



ESASTAP 2020 Call for Twinning Activities in Marine Sciences

Closing Date for applications: 06 October 2017

About ESASTAP 2020

The project on Strengthening of Technology Research and Innovation (R&I) between Europe and South Africa (ESASTAP 2020) and its predecessors (i.e. FP6 and FP7 INCO projects SAccess, ESASTAP, ESASTAP-2 and ESASTAP Plus) have been instrumental in enhancing the success of the SA-European Union (EU) Research and Innovation cooperation. Discussions at the policy level between the European Commission and the Department of Science and Technology on areas of cooperation between South Africa and EU led to a renewed focus on themes of common interest with particular emphasis on Marine Science. ESASTAP 2020 has been requested to support this focus. For more information on ESASTAP2020 and its activities please visit www.esastap.org.

Amongst its key objectives the ESASTAP 2020 project seeks to support the coordination of EU Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC)'s research and innovation policies and programmes with South Africa in order to maximise synergy for more prominent impact and value addition. To reach this goal, ESASTAP partners have (1) undertaken studies analysing and monitoring the current status of the SA-EU bilateral research and innovation cooperation programmes and (2) use the outcomes of these studies to organise match-making workshops on critical themes of common interest to further improve the coordination of different bilateral R&I cooperation initiatives. This work is currently undertaken by Work Package (WP2) partners led by the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) in partnership with the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), the Research Council of Norway (RCN), the Project Management Agency at the German Aerospace Centre (DLR-PT), the South African Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), and the South African Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Why a call for twinning activities?

The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) cooperation between the EU and South Africa as originally framed by the EU/SA Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement and as steered by the Joint Science and Technology Coordinating Committee (JSTCC) requires a support mechanism which can translate and facilitate policy decisions, and provide intelligence and information services to various actors and stakeholders. In previous years the ESASTAP project series (ESASTAP, ESASTAP-2 and ESASTAP+) has successfully provided this support. The current ESASTAP 2020 programme also aims to further advance this bilateral STI cooperation by building on the work and results of three preceding actions and responding to the needs and recommendations at the policy dialogue level, in particular to the mandate of the JSTCC and to the adopted Roadmap for cooperation between Africa and EU.

Twinning activities within the framework of ESASTAP 2020 are ideal instruments for strengthening EU/SA STI cooperation. This is further supported by the Department of Science and Technology agenda of seeking to broaden bilateral cooperation between South African research institutions, universities and SMEs with their EU counterparts. The objectives of this Twinning Call therefore is to provide mobility grants in order to (1) build on /expand the existing research collaboration and relationships and (2) establish new research relationships or collaborative projects. The overall aim is to establish long-term, institutional cooperation between EU and South African partners and reach a new level of partnership by strengthening a small number of strategic alliances.

What strategic objectives are to be achieved through this twinning call?

The funding for this twinning call is meant for exploration and networking of R&D collaboration between the EU and South African research institutions, universities and SMEs, aiming at achieving the following strategic outcomes:

- Long-term international partnerships between South African universities and research institutions and their EU counterparts.
- Awareness of the science, research, technology and innovation potential of partner countries.
- Establish new contacts with stakeholders in the partner countries.
- Active R&D networks amongst the next generation of scientists (PhD students/early to mid-career researchers) within partner countries.
- Joint project ideas in key areas of the European Research Programme(s) leading to successful joint applications for larger funding in Horizon 2020.

What is the thematic focus of this call?

In October 2016, the EU/SA JSTCC identified several thematic areas for strengthening research and innovation cooperation between South Africa and the EU. ESASTAP 2020 has agreed to support marine sciences as one area from this list. For this reason, applications for this twinning call can only be submitted within the particular theme of **Marine Sciences**, including polar science, oceanography, marine ecology, marine geology, marine biology, maritime meteorology and climatology.

Which activities are eligible for funding?

The purpose of this call is to support the networking research activities and mobility of researchers (and their postgraduate students) between South Africa and EU MS and ACs. Research activities as such **will not be supported by this call**. Therefore, the funds can only be used for:

- Networking events (i.e. joint workshops, seminars, conferences, symposia, meetings, regional conferences, etc.).
- Accommodation, subsistence, international and local travel of researchers and their postgraduate students, including costs for visa.
- Other networking activities as defined and motivated by the partnering researchers.

What is the duration of the funding support?

- Joint networking /mobility activities will be supported for a maximum period of **9 months** (starting January 2018 until the end of September 2018).
- Researchers must utilise the funds within the stipulated 9-month period.
- No networking/ mobility activity shall be supported after the end of September 2018.

Who may apply?

- The call is open to higher education and research institutions (i.e. universities, universities of technology, science councils) from South Africa and Europe (MS/ACs).
- The funds will be awarded to a Consortium. One Consortium must consist of researchers from one/more national institutions based in South Africa and one/more national institutions based in EU MS/ACs. A Consortium can also include SMEs (from SA/EU) as partners.
- International organisations are not eligible.
- Each Consortium must elect a **Consortium Leader (CL)** who will bear the main responsibility for the project activities, including its technical and administrative coordination as well as scientific and financial reporting.
- The CL must be a **researcher based at any of the South African public higher education institutions or research institutions**.
- The CL must be in a possession of a PhD.
- In terms of human capital development, Consortia that involve young scientists (i.e. postgraduate students) and focus on gender equality (a balanced involvement of female and male researchers) will be positively considered and will receive a higher rating.
- The grant will be released to the CL; therefore, it is the responsibility of the CL to ensure that all the other Consortium partners (i.e. researchers from EU countries and SMEs) have access to the funds.

Funding Modalities

- Funding will be available for a maximum period of **9 months (Jan-Sep 2018)**. Researchers must utilize the funds for networking/twinning activities taking place within this 9-month period.
- Networking/ mobility proposals must be jointly developed and completed by the partnering researchers on both sides.
- Apart from the financial support from the ESASTAP 2020 Project, institutions and universities are encouraged to solicit other funding resources as needs be.
- These funds can be used as:
 1. A top-up grant to an already existing/funded network/project on Marine Science between South Africa and EU MS and AC.
 2. A start-up grant for organising consortia meetings of partners who are working on/or preparing proposals for application to other H2020 Calls on Marine Science.
 3. To initiate or establish a new Marine network/project between South Africa and EU MS and ACs.

How much should I apply for?

The maximum budget available per Consortium (to be awarded to the CL) is **7 000 EUR** (approximately R105 000). Please do take note that:

- Each Consortium will be funded only for the activities within the scope of the guidelines, should it be successful.
 - The award per Consortium will be released only to the CL, who should be based at any of the South African public universities or research institutions. All the other Consortium members can access the funds from the CL.
 - Scientific and financial reporting on the networking /mobility activities is obligatory and must be completed by the CL upon completion of the activities.
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What is the deadline for submission of applications?

Applications must be submitted through the NRF Online Submission System by **06 October 2017**. Applications received after this date will not be considered for funding.

How do I apply?

The onus is on the applicants to find their own research partners. Please note that application does not guarantee funding. Applicants can apply by following the steps below:

- Applications must be submitted electronically to the NRF on the NRF Online Submission System at <https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/>
- Register/Login using your ID/Passport number and password.
- Go to “My Applications” and select “Create Application”.
- Select the call for which you are applying for: **ESASTAP 2020 Twinning Call**.
- Complete all compulsory and non-compulsory sections applicable to you. Please attach the required documents in PDF format and in **one file** in the following order: CV of partners and the signed page of the partners, networking /mobility schedule/plan, and budget.

Please take note of the following aspects:

- Complete applications by the CL will go to the CL’s 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.
- The CL must contact their research office or Designated Authority for 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.

How are applications evaluated?

Following the eligibility check, eligible proposals will be evaluated by the members of the ESASTAP 2020 Project, based on the following criteria:

- Potential of the networking activities leading to long-lasting sustained partnerships
- Feasibility of the network/mobility plan being executed within the 9-month period
- Budget fitting to the plan (value for money)
- Participation of postgraduate students.

Important dates

- Opening of Call: 11 August 2017
- Closing of Call: 06 October 2017
- Screening and Evaluation of received proposals: October to November 2017
- Awarding: December 2017
- Networking /mobility activities: start of January to end of September 2018
- Final date for submission of the report by CL: 15 November 2018
- The CL must note that he/she will also be requested to provide a follow-up report on the network/project a year after the funding period, November 2019.

Where can I obtain more information?

For more information please contact:

National Research Foundation (NRF)

For programme-content related queries	For technical and grant related queries
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