

# ISARP

## Italy-South Africa joint Research Programme

Call for applications for joint research and mobility projects: 2018-2020

**CLOSING DATE: 07 SEPTEMBER 2017 h. 17.00 C.E.S.T.**

**A Maximum of 14 Joint Projects (4 research and 10 mobility) will be funded for this call**

South Africa and Italy have a long lasting bilateral partnership in science and technology. The first agreement was signed, as far back as, January 1998 in Pretoria, and implemented through this joint Programme in 2000. The success of this partnership has led to the establishment of the NEW Programme, now known as ISARP, between the Directorate General for Country Promotion (Economy, Culture and Science) – Unit for Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (herein after MAECI) and the South African Department of Science and Technology (herein after DST) and the National Research Foundation (herein after NRF), hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”, launching this renewed simultaneous joint calls.

### STRUCTURE AND AIMS OF ISARP

ISARP offers two different funding schemes supporting different cohorts of researchers (i.e. young, emerging and well-established researchers). These two funding schemes are implemented on a co-funding model between Italy and South Africa. The two schemes to apply for are:

1. **Joint Research Scheme** – joint research projects where research activities between researchers are co-funded by the two Parties. Grants for joint research projects within this Programme are aimed at promoting collaborative projects with clearly defined goals involving at least one partner based in Italy and one based in South Africa. Applications should describe *ambitious applied* research and propose innovative approaches. The research is to be carried out at the research facilities involved.
2. **Joint Mobility Scheme** – joint research projects where only the expenses for researchers’ mobility are co-funded by the two Parties. This scheme aims to support reciprocal visits and short stays in Italy for young and emerging researchers from South Africa and vice versa.

With this phase of funding, both Italy and South Africa have agreed to make fewer awards but with increased levels of support in order to facilitate the development of sustainable institutional links between the two countries. The overall aim of this Programme, therefore, is not only to build on existing, outstanding and established research partnerships but to also foster new linkages and engagements with small cohorts of young researchers for new links between South Africa and Italy. Please note that the basis of selection from both countries will be excellence. However, from the South African side, excellent joint projects with a clear intention to address diversity, will be favorably considered. Likewise, environmental sustainability will be favorably considered. The specific aims of this Programme is:

- to support the advancement of basic, applied and innovative research;
- to contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint research activities in specified research fields;
- to provide an opportunity for young researchers in the two countries to meet and interact through the funding of researchers’ mobility in the frame of joint research projects in specified research fields; and
- to contribute meaningfully to research capacity development.

## AREAS OF COOPERATION

Different areas of cooperation have been identified and prioritised for the two funding schemes as outlined below.

**Joint Research Projects** may be submitted in the priority research areas of cooperation listed below. Only a maximum of four joint research projects will be funded in this scheme, preferably one project per thematic area.

- Biotechnologies, with focus on Pharmacological Research in the field of the Transmissible Diseases and vaccination
- Integrated and Sustainable Water Management, promoting measures and techniques aimed to enhance the sustainability and the efficiency of the water resources
- Blue Economy
- Space, Astrophysics and Radio-astronomy

**Joint Mobility Projects** may only be submitted in the priority areas indicated below. A maximum of ten joint projects will be funded in this category.

- New Technologies for Social Science
- Aerospace
- Blue Economy
- Information and Communication Technology
- Green and Renewable Energy

Proposals outside the above-mentioned broad thematic area of focus will not be accepted.

### Please Note:

- Cooperation projects with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the South African, Italian and European research programmes will be favourably considered.
- Cooperation projects aiming at strengthening the efforts to combat global climate change and address its adverse effects, reducing climate change vulnerability, enhancing risk assessment, protecting the environment and natural resources and stimulating the transition towards a low-carbon economy will be favourably considered;
- In terms of human capital development, joint projects that involve young scientists (i.e. doctoral students) and pay attention to gender equality (a balanced involvement of female and male researchers) will be positively considered and will receive a higher rating.
- In terms of the South African transformation agenda, South African applications from previously disadvantaged individuals and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions will be prioritised.

## DURATION OF PROJECTS

The projects will be supported for a period of three years (projects starting beginning of 2018 and ending December 2020).

## WHO MAY APPLY?

Each proposal under this Programme must have one main applicant based in Italy and one main applicant based in South Africa; they are the **Principal Investigators** on the Italian and South African sides respectively. They bear the main responsibility for the project including its technical and administrative coordination as well as timely delivery of scientific and financial reports. Additional partners (including postdoctoral researchers) based in Italy and/or in South Africa can also participate in the consortia. Applicants are allowed to collaborate with other partners such as NGOs or companies, but no funding can be applied to these. Former PIs are welcome to participate in the call; however, the project should not only be a continuation of the current/past project.

### 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 (i.e. industry e.g. SMEs) are also eligible as part of the research team and have to fund their own activities within a project. Private higher education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme. The South African applicant must be in possession of a PhD.

### Italy:

This call is open to public or private research organisations. Principal Investigators shall have Italian or any other EU nationality and legal residence in Italy.

### Please note:

- The Principal Investigators for the Joint Mobility Scheme should only be young emerging researchers (i.e. researchers who are not older than 45-years on time of application and who have received their PhDs within the past 7-years).
- Each Principal Investigator shall submit only one project proposal. Also, Principal Investigators cannot submit the same proposal for both Schemes.

### WHICH ACTIVITIES MAY I APPLY FOR?

Support will be provided for collaborative basic, applied and innovation research projects.

### Funds for the Joint Research Scheme can be used to cover the following costs:

- **Research-related costs** - activities to be supported may include expenses relating to field work such as conducting interviews, research-related trips, and research equipment (small equipment). The funds can also be used for consumables, accessories, publication related costs, and any others expenses listed in the specific calls for each Countries;
- **Exchange programmes** - short term mobility or travel expenses (i.e. transport and accommodation costs) of the research teams between the two partnering countries.
- **Doctoral and Post-doctoral Research Placements** - The placements should enable young researchers to (1) learn valuable new skills or techniques; (2) access facilities or resources not readily available at home; (3) build relationships with potential new collaborators; and (4) advance complementary collaborative research. The duration of each placement is expected to be 3-6 months; with flexibility to split the placement into several shorter visits. Longer placements may be undertaken where this would add value and these should be justified within the application. Placements must enhance, not replace, the standard training and study support that both the doctoral and postdoctoral researchers receive.
- **Knowledge sharing costs** – Only for the South African applicants, in support of activities organised by the consortium, such as joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecture presentations, capacity building sessions, meetings, local/regional dissemination of results aimed at involving stakeholders, and/or end users from outside the consortium with a minimum of 10% of the grant budget. For the Italian counterparts, please refer to the expenses listed in the specific call.

The PhD placements must be managed to fit within the original funded period of the studentship. Additional funding will not be made available through this call or by the funders to support studentship extensions for those undertaking international placements. Applicants should include information about how these exchanges will be managed within their proposal.

South African researchers are urged to encourage their PhD students (who have been selected as members of the project team under this scheme) to apply for Bursaries through the NRF's "Scholarship and Fellowship Funding Programmes" which are usually launched June/July of every year and close 2 months following the opening date. Actual opening and closing dates of these student support funding programmes should be verified with Dr Mbulelo Ncango, Director: Human Infrastructure Capacity Development (HICD) at either +27 12 481 4390 or e-mail address: [Mbulelo.ncango@nrf.ac.za](mailto:Mbulelo.ncango@nrf.ac.za). This is a very central component to this call as both funders need to ensure the development of research capacity in identified research fields through the support of PhD students within each project.

## Funds for the Joint Mobility Scheme can be used to cover the following costs:

The purpose of this Scheme is to support the networking research activities and mobility of young researchers (and their postgraduate students) between the two countries. The funding of the bilateral networking activities is based on the **principle of reciprocity**. Research activities as such **will not be supported in this Scheme**.

Therefore, the funds for this Scheme can only be used to finance the cost of the exchange of researchers. For each project 1 short-term stay (up to 10 days) and 1 long-term stay (up to 30 days) in Italy and 1 short-term stay (up to 10 days) and 1 long-term stay (up to 30 days) in South Africa may be financed yearly.

The South African Part will cover:

- International travel, accommodation, subsistence and local travel of researchers.
- Short-term stay of up to 10 days and long term stay of up to 30 days.
- Other networking activities as defined and motivated by the partnering researchers (e.g. joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecturer presentations, meetings, regional conferences, etc.).

The Italian Party will pay the international travel expenses to researchers with Italian nationality (or any other EU nationality, who are legally resident in Italy) and will provide a contribution for the accommodation expenses in Italy to researchers with South African nationality.

The receiving Party shall provide medical insurance coverage, on the basis of the rules in force in each Country, against work accidents and illnesses, excluding already existing and chronic diseases.

### Please Note:

- The funders will also organise **launching and closing workshops** for the Programme (maximum of 2-days per workshop) and Principal Investigators (for both Schemes) should include, in their budget plans, the costs of attending these two workshops (i.e. travel and accommodation costs). The launching workshop will be held in Italy (date will be communicated during the awarding process) and the closing workshop in South Africa (preferably before end March 2021).

## FUNDING MODALITIES

### South Africa:

- **Joint Research Scheme:** The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed **R3mil** per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual installments (**R1mil** per year) and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2018.
- **Joint Mobility Scheme:** The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed **R300 000** per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual instalments (**R100 000** per year) and exclusively for visits commencing in 2018.

### Italy:

- **Joint Research Scheme:** Total amount requested from the Italian side should not exceed **100 000 Euro** per year. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual installments and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2018.
- According to the Italian law Nr. 401/90, at the beginning of each year of activity, the principal investigators of projects listed in the Executive Programme will be invited to submit a request for funding, in accordance with the specific call issued by MAECI. Call details will be available, in due time, at the following link:  
[http://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica\\_estera/cooperscientificatecnologica/avvisiincaricobandi.html](http://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica_estera/cooperscientificatecnologica/avvisiincaricobandi.html)
- Financing will be granted within the limits of the available annual resources.
- **Joint Mobility Scheme:** 93 Euro/day, from day 1 to day 10, up to a maximum of **930 Euro** (short-term stay) and 18, 50 Euro/day, from day 11 to day 30, up to a maximum amount of **1, 300 Euro** (long-term stay). **From the Italian side, the financing for this Scheme will be granted within the limits of the available annual resources.**

## HOW DO I APPLY?

It is up to the applicants to find their own research partners. **Proposals must be received in both South Africa (NRF) and Italy, Directorate-General for Country Promotion (DGSP) - Economy, Culture and Science – Unit IX of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI).** Proposals which have not been received in both countries will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive therefore application does not guarantee funding. The evaluation of applications from both countries should have positive ratings before consideration for funding. Both the NRF and the DGSP – Unit IX MAECI 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://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID number and password.
- Go to “My applications” and select “create new application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **ISARP 2017 Joint Call for Proposals.**
- 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, budget of partner and the signed page of the 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 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 your research office if you have any queries.

### Italy:

The Italian Principal Investigators must submit their proposals exclusively through the *ad-hoc* online platform: <http://web.esteri.it/pgr/sviluppo>. Any enquiries about the present call can be sent to: [DGSP-09bandi2@esteri.it](mailto:DGSP-09bandi2@esteri.it)

## 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. Both the South African and the Italian activities will be assessed against the same criteria but additional, country-specific application requirements may also apply. Proposals for the **Joint Research Scheme** will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance of the intended joint research project
- Feasibility of the joint research plan and adequacy of the scientific method
- Competence and expertise of the scientists/research teams concerned
- Relevance to the call, added value expected from the bilateral research collaboration
- Environmental sustainability
- Potential for further or future international cooperation
- Student involvement through exchange programmes and short-term placements (for Human Capital Development)
- Participation of industry (SMEs) in the joint projects
- Budget fitting to the work plan (value for money)

The following will also be taken into consideration during the review process:

- **Training Excellence:** PhD exchanges and additional training activities are integrated appropriately into the student research projects to ensure that the student's research project and broader skills training is enhanced through engagement within this programme.
- **Management and Welfare:** There should be a clear, fair and transparent process for selecting PhD students who will undertake exchanges through this programme, with a robust mechanism for managing PhD exchanges in both partner institutions to ensure student welfare is managed appropriately.
- **Strategic Links:** An indication of how the proposed exchange activities will benefit both partnering institutions over the lifetime of the programme. There should be suggestions of how this funding will facilitate new strategic links between the partners that will continue to exist and strengthen beyond the lifetime of this opportunity.

Therefore, the integration of young researchers and students, and the exchange of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers are encouraged, as is the involvement of students and researchers from previously-disadvantaged communities in South Africa.

Proposals for the **Joint Mobility Scheme** will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Scientific relevance of the intended joint research project
- Competence and expertise of the scientists/research teams concerned
- Relevance to the call, added value expected from the bilateral research collaboration
- Environmental sustainability
- Potential of the networking activities leading to long-lasting sustained partnerships
- Suitability and feasibility of the work plan
- Budget fitting to the work plan (value for money)
- From the South African side emphasis will also be placed on the participation of postgraduate students

**Please Note:**

- Following national evaluation, a shortlist of projects to be funded will be constituted through consultations between the NRF and MAECI based on the results of the evaluations done in both countries.
- The project selection will be carried out by both funders through a Joint Technical Committee (JTC) Meeting. The results of this selection meeting will be announced presumably before December 2017.
- Please note that, although the two Parties undertake to execute the evaluation and selection process as quickly as possible so as to notify applicants of the results as soon as possible, the nature of the bilateral process requires the alignment of the commencement of each phase of the process with the partnering country, whose schedules may differ significantly.

## **PUBLICATION OF RESULTS**

For the Italian Party, the list of the selected projects and funding procedures will be posted on the website of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation at the following address:  
[http://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica\\_estera/cooperscientificatecnologica/programmiesecutivi/accordi\\_programmi\\_culturali\\_tecnologici.html](http://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica_estera/cooperscientificatecnologica/programmiesecutivi/accordi_programmi_culturali_tecnologici.html)

## **PROJECTS FOLLOW-UP AND REPORTING**

- A final scientific and financial report has to be submitted in English by both the South African and the Italian Principal Investigators no more than 3 months after the end of the project.
- The report has to mention outputs of the projects compared with the objectives and aims of the proposal.
- The joint publications have to mention the support from all Organizations financing the present call.

**Please Note:**

The funders are planning to produce a small **"coffee-table publication"** highlighting the success of the programme and the impact of all funded projects. Principal Investigators will therefore be requested to submit a contribution (an article) for this publication at the end of the funding phase. PhD students who were involved in the programme will also be requested to submit articles indicating how they have benefited from the short-term exchange placements they undertook as part of this programme. The articles will also include

anecdotes by the SMEs that were involved in the joint projects. The intention is to have the publication launched at the closing workshop.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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

## WHEN IS THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS?

Applications for both South Africa and Italy must be submitted by **07 September 2017 h. 17.00 C.E.S.T.** Applications received after this date will not be considered. Please note that neither the NRF nor the MAECI, will be responsible for applications that were not received. Principal Investigators are also advised to ensure submission of their proposals by their counterparts in the partner Country.

## WHERE CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION?

<b>National Research Foundation (NRF)</b>	
<b>For programme-content related queries</b>	<b>For technical &amp; grant related queries</b>
<p><b>Mr Teuns Phahlamohlaka</b> Professional Officer: Overseas Cooperation International Relations and Cooperation Tel: +27 12 481 4385 Email: <a href="mailto:teuns.phahlam@nrf.ac.za">teuns.phahlam@nrf.ac.za</a></p>	<p><b>Mr Stephen Dlamini</b> Professional Officer: Grants Management and Systems Administration (GMSA) Tel: +27 12 481 4037 Email: <a href="mailto:stephen.dlamini@nrf.ac.za">stephen.dlamini@nrf.ac.za</a></p>
<b>Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)</b>	
<p><b>MAECI HELP DESK</b> <a href="mailto:DGSP-09bandi2@esteri.it">DGSP-09bandi2@esteri.it</a></p>	