GUIDELINE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF CSIR STRATEGIC RESEARCH RELATIONSHIPS

1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the different types of strategic research relationships that the CSIR has with research institutions, tertiary education institutions (TEIs) and research alliances, and clarifies the roles of the operating units, national research centres, Human Capital Development Portfolio, and the Strategic Research Alliances sub-portfolio in their development and management.

Box 1: Definition of strategic research relationships

Strategic Research Relationships are those relationships that are aligned with the CSIR strategic objectives of strengthening the science and technology base, building and transforming human capital, and performing relevant knowledge-generating research and transferring technology and skilled human capital.

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2. CSIR STRATEGIC RESEARCH RELATIONSHIPS

CSIR has bilateral and multi-lateral relationships with tertiary education institutions, research institutions and private sector R&D units, both in South Africa and internationally.

The relationships with TEIs have in most cases been formalised through MoUs which typically identify possible areas of collaboration in research. With respect to some TEI's scholarship agreements which outline areas for human capacity development have been developed.

There are relatively few relationships with the private sector and research institutions. Close collaboration has been maintained with some private sector companies and research institutions in order to explore possibilities for research collaboration.

CSIR is a member of two research alliances – Global Research Alliance and Regional Research Alliance.

The relationships are guided by the Science and Technology strategy as well as the HCD Strategy and Plan and are aimed at building competence in established and emerging research areas through joint research and human capacity development.

The relationships support the CSIR mandate, which emphasises partnerships and alliances, and the CSIR strategic objectives whose core elements are: strengthening the science and technology base, building and transforming human capital, and performing relevant knowledge generating research and transferring technology and skilled human capital.

3. PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH RELATIONSHIPS

An agreement establishing formal research relationships can be concluded between:
- (i)   A research organisations and one CSIR operating unit or national research centres, and
- (ii)   A research organisation and the CSIR where more than one OU or research centre participates in the relationship.

The key considerations for prioritising the relationships will be opportunities for:

- ▪ Securing knowledge and skills that complement and enhance the expertise available in the CSIR and improve the competence of the organisation in the priority research areas.
- ▪ Accessing networks of knowledge that support the achievement of CSIR priorities.
- ▪ Pursuing research that provides a platform for collaboration with previously disadvantaged TEIs.
- ▪ Securing long term co-funding for research and/ or training

3.1 AGREEMENT INVOLVING A SINGLE OPERATING UNIT OR NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE

Table 1: Process and Responsibility for a Research Relationship with a Single OU/Centre

	Activity	Responsibility
Development of MoU	Discussion of possible areas for cooperation with collaborating institution.	Operating unit/ national research centre.
	Preparation of draft MoU. SRA to be informed.	Legal Services at the request of the operating unit/ national research centre. SRA to ensure consistency with similar agreements.
	Liaison with collaborating institution to finalise MoU.	Operating Unit/ national research centre
	Signing of MoU. Copy of final MoU to be sent to SRA manager.	Operating Unit/ national research centre director.
Management of MoU	Annual review of implementation of agreement.	Steering Committee[1]

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[1] The representatives of the CSIR will typically be: Group Manager Human Capital Development, Strategic Research Alliances Manager, and Human Capital Development Manager.

3.2 AGREEMENT INVOLVING SEVERAL OPERATING UNITS OR CENTRES

The process and responsibilities for developing and managing a research relationship involving several operating units or centres are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Process and Responsibilities Research Relationships Involving Several OUs/Centres

	Activity	Responsibility
Development of MoU	Discussion of possible areas for cooperation with collaborating institution.	Operating units/ national research centres.
	Preparation of draft MoU.	Legal Services at the request of SRA sub-portfolio. Units to review draft of MoU.
	Liaison with collaborating institution to finalise MoU.	SRA sub-portfolio.
	Signing of MoU	Member of the CSIR Executive
Management of MoU	Preparation of progress reports	Project Managers
	Annual review of implementation of agreement.	Steering Committee

3.3 DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENTS

The process and responsibilities for developing and managing a scholarship agreement are described in Table 3.

Table 3: Process and responsibilities for developing scholarship agreements

	Activity	Responsibility
Development of scholarship agreement	Discussion of possible areas for cooperation with collaborating institution (based on MoU).	SRA Manager in consultation with HCD Manager and Strategic Research Managers.
	Preparation of scholarship agreement	Legal Services at the request of SRA sub-portfolio.
	Liaison with TEI to finalise scholarship agreement	Strategic Research Alliances sub-portfolio.
	Signing of scholarship agreement	Member of the CSIR Executive responsible for human capacity development.
Implementation of scholarship agreement	Identification of training areas (annually)	SRA Manager in consultation with HCD Manager, Group Manager Research and Development and Strategic Research Managers.
	Interviews of the candidates	Relevant HR Managers
	Selection of students from shortlist	Scholarship Committee[2] in consultation with operating units.
	Monitoring of student performance	Scholarship Committee in consultation with relevant HR Managers.
	Recruitment of students	Relevant HR managers

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[2] The representatives of the CSIR typically are Strategic Research Alliances Manager and Human Capital Development Manager.