

## **NRF / BELSPO 2018 Joint Call for Proposals**

**Closing Date: 31 August 2017**

**A MAXIMUM OF 10 JOINT PROJECTS WILL BE FUNDED FOR THIS CALL**

### **1. Background**

In line with the Science and Technology Agreement that was signed in January 2017 between South Africa and Belgium, the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO) agreed to launch the first joint call for supporting joint networking research activities between South African and Belgian young and emerging researchers. Applications for this call should be submitted by a date not later than 31 August 2017. Networking activities should start in 2018.

### **2. Aims of the Call**

- To contribute to scientific advancement in both countries through the funding of joint activities in specified research fields.
- To provide an opportunity for young and emerging researchers in the two countries to engage.
- To contribute to research capacity enhancement.

### **3. Areas of Cooperation**

Applications should be submitted in the following domains:

- Marine sciences
- Space

Proposals combining both domains are also accepted. The 'major' domain should be clearly indicated. Multidisciplinary networks including partners from different disciplines (engineering, eco-geographical sciences, human sciences are particularly encouraged). Cooperation activities with the potential to lead to future bilateral and multilateral research and innovation projects within the South African, Belgian and EU research programmes will be important.

In terms of human capital development, South African applications from previously disadvantaged individuals and the involvement of historically disadvantaged higher education and research institutions will be prioritised.

### **4. Which activities are eligible for funding?**

The purpose of this call is to support networking research activities and mobility of researchers (and their postgraduate students) between the two countries. Research activities as such **will not be supported by this call**; they are financed by other funding resources or by the original project (BELSPO's topping up principle). Therefore, the funds can only be used for:

- Networking events (i.e. joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecturer presentations, meetings, regional conferences, etc.).
- International travel, accommodation, subsistence and local travel of researchers.

- Short-term exchanges of the partnering researchers' postgraduate students.
- Other networking activities as defined and motivated by the partnering researchers.

The funding of the bilateral networking activities is based on the **principle of reciprocity**. Each country finances the costs for activities carried out in its territory (e.g. the organisation of study visits, seminars, workshops, setting up of joint experiments), whereas the international travel costs are borne by the respective sending country.

## **5. Duration of projects**

Joint networking activities will be supported for **3-years** (36 months: starting at the beginning of 2018 and until the end of 2020).

## **6. Who may apply?**

An application must designate two Principal Investigators, one in South Africa and one in Belgium, who will bear the main responsibility for the project activities, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting. Commercial institutions and private education institutions are not eligible to apply under this Programme.

**South Africa:** This call is open to young emerging researchers (researchers not older than 45 years at the time of application) and residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology or science council. The South African PI (Principal Investigator) must be in possession of a PhD (received within the past 7 years).

**Belgium:** Proposals eligible under the present call are those related to projects that are or have been supported by one of BELSPO's research programmes ([BRAIN.be](#) (≥ 2012), [STEREO III](#), (≥ 2012), [ESA-PRODEX and others to CHECK](#)) or projects of the federal scientific institutions (FSIs). At least one investigator of the supported project should be involved in the proposal. It is possible to link with another Belgian research team of an initially supported project. The added value of such extension of the network has to be clearly explained.

Information about the above-mentioned research programmes is available via BELSPO's website: [www.belspo.be](http://www.belspo.be) →Fedra →Research actions. Information on the federal scientific institutions can be found in [annex 1](#).

## **7. How do I apply?**

The onus is on the applicant is to find their own research partner.

**Proposals (via the submission file) must be received in both South Africa and Belgium.** Proposals which have only been received in either South Africa or Belgium, but not both countries, will not be considered for funding. The call process is highly competitive, therefore application does not guarantee funding.

**South Africa:** Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted electronically on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID number and password.
- Go to "My Applications" and select "Create Application".
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **NRF / BELSPO 2017 Joint Call for Proposals**.
- Complete all compulsory sections and the non-compulsory sections applicable to you.
- Please attach the required documents in PDF format in the following order: CV of partner, budget of partner and the signed page of the partner.

**Please take note of the following aspects**

- Complete applications will go to the host institutions for verification before being forwarded to the NRF for further processing.
- Incomplete applications and applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered.
- Please contact your research office or Designated Authority if you have any queries.
- 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.

***Belgium:***

Applications are to be submitted at BELSPO by the Belgian coordinator via the submission file **by e-mail (in 'Word' and in 'pdf', with signatures)**. Applicants are encouraged to use the checklist with regard to the eligibility before submission of the proposal (checklist as annex 2 to this document).

**8. Deadline for submission of applications**

Applications must be submitted through the NRF Online Submission System and at BELSPO by **31 August 2017** at 15:00 CE time. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding.

**9. Funding Modalities**

- Funding will be available for a maximum of **three years**.
- 3-year networking proposals must be jointly developed and completed by the partnering researchers on both sides.
- In both countries, apart from the financial support from the two parties, institutions and universities are encouraged to solicit other funding resources as needs be.
- These funds can also be used as a top-up grant to an existing/funded network/project and/or start-up grant for a larger bilateral/multilateral project between South African and Belgian research groups.

**10. How much should I apply for?**

***South Africa:*** The total funding from the NRF should not exceed **R300 000**. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual installments (R100 000 per year). Note that a commitment to both scientific and financial reporting on the project following its completion is an obligatory condition of funding. Please also note that the requested amounts do not necessarily imply that this amount will be awarded upon selection for funding.

***Belgium:*** The maximum budget per proposal to be granted to the Belgian partner is **30.000 EUR**. Participation of another relevant European partner in the network is possible but will not be funded by BELSPO nor by the NRF. Such a partner should be indicated as 'optional partner' in the application.

**Please do take note that:**

- you will be funded only for the activities within the scope of the guidelines should you be successful;
- only a maximum of ten joint projects will be funded for this call; and
- scientific and financial reporting on the project is an obligatory condition for funding in subsequent years.

**11. How are applications evaluated?**

Following the eligibility check at each side, eligible proposals will be submitted in parallel at the Belgian and the South African sides to both a written and a panel review. The panel will include recognised local experts in the various fields of research represented by the proposals received. Reviewers will evaluate each proposal guided by the following criteria:

- 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.

**12. How will the proposals be selected?**

Once the call is closed and all proposals are examined according to the eligibility criteria, the eligible proposals are subjected to a selection process. Proposals will be evaluated both in Belgium (by BELSPO) and in South Africa (by the NRF). The final selection will be jointly made by the NRF and BELSPO. Both BELSPO and the NRF will inform the Belgian and the South African applicants of the outcomes of the selection process.

**13. Projects follow-up and reporting**

- A final scientific and financial report will be submitted in English by both the South African and the Belgian Principal Investigators no more than 3 months after the end of the joint activities.
- The report will mention the project outputs compared with the objectives and aims targeted in the submission.
- The joint publications, if any, by the researchers, will mention the support from the NRF and BELSPO.

**14. 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 activities.

**15. Where can I obtain more information?**

For South Africa: National Research Foundation	For BELSPO: Belgian Federal Science Policy Office
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## Annex I

### **Belgian Federal Scientific Institutions** (having activities in the thematic domains addressed by this call)

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Website</b>
<b>Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (KBIN-IRSNB)</b>	<a href="http://www.naturalsciences.be">www.naturalsciences.be</a>
<b>Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy (BIRA-IASB )</b>	<a href="http://www.aeronomie.be">www.aeronomie.be</a>
<b>Royal Observatory of Belgium (ROB)</b>	<a href="http://www.astro.oma.be">www.astro.oma.be</a>
<b>Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium (KMI-IRM )</b>	<a href="http://www.meteo.be">www.meteo.be</a>
<b>Royal Museum for Central Africa (KMMA-MRAC)</b>	<a href="http://www.africamuseum.be">www.africamuseum.be</a>

## Annex II

### Check list Eligibility of proposals

#### Call 2017 - Networking Call Belgium - South-Africa

BELSPO checks if the proposals fulfill the mentioned eligibility criteria.

Promoters of proposals that are not eligible are informed by BELSPO.

The eligibility of each proposal is checked on the basis of the information provided by the applicants in the application file.

#### List of criteria

All proposals are checked on the following criteria. Only proposals fulfilling all criteria are evaluated.

➤ The application file is entered at latest on 31st August 2017 at 3h PM (CE time) <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The application file is sended in electronic format, (Word + Pdf with signatures)	<input type="checkbox"/>
The network is composed of at least one eligible Belgian partner and one South-African partner	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The proposal is based on a project supported by BELSPO or includes a FSI	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Optional partners provide their own funding	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The proposal concerns networking activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The proposal fits to one or both focus domains of the call	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The requested budget from BELSPO does not exceed 30.000 EUR	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ The duration of the proposal is maximum 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>1</sup> A proof of reception is delivered.