

## Call for Applications: DSI - NRF CONFERENCE FUND 2026

**UCT's internal deadline: Friday, 04 April 2025**

Please direct all queries to Zam Ndzotyana ([zam.ndzotyana@uct.ac.za](mailto:zam.ndzotyana@uct.ac.za)).

### PURPOSE

The Conference Fund is intended to support the hosting of prominent international conferences focused on excellent scientific research that has potential for socio-economic impact. This funding platform makes provision for **large, strategic events of an international nature**, hosted in South Africa, or on behalf of South Africa abroad. The fund will typically support 'global conferences' of **more than 500 participants**.

#### **Please note:**

Applicants should only apply for travel and hosting of a physical meeting if they are confident and can show convincing evidence that such meetings can and/or will take place. It must be noted upfront that carry forwards will not be allowed for postponed or cancelled events.

The NRF requires strong motivation and evidence to be provided in support for virtual gatherings that require funding for hosting and/or registration fee, and/or attendance/participation.

### ELIGIBILITY

UCT researchers are eligible to apply, provided that they are:

- Permanent UCT employees

OR

- On contract for the duration of the funding period applied for and until after the submission of the NRF progress report no later than 30 days after the conference. If the applicant's contract is not valid for the required period of time, then the Research Office requires a letter from the applicant's Head of Department confirming that the contract will be extended, should the funding be awarded. This letter must be received before the application can be submitted to the NRF;
- In possession of a PhD degree;
- The applicant must be a member of the conference organising committee.

### FUNDING

The conference should take place between **1 January 2026 and 31 December 2026**. Grants are limited to a maximum of R2 million per conference (and a minimum of R350,000). **At least one thirds of the total cost of the event must be sourced elsewhere.**

Funding may only be used for the following activities:

- Venue and/or equipment hire;
- Catering – meals, lunches, tea and coffee breaks;
- Conference marketing material;
- Evaluation reports and/or publication of conference proceedings;
- Translation;
- Accommodation and/or travel for non-paying delegates (keynote speakers, or participants from Africa only);
- Bursaries/support for participants with appropriate backgrounds and/or experience that would be useful to include in order to achieve the conference objectives (limited to participants from developing countries, and specifically from Africa);
- Given the competitive nature of the programme and budgetary limitations, funding is not guaranteed, and the NRF will only make a contribution to the event.

**Costs for non-scientific activities e.g., cultural activities and social programmes will not qualify for consideration.**

**Compulsory supporting document**

- A list of the conference organising committee (A diversified committee comprising of researchers from different institutions is highly encouraged);
- A list of local and international invited keynote speakers;
- CVs of the organising committee members and invited keynote speakers;
- A detailed draft or final version of the conference programme;
- A letter of support/sponsorship/co-funding/part-funding from the international body;
- Letters of support from hosting institutions;
- Information on conference publicity (especially international) and outreach activities;
- A separate detailed budget for the conference (please put only the amount you are requesting in the section titled 'Financials: Operating Costs');
- Proof of other sources of funding and fundraising strategy.

**APPLICATION & SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Applications must be submitted electronically via the NRF Connect system at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>.

- Register/Login by following the steps in the Manual published on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-documents/>;
- Click on SYNC NOW to Migrate your NRF Online Submission CV data to NRF Connect;
- Create or update your CV;
- On the Menu, click on Applications under My Applications tab;
- Click on the + sign next to Travel, Training and Conference Grants category;
- Click on the Create button next to '**DSI-NRF Conference Fund**;
- Complete all compulsory sections;
- Attach the required supporting documentation in **PDF** format;
- Click on the **Submit** button.

**It is of utmost importance that applicants consult the call [Framework document](#) for more detailed information about the call.**

**Please be advised that the UCT Research Office may not review applications submitted after UCT's internal closing date i.e., **Friday, 04 April 2025**.**

Note: Only applications endorsed by UCT Research Office by the NRF deadline for Designated Authorities will be considered for funding by NRF.
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