Long Term Africa-Japan Research and Innovation Partnership

Call for Proposals Framework

Africa-Japan Collaborative Research

(“*AJ-CORE*”)

on

Environmental Science

Launch | 20 December 2019

Deadline | Monday, 30 March 2020

National Research Foundation

Japan Science and Technology Agency

Long Term Africa-Japan Research and Innovation Partnership
AJ-CORE Call for Proposals 2019

Africa-Japan Collaborative Research on Environmental Science

A joint call for research and innovation proposals

Content

1. Introduction

AJ-CORE is a partnership between the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) which aims to support joint research and innovation projects in designated field of science between researchers from Japan, South Africa and the 15 African countries whose ministries and granting councils are a participating member in the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI). ***See Annex I for a list of eligible African countries within SGCI***.

The AJ-CORE call for proposals operates on a co-funding model financed by the NRF and the JST. This call for proposals invites consortia composed of at least three research organisations (and/or private and public practitioners) from three different countries (i.e. South Africa, Japan and an SGCI African country) to submit project proposals for research and innovation on designated field of science in the countries concerned. The proposal development and execution should be driven by local demand and include an approach that contributes to enhancing impact.

1.1 Objectives of the AJ-CORE

With just about 10 years left for the world to realise the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the role of science and technology has become increasingly important. The rapid population growth and increasing access to education has created a pool of highly skilled human resources and accelerated economic growth in Africa but it has also brought other societal problems. A partnership between Africa and Japan has a great potential to contribute to the kind of sustainable global society we are all currently aiming for.

AJ-CORE therefore, serves as a national and regional research platform designed to provide the knowledge needed to support transformations towards sustainability. AJ-CORE seeks to:

- build and connect knowledge to increase the impact of research;
- explore new development paths;
- enhance human capacity development in Science, Technology and Innovation;
- find new ways to accelerate transitions to sustainable development; and
- contribute to SDGs.

AJ-CORE aims to bring together partners in society to co-develop the knowledge needed to support decision-makers and societal change at all scales and in diverse contexts, by focusing on the research area contributing to resolving common problems in Africa.

1.2 Focusing Research Area on the first AJ-CORE call

Environmental science is a global, regional and national challenge that cannot be solved by one country alone. It requires multi-country partnerships, multi and interdisciplinary research (e.g. climate change, agriculture, living environment, infectious diseases, etc.) with a range of diverse participants in a single project (while emphasising cooperation led by researchers, it is expected that the private sector and NGOs would be involved in the funded projects – at their own cost of participation). Therefore, in our first call we designate environmental science as the focusing area. The call seeks technological

solutions to the environmental factors affecting quality of life in Africa – climate change, water quality, atmosphere, geological environments, ecosystems – and ultimately contribute to building African STI capacity and sustainability.

Through supporting research and innovation projects in environmental science, the partnership aims to contribute to SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

Applications should pursue a holistic (system) approach to finding integrated solutions that can be implemented in the relevant context and should address the following aspects:

- solving of complex economic, ecological and social challenges to improve lives in a sustainable way using comprehensive system-oriented approaches;
- expected impact of research and likelihood of uptake contributes to solutions and evidence for policy change to significantly improve economies, wellbeing and resilience;
- research and innovation projects with potential impact at national or regional scales; and
- contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Possible projects may, for example, include the following topics:
- Development of climate change resilient and sustainable rice production in Africa (SDG #2)
- Improving sustainable water and sanitation systems in Africa (SDG #6)
- Production of Biofuels Using Biomass (SDG #7)
- Development of innovative sustainable land management method to prevent desertification (SDG #15)

1.3 Countries participating in the AJ-CORE

The call has been developed in partnership between the NRF (South Africa) and the JST (Japan). For a consortium to be eligible it should consist of researchers from at least (1) one Japanese institution, (2) one South African institution and (3) one institution in an SGCI African country.

Please note that a proposal submitted by only South African and Japanese researchers will be considered ineligible.

African countries participating in the SGCI:

- Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. ***See Annex I for information on SGCI***.

Both the South African and the Japanese researchers in the proposal must clearly indicate the benefit of co-opting a 3rd African partner and the research activities that will be carried out in the 3rd African partner country.

The researchers should also indicate the type of contribution (in kind/ otherwise) to be made by the 3rd African partner country.

1.4 Governance of the AJ-CORE

Both the NRF and JST take responsibility for the administration and overall management of the call (from the call publication phase to awards).

A proposal should be submitted by a South African Principal Investigator (PI) to the NRF through the NRF Online Submission System at (https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/) and the Japanese PI to JST through the National Online Submission System at (https://www.e-rad.go.jp/) before the deadline.

Detailed information on project proposal and submission guidelines can be found in the sections below. Proposals received by the NRF and not submitted to JST (and vice-versa) will automatically be considered ineligible. Also, submitted proposals to both the NRF and JST without a 3rd African partner country will be considered ineligible.

An International Review Panel (IRP) consisting of experts from South Africa, Japan and some of the SGCI African countries will assess the proposals and provide advice on ranking to the NRF and JST. The NRF and JST will ensure that all parties involved in the evaluation and selection procedure and its administration sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest forms.

1.5 Budget information

The total budget for this call amount to **1 363 600 USD** (*South Africa and Japan combined*).

With the available total budget, the NRF and JST aim to fund a maximum of around four large projects for not more than 36 months (3-fiscal years). Projects can apply for not more than:

- 163 500 USD per project from JST (*not more than 40 875 USD per project, per annum).*

- 173 985 USD (R2, 680 mil) per project from NRF (*not more than 57 995 USD (R893 300) per project, per annum)*.

NRF supports researchers from South Africa and JST supports researchers from Japan.

Please note that both Fonds National de la Recherche et de L'innovation pour le Développement (FONRID) of Burkina Faso and Direction du financement de la Recherche scientifique et du Développement Technologique (DFRSDT) in Senegal have committed funds for this call and will support their researchers involved in the joint projects. The contributions of the other consortium partners from other SGCI countries whether in monetary value or in kind must be captured in the proposal.

See ***section 3.2*** for guidelines on budget allocation against eligible research activities.

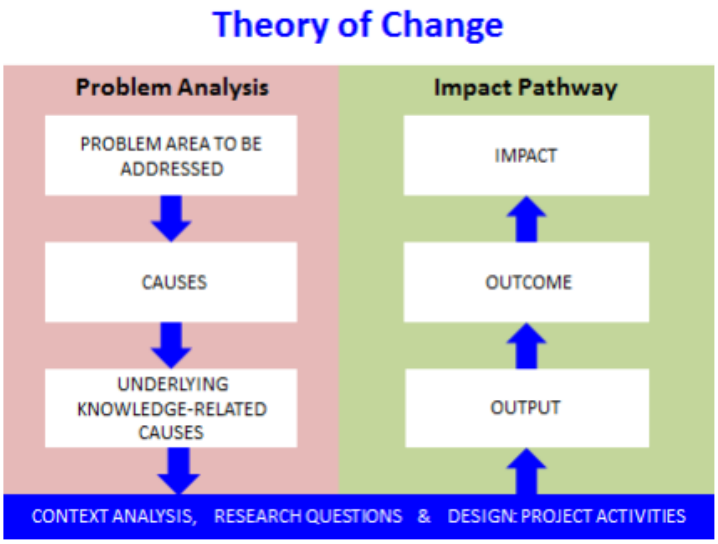
2. Cross-cutting issues for all proposals

2.1 Increasing impact

As development of research and innovation in higher education, private, governmental and civil society sectors is basically a continuous and iterative process, a clear strategy for research uptake needs to be provided. Research uptake is part of the project formulation and execution from the very beginning and includes stakeholder engagement, capacity development and communication. It also aims at influencing an enabling environment.

- **Stakeholder engagement**: stakeholders need to be involved from the research proposal stage onwards. This includes an initial mapping of relevant stakeholders.
- **Capacity development and training**: activities directed at improving the capabilities of individuals, networks and institutes to learn and innovate, based on sustainable partnerships and the ability to both generate and build on knowledge.
- **Communication**: a communication strategy, including specification of target groups, messages to communicate, means of communication etc. is part of the proposal. The aim is to make knowledge and research results available and accessible to stakeholders.

In order to focus and connect the knowledge sharing and research uptake activities, applicants are requested to design a Theory of Change with a related Impact Pathway which mentions well-specified outputs and outcomes. The Theory of Change describes the relationship, logical flow and/or causalities between planned activities, expected results (output), desired changes (outcome) and main objective (contribution to impact). A context analysis that includes the assumptions underlying the Research Impact Pathway should be part of the Theory of Change (see figure below).



Theory of Change and the Impact Pathway

It is therefore important that in the proposal the project activities for increasing impact are well integrated and relate to the aim and objectives of the project. Applicants are therefore advised to include sufficient social science expertise in the research team to address impact.

The research conducted in this Call for Proposals should have relevance and potential for impact beyond the academic world, such as in societal, technical, economical or cultural realms. This is why, in addition to having a societal or industry partner within the consortium, consortia should consider how relevant stakeholders can be involved in, or benefit from, the design and realisation of the proposed research project.

To further enhance the potential for impact of the proposed research, the application should state how approaches for achieving impact are integrated in the research design and conducted by the consortium in engagement with end users, such as practitioners, policymakers, and industry.

Developing a vision on desired change in collaboration between partners and stakeholders is pivotal for developing realistic and feasible strategies to enhance the potential for impact. To this end an integrated approach is required, which consists of the following elements: ***co-creation, theory of change and impact pathway,*** and ***impact strategy.***

Co-creation: A form of cooperation in research where different parties (researchers and stakeholders) in the knowledge process (demand and supply) interact and engage in joint learning to define problems, formulate possible solutions, design the research, conduct the research, assess the results and to translate these into new practices and products.

A **Theory of Change** describes how the research process can contribute to impact, taking into account the context, actors involved and describing the sequence of logically-linked cause-effect relations. Developing a Theory of Change in a joint effort with research partners as well as stakeholders allows for making explicit which (and whose) problem is being tackled, and how the desired change is perceived to happen through research efforts. Projections on expected change will be based on a

myriad of assumptions; documenting these assumptions allows for reflection on whether and how expected pathways to impact remain adequate or need adjustment.

The **Impact Pathway**, which is part of the Theory of Change, is the visualisation of the change process following from research execution as described in the Theory of Change. It makes explicit how the research activities will lead to results (output) and how these will contribute to desired changes in behaviour of partners and stakeholders that are considered essential to achieving the desired impact.

An **Impact Strategy** is the plan of the consortium that spells out how the activities contribute to outcomes. Outputs do not automatically lead to outcomes, thus strategies are needed for the research consortium to plan and monitor how their efforts will enhance the potential for outcomes.

How to translate this approach in a research proposal?

- Co-creation: Specify how the different skills and expertise are complementary and how this is integrated in approaches. Co-creation within the consortium and with stakeholders is central to the development of the research proposal through to the execution of the research. Describe how co-creation within the consortium and with stakeholders is organised and monitored.

- The Theory of Change describes how the research process is expected to contribute to Environmental Science. Describe clearly the contribution of the proposed research from problem definition and the identification of knowledge gaps, through to the research design and how this is expected to contribute to change, including accompanying assumptions. The Theory of Change takes into account the context and the key groups of actors required to achieve the desired change. The Theory of Change is the vision narrative that is the background to the Research Impact Pathway.

- Explicate in the Impact Pathway the expected change process that the proposed project contributes to through the realisation of output and outcomes, and the desired contribution to impact (see ***Box 1*** below). Describe the sequence of expected logical cause-effect relations, including underlying assumptions. By formulating and revising the Impact Pathways in a collaborative effort between research partners, and stakeholders, it serves both as thought process (joint reflection) as well as method (tool) for formulating activities and strategies and monitoring and progress.

- To further increase the potential for impact of the proposed research, the proposal should state how productive interactions around knowledge from the consortium to end users, such as government ministries, societal stakeholders and companies, will be facilitated. To this end, a clear impact strategy (including stakeholder engagement, capacity development, and communication, also with the aim to influence the enabling environment) needs to be provided. This impact strategy should contain descriptions of the actual knowledge transfer activities undertaken to encourage innovation and boost impact from inception through to the end stages of the proposed research.

- Indicators, at output and outcome levels, facilitate monitoring progress and accordingly adjusting the research approach, where the assumptions proved insufficient or incorrect. Indicators should be formulated in SMART ways and be ambitious, yet realistic.

- A Theory of Change is not fixed, but rather reflected on continuously throughout the research process. For this reason, it is also used as part of the monitoring, evaluation and learning trajectory.

Definition of Output, outcome and impact

Output: the most immediate results of the research project. Research outputs by consortium members can be reckoned as falling under the direct span of control of the project. Research outcomes relate to the uptake of these outputs by external stakeholders and the effects thereof.

Outcome: The external use, adoption or influence of a project's outputs by next and final users that results in adopter-level changes needed to achieve the intended impact. Indicate the (economic, social, environmental) changes that are expected at the level of the adopters.

Impact: changes in economic, environmental and social conditions that the project is working toward.

See Annex II for the format/ template to be used when completing the Impact Pathway with indicators at output and outcome level. A completed template should be attached as an Annex to the joint proposal.

2.2 Knowledge sharing and research uptake activities

To increase research impact the funded research projects shall contribute to the development of a comprehensive set of recommendations. Being embedded in a large Africa-Japan network, the research should involve target group and key players, including local players from the private (both for-profit and not-for-profit) and policy sector. Involving, where possible, entrepreneurs, policy and NGOs already during the research provides a voice to demand and facilitates scaling-up.

A certain percentage of the budget should be allocated for use for the knowledge sharing and research uptake components. Project consortia should organise activities as well as produce adequate tools such as radio programmes, videos, training modules, policy briefs, demonstrating the results of the research and elaborating on the potential for adaptation and options for up-scaling.

Both the NRF and JST envisage to present the knowledge sharing and research uptake tools and videos with success-stories from the funded projects at other national, regional and global platforms.

2.3 Integrated research approach

The challenges to be addressed through this Call are interrelated and multi-scalar, and to reach impact requires a holistic approach that spans the entire research and innovation chain. The consortia should therefore cut across different scientific disciplinary boundaries (interdisciplinary) and integrate scientific and practitioners' knowledge in joint research (transdisciplinary). It is therefore expected that proposed research projects will be characterised by integrated perspectives. The projects should evolve in a process of co-creation with different partners: researchers from partnering countries and societal partners should be actively involved throughout the entire project, in (advising on) defining and conducting the research as well as in communicating the progress and results, in order to jointly produce a mutually valued outcome. Added value may be achieved by integrating and synthesising various sources of knowledge to create new knowledge and by creating sustainability through the development of long-term knowledge relations.

The proposed research projects should furthermore be characterised by equal partnership and sustainable collaboration between the South African, Japanese and 3rd African partner. This includes inter-institutional cooperation, a balanced contribution to the proposed research, and frequent exchange between the partners, including a focus on capacity building.

Projects are also expected to collaborate with the other project(s) awarded in this Call so as to enhance the impact of the Call aim as a whole. As a part of this, projects will be expected to attend joint kick-off workshop, midterm review workshop and final workshop. Projects should therefore budget for this accordingly.

3. Eligibility criteria and funding regulations

3.1 Who can apply?

The submission of an AJ-CORE proposal is only possible by consortia of at least three partner **Principal Investigators (PI)** from three different countries. At least two African institutions (from two different African countries – one South Africa the other from any of the SGCI African countries) and one Japanese institution must be part of the consortium. Next to these three required project partners, additional consortium partners from other public and/or semi-public sectors and/or industry are allowed as **Associated Partners (AP)**. Associated Partners cannot request financing from the NRF and JST, but could be funded by other Funding Agencies, either national, regional or international, including Development Banks such as the World Bank.

South African-based principal investigator

For South African applicants, the NRF eligibility criteria apply as follows:

- Only working researchers/ scientists residing in South Africa and affiliated with a recognised South African public higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology or science council are eligible to apply.
- South African applicants must be in possession of a PhD.
- Private higher education institutions are not eligible to apply under this programme.
- The SMEs, private companies/ industries, and NGOs cannot serve as a principal investigator but can form part of the research consortium.
- It is "*obligatory*" for South African principal investigator based at historically advantaged institutions to include, as part of the consortium, a research partner from any of the historically disadvantaged institutions. Proposals submitted by an applicant based at a historically advantaged institution without a research partner from a historically disadvantaged institution will be ineligible (and will not be submitted for review). The research partner from the historically disadvantaged institution in this case can serve as a co-applicant in the proposal.

- Applicants based at historically disadvantaged institutions are allowed to submit proposals without the involvement of researchers based at historically advantaged institutions if they so wish.

Japanese-based principal investigator

For Japanese applicants, the JST eligibility criteria apply as follows:

- Any independent researcher personally affiliated with (and actively conducting research at) a domestic Japanese research institution, regardless of nationality, is eligible to apply.

- 'Domestic Japanese research institution' refers to universities, independent administrative institutions, national/public testing and Research Institutions, specially authorized corporations, public-service corporations and enterprises, etc. that satisfy requirements predetermined by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Please refer to the MEXT homepage for more information:

  http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kansa/houkoku/1301688.htm

- The Japanese applicants must also complete a research ethics training program conducted by the research institute with which the PI is affiliated, and then declare the completion of the program to JST. If it would be very difficult for the Japanese PI to undertake a program provided by his or her own affiliated institute, they should please contact JST. Please note that unless applicants complete a research ethics program, his / her application will be deemed ineligible. For more details, please refer to call announcement page linked from the JST homepage.

- Japanese applicants will have to register their applications on the Cross-Ministerial R&D Management System (e-Rad: https://www.e-rad.go.jp/index.html).

3rd Partner principal investigator from any of the SGCI African countries

A 3rd partner principal investigator from any of the SGCI African countries should:

- Be a researcher from any of the public higher education and research institutions in their home country, who has an employment contract for at least the duration of the application procedure and the duration of the research grant.

- Have at least a PhD or an equivalent qualification.

- Researchers with a 0 hour contract at any of the public higher education and research institutions in their home country cannot serve as a 3rd partner principal investigator.

Together, the consortium members should (1) formulate relevant research questions and approaches; (2) formulate and submit the proposal through the principal investigators; (3) conduct the project activities; (4) coordinate knowledge sharing and support the application, dissemination and communication of the project results to a broader group of possible knowledge users that are not a member of the consortium; and (5) take responsibility for the adequate and timely reporting conditions.

Proposals must address the thematic area supported within the framework of this call. Each PI and consortium can only submit one proposal. Consortia submitting proposals are obliged to report

submission of the same or similar proposals to other funding schemes, as well as funds awarded as a result of such submission. The NRF and JST retains the right to reconsider the granting of funds should the concerned project consortium fail to report double submissions or the funds awarded as a result of such submissions.

This Call aims at knowledge chain-wide collaboration, to enhance demand articulation, ownership, and the effective uptake of results. For this reason, all consortium partners, as well as relevant stakeholders, are expected to be engaged in all phases of the project execution, from its inception to sharing the (emerging) results. Evidence of such active engagement will be an important element in the assessment of project proposals and may be demonstrated through references to involvement in project preparation, active involvement as a project partner and links between the proposed research project and ongoing projects of NGOs, private enterprises, and/or policy implementation.

3.2 What can I apply for? (Eligible activities)

The funding of an individual proposal will depend on the nature and duration of the proposed activities and must be justified in terms of the resources needed to achieve the objectives of the project. The funding requested should therefore be realistically adjusted to the actual needs of the proposal, taking into account the maximum limit as indicated in ***section 1.5*** above and any other external funds.

Eligible costs depend on the NRF, JST, FONRID and DFRSDT *National Funding Regulations*. The following general categories may apply:

- Research related costs
- Mobility costs (travel and subsistence expenses)
- Short-term research placements for postgraduate students
- Costs related to organisation and attendance of seminars and workshops within the project
- Costs for attending the kick-off, mid-term and final workshops of all funded projects
- Acquisition of material and small-scale research equipment
- Capacity building costs (training, module presentations, etc.)
- Postgraduate scholarships/ bursaries
- Knowledge sharing and dissemination

Other relevant costs may be funded according to the individual national funding regulations, while some of the items listed above may not be eligible for funding. For this reason, it is imperative that applicants take notice of the rules of the national funding organisations concerning the costs they are able to fund prior to proposal preparation. The national contact should be consulted well before the submission deadline. ***See Annex IV for individual national funding regulations***.

3.3 Obligations of Funded Projects

Consortium members are guided by the general requirements of this Call. During the granting process, a specification of requirements will be included by the funder in the grant letter for the consortium partners. The **PIs** are responsible for ensuring the consortium meets all the general obligations.

3.3.1 Letter of Intent

For research partnerships to be effective, they have to be fair. A Letter of Intent (LOI) is obligatory and should be signed by all consortium partners prior to submit the joint proposal form. This LOI is to confirm that a researcher understands his or her responsibilities in the consortium.

3.3.2 Published information on granted projects

A list of the funded projects will be published after granting and updated during the execution of the projects. Therefore applicants should be aware that the following information from the proposals will be published by the NRF and JST:

- Project title and project acronym;
- Duration of the project;
- Total funding of the project;
- Name of the project PIs (including contact information as email and telephone number);
- Country, organisation and name of each partner;
- A short publishable summary of the project.

This information will be updated with an annual progress summary, activities and output. Projects are expected to provide this information in their reporting.

4. Application Procedure

Only submissions through the official NRF Online Submission System *{*https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/*}* and the Japanese National Online Submission System *{*https://www.e-rad.go.jp/*}* will be accepted. Proposals sent by mail, e-mail, telex, or facsimile will be rejected without further notice.

All proposals must be submitted by the Principal Investigators before the deadline of **Monday, 30 March 2020**. Once finally submitted changes to the proposal will no longer be possible. Delayed proposals and/or proposals submitted outside this deadline will be considered non-eligible.

After submission, proposals will first be checked by the NRF and JST for the following general eligibility criteria. Each proposal must:

- be complete according to the rules and in line with the required proposal structure described in the guidelines;
- conform to the scope and the thematic focus of the call;
- be submitted by at least 3 applicants (2 African (South African + other) and 1 Japanese) from 3 different countries;

- South African applications from historically advantaged institutions must have a co-applicant from a historically disadvantaged institution;
- comply with the maximum allowed duration of three fiscal years (36 months);
- comply with the funding requirements, including those for the funders;
- comply with the terms of the submission procedure;
- be submitted in the English language;
- be submitted electronically using the NRF and the Japanese National Online Submission Systems; and
- meet the submission deadline.

4.1 Structure of the Proposal (see Annex III for details on this)

Applicants are required to follow the structure as outlined in the NRF and JST Online Submission Systems. Only applications submitted with the correct template and in the correct format will be allowed into the procedure. The online submission systems will require more/less information on:

Part.1 General information
1. Title of the collaboration project
2. Acronym of the collaboration project
3. Contribution to SDGs
4. Key words
5. Publishable summary of research project
6. Budget overview for whole duration (3 fiscal years)

Part.2 Project team members
Part.3 Project description
Part.4 Impact Pathway with indicators at output and outcome level
Part.5 Budget plans
Part.6 CVs

Refer to Annex III for the required attachments.

5. Evaluation and selection procedure

The fundamental principles governing the evaluation of project proposals are:

- **Transparency.** The process for reaching funding decisions will be clearly described and available to any interested party;

- **Equality of treatment.** All proposals shall be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the proposers;

- **Ethical considerations.** Any proposal that contravenes fundamental ethical principles of a funding organisation may be excluded from being evaluated and selected at any time.

The evaluation and selection procedure will be monitored by independent observers invited by the NRF and JST.

5.1 Evaluation process

A proposal that has been deemed eligible by both the NRF and the JST will be submitted for review. Both the NRF and the JST shall submit, in parallel, eligible proposals to their national experts who will assess the proposals remotely and submit reviewers' reports. These reviewed proposals and their accompanying reviewers' reports will be submitted to an Independent International Joint Review Panel for final recommendation.

5.2 Criteria for evaluating proposals

The Independent International Joint Review Panel will assess all eligible proposals based on the following criteria:

I. Excellence of the project:

- strong potential to generate new knowledge, insights and/or innovations and sufficient complementarity to other research programmes;
- adequacy of the research approach including the robustness of the conceptual framework and experimental set-up and the coherence of the hypotheses, research questions and methods;
- clear alignment of the proposed research scope with the thematic focus of the Call; and
- disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary value add.

II. Expected Impact of the project:

- clear rooting of the proposal in the demands of partners and/or stakeholders, including appropriate integration of gender and youth;
- quality and feasibility of the research impact pathway with indicators; and
- adequate potential for uptake/application of results including quality of the knowledge sharing approach with appropriate stakeholder engagement, capacity development and communication strategy.

III. Quality and efficiency of the implementation:

- complementarity, range and level of integration of the consortium and research team,

appropriate for implementing the proposed research project;
- adequacy and feasibility of the research methodology/approach and activities, in relation to research questions and objectives as well as the related work plan;
- adequacy, feasibility and coherence of the various activities to enhance impact, in particular by influencing national and/or regional policies.

5.3 Timetable

Dates	**Activities**
By end December 2019	Launch of the AJ-CORE Call for Proposals to the research communities (and opening of the NRF and JST online submission systems)
30 March 2020	Deadline for submission of applications
1st week of October 2020	Independent International Joint Review Panel Meeting
End Jan 2021	All approved projects should be awarded by end Jan 2021
1 April 2021	Start of Joint Projects (start of the fiscal year)
End of June 2021	Kick-off workshop with all the funded projects (in South Africa)
1st Week of October 2022	Mid-term review workshop (in Senegal)
End of October 2022	Deadline for consortia to submit mid-term progress reports
End of Feb 2024	Final workshop with all the funded projects (in South Africa)
31 March 2024	Deadline for consortia to submit final progress reports

******NRF and JST reserve the right to change the above-mentioned dates at any stage******

6. NRF and JST Contact Details for Queries

Consortium partners of proposals selected for funding will have to follow national/institutional procedures after a positive funding decision by NRF and JST. It is also advisable to contact your funding body as soon as possible in case your proposal is granted to discuss the national requirements that have to be met before the start of the project.

For specific content related questions please contact:

NRF Contact Person	**JST Contact Person**
Nombuso Madonda +27 12 481 4285 Nombuso.madonda@nrf.ac.za	Shiraishi Junko, Doi Shinichi +81 3 5214 7375 jointza@jst.go.jp

Technical questions about the online submission systems contact:

For technical questions on the NRF Online Submission System {https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/} please contact Mr Jan Phalane on tel. +27 12 481 4157 or email. Jan.phalane@nrf.ac.za OR the NRF Support Desk on email: supportdesk@nrf.ac.za and tel. +27 12 481 4202.

For technical questions on the National Online Submission System {https://www.e-rad.go.jp/} please contact Help desk 0570-066-877 (Available 9:00am-6:00pm). If you cannot Navi Dial, you can reach us on the direct line below: 03-6631-0622 (direct line).

Call Annexes:

- **Annex I:** Information on the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI)
- **Annex II:** Format for Impact Pathway with indicators at output and outcome level
- **Annex III** Structure of the proposal (details)
- **Annex IV:** Individual National Funding Regulations
- **Annex V:** Information on 3rd/ 4th Partner Principal Investigator

Annex I
Information on the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI)

The Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) is a multi-funder initiative that aims to strengthen the capacities of 15 science granting councils in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to support research and evidence-based policies that will contribute to economic and social development. Launched in April 2015, the Initiative contributes to strengthening the ability of science granting councils to:

- manage research;
- design and monitor research programmes based on the use of robust science, technology and innovation indicators;
- support knowledge exchange with the private sector; and
- strengthen partnerships between Science Granting Councils and other science system actors

The Initiative is being implemented mainly through on-site coaching and mentoring, and a few regional training workshops by a number of specialist organisations. This Initiative was designed on the premise that more effective Councils will strengthen national science systems and lead to nationally led research that contributes to development in participating countries.

The Initiative is currently supported and funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the South African Department of Science and Technology and the National Research Foundation. There are 15 African countries participating in the Initiative representing East, West and Southern African regions as follows:

SGCI Participating Countries in East Africa	SGCI Participating Countries in Southern Africa	SGCI Participating Countries in West Africa
1. Ethiopia	6. Botswana	12. Burkina Faso
2. Kenya	7. Malawi	13. Côte d'Ivoire
3. Rwanda	8. Mozambique	14. Ghana
4. Tanzania	9. Namibia	15. Senegal
5. Uganda	10. Zambia	
	11. Zimbabwe	

For more detailed information on the SGCI please visit the website: https://sgciafrica.org/en-za/home.

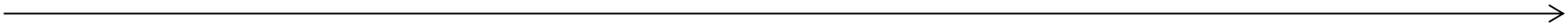
Annex II

Format for Impact Pathway with indicators at output and outcome level (max. 2 page)

Research outputs	Indicators

Research outcomes	Indicators

Impact



Annex III
Structure of the proposal (details)

		Consortium members								
		Required						Optional		
		PIs(s)						PI(s)		Associated Partners
		South African based PI	South African based co-PI	Japanese based PI	Japanese based co-PI	3rd African country PI	3rd African country co-PI	4th(>) African country PI	4th(>) African country Co-PI	
Joint Proposal form	Part.1 General information	Part.1 -4: **Req** as consortium (prepared by all consortium members)								
	Part.2 Project team members									
	Part.3 Project description									
	Part.4 Impact Pathway with indicators at output and outcome level									
	Part.5 Budgets plan	**Req** as South African team		**Req** as Japanese team		**Req** as 3rd African country team		**Req** as 4th African country team		N/A
	Part.6 CVs	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Req** (individual)	**Opt**
	Annex.1 Letter of Intent	**Req** as consortium (signed by each consortium members)								
	Annex.2 Institutional endorsement Letter	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	**Req** (individual)	N/A	**Req** (individual)	N/A	**Req**
	Annex.3 Letters of Commitment from other Consortium African Partners	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	**Req** In case of in-kind **only**	**Req** In case of in-kind **only**	**Req** In case of in-kind **only**	**Req** In case of in-kind **only**	N/A
	Annex.4 Information on 3rd/4th Partner Principal Investigator	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	**Req** (individual)	N/A	**Req** (individual)	N/A	N/A

Annex IV
Individual National Funding Regulations

SOUTH AFRICA | National Research Foundation (NRF)

The purpose of this funding is to support joint research, human capacity development, mobility and research exchanges between researchers and postgraduate students within the joint projects. From the NRF side, funding will be made available for the following joint research activities undertaken as part of the joint research project.

Research-related costs

Activities to be supported may include expenses relating to field work such as conducting interviews/ surveys/ laboratory experiments, publication costs, research-related trips, etc.

Staff exchange programmes

Short term mobility or travel expenses (i.e. transport, accommodation, subsistence, visa and health insurance costs) of the research teams between the partnering countries.

3-year doctoral positions (see section below on "NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy").

The funds make provision for two (2) Doctoral students per project. Please note that the scholarship support will only be released on condition that nominated students are black and female students registered at any of the South African public higher education institution.

2-year Masters' positions (see section below on "NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy").

The funds make provision for two (3) Masters' students per project. Please note that the scholarship support will only be released on condition that nominated students are black and female students registered at any of the South African public higher education institution.

Masters and doctoral research placements

The placements should enable the postgraduate students within the project to learn valuable new skills or techniques; access facilities or resources not readily available at home; build relationships with potential new collaborators; and 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 the postgraduate students receive. These placements must be managed to fit within the original funded period of the studentship. Additional funding will not be made available through this Call to support studentship extensions for those undertaking international placements. Applicants should include information about how these exchanges will be managed within their proposal.

Knowledge sharing costs (research uptake and science communication)

In support of activities organised by the partners, 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.

Small equipment, consumables and accessories

Up to a maximum of 15% of the budget may be budgeted for this item.

The following ***will not*** be funded from the ***South African*** side:

- Consultant's fees, salaries, or temporary staff fees
- Large equipment
- Overheads

The total amount requested from the NRF should not exceed R2.680mil per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual instalments and exclusively for research activities commencing in 2021. The funds per project have to be utilised as follows:

- R1.6mil per project for research activities, mobility costs of the research team, small equipment and knowledge sharing costs per project (R530 000 per year).

- R720 000 for 2 Doctoral scholarships per project at R120 000 per student per annum for 3-years (R360 000 per student) - (see section below on "NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy").

- R360 000 for 2 Masters' scholarships per project at R90 000 per student per annum for 2-years (R180 000 per student) - (see section below on "NRF Postgraduate Student Funding Policy").

Instructions to South African PIs wishing to enrol students

Upon submitting an application to the NRF, the Principal Investigator (PI) will receive a ***Reference number***. The PI is expected to encourage his or her students to apply when the call for Student Support is published on 1 April 2020 using the reference number of the PI. The use of the reference number will apply to students seeking support in 2021. Students seeking support from 2022 must use the ***UID number*** that the PI will receive from the NRF upon the awarding of the grant.

- Please note that the scholarship support will be released on condition that nominated students meet the requirements of the NRF Postgraduate Funding Policy as stated below.

NRF POSTGRADUATE STUDENT FUNDING POLICY

The National Research Foundation (NRF) has developed a new Postgraduate Student Funding Policy that will use postgraduate student funding as a lever to address the challenges of inequity of access, success and throughput. The policy is underpinned by the pursuit of research excellence in all of its dimensions and has transformation of the postgraduate cohort as the core objective. Its purpose is to retain high academic achievers in the system to pursue postgraduate studies up to the doctoral level, as part of a national drive to grow the next generation of academics to sustain South Africa's knowledge enterprise. The NRF is prioritising postgraduate students with research inclination, with the aim to grow the pool of early career researchers. Another motivation for this policy is to fast-track the development of postgraduate students in high-impact, priority and vulnerable disciplines critical for national socio-economic development.

From the 2021 academic year onwards, the NRF will be phasing out the block grant nomination process as well as the grant-holder linked modalities of funding postgraduate students. All the postgraduate students will be expected to apply on the NRF Online Submission System by accessing the link: https://nrfsubmission.nrf.ac.za/. This single entry point will allow the NRF to co-ordinate the applications that have not yet had the financial means test conducted, this financial means test will be conducted by Ikusasa Students Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP). Postgraduate students will be funded either at Full Cost of Study (FCS) or Partial Cost of Study (PCS) under the new policy. To ensure equity of access to postgraduate studies, financially needy students (i.e., those whose combined household income is R350 000 per annum or less) and students with a disability will be funded at FCS. Academic high fliers achieving a distinction or first-class pass will also be eligible for funding at FCS. International students as well as any other South African student who is not eligible to be funded at FCS will be eligible for PCS funding.

The students are expected to meet the NRF minimum entry requirement in order to be eligible for FCS or PCS as illustrated in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Eligibility criteria for NRF postgraduate funding for FCS and PCS.

Study Level	Full Cost of Study *(South African Citizens and Permanent Residents only)*		Partial Cost of Study *(South African Citizens; South African Permanent Residents and 5% Non-South African Citizens)*
	Exceptional Achievers	**Financially Needy & Students with Disability**	**Other**
Honours	• ≥ 75% Mark in Final Year of study	• ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study	• ≥ 65% Mark in Final Year of study
	Honours students must be **28** years of age or younger in the year of application. Non South African Citizens are not eligible for Honours Scholarships.		
Masters	• ≥ 75% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year	• ≥ 65% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year	• ≥ 65% Mark for Honours • Completed Honours in one year
	Masters students must be **30** years of age or younger in the year of application.		
Doctoral	• ≥ 75% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years	• ≥ 65% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years	• ≥ 65% Mark for Masters • Completed Masters in two years
	Doctoral students must be **32** years of age or younger in the year of application.		

In cases where a grade is not indicated, the application will not be considered for funding by the NRF.

The NRF will allocates all postgraduate bursaries under its management control as follows:
95% South African citizens and permanent residents;
5% students from SADC countries and from the rest of the world; and
55% women.

The NRF disaggregates these targets for South African citizens and permanent residents as follows:
90% Black (African, Coloured, and Indian);
10% White; and
1% students living with a disability.

For further details on the NRF Postgraduate Funding policy, kindly refer to the framework document which is available on www.nrf.ac.za/

JAPAN | Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

JST will support 18 million yen per project in total (6 million yen per project *annum*). Please be noted that 18 million yen includes overhead cost (30% of direct cost). The budget for a project may differ each year, depending on the content of activities. The amounts will be adjusted each year due to the budgetary limitations for this program.

Eligible direct costs

In principle, eligible direct costs are those costs directly necessary for accomplishing the research, indicated below. Please refer to the guidance documents available at the following link for further details of eligible direct costs (available in Japanese only). https://www.jst.go.jp/contract/index2.html

(a-1) Facilities, Equipment and Consumables: costs of research equipment, spare parts, prototypes, software (in-line products) and purchase of books, reagents, materials and consumables.

(a-2) Travel Expenses: costs and associated living expenses of the project members registered in the project plan, and costs of inviting external experts.

(a-3) Personnel costs: costs of the researchers, temporary staff, post-docs, etc., who are hired for the research and other costs such as honoraria for invited lecturers.

(a-4) Others: costs for the organisation of small scientific events in Japan including rental costs for the venue, food & beverage (excluding alcohol) costs and other costs which are deemed to be necessary for organizing the event. Expenses for creating software, renting or leasing equipment, transporting equipment, etc.

Eligible indirect costs

Please refer to the following link for the provisions regarding indirect costs:

http://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/compefund/shishin2.pdf (available in Japanese only)

BURKINA FASO | Fonds National de la Recherche et de L'innovation pour le Développement (FONRID)

Who can apply?

Any TEAM of Research or innovation actors, public or private, NGOs (but individuals cannot apply) (Research centers/institutes, Universities, NGOS) OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED (informal institutions, associations, NGOs or teams are not allowed to apply).

What types of costs are eligible for funding?

Direct costs: Research costs (no salaries, no buildings), scholar fees for students, fellowships, travels and participation to scientific meetings, per diems, fuel, IT-items and consumables, communications and publications costs.

Eligible costs as indirect costs: Administrative costs (10%), overheads (5%), cars repairs, telephone and internet.

Upper funding limits for the eligible costs: 50 000 USD (for maximum of 3 years).

Additional requirements

- Teams must submit proposal as a consortium of minimum 3 different research teams
- Host institution must show good financial organization and skills (existence of a bank account, financial reports audited, engagement to report with consistent invoices of expenditures).

For more information please contact

Institution	Contact person
FONRID 1, Av. Père J. Wrezinski, Patte d'Oie, 01 PO Box 5933 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso Phone : (226) 25 37 14 28 Website: www.fonrid.bf	**Dr Hamidou H. TAMBOURA** Director General Phone: (226) 70 30 29 29 Email: hh_tamboura@hotmail.com

SENEGAL | Direction du financement de la Recherche scientifique et du Développement Technologique (DFRSDT)

Who can apply?

- Researchers, inventors and research institutions of Senegalese nationality
- Public and private sectors which support research and popularize research results
- Activities related to technological innovation and the intellectual protection of research results.

Research proposals may be submitted by?
A consortia composed of at least three research organizations (and/or private and public practitioners) from three different countries: South Africa, Japan and Senegal. A multi-institutional approach is encouraged and a balanced involvement of female and young researchers will be positively considered.

What types of costs are eligible for funding?
Funds can be used to cover the following costs:

- Research related costs: Activities include related costs to communication and publication, research-related trips, research equipment (small equipment) and consumables etc.
- Doctoral and postdoctoral research placements for supporting young researchers
- Salaries for technicians
- Travel costs, Meeting costs
- Exchange programs, to support transport and accommodation costs of the research team between the partnering countries.
- Knowledge sharing costs: cover the costs of activities organized by the consortium, such as joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, lecture presentations, capacity building sessions, and meetings.

Eligible costs as indirect costs
Not eligible

Upper funding limits for the eligible costs
The total amount requested from the DFRSDT should not exceed 42.000 USD per project. Funding will be made available for a maximum of 3-years, to be paid in annual installments (around 14.000 USD per annum). The funding rules of DFRSDT will be applied.

Additional information
Private companies or NGOs involved in the joint projects are expected to cover their own costs of participation in the project.

For more information please contact

Contact person
Professor Soukèye DIA TINE Director Direction for funding scientific research and technological development (DFRSDT) BP36005 Dakar, Sénégal. Tel: +221 776440590/ +221 338264932. Email: soukeye.diatine@gmail.com

Annex V
Information on 3rd/ 4th Partner Principal Investigator

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title	
Academic title	
Family Name	
First Name	
Name of Institution	
Type of Entity	
Department	
Position	
Institution Address	
City	
Country	
Phone	
Email	
Which funding body are you applying to?	

BUDGET (indicate currency in USD)

FINANCIAL YEAR	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
Research costs			
Travel and meeting costs			
AJ-CORE kick-off, mid-term and final workshops			
Knowledge Sharing and Research Uptake costs			
Student support costs			
Employment costs			
Overheads			
Other costs (specify)			
Total budget requested			

I hereby confirm that as the 3rd OR 4th Partner Principal Investigator I meet the funding requirements of my national funding body.

…….. ……

Signature Date