

NRF CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) Small Grants (Review Period 2)

UCT's internal submission deadline: Friday, 29 November 2024

NRF Application deadline: 02 December 2024

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Proposals for small, strategic projects that address critical gaps relevant to foundational biodiversity information and knowledge are invited.

BACKGROUND

The primary focus of the programme is to generate, mobilize, co-ordinate, and make accessible foundational biodiversity knowledge in line with the needs of society, the Department of Science & Innovation (DSI) Global Change Programme, and the bio-economy. The priority knowledge needs to relate to species occurrence, species identity, population abundance, and DNA information, particularly barcoding. This type of information is often referred to as “fundamental” or “foundational” because it forms the basis of so many other aspects of biodiversity research and decision-making.

The project must align with and contribute to the objective/s and target/s of at least one of the following national strategies: The Bioeconomy Strategy of the Department of Science and Technology (2013); Biodiversity Economy Strategy (Bes) for the Department of Environmental Affairs (2015); or South Africa's 2nd National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2025.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Researchers working towards the generation and mobilization of foundational biodiversity knowledge are the priority target group for accessing programme funding.

UCT researchers are eligible to apply as the Principal Investigator, provided that they are:

- Permanent UCT employees

OR

- On contract at UCT, but on condition that their appointment at UCT is for (at least) the duration of the project applied for in the submission. The length of the contract should be stated in the application form. Salaries must be paid by UCT and the primary employment of the individual concerned must be at UCT. If the applicant's contract is not valid for the required period then a letter from the Head of Department confirming that the contract is likely to be extended, should the funding be awarded, must be submitted to the Research Office. This letter must be received before the application can be endorsed and submitted to the NRF.

OR

- Retired / Honorary Staff provided that they meet all of the set criteria below:
 - Are resident in SA;
 - Are formally affiliated to UCT (e.g., appointed as an emeritus professor/associate professor, honorary research associate / honorary academic staff member);
 - Are active researchers with a distinguished track record in research and postgraduate student supervision;
 - Are actively mentoring / training postgraduate students / young research staff; and
 - A minimum of six months is spent at UCT for the purpose of research and research capacity development.

Note: Post-doctoral fellows and students are **NOT** eligible to apply as PI.

Further eligibility criteria for the **Small Grants** are:

- The strategic value of the data or knowledge that will be generated / made accessible through the grant must be clearly explained and motivated (what will change because the knowledge is generated / data made available?).
- The project must align with and contribute to the objective/s and target/s of at least one of the following national strategies: The Bioeconomy Strategy of the Department of Science and Technology (2013); Biodiversity Economy Strategy (Bes) for the Department of Environmental Affairs (2015); or South Africa's 2nd National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015-2025.
- The data / knowledge should be clearly and directly linked to the main focus of the Programme (bio-economy or global change), but it may fall outside of the focus areas for large, integrated team projects.
- Grants can be used for taxonomic research, mobilisation of primary data (specimen records according to Darwin Core standards), generation of DNA barcodes (using the globally accepted barcode genes for the taxon and with submission to BOLD), compiling species information according to the specifications of the FBIP, development of innovative approaches for data management or application or for investigations of existing data and methods to identify priorities or improve methods (eg. development of systems for data mobilization, data cleaning, analyses of gaps in knowledge). When assessed by the panel, the return on investment will be considered in terms of how many records generated / mobilised, species pages compiled or species / specimens barcoded.
- The grants must result in the release of the data to the FBIP / SANBI for archiving, integration, management and dissemination.

FUNDING

The funding will range from R50, 000 – R250, 000 per project over a two-year period (2025-2026). The grant covers research operating costs and excludes postgraduate student support and postdoctoral fellowships (please refer to the framework document for more details).

APPLICATION & SUBMISSION PROCESS

Applications must be submitted via the NRF Connect system at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>.

1. Register/Login by following the steps in the Manual published on the NRF website at <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-connect/nrf-connect-documents/>;
2. Click on SYNC NOW to Migrate your NRF Online Submission CV data to NRF Connect;
3. Create or update your CV;
4. On the Menu button, click on Applications under My Applications tab;
5. Click on the + sign next to **Research Grants**;
6. Click on the Create button next to '**Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) - Small Grants**;
7. Complete all compulsory sections;
8. Please attach supporting documents in **PDF format**.
9. Click on the **Submit** button.

It is of utmost importance that applicants consult the [Funding Framework document](#) for more detailed information about the call.

NRF has adopted and is given permission to use the [DCC Checklist for Data Management Plan](#), and this can be used as a guide for developing the Data Management Plan (DMP). Applicants can create a DMP using the UCT template that is available at this link: <https://dmp.lib.uct.ac.za/>.

Please be advised that the UCT Research Office may not review applications submitted after UCT's internal closing date – Friday, 29 November 2024.

Only applications endorsed by the UCT Research Office by Thursday, 02 December 2024 will be considered for funding by NRF in 2025 – 2026.
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