



science and technology

Department:  
Science and Technology  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National  
Research  
Foundation

**The Department of Science & Technology (DST)**  
**Energy Research Programme**  
**(ERP)**

**Guide to Applicants**

**For**

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW RENEWABLE AND  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SPOKE  
IN OCEAN ENERGY**

**Read this guide carefully before completing your application**

**Your application will only be considered if you comply with the  
requirements as set out in this Guide**

## Acronyms And Abbreviations

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APR	Annual Progress Reports
ARIC	Applied Research, Innovation and Collaboration
COG	Conditions of Grant
CRSES	Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies
DoE	Department of Energy
DST	Department of Science and Technology
ESGC	Energy Security Grand Challenge
HCD	Human Capital Development
HEIs	Higher Education Institution
Hub	Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
MANCO	ERP Management Committee
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
NRF	National Research Foundation
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
PoE	Proof of Expenditure
R&D	Research and Development
RDI	Research, Development and Innovation
RSE	Renewable and Sustainable Energy
RSES	Renewable & Sustainable Energy Scholarship
SANEDI	South African National Energy Development Institute
SANERI	South African National Energy Research Institute
SCs	Science Councils
SLA	Service Level Agreement
PV	Photovoltaic
TYIP	Ten-Year Innovation Plan

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## 1. Introduction and Overview

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Government of South Africa, through the National Research Foundation (NRF), wishes to provide funding for the establishment of **one new Renewable and Sustainable Energy (RSE) Spoke** in Ocean Energy .

The DST has developed and has started the roll-out of a collaborative hub and spokes model that recognises and supports the distribution of research capacity and expertise for a defined focus area, across more than one institution and/or divisions of an institution. This hub and spokes model is called the Energy Research Programme (ERP) and is funded by the DST.

The various institutions are assigned areas of focus and responsibility within the broader defined focus area, preferably within their individual areas of pre-existing competencies, capacities, expertise and specialisation. One institution is selected as the coordinating point (the Hub) and the rest are the Spokes. A hub-and-spokes cluster may have any number of spokes and these may be added as the need arises, for example if new sub-focus areas not yet catered for are realized. These hub-and-spokes are mainly expected to focus on applied research with a goal of ensuring that South Africa stays abreast with regard to the latest technologies and research in a specific focus area. The hub-and-spokes are also critical to realising the objectives of human capital development in renewable energy.

The first hub-and-spokes cluster has been established to contribute to the key strategic area of Energy Security with the Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies (CRSES) at the University of Stellenbosch serving as the hub with three spokes focusing on Wind (University of Cape Town & Stellenbosch University), Solar Thermal (University of Pretoria & Stellenbosch University) and Solar Photo-Voltaic (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University & Fort Hare ) .

**Initial funding of a minimum grant of R1 million per annum to the spoke and R1.5 million for the remainder of an initial contract period of 5 years will be made available to Institutions within South Africa to establish the spoke. The grant may be renewable for a further period, depending on funding availability and performance. Individuals based at qualifying institutions in South Africa are invited to bid for the aforementioned spoke according to the guidelines and criteria captured in this guide.**

**This call is therefore aimed at establishing one additional spoke within the current cluster which will focus on ocean energy. The establishment of ONLY one Spoke is determined by the limitation of available funding.**

## 2. Background Context and National Priorities

South Africa is well situated and endowed with renewable energy resources such as direct solar radiation, ocean wave power, wind energy, and, to a lesser extent, arable land for the cultivation of bio-energy feedstock. Apart from the socio-economic benefits of a vibrant renewable and sustainable energy industry for South Africa, the diversification of the nation's energy supply through a stake in renewable energy technology development and implementation in the post fossil-fuel 21st century is urgently required. This effort will be of value not only to South Africa, but also the rest of the continent and the world.

Government is committed to expanding its funding support for energy research. This call for proposals is one of a number of initiatives to develop and enhance human capital,

knowledge and innovation in the field of renewable and sustainable energy research. The DST, with the support of the NRF, is spearheading this initiative.

### **3. Renewable Energy Research Spokes**

#### **3.1 Purpose/Aim**

The overall aim of the Spokes are to accelerate the delivery of knowledge capacity and appropriate human resources in strategic focus areas of renewable and sustainable energy in support of accelerated and shared economic growth within the bounds of environmental sustainability. The specific objectives are threefold:

- i. deepen knowledge through research,
- ii. develop appropriate human capital; and
- iii. stimulate innovation and enterprise development.

The objectives of the spokes are expanded on below:

#### **3.2 Objectives**

##### **3.2.1 Deepening knowledge through research**

The focus of the research must be aligned with themes and priorities as expressed in applicable national strategy and policy documents including, but not limited to the National Energy Act, 2008 (Act No. 34 of 2008), The White Paper on Renewable Energy (2003), the Energy Security Grand Challenge (ESGC), as described in the Ten-Year Innovation Plan (TYIP) of the DST and priority areas as identified by government and NRF, as well as relevant national South African energy research entities ([www.dst.gov.za](http://www.dst.gov.za) & [www.doe.gov.za](http://www.doe.gov.za)). Student research projects should, as far as possible, be directed towards these priority areas – although some space should be available for more open-ended enquiry.

The research focus of the existing spokes is currently on solar and wind. The specific focus of spokes which are established in the future are jointly determined by the DST in conjunction with the NRF, and are influenced by priorities in the sector and available funding.

However, the research should focus on the following nine medium to long term energy related research themes which have been identified in the draft national energy research, development and innovation strategy:

- Energy infrastructure optimisation;
- Energy efficiency and demand side management;
- Understanding the impact of energy use on the environment;
- The role of energy in stimulating socio-economic development;
- Cleaner fossil fuel development, including clean coal technologies;
- Renewable energy;
- Energy planning and modeling;
- Energy policy research; and
- Alternative energy.

### **3.2.2 Human Capital Development**

The Spokes are intended to develop appropriately qualified and skilled engineers and scientists interested in research, innovation and enterprise development in the targeted field of renewable energy. The emphasis will be on postgraduate research degrees at the Masters and Doctoral levels linked to basic and applied research projects implemented by the spoke. These students will be funded through the DST/NRF Renewable and Sustainable Energy Scholarship Programme (RSES).

### **3.2.3 Stimulating innovation and enterprise development**

The Spokes are expected to utilize appropriate mechanisms to further this objective of which the degree and other courses (teaching), masters and doctoral research (basic and applied research projects) offers opportunities for knowledge creation, skills development and technology transfer. In addition, knowledge transfer can be enhanced through training of skilled manpower and via commercialization of products and services.

The management of the research results as well as the dissemination of research results should receive attention through appropriate media and activities such as peer reviewed journals, active website, seminars and conferences.

As appropriate, solutions should be disseminated or commercialised in line with the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act (Act 51, 2008). Partnerships with institutions and with industrial and government partners locally and internationally are important to ensure the research is correctly focused, useful and sustainable. Partnerships should ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to research that provides novel solutions at the interface of the disciplines of materials, science, engineering, economics and environmental studies. Such partnerships can assist in overcoming market barriers and promoting widespread use of sustainable energy solutions.

It is therefore imperative that cutting-edge research is conducted on appropriate materials, technologies, systems and resource assessment.

## **3.3 Key activities of the spokes**

In order to maximize the impact of the spokes, to create efficiencies and to achieve the objectives of the programme, each spoke should manage and perform/provide the following activities and services:

### **3.3.1 Research**

The primary activity of a spoke is research. The work that is undertaken should be aligned with the approved strategic plan of the spoke with a focus on the creation and development of new knowledge and technology relevant to the identified strategic focus area in sustainable energy.

### **3.3.2 Education and Training**

Human resource development is to be done through appropriate modalities which include masters and doctoral programmes, post-

doctoral support, internship programmes, support for students to study abroad, joint ventures in student training, etc. In creating, broadening and deepening research capacity, a spoke needs to pay particular attention to addressing racial and gender balance.

### **3.3.3 Information brokerage and service rendering (knowledge and technology transfer)**

The spokes are to provide access to a highly developed pool of knowledge, maintaining data bases, promoting knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer, etc.

The spokes are to provide information, analysis, policy, and other services, including informed and reliable advice to government, business, and civil society.

### **3.3.4 Networking**

The spoke is expected to actively collaborate with reputable individuals, groups and institutions. Equally it must negotiate and help realise national, regional, continental and international partnerships, etc.

### **3.3.5 Public awareness and outreach**

The spoke should promote public awareness and understanding of sustainable energy, and the targeted field of research in particular, and its importance, as well as to promote empowerment of previously disadvantaged communities within the targeted fields of research.

Activities within this objective should target the general public, government and academia, as well as young people at school and university.

Each spoke is required to work closely with the Centre for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies (CRSES) at the University of Stellenbosch which is the hub for this cluster. This entails coordination and collaboration on research, as well as participation in the relevant governance structures.

## **4. Governance of ERP**

The governance of the ERP Hub and Spokes is described below:

### **4.1 Management by NRF**

The NRF has been contracted to manage the funding for the ERP. This entails evaluation of Strategic and Performance Plans, provision of and administration of funding and monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress against approved plans. The Hub and Spokes therefore report to the NRF, who will be supported by the DST as the responsible line department. The NRF will also facilitate contracting between the Hub and Spoke and the NRF, and ensure compliance with the governance requirements as set out below.

### **4.2 ERP Management Committee (ManCo)**

The governance of the ERP Hub & Spokes between the DST and NRF takes place through the ERP ManCo which provides strategic direction to the ERP in relation to the purpose for which the programme was established and the implementation of different projects within the ERP. The ERP ManCo includes representatives from the DST as well as the NRF. The Committee meets quarterly and is convened by the project management personnel at the NRF.



### 4.3 Hub Advisory Board

The Advisory Board serves to guide and assist the DST, NRF and the Hub & Spokes in assessing proposed new activities and identifying promising new directions. The Advisory Board consists of representatives of the Hub, DST, NRF and a rotating representative from the Spokes.

### 4.4 Governance of Spokes

The spokes meet at least twice a year with representation from all the existing spokes, the DST and the NRF. In addition, as indicated above, one member from the spokes is delegated to represent the spokes on an annual rotating basis at the Hub Advisory Board. Cost of attending these meetings should be included in the proposal.

## 5. Eligibility and submission of proposals

All proposals submitted, through the various mechanisms, must meet all these criteria in order to qualify for financial support:

### 5.1 Submission of proposal

The proposal must be submitted on the relevant application form which provides a motivation as well as implementation plan to fund research in ocean energy for the next five year period (2016 to 2020) through the establishment of a Spoke. The strategic plan should convey the strategic long term importance of ocean energy as a discipline and make a case for funding R&D in this discipline. This should be done by looking at the global and local context, the identification of key focus areas, and the determination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to making this investment. In addition the implementation plan should capture detail of the establishment and management of the Spoke, the research activities, associated human capital development and the associated deliverables. The afore-mentioned must be accompanied by a budget and both should have the associated timelines.

### 5.2 Application Process

**A call for proposals will open on 17 December 2014 and close on 10 February 2015.** Institutions must set their own internal closing date for DAs to validate applications before the closing date. All proposals must be submitted electronically via the NRF's Submission system at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za>. Please select the Ocean Energy Spoke Research Funding Programme Call under Create New Application.

All applications must be endorsed by the research office of the principal applicant before submission to the NRF. It is the responsibility of each applicant to familiarise themselves with the internal closing date, set by their institution in order to meet the NRF closing date. Incomplete OR late submissions will not be accepted.

A **compulsory soft copy** (in PDF Format) of the application and the scanned signature page of the application must be emailed to: **Mr Raven Jimmy**, [raven@nrf.ac.za](mailto:raven@nrf.ac.za).

**No hard copies of the application will be accepted.**

Only applications endorsed by the research office or its equivalent at higher education or research institutions will be accepted. Late applications will not be considered and **no exceptions will be made to this rule under any circumstances.**

### **5.3 Eligibility of participating institutions that may receive funding**

One of the aims of the ERP Programme is to strengthen the research capability of South African renewable research institutions as contributing to the strengthening of the National System of Innovation. In addition, given the challenges experienced by Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs), it is in the national interest to pursue a developmental agenda within the ERP. The ERP Hub and Spokes model is therefore premised on collaboration and knowledge transfer between institutions.

Applications from a single institution will be considered. However, applications are encouraged which include co-hosting of the spoke between complementing institutions. In the event of the latter application, the role of each of the two institutions in the management, research and human capital developmental activities must be clearly demonstrated as well as the developmental Return on Investment.

Institutions that has been identified as eligible and may receive funding is guided by the “Notice of Intention to Declare Research Institutions” (Notice 860 of 2012), appearing in the Government Gazette of the South African Government, dated 26 October 2012. The following institutions are therefore eligible for this call:

#### **5.3.1 Higher Education Institutions**

All South African public (as opposed to ‘private’) HEIs may receive funding.

#### **5.3.2 Science Councils**

Science councils (SCs) whose legislative mandates generally centred around performance and promotion of research and of technology innovation and transfer can also receive Spoke funding. These will, however, have to be working in collaboration with one or more HEIs on the project. This approach is aimed at mobilizing the vast skills base in Science Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines residing within these SCs, in the training and development of human capital in the renewable energy sector through industry-prioritised collaborative research involving SCs, HEIs and industry.

#### **5.3.3 National Research Facilities**

This refers to national research facilities (NFs) of the NRF declared by the Minister in terms of section 5(1) of the NRF Act. The participation modality and rationale for the NFs is similar to that for the SCs.

#### **5.3.4 Research-performing museums**

This refers to research-performing museums declared as such under the Cultural Institutions Act (Act No. 119 of 1998). The participation modality and rationale for the NFs is similar to that for the SCs.

#### **5.3.5 Other science, engineering and technology research institutions**

Other research, engineering and technology institutions that do not fall into any of the above groups will be considered on a case-by- case basis and be declared

as a research institution that is or is not eligible for receiving funding. This exercise will be conducted once and the status of the particular institution will hold permanently unless circumstances change in a manner that necessitates a review of the position.

## 6. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Arrangements

- a) "Intellectual Property" shall mean intellectual capital related to the Spokes in the form of any and all technical or commercial information, including, but not limited to the following: chemical structures; biological or chemical information; manufacturing techniques and designs; specifications and formulae; know-how; data; systems and processes; production methods; trade secrets; undisclosed inventions; marketing and financial information; as well as registered and unregistered intellectual property in the form of patents, trademarks, designs and plant breeder's rights (whether granted/registered or applied for and copyright in any works, including literary works or computer software programmes).
- b) The Grantholder undertakes to comply with the Grantholder Institution's policy on Intellectual Property disclosures and as envisaged in the Master Funding Agreement between the NRF and the Institution.
- c) The Grantholder shall be entitled to exploit the Intellectual Property, subject to the provisions of the IPR Act, No. 51 of 2008: Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 2008 (<http://www.nipmo.org.za/>).

## 7. Communication & acknowledgement

### (a) NRF or DST communicating about the projects

When the Spokes are funded, the NRF and the DST may need to communicate matters and information pertaining to the Spokes, to other participants in the Spoke and to the public, excepting where such communication may compromise protection of intellectual property and this risk has been communicated to the NRF.

### (b) Beneficiaries acknowledging support

- A grantholder is responsible for ensuring that an acknowledgement of the Spoke support is made in any publication emanating from funded projects.
- NRF support must also be acknowledged appropriately in any media communications on a funded project.
- In acknowledging NRF support, appropriate use of the NRF logo(s) according to the current branding policy of the NRF must be observed.

### (c) Disclaimer

Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in any publication generated through Spoke-supported research, are those of the author(s) and therefore the NRF will not accept any liability in that regard.

## 8. Finances

### 8.1 Funding period

A Hub and respective Spokes are funded for a period of 5 years, subject to the following:

- Successful evaluation and approval of a five-year strategic plan.
- The availability of funds;
- That all agreed "Conditions of Grant" are met;
- The submission of a complete and satisfactory annual progress report, specifically addressing the deliverables as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan and budget.

Funding for the Ocean Energy Spoke would be at the level of R1,000,000 per annum for the first year, and R1,500,00 for the balance of the five years, with each institution attached to the spoke receiving 50% of the allocated amount per annum. The latter allocation is relevant where the spoke consists of two hosting institutions.

## 8.2 Multiple Grants within NRF

A Spokes grant may be held concurrently with other grants in the NRF provided that:

- The respective funds (Spoke and other) are not received/held for the same costs, which would amount to “double-dipping”.
- The application for or receipt of the other grant(s) is declared in the Spoke proposal.

## 8.3 Qualifying costs

The following items are funded within the Spokes on condition that they are legitimate research costs and support the proposal presented for funding:

### a) Personnel

The costs towards personnel should exclude the salary of staff employed on a full-time basis by the institution where the Spoke is implemented.

### b) Travel

- Local travel to present a paper at a conference or visiting experts and/or centers of specialization which are essential for the Spoke.
- International events, including workshops, conferences and visiting experts and/or centers of specialization which are essential for the Spoke. A detailed motivation should be presented in the application as an attachment for visiting experts and centres of specialization. Some form of presentation must be made at the workshop/conference.

### c) Equipment

- The equipment should be for use by the research group of the funded Spoke. The purchased equipment must become the property and responsibility of the Research Institution which administers the grant. The value of the equipment budgeted for should not exceed 30% of the total grant awarded.
- It is recognized that some specialized equipment may have a high financial cost which may exceed the funds available to the Spoke. The DST and NRF would advise that such equipment be motivated through the NRF's National Equipment Programme (NEP). The NEP, through a competitive peer review process makes funds available to support the acquisition, upgrade or development of state-of-the-art research equipment. This involves major items of equipment for multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research that usually requires significant capital investment, specialised operators and dedicated personnel to operate and maintain the equipment.

### d) Bursaries

- The NRF will support human capital development at the spokes through the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Scholarship (RSES), as a separate process, with due consideration to compliance with the RSES Guidelines, and available funding. Only masters and doctoral

students are supported through RSES, and cannot concurrently hold another NRF bursary or university scholarship.

- It is recognized that the Spoke may leverage additional funding which may allow the Spoke to host students beyond what the RSES can fund. These are allowed, but should be reported.
- The proposal should clearly indicate the human capital development activities, the number of students, demographics, gender, etc. and how they will be utilized in the spoke. This applies to both the anticipated RSES supported students and those supported through other sources, but engaged in activities of the spokes funded through the NRF.

#### **8.4 Managing finances**

- Grantholders are expected to spend their allocated funds within the allocated NRF financial year (April to March), and within the specifications of the submitted budget, in the most effective and efficient way;
- Financing by one party should not be restricted by the financing conditions of other parties but should be supplementary to each other for the attainment of the objectives of the Spoke;
- It is expected that grants forwarded to the research institutions will be administered according to the financial policy of the institution concerned and that the institution will ensure observation of the appropriate tax legislation;
- It is expected that the hosting institutions comply with the NRF's requirement for an external auditors' report to be submitted on an annual basis. This report is not specific only to the finances of the spoke. The NRF reserves the right to request an external auditors report specific to the spoke.

#### **8.5 Submission of Reports**

- All reports must be completed satisfactorily according to Spoke evaluation requirements, processes and standards and submitted to the NRF via the institution's research administration office.
- The grant holder must submit a report one year from release of installment as an obligatory condition.

#### **8.6 Compliance and Research Ethics**

The institution(s) where the project is based, and the grant-holder, have the following responsibilities with regard to compliance and ethics:

- Ensuring that the highest ethical, environmental and safety standards are observed when conducting research, particularly when human and animal subjects are involved.
- Ensuring that the grant funds are not used to promote or engage in violence, terrorism, bigotry or the destruction of any State property.
- Ensuring that in conducting the research there is full compliance with all relevant legislation (including the "Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 2008" (Act 51 of 2008) ("IPR Act")), policies (including those laid down by the institution concerned) and conditions of grant.

## 8.7 Breach

Conditions of grant will include a breach statement which at least conveys the following:

- Should the Grantholder fail to meet any of their material obligations in terms of the conditions of Grant, and fail to remedy the breach within a reasonable period from the date of receipt of a written notice from the NRF or the Institution calling upon them to remedy such breach, the NRF shall be entitled to halt all Grant transfers to the Institution relating to the grant concerned, until the breach has been remedied to the satisfaction of the NRF.
- Should the Grant-holder fail to remedy the breach within a specified period of the halting of the transfers of grants, the NRF will be entitled to recover all or part of the funds transferred to the Institution in respect of this grant. The precise portion to be recovered will be calculated depending on the nature of the breach.

## 8.8 Access to participants

The NRF and/or the DST or any of its appropriately authorized representatives, will be allowed access to any of the participants in the Spoke project. Where and when this is necessary, it will be done in consultation with the Grantholder or Designated Authority from the institution concerned and due consideration will be given to time and logistics for this to happen.

## 9. Processing of Proposals and Grants

### 9.1 Submission of Proposal

- In response to the call, applicants submit their applications through the NRF Online Submission System. (Note that before an individual can apply for a grant they should be registered on the NRF Online Submission System).
- The applicant is responsible for completing the application form and submitting it to the institution's Designated Authority (DA).
- The DA of the institution validates the application (electronically in the case of the NRF Online System).
- The application is only acceptable to the NRF after the DA has signed-off on it and accepted/approved it. This is intended as an indication that the institution is aware of the application and assures the quality of the application. After the DA validates the application, the detail on the application form cannot be changed for any reason whatsoever.

### 9.2 Screening of proposals

This tends to be an iterative process between the NRF and the institution.

- NRF screens the submitted and validated applications primarily for completeness, correctness and/or whether submission has been made to the appropriate programme.

### 9.3 Panel Reviews

#### 9.3.1 Composition of Review Panels

The credibility and quality of the review process depends on the integrity, expertise and experience of the reviewers. Review panels will be constituted based on directed and thematic areas identified for a call for



applications. Reviewers will be appropriately allocated to panels based on their area of expertise, and the composition of the review panels will ideally reflect the race and gender diversity of the South African research community and the institutional diversity of the universities and research institutions

### **9.3.2 Reviewers**

Reviewers will be individuals from broad disciplines covering the directed and thematic areas identified for a call for Spoke applications. Reviewers must have extensive research and/or research management experience and have an understanding of the South African Higher Education System (HES) and NSI. Furthermore, they will be individuals with no direct association with any of the proposals for which he/she is serving as a reviewer.

## **9.4 Peer review process**

The NRF will coordinate and lead the peer review process. The NRF will drive the process of nomination and appointment of reviewers from HEIs, research institutions and industry to eliminate any element of bias. Successful applications will be subjected to the process of ranking in terms of criteria (and sub-criteria) that reflect the objectives, priorities and focus of a Spoke within the ERP Hub and Spokes model (see section 12 for scoring tool).

## **9.5 Deciding on Funding**

Funding decisions will be made, guided by:

- Panel recommendations;
- Available budget
- Scores and ranking
- Consequences of decisions to fund vis a vis policy, strategic objectives, priorities, focus and targets for the Spokes.

## **9.6 Communicating and effecting decisions**

- Once decisions are finalised, NRF communicates funding decisions (full qualifying and cut amounts) to the institutions' research administrators by e-mail.
- In parallel, the applications on the system are progressed to approval or regret stage.
- In the case of approvals, the corresponding grant award is created on the system and an award letter reflecting the full qualifying amounts is generated and forwarded to the applicant, and copied to the respective Research Administration office accompanied by Conditions of Grant.
- In the case of regrets, regret letters are generated and forwarded to the applicants, and copied to the respective Research Administration office.

## **9.7 Returning CoGs**

Before grants can be activated for payment ("released"), the successful applicants must return the completed and signed Conditions of Grant, as a statement of accepting the conditions linked to the grant. In the case of continuation of grants in subsequent years, this is not required except where there is a necessary and obligatory revision to the Condition of Grant since the one last signed for the project concerned.

## **9.8 Beginning research**

Technically, once the award letter has been issued and the Conditions of Grant submitted to the NRF, the grantholder is authorised to incur the approved expenses,

i.e. begin the research, to a maximum of the grant funds awarded. The Grant Deposit at the institution should be used to assist with cash-flow.

### **9.9 Releasing grants**

After funds have been awarded, they will be released and paid to the institution, per the agreed rules and processes in order for the institution to really spend the funds.

### **9.10 Paying grants**

Note that HEIs and SCs that have had grants awarded to them, receive an annual grant deposit to assist them with cash flow issues. Funds will be paid to the institution when expenses have been reported to the NRF via the research institution office.

Grant-holders are encouraged to claim funds as early as possible to improve timely expenditure rates and cash-flow for the Spoke.

### **9.11 Carry-Forward**

“Carry forward” is the exercise of carrying forward a grant in a particular year, into the next year, because it is still not completely spent by year-end and has acceptable reason for not being cancelled/withdrawn. Carry-forward must be motivated for, among others, a commitment to spend the funds early in the next year and a demonstration of ability to do this. Carry forward will apply in the case of the Spokes, guided by the general principles of the NRF for carry forwards.

### **9.12 Appeals**

Unsuccessful applicants will be allowed to submit appeals within a period of two weeks after having received communication on funding decisions, should they choose to appeal. The information on how to appeal will be communicated when sending communication informing unsuccessful applicants about the outcomes of assessing proposals. The feedback on appeals will be given to the institutions within a period of a month on submission of the appeal. The appeal should be addressed to the relevant programme director which will be tabled with the relevant executive director of the programme

## **10. Monitoring and Reporting at Project Level**

### **10.1 Annual Progress Reports**

- The grant holder must submit a report one year from release of installment as an obligatory condition.
- The grantholder is responsible for reporting progress using the NRF reporting template sent to him/her as determined by the NRF,
- The research administrator is responsible for validating all applications and reports

### **10.2 Financial and Audit Reports**

Institutions should include a financial report in all reports submitted to the NRF which provides an account of expenditure against the planned budget.

It will be required from time to time that grant-holders and the appropriate institution allow NRF/Spoke-appointed auditors and relevant staff at the NRF access to records related to Spoke grants and to projects at the institutions, in order to conduct audits.



### 10.3 Technical Visits

The NRF engages in a Technical Project Visit of randomly selected Spoke projects supported by the programme. The purpose of the audit is primarily to:

- Witness some of the outcomes (research outputs, human capacity development, publications, etc.) as was expected through the project proposal and/or reported in the Progress Report;
- Witness the facilities and equipment supported through Spoke, and
- Interact with grantholders, team members, students and other stakeholders involved in Spoke projects.

Generally the Technical Visit team will comprise at least one representative from each of the NRF and DST and a technical advisor, who is a recognised expert in the relevant field of renewable energy. Due notice is given of the intention to visit. However, these visits may coincide with general visits to the Spoke and even at the invitation of the Spoke.

### 10.4 Final Reports

At the end of the final year of the five year support to the Spoke, a Final Report is submitted as well as the Annual Progress Report. In addition to addressing the outputs for the last year of funding, the Final Report also addresses the outputs and impacts of the project for the duration for which it was supported. This report should be received by the NRF within 3 months after the end of the 5 years of support.

### 10.5 Other Reports

Grant-holders may be requested to report in other formats. Where this is necessary due consideration will be given to time and cost.

### 10.6 Changes

The Spoke management, through the NRF, reserve the right to change the terms of Spoke support where and when necessary. If this were to happen however, due consideration will be given to possible implications of the actions, and the change intention or decision will be communicated to the grant-holder and relevant authority in the research institution. A need to change could typically be influenced by:

- Availability of funds;
- Failure by the other partner/s in the Spoke project to honour agreements; and
- Changes in circumstances.

Grantholders may also request changes to the project. These will be considered, decided and communicated to the grant-holder by the NRF. In deciding these changes the NRF will ensure that the relevant internal (to the NRF) affected parties and authorities are appropriately consulted. The need to effect changes in the project plan could for example be influenced by changes in circumstances such as resources or participants.

## 11. Scoring of proposals during review processes

This proposal assessment tool has been designed primarily on the basis of the ERP programme objectives, priorities and criteria. Please note the following:

- The level of funding, or a decision not to fund, is based on the proposal assessment tool. Not all “fundable” projects will necessarily be funded as budget may be a limiting factor.
- Proposals are assessed by a panel of researchers and practitioners who grade applications according to the parameters in the proposal assessment tool and award scores up to a maximum for each criterion.
- The panel adjudication of projects strongly guides the ERP management team

## 11.1 Proposal scoring key

There is no assumption that any of the criteria used in the scoring, is more important than another, thus they have not been weighted. Each criterion (where applicable) is graded on a sliding scale of 0-4 where 0= Poor and 4 = Excellent.

**Table 1:** Scoring of individual criteria

Score	Meaning of score	Notes
4	Excellent	Evaluation of proposal against the stated criterion demonstrates evidence of outstanding performance against the stated criterion, as determined by the panel and relative to knowledge field
3	Above average	Evaluation of proposal against the stated criterion demonstrates above average performance across against the stated criterion, as determined by the panel and relative to knowledge field
2	Average	Evaluation of proposal against the stated criterion demonstrates average performance across aligned to the stated criteria, as determined by the panel and relative to knowledge field
1	Below average	Evaluation of proposal against the stated criterion demonstrates below average performance aligned to the criteria, as determined by panel and relative to knowledge field
0	Poor	There are major shortcomings or flaws within and across the stated criterion, with particular emphasis on the scientific/scholarly merit

## 11.2 Scoring criteria

Table 2: Scoring criteria

Panel Assessment Scorecard						
ERP Spokes Call 2014						
No.	Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)	Weighted score (Total = 4)
1	Proposal	Alignment with funding instrument	Does the proposal meet the objectives of the funding instrument?		0%	Hurdle
		Scientific merit and feasibility	Reflect on the rationale, approach and proposed methodology.		35%	0.00
2	Track record of applicant	Past students (graduated)	Masters and Doctoral degrees.		5%	0.00
		Past research	Publications, patents, designs, performances, etc.		8%	0.00
3	Equity and redress	Of applicant	Black, female, young (five years after obtaining a PhD) or disabled.		5%	0.00
		Of students supervised	Masters and Doctoral degrees.		5%	0.00
4	Collaboration	With other individuals (Do they add value?)	<p>This will include collaborations at both a national and international level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the rationale for the collaboration clear, justified and appropriate?</li> <li>Are the roles of the collaborators clearly indicated in the proposal?</li> </ul> <p><b>The following two aspects are ONLY relevant in the event of submission of a joint proposal by two institutions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the institutional partner mentioned have the necessary resources to be part of the project? (Time, people, etc)</li> <li>Is the developmental trajectory and impact (ROI) clearly indicated and feasible?</li> </ul>		5%	0.00

Panel Assessment Scorecard						
ERP Spokes Call 2014						
No.	Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Details	Score / 4	Weight (Total = 100%)	Weighted score (Total = 4)
		Within a team (Is it appropriate?)	Are the roles of these team members clearly indicated in the proposal?		5%	0.00
5	Impacts	Expected research outputs	Scientific products, e.g., publications, patents, etc. relevant in each case.		5%	0.00
		Impact on knowledge production/field	The potential for the research to advance discovery and understanding in the field?		10%	0.00
		Plans for digital data storage, usage and/or dissemination	If relevant, are the proposed plans appropriate?		2%	0.00
6	Human Capital Development	Skills development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which the project will contribute to empowerment or skills transfer that addresses the needs of renewable energy research in Ocean Energy Research within South Africa;</li> <li>The intensity of post graduate student training intended in the project and provision of funding to the students involved, for their studies.</li> </ul>		15%	0.00
7	Other	Ethical research	If relevant, have ethical considerations been addressed? <sup>1</sup>		0%	Hurdle
<b>Totals</b>					<b>100%</b>	<b>0.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> Ethical considerations and clearances for grant proposals are the responsibility of the research institute and/or institution of the applicant. Where such ethical considerations and clearances are required, grant applicants will be expected to submit to the NRF signed statements and/or copies of clearance certificates before any grant funds are released.

## 12. Contact details

Please address all enquiries to:

**Mr Raven Jimmy**

Director: GMSA

National Research Foundation

Tel: 012 481 4069

e-mail: [raven@nrf.ac.za](mailto:raven@nrf.ac.za)

For technical online enquiries, please contact the NRF Support Desk during office hours (08:00 – 16:30), on: Tel: (012) 481 4202 E-mail [Supportdesk@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Supportdesk@nrf.ac.za)

## Deadline for applications

Opening date: 18 December 2014

Closing date: 10 February 2015