

South Africa / China Joint Research Programme

10th Call for 2019 Joint Research Project Proposals (JRP)

and

2nd Call for 2019 Joint Flagship Projects (FP)

Closing Date: 28 September 2018

A maximum of 15 joint projects will be funded under the Joint Research Programme (JRP)
and

A maximum of 1 joint project will be funded under the Flagship Programme (FP)

Formal diplomatic relations between South Africa and the People's Republic of China were established in January 1998. The relations were given impetus in 2001 through the creation of a Bi-National Commission to champion bilateral relations in seven sectoral committees, including science and technology. In line with this agreement we are pleased to announce a 10th call for joint research project proposals (JRP) and a 2nd call for joint flagship projects between the South African and Chinese researchers. Researchers are invited to submit proposals in either the JRP or the FP no later than the date indicated.

Aims of the Programme

This Programme aims to:

- contribute to scientific advancement in both countries by funding researchers' mobility in the frame of joint research projects in specified research fields;
- provide an opportunity for researchers to cooperate in an international setting and to develop their scientific careers, especially for early-stage, mid-career as well as female researchers;
- support the advancement of basic and applied research; and
- contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

Areas of cooperation

Applicants interested in applying under the **Joint Research Programme (JRP)** are invited to submit their joint research proposals in the following designated thematic areas prioritised by South Africa and China:

- Biotechnology in health and agriculture
- Traditional medicines
- Renewable energy
- Water resources
- Palaeoanthropology / archaeology

Joint research proposals under the **Flagship Programme (FP)** can only be submitted within the Big Data (in Astronomy) thematic area. Any other flagship proposal submitted outside this theme will not be considered for funding.

Please note:

- It is important to note that researchers deciding to apply for funds under the flagship programme will not be allowed to also apply for funds under the Joint Research Programme. Only one application per applicant will be accepted and evaluated by NRF and MOST.
- Joint projects with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral co-operations will be favourably considered.
- Also, the joint projects by young and emerging researchers / scientists and those that pay particular attention to a balanced involvement of female and male researchers (gender equality), will be positively considered.

Duration of the projects

The projects will be supported for a period of two years (starting in early 2019) for both the JRP and FP.

Who may apply?

For both the JRP and FP:

- an application must designate two Principal Investigators (PIs), one in South Africa and one in China, who will bear the main responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting;
- project proposals submitted by young, early-stage or mid-career researchers as well as project proposals with involvement of doctoral students and/or female researchers will be prioritised for funding by both sides; and
- the focus of the Programme lies on new international partnerships. Therefore, follow-up proposals with the same research partners will not be prioritised for funding (if they have already been funded under this Programme).

South Africa:

This call 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. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD. In terms of human capital development, South African applications from previously disadvantaged individuals and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education institutions will be prioritised.

China:

This call is open to working researchers residing in Mainland China and affiliated with a recognised Chinese higher education university/college, research institution, or enterprise.

How do I apply?

The onus is on the applicant to find their own research partner. Proposals must be received in both South Africa and China. Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or China, but not both, will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive; therefore submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The availability of funds and the evaluation of applications from both countries should be positive for projects to be considered for funding. The NRF will not be held responsible for non-submission, administration or evaluation of the application in the partner country.

South Africa:

Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted through an online application process to the NRF by accessing the link: <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID/Passport number and password.
- Go to “My Applications” and select “Create Application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: *South Africa/China Joint Call for Proposals 2019*.
- Remember to complete all sections of the application as indicated on the online application form.
- Please attach the necessary documents in PDF file in the following order: CV of partner and the budget of partner.
- Remember to submit your application on completion.
- Completed applications will go to the host University 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 as outlined in this document 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 the institution research office or equivalent, if you have any queries.

China:

Application forms and guidelines for Chinese applicants could be found through the following link:
<http://www.cistc.gov.cn/>.

Which activities may I apply for?

The purpose of the JRP is to support the research mobility of researchers between the two countries to carry out joint research projects. In this regard, funding under the JRP will be made available for visits and exchanges (mobility) of researchers/ scientists conducting joint research in the above-mentioned thematic areas.

The following activities will be supported under the FP:

- **Research-related costs** - activities to be supported may include expenses relating to conducting research such as field work (e.g. conducting interviews), research-related trips/visits, small equipment, consumables and accessories, publication related costs, etc.
- **Doctoral and post-doctoral research placements** - for placements not longer than 6 months per annum; with flexibility to split the placements into several shorter visits throughout the duration of the grant.
- **Knowledge sharing costs** - in support of project-related activities, such as joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecturer presentations, meetings, local and regional dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders.

Please note:

In the case of meetings, research visits and exchanges of scientists, personnel and experts, as well as reciprocal visits undertaken as part of joint research projects and the attendance of workshops, seminars, symposia and other meetings funded under this partnership, the sending side will be responsible for expenses associated with international travel (flights), visas, medical insurance and subsistence while the receiving party covers accommodation costs, local/ground transport and all expenses associated with hosting of events, e.g. venue for workshops, etc.

The following will **NOT** be funded from the funds allocation:

- Consultant's fees
- Project management fees
- Educational expenses (scholarships and/or bursaries, etc.)
- Large equipment
- Salaries and temporary staff fees.

Funding modalities

Funding, for both the JRP and FP, will be available for a maximum of two years for collaborative research projects jointly developed and completed by researchers on both sides. In both countries, all the approved projects will get funding support from the two parties in terms of the cost of activities mentioned above. Apart from the financial support from the two parties, institutions and universities in both countries are encouraged to solicit other funding resources.

Funding limits

South Africa:

The total amount requested from the NRF, under the JRP, should not exceed **R400 000** per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of two years, to be paid in annual installments (R200 000 per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2019.

The total amount requested from the NRF, under the FP, should not exceed **R1 mil** per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of two years, to be paid in annual installments (R500 000 per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2019.

China:

The total amount requested from MOST, under the JRP, should not exceed **RMB 1 mil**. Funding will be made available for a maximum of two years to be paid in annual installments (RMB 500,000 per year). Reimbursements will be paid to the implementing institutions. Reimbursements will be received upon submitting annual scientific and financial reports to MOST. A Guideline of Implementation shall be provided after selection to the projects endorsed by the Programme.

The total amount requested from MOST, under the FP, should not exceed **RMB 2 mil**. Funding will be made available for a maximum of two years to be paid in annual instalments, **RMB 1 mil** per year.

How are applications evaluated?

Following the closing date indicated below, applications will be submitted to recognised national experts in the various fields of research represented by the proposals received. These experts will evaluate each proposal based on the following broad criteria:

- Scientific quality of the intended research project including the feasibility of the joint research plan and the adequacy of the scientific method.
- Alignment with national priorities in each country.
- Reasonableness of the described further cooperation perspective.
- Project proposals submitted by young, early-stage or mid-career researchers.
- Project proposals with the involvement of doctoral students and female researchers.
- From the South African side: researchers from previously-disadvantaged communities.

Please note that other national criteria may be applicable in line with the national policies and regulations of the partnering countries. Following national evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the two Parties based on the results of the expert evaluations done in both countries. The project selection will be carried out at the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) Meeting. The minutes of this meeting (indicating approved joint projects for funding) shall be signed by both Parties to indicate a joint consensus on projects to fund.

Project follow-up and reporting

- A final scientific and financial report has to be submitted in English by both the South African and the Chinese PIs no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- From both the South African and Chinese sides, successful submission of the first annual report is an **Obligatory** condition of funding in subsequent years.
- All project reports must mention project outputs as compared to the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The funders reserves the right to make the final reports available to researchers within and outside this programme in similar disciplines.
- The joint publications by researchers must mention the support from the funders (i.e. the South African Department of Science and Technology, the South African National Research Foundation, and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology).

Intellectual property

The researchers of each country, particularly the PIs, must take adequate steps to ensure protection and sharing of the intellectual property that could result from the joint projects.

Closing date for applications

Applications must be submitted by **Friday, 28 September 2018**. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding. Researchers are also advised to ensure that their research partners' applications are submitted and have also been received in the partner country in time. Both the South African and the Chinese funders will not be held responsible for applications that were not received in either side.

Contact details for queries and further information

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