

**NRF Call for Joint Applications  
Switzerland (SNSF) / South Africa (NRF) Lead Agency**

Please direct all queries to Alison Witbooi (at [researchfunding@uct.ac.za](mailto:researchfunding@uct.ac.za)).

UCT's internal closing date: Friday 06 September 2024

## Background

The NRF is committed to promote international collaboration in advancing research excellence, reflected through agreements with a number of strategic partners. The objectives of the South Africa-Switzerland partnership are to:

- build on existing, outstanding, and established research partnerships;
- contribute to scientific advancement in both countries by funding collaborative research projects in specified research fields;
- provide an opportunity for emerging researchers to cooperate in an international setting and to develop their scientific careers;
- support the advancement of basic and applied research; and – contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

## Thematic focus areas

Submitted research proposals should clearly indicate how they aim to address one or more of the Seventeen (17) [Sustainable Development Goals](#). Successful proposals are those likely to empower emerging researchers in both countries to become globally engaged citizens with knowledge, skills, and innovation potential to tackle major societal challenges in the SDGs. Proposals that do not illustrate the link with one or more of the above-mentioned SDGs will not be considered for evaluation.

## Eligibility

This funding opportunity 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. If on contract, the contract should be for at least the duration of the funding period (until 31 December 2027).

- The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD.
- A PI from South Africa and a PI from Switzerland
- Inclusion of a Co-PI with a PhD from a Historically Disadvantaged Institution

It is mandatory for UCT Principal Investigators to include as part of the research team a research partner from a historically disadvantaged institution (HDI). The partner from an HDI can serve as a co-applicant and must be in possession of PhD. Proposals submitted without a research partner from a historically disadvantaged institution will be ineligible

Each PI is allowed to submit only one proposal and cannot serve as a PI on more than one proposal.

## Funding

The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed **R1.5 mil per project**. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3 years, to be paid in annual instalments and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2025.

- **R500 000 for all activities of the collaborative project**. To be released per annum for a three-year funding period in line with the PIs budget requests.
- **R740 000 for postdoctoral support**. Two years of funding at R370 000 per annum (R320 000 non-taxable stipend, R50 000 towards research costs).

## Eligible research activities:

Funding will be made available for the following research activities

- **Research-related costs:** Activities to be supported may include expenses relating to actual research costs such as research field work; conducting interviews, surveys, laboratory experiments; research-related trips of the research teams between the partnering countries, etc. Airfare, accommodation, ground transport, subsistence, visa, and health insurance costs should be calculated using UCT's travel policies).
- **Postdoctoral fellows** Researchers can utilise the grant to support up to one postdoctoral position within their collaborative projects. The support should be equivalent to the NRF Freestanding Postdoctoral Fellowships. The responsibilities of this position may go beyond research and include activities such as the management and administration of the collaborative project.
- **Short-term research placement:** The placements should enable emerging researchers within collaborative projects to
  - learn valuable new skills or techniques;
  - access facilities or resources not readily available at home;
  - build relationships with potential new collaborators; and
  - advance complementary collaborative research. The duration of each placement is expected to be not more than three months, with the flexibility to split the placement into several shorter visits.
- **Knowledge sharing and capacity building:** Funds can be used in support of activities organised by the partners, such as joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia and lecture presentations; capacity building sessions such as participation in winter/summer schools and master classes; setting up of joint experiments; accessing each other's research infrastructure; local/regional dissemination of results aimed at involving stakeholders, and/or end-users from outside the funded project; project meetings; etc.
- **Small equipment, consumables and accessories:** Up to a maximum of 20% of the budget may be budgeted for this item.

The following will **NOT** be funded:

- Consultants' fees
- Large equipment
- Project management fees
- Overheads
- Salaries and temporary staff fees
- Educational expenses (scholarships/ bursaries/ student fees, etc.)

## Application process

The South African PIs must submit their collaborative research proposals through an online application process to the NRF on 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 **Research Grants**;
- Click on the Create button next to **'Switzerland/SA (SNSF/NRF) Lead Agency**
- Complete all compulsory sections and the relevant non-compulsory sections;

- Attach the following **compulsory supporting documentation** in **PDF** format:
  - CVs of all consortia partners including the Swiss Principal Investigator.
  - Budgets of the Swiss Principal Investigator.
  - Budget division of the South African team, in particular budget sharing between the Historically Advantaged and Historically Disadvantaged Institutions.
- Click on the **Submit** button.

Only applications endorsed by UCT Research Office will be considered for funding by NRF. Please submit your application by the UCT internal deadline, **Friday, 06 September 2024** to receive review feedback.

It is of utmost importance to consult the full [Framework document](#) for more details about the funding programme and the review process.