Knowledge, Interchange and Collaboration (KIC)
First Call

Scientific Events/ Travel Grants

2023

Closing Date: Consult the General Application Guide 2023

CONTEXT

The purpose of the Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) funding instrument is to build and maintain excellence in South African research, bolstered by international collaboration. The promotion of international collaboration through the support of travel opportunities and participation in scientific events, enriched by national learning opportunities and engagements, are important mechanisms towards this goal.

The KIC funding instrument is therefore aimed at contributing to the following objectives:
- internationalising South Africa's research platforms;
- enhancing networking within the global science system, in particular, the African science system;
- fostering collaboration to improve the quality of research outputs by researchers.

Within the NRF funding context, the internationalisation of research is an intrinsic part of the current funding instruments, built into research grants awarded through programmes such as Competitive Funding for Rated Researchers, the South African Research Chairs Initiatives (SARChI), and the Centres of Excellence (CoE) Programme. **Therefore, funding for KIC support is prioritised for those researchers who have not already been allocated travel support through any other NRF grant.**

TYPES OF SUPPORT

The investment in support for travel and participation in scientific events are focused on four categories:

- **Travel Grants for Individual Researchers (including attendance and participation in virtual events):** The applicants in this category are the individual South Africa-based researchers (emerging or established researchers) travelling either locally or internationally. The funding requested will be to support local and international travel, including participation in events that are organised virtually related to research

activities such as the presentation of posters and oral presentations/invited speakers and presentations in seminars, symposia and workshops. The maximum value for this category is R50 000.

- **Visiting Foreign Researcher:** The applicants in this category are South Africa-based researchers requesting funding to host research leaders from abroad for a short period (up to three weeks) in South Africa in order to enrich local expertise in their field. A comprehensive itinerary of the visiting researcher needs to be included. The maximum value for this category is R50 000.

- **Africa Interaction:** The applicants in this category are South Africa-based researchers intending to visit universities/research organisations/researchers in other African countries in order to build capacity and to promote future collaboration, and/or to strengthen existing collaborations OR host experts from other African countries. Please note that applications in this category will be prioritised. In addition, joint events with researchers from our African partner countries (see list attached) may receive additional funding on request, based on merit. The maximum value for this category is R75 000.

- **Support for Local Scientific Events:** The applicants in this category are South Africa-based researchers requesting financial support to organise or host scientific events with a minimum of 50 participants for workshops and a minimum of 150 for local conferences. The support may be for the organisation of virtual events. The maximum value for workshops is R150 000 and R350 000 for local conferences.

CATEGORY DETAILS

Travel Grants for Individual Researchers (and attendance of virtual events)
This grant area supports three categories:
- Next generation researchers (PhD students)
- Emerging researchers
- Established researchers.

Purpose
The main purpose of this category is to support:
- Travel by researchers employed by qualifying institutions and PhD students registered in South Africa to local conferences, workshops and seminars
- Payment of registration/participation fee(s) in the virtual event (evidence of such changes must be presented)
- Part or full cost of connectivity to virtual events
- Travel by researchers employed by qualifying institutions and PhD students registered in South Africa, to travel to conferences, workshops and seminars abroad. **Please note that only Supervisors may apply on behalf of PhD students.**

*Criteria maximum award of **R50 000***
- Illustrated value (for the applicant or institution) to be derived from participation in the event and the potential of new initiatives.
- Use networking to influence the strategic direction in areas of national importance.
- The applicant must provide proof of submission of an abstract or paper presentation.
- The applicant must provide a letter of support from their HoD or line manager.

- The applicant must be the author or the co-author of the accepted paper/poster, and a formal invitation letter if presenting a keynote lecture.

Applications **that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission**, will be disqualified and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.

Grants for visiting Foreign Researchers

Purpose

The main purpose of this category is to enable local researchers to invite foreign researchers to spend time in South Africa in order to enrich local expertise in their field, promote future collaborations and/or strengthen existing collaboration. This may also include support for virtual visits where a series of connectivity with foreign experts may be supported. Priority will be given to international bilateral grantholders applying for funds to their partner countries.

Criteria for a maximum award of R50 000
- Visits by researchers with institutional and individual scientific relevance.
- Provide an itinerary and detailed programme for the visit.
- The invited researcher must be a leader in their field of research.
- Illustrated value to be derived from the visit and the possibility of the start of new initiatives.
- Involvement of other South African scientists and engagement with more than one institution other than the host/applicant.
- It is obligatory that the invited researcher present a public lecture/seminar at the institution, or at a partner institution.
- A copy of the invitation to the visitor(s) and a copy of the provisional acceptance of the invitation from the visitor(s) must be included.
- The institution or HoD or line manager must provide a letter of support for the applicant indicating contribution by the institution towards the event e.g. accommodation costs etc;
- CV of the invited researcher.
- Applications **that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified** and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.

Africa Interaction

Purpose

The main purpose of this category is to enable researchers in South Africa to build capacity and to establish or strengthen academic collaboration with one or more partners based at universities or research institutions in Africa. Priority will be given to NRF Africa bilateral grantholders applying for funds to their partner countries.

The proposed African Universities Twinning Programme is an instrument to accelerate the development of research capabilities of academic institutions in areas of importance to African countries. These academic institutions stand to benefit immensely, through the generation of knowledge at a bilateral, continental and global scale.

In addition, this category also supports the establishment of Twinning Programmes between collaborating institutions. Twinning may be implemented in many forms, depending on the interest of the collaborating universities, which could include twinning of the different faculties, co-curriculum development, research collaboration, twinning of the support structures, such as administration process, intellectual Property (IP) policy

development, amongst others. Should the interest of the applicant be in the establishment of twinning programmes, a detailed motivation on how this will be done needs to be included in the body of the application or should be attached to the application. Priority for twinning will be allocated to the HDIs and additional funding maybe be made available depending on the justification of the budget.

*Criteria for a maximum award of **R75 000***
- The applicant must be a leader in their field of research.
- The applicant must indicate how the activity(interaction) will support the collaboration with partners elsewhere in Africa at the level of research, teaching, or capacity development. It is strongly recommended that such interaction must be supported by existing inter-institutional MoUs or new ones in the process of being developed.
- The host institution must provide a support letter containing detail on co-support for the event.
- Provide an itinerary and detailed programme for the visit.
- In the event that the applicant will provide training, a training manual MUST be attached, and the expected number of participants be indicated. Other institutions in the vicinity of the training venue should be invited to participate.
- Institutional letter of support by the HoD or line manager.
- Events must be formal and documented by the hosting institution.
- Copies of invitation(s) received from host(s) must be included.
- Applications **that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified** and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.

Support for Local Scientific Events
Purpose
The main purpose of this category is to promote excellence in research through financial support for international research events hosted in South Africa such as conferences and workshops. The term 'conference' is used in its broadest sense and includes all types of scientific meetings including seminars, symposia and workshops. The minimum number of targeted participants is 50 for workshops and 150 participants or more for local conferences. Hybrid events are also supported.

Criteria for a maximum award of **R150 000 for workshops** and a maximum of **R350 000 for local conferences**:
- The event proposal must clearly define the overall objectives and programme of activities.
- The event should be a platform aimed at creating new contacts (international or regional) in its area of expertise/discipline and may be connected to other networks.
- The event should offer the potential of establishing institutional cooperation in relevant areas.
- A copy of the invitation to the keynote speaker(s) and a copy of provisional acceptance of an invitation from the keynote speaker(s) must be included.
- CVs of invited keynote speaker(s).
- Detailed programme from the hosting institution.
- Proof of co-investment will be an added advantage.
- Support letter by the hosting institution if the applicant is not the hosting institution.
- The institution or HoD or line manager must provide a letter of support for the applicant indicating contribution by the institution towards the event.
- An attendance register is compulsory, and it must be made available during the event according to the format as shown in the application form. This should include detailed information providing name, department, institution, study level and demographics.

- Applications **that do not have all required supporting documents by the time of submission will be disqualified** and will not be taken up for evaluation by the NRF.

WHO MAY APPLY

PhD students (through their supervisors) registered at public South African institutions, and all researchers who are full-time employees or on a fixed-term contract at any of the following institutions are eligible to apply:
- South African universities/universities of technology.
- Recognised research institutions such as national facilities.
- Museums.
- Science councils.

The applicants must be in possession of at least a PhD degree.

PhD students (through their supervisor) who cannot apply for a travel grant through their NRF Scholarships and Fellowships award, and who are **registered at a South African public university.** These students can only apply for travel grants for individuals.

Student involvement in local events is highly encouraged.

Postdoctoral Fellows are not eligible to apply.

Students and researchers from private/commercial institutions are not eligible to apply.

WHICH ACTIVITIES MAY I APPLY FOR?

Category	Item
Travel Grants for Individual Researchers	- Flights - Visa costs - Accommodation - Ground transport - Conference registration fees - Connectivity (where such an event is virtual)
Visiting Foreign Researcher	- Flights - Accommodation (Host institution to fund at least 50%)
Africa Interaction	- Flights - Visa costs - Accommodation - Ground transport
Local Events	- Flights and accommodation (speakers and/or students) - Ground transport - Venue hire - Refreshments - A variety of costs related to arrangements of Virtual Meetings including technical expert support where and if necessary

Note: <u>Subsistence is not supported*</u>

PROCESSING AND DECISIONS

In line with the NRF's endeavour for a fair and objective granting process, all applications are subjected to the following:

- Applications under **KIC Review __Period 1__** will be considered for support for travel/events taking place between **1 July and 31 Dec 2023;**
- Only one event/activity per applicant will be supported with no exceptions
- Applicants may not be supported for two consecutive calls.
- Applications need to be endorsed by the applicant's Institutional Research Office.
- A panel consisting of reviewers will assess and select applications according to the stipulated criteria.
- KIC awards may not cover all expenses requested, and co-investment from own/other sources is essential. **This should be clearly indicated in the application.**
- Given the competitive nature of the programme and budgetary limitations, funding is not guaranteed.
- Applicants have 3 days to query from the date of email receipt should their applications be rejected in the screening phase.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications must be submitted electronically on the NRF Connect system at https://nrf.connect.nrf.ac.za
- Please follow the steps in the Manual on how to Register/Login, published on the NRF website at www.nrf.ac.za, with all the call documents.
- **Applicants must update their CVs before creating the applications.**
- Supervisors applying on behalf of PhD students must ensure that student details are captured in their CVs under Student Supervision Record section.
- Applicants must ensure that their employment records in the CV section is updated accordingly.
- Go to "My Applications" and select "Create Application".
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **Knowledge Interchange & Collaboration (KIC) 1st Call.**
- Remember to complete all sections of the application as indicated on the online application form.
- Attachments must be in English and be converted to PDF.
- Should you not follow the guidelines for attaching the necessary supporting documents, your application may not be considered.
- Remember to __submit__ your application on completion.
- Completed applications will go to your institution 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.
- 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 your research office if you have any queries.
- All application for **KIC Review Period 1** grants should be submitted by **31 March 2023**. **No application will be accepted beyond this date.**
- The NRF will not be held liable for server/IT problems experienced by any institution for non-submission of applications.

Communicating outcomes to the applicants

The processing of applications after the call closing date entails screening all applications for eligibility, evaluating eligible applications through a peer review process, announcing the outcomes and awarding of grants. Feedback will be communicated to all institution Designated Authorities in the form of a list/spreadsheet of all successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Conditions of Grant (CoG)

The CoG will accompany each formal letter of award. This should be signed by both the grantholder and the Designated Authority at the institution. The CoG should be uploaded on the NRF system within 30 days of receipt of the documents. Failure to comply may result in the NRF cancelling the award. Funding can only be released for payment to the institution once the signed CoG was received.

Reporting and Payments

- Grantholders will be required to submit a Completion Report within thirty (30) days following the completion of the events/travel. The reporting template will be accessible online throughout the duration of the grant.
- The NRF support should be acknowledged in all publications (including World Wide Web pages) and presentations (oral or poster).

Contacts

All queries or comments about this call should be addressed to:

For content-related queries	For technical and grant-related queries
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Active Bilateral South African Partner Countries

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