the remainder of the year, and no separate calls will be issued for PICS, GDRI or LIA projects in South Africa. Researchers, who do not submit their applications in response to the present call, regardless of the type of funding solicited, will not be provided with funding outside the administrative operation of this call.

Research Activities

In accordance with the NRF/CNRS agreement, the following joint research activities may be funded from allocations accorded in terms of this call:

- **Bilateral Exchange:** International travel costs for South African researchers visiting France, and costs for the accommodation, subsistence and local travel of French researchers visiting South Africa, for a maximum duration of 1 month per year.
- **International Scientific Cooperation Programme (PICS):** International travel costs for South African researchers visiting France, and costs for the accommodation, subsistence and local travel of French researchers visiting South Africa. Organisational costs of meetings and colloquia held in South Africa. Costs required for project operating expenses and the purchase of small equipment.
- **International Research Networks (GDRI):** International researcher exchange and the organisation of joint seminars and workshops from the pooled resources of participating institutions.
- **International Associated Laboratories (LIA):** International mobility, equipment, research operating costs and visiting researcher positions.

In the case of bilateral exchange funding (not including PICS, GDRI and LIA projects), the maximum number of years for which funding will be provided is **two**, i.e. 2010 and 2011. In the case of PICS, GDRI and LIA projects, the maximum number of years for which funding will be provided is **three** (2010, 2011 and 2012). In the case of the GDRI and LIA projects, the maximum number of years for which funding will be provided is **four** (2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013). In all cases the continued disbursement of funds for the second, third or fourth year is contingent upon the submission of a detailed progress report on the previous year's activities to the NRF for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

In the case of bilateral exchange funding, only research teams not having benefited from such funding before will be considered. Teams which have already benefited from bilateral exchange funding are encouraged to apply for PICS funding instead.

In all cases, once funding has come to an end there will be no possibility of renewal or extension. New funding can only be obtained via the submission of a new application in response to a subsequent NRF/CNRS call, and the allocation of such funding is contingent upon the submission of a final report on the activities sponsored by the previous allocation.

With the exception of visiting researcher positions within the framework of LIA projects, no salaries, temporary staff fees or honoraria may be financed from funds allocated in terms of this call. In all cases, medical care may not be financed from the NRF allocation, or any of the following: consultant's fees, educational expenses (scholarships, etc.), large equipment, project management fees and publication costs.

Eligibility

This call is open to full time 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. An application must designate two principal investigators, one in South Africa and one in France, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting. In the case of GDRI and LIA projects, the participation of all other parties should be clearly indicated, preferably via the submission of the GDRI or LIA draft contract to be signed by all participating institutions. (Note that under no circumstances will the NRF itself be signatory to such a contract nor participate in any steering committee activities). In all cases the South African principal investigator must be in possession of a **PhD**.

Amount of Funding

While NRF funding levels are not fixed, the total amount of funding requested should preferably be based on the following general maximums for each type of activity to be undertaken:

- Bilateral exchange: R40 000 per annum
- PICS: R100 000 per annum
- GDRI and LIA: R200 000 per annum

Funding will be paid in annual instalments. Note that a commitment to both scientific and financial reporting on the project or activity, both annually and following its completion is an obligatory condition of funding.

Evaluation

Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to both a postal and panel review by 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:

- Scientific and technical merit
- Suitability and feasibility
- International significance
- Budget
- National priority

(Note that proposals demonstrating strong elements of capacity building, particularly among **previously disadvantaged socioeconomic communities**, will be favourably regarded).

Following local evaluation a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted in consultation with the CNRS and based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries. **Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or France,**

but not both, will not be evaluated or considered for funding. Applicants are urged not to make definitive logistical arrangements with regards to their proposals until the success of their applications has been confirmed. Under no circumstances will funding be made available until after both agencies have concluded their respective administrative processes which can take up to a year to conclude.

Application Procedure

Application forms for South African applicants may be downloaded electronically from the NRF website (www.nrf.ac.za). Application forms for French applicants may be downloaded from the website of the CNRS Directorate for International Relations (www.cnrs.fr/dri-dae). Only an **electronic copy of the application (preferably a word document) will be accepted** (duly signed by both principle investigators). The South African application should be submitted to:
raven@nrf.ac.za

Only applications **endorsed** by the research office or its equivalent at higher education or research institutions will be accepted.

Closing Date

All applications must be submitted by **1 June 2009**.
Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding.

Further Information

For further information, please contact:

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For more information on GDRI and LIA initiatives, visit the website of the CNRS Directorate for International Research at:
<http://www.cnrs.fr/dri-dae>