



SAMRC - Self Initiated Research Grants (SIR)

Guide to proposal development and approval process

Note: Most SAMRC-SIR funding calls are health-related, so the proposal development and approval process outlined here is designed for FHS researchers. The process for other faculties is very similar, with only slight variations and is managed by the International Grants Hub (IGH). If you are from another faculty, please contact IGH for their specific process [[click here to email](#)].

RIMS System

Platform for submitting SAMRC applications

- 1 Register on RIMS
- 2 Initiate a SIR application
- 3 Complete the application - key to sections includes:
 - 3.1 Aims
 - 3.2 CVs
 - 3.3 Key personnel
 - 3.4 Milestones and deliverables
- 4 Download and complete the detailed budget then upload it to RIMS application.
- 5 Generate a PDF preview of the application

PI actioned step

UCT eRA System

UCT's system for internal review and approval

- 6 Initiate a SIR Application stage approval form
- 7 Complete required tabs and upload supporting documentation
- 8 Advance to Final Faculty Approvers

PI actioned step

- 10 Complete the application, uploading supporting documentation
- 11 Submit your application via RIMS

PI actioned step

- 9 Institutional Approval

FFA actioned step

SAMRC - Self Initiated Research Grants (SIR)

Guide to proposal development and approval process



NOTES

Introduction

Review this infographic for a detailed guide on the proposal development and approval process for South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)- Self-Initiated Research (SIR) applications.

Note explanations

NOTE 1 - REGISTER ON RIMS

If you do not already have a RIMS profile, register your profile on the system.

Tip: Ensure you provide all personal details on the registration form, as this information auto-populates into your application and incomplete details may cause delays.

NOTE 2 - INITIATE A SIR APPLICATION

Log in to RIMS using your username and password. Make sure to select "external account". Start a new SAMRC-SIR application.

NOTE 3 - COMPLETE THE APPLICATION

RIMS provides a standardised online template for your funding application, ensuring that your proposal meets the required format and guidelines set by the SAMRC.

The online templates structure the content according to the SAMRC's specifications and guide you through each required section ensuring consistency and compliance with the funding criteria.

Complete all sections of the proposal. Use "Save" to save your progress and allow you to return to your application later. Only once your application has been internally approved can you click "Save and Close" to move your application forward.

NOTE 3.1 - AIMS

The SAMRC aims to support the generation of:

- New knowledge
- Medical products
- Improved health practices
- Health promotion strategies
- Enhanced health policy and systems

Make sure your application clearly explains how your project will contribute to at least one of these aims, selecting only one from the provided checklist.

NOTE 3.2 - CVS

CVs are an important part of the SAMRC-SIR application. Use this opportunity to highlight your suitability, track record and ability to lead the proposed research project. CVs should be a maximum of 5 pages.

Tip: Use this [template](#) as an example of an abridged CV and modify accordingly.

NOTE 3.3 - KEY PERSONNEL

Include the names and roles of all key personnel involved in your project. Key personnel are those who contribute significantly to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not salaries are requested.

Tip: Ensure that all named personnel are aware of their involvement and have agreed to participate, as the SAMRC may confirm this directly with them.



NOTE 3.4 - MILESTONE AND DELIVERABLES

Milestones mark the completion of significant stages in a project that require time, resources, and effort. Provide a descriptive title for each milestone, which can be broken down into 1-3 key tasks, each with its own duration and deliverables.

Deliverables are the measurable outcomes produced during each stage.

For outcomes, outline them in the “short description(s)” section of the form and provide more detail in the “detailed description(s)” section.

NOTE 4 - DOWNLOAD AND COMPLETE THE DETAILED BUDGET THEN UPLOAD IT TO RIMS APPLICATION

The SAMRC-SIR Grant offers up to R200,000 per year for a maximum of 3 years. A detailed budget is required for year 1, with indicative budgets for years 2 and 3.

You complete two budget documents for SAMRC-SIR applications:

1. A detailed budget which is completed on a Word document downloaded from RIMS and then attached to your final RIMS application
2. A budget summary which includes only broad budget categories and is captured directly via RIMS

Tip: Refer to [SAMRC's Terms and Conditions document](#) for guidance on allowable and non-allowable costs.

UCT has developed a [budget template](#) to assist you in completing the detailed budget. This template is designed to assist you in identifying the funding categories, assisting with calculations and identifying allowable costs. Complete this Excel budget template paying careful attention to the following:

- Only request funds under the provided categories
- Ensure budget totals and sub-totals are correct, checking your additions in Excel

- Use round values for example R2,000 vs. R1,999.60
- Request budget for the R200,000 exactly- do not exceed the cap as proposals requesting more than this will be rejected, but there is no benefit in requesting less

Do not modify the UCT budget template, as it meets SAMRC's budget requirements!

Once you confirm the budget figures are correct, transfer them from the template to the detailed SAMRC-SIR budget Word document, which you download from RIMS and enter the summary figures into the budget summary table in the RIMS application.

Tip: Ensure that the figures in the summary table on RIMS align with those in the detailed budget template.

See [guidance](#) for assistance in completing the budget sections of the application via RIMS.

SAMRC requires budget justifications to explain and justify the items included in your budget. This information should be provided in the designated section of the RIMS application.

NOTE 5 - GENERATE A PDF PREVIEW OF THE APPLICATION

DO NOT ACTION THE PI SUBMISSION ON RIMS AT THIS POINT.

Your application is now ready to go through UCT's internal approval process.

There are certain documents/sections of your RIMS proposal that will be reviewed as part of the UCT eRA approval process. PDF and download the following completed documents from RIMS:

- SIR grant proposal
- SIR grant budget form
- Abridged CV

These documents will be uploaded via UCT eRA as part of the internal approval process.



NOTE 6 - INITIATE A SIR PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

SAMRC applications must be approved internally by UCT before being sent to the funder. This process is done by logging an application-stage approval via UCT's eRA system.

Follow these steps to initiate an SAMRC-SIR UCT eRA application-stage approval:

1. Log on to UCT eRA using your researcher role
2. Navigate to the award management section
3. Select Project Application/Approval request from the dropdown menu
4. Choose Application-stage approvals under other funding schemes
5. Select the SAMRC-SIR approval form option

There is a streamlined UCT eRA approval process designed specifically for SAMRC-SIR applications, bypassing the finance approval steps and going directly to the final faculty approver. This separate UCT eRA process applies only to SAMRC-SIR applications; other SAMRC funding schemes use the general UCT eRA application-stage approval form.

Tip: Ensure you use the correct approval form, which is only visible when the SAMRC-SIR call is open and disappears once it closes.

NOTE 7 - COMPLETE THE UCT ERA APPLICATION AND UPLOAD SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

As the principal investigator (PI), you are responsible for completing the tabs "Key information" and "Resourcing, ethics and biosafety". All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

Upload supporting documentation via UCT eRA to accompany your application. Supporting documentation includes:

Key information tab

- A PDF copy of your completed SIR grant proposal downloaded from the RIMS system
- A PDF copy of the completed SIR Grant Budget form downloaded from the RIMS system
- A PDF copy of the completed SIR Grant Reviewer Nomination form downloaded from the RIMS system

- Resourcing ethics and biosafety tab
- Applicants CV
- Ethical clearance certificate or letter stating why ethical clearance is either not required or providing assurance that it will be finalised before work on the research project/study commences

NOTE 8 - ADVANCE YOUR APPLICATION TO FINAL FACULTY APPROVER

Identify and tag your final faculty approver via the UCT eRA application. Ensure you tag the correct final faculty approver, if the wrong approver is tagged, your application will not be reviewed and cannot move through the workflow.

Tip: Do not tag the departmental budget reviewer, as SAMRC-SIR grants do not require finance approver signoff.

Advance your application to the final faculty approver by selecting "Save and Close," then "Submitted to Dean/Deputy Dean/Final Faculty Approver," and clicking "Done."

Your final faculty approver will receive a notification via UCT eRA that your application is ready for review. Applications must be with the final faculty approver at least 10 working days before the funder deadline.

The final faculty approver will conduct a technical and administrative review of your application. Reverting to you with any queries or corrections.

NOTE 9 - INSTITUTIONAL APPROVAL

Research Contracts and Innovation (RC&I) provide institutional signoff on behalf of UCT.

Once approved by the final faculty approver, a notification is sent to RC&I. RC&I conducts a review on the application essentially to ensure that the proposal contents, including the budget, align with the pre-award approval record captured submitted via UCT eRA.

Once all the necessary approvals are in place, the application is marked as "Institutional approval – ready for submission by the institution".

SAMRC - Self Initiated Research Grants (SIR)



Note: UCT eRA is for internal approvals only and your application is not sent to the funder via this system.

NOTE 10 - COMPLETE THE APPLICATION, UPLOADING SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Finalise your application based on the feedback received through the internal approval process.

Upload supporting documentation to your RIMS application. There are three mandatory attachments for SAMRC-SIR applications. Upload them as PDFs to your application:

1. SIR Grant Budget Form
2. SIR Grant Reviewer Nomination Form
3. Ethical clearance or ethics letter

You may also upload additional documentation, such as tables, figures, or schematics, in PDF format. Be sure to cross-reference these using a logical system, in the text fields provided in RIMS.

NOTE 11 - SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION VIA RIMS

Note: You can only submit your application via RIMS once you have received final faculty approval via UCT eRA.

Once your SAMRC-SIR application is complete and approved via UCT eRA you initiate the pre-submission process on RIMS by selecting the status "Institutional screening" and clicking "Done."