



SAMRC-Newton grant funding guidelines for applicants and awardees June 2019

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) plays a key role in developing, facilitating and supporting high quality and relevant health research in South Africa. The SAMRC has a number of ongoing research and career support mechanisms and continues to enter into new partnerships with local and international partners to bring in additional funding to support key health research and product development priorities.
- 1.2. All SAMRC funding is subject to the SAMRC Funding Terms and Conditions, which set out the general terms under which funding is provided by the SAMRC and the obligations of funding recipients. However, certain grant programs may have specific requirements in addition to or that may differ from these Terms and Conditions. Such requirements, where applicable, can be found in the relevant Request for Applications (RFA) documents and will take precedence for that particular grant program only.
- 1.3. The current document sets out the specific requirements for South African investigators applying to the joint funding programs between the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and the Medical Research Council UK (MRC UK) under the Newton Programme and is aimed at assisting applicants through the process of completing an application for such funding. This document incorporates the applicable provisions from the SAMRC Funding Terms and Conditions.
- 1.4. The SAMRC reserves the right to amend the SAMRC-Newton Grant and SAMRC General Funding Terms and Conditions from time to time at its discretion. Changes will be applicable from the date of posting on the SAMRC website.

2. Who can apply

- 2.1. The following are **eligible** to apply for SAMRC-Newton Grant Funding:
 - 2.1.1. Investigators from South African public universities, science councils (including the SAMRC) and other public research organisations
 - 2.1.1.1. Applications from and/or inclusion of the following Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) and Universities of Technology are strongly encouraged:
 - Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT)
 - Sefako Makgatho Health Science University (SMU)
 - University of Fort Hare (UFH)
 - University of Limpopo (UL)
 - University of the Western Cape (UWC)
 - University of Venda (UV)
 - University of Zululand (UZ)
 - Walter Sisulu University (WSU)
 - 2.1.2. Foreign collaborators from research institutions and universities (in addition to the lead UK collaborator) who are deemed essential for the completion of the project may be included as a collaborator or sub-contractor and may receive funding from SAMRC, provided that they offer a service or capability that is not available among the project partners.

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2.1.3. South African local not-for profit companies, research institutes, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations that conduct research and/or product development may apply directly for funding.

2.1.4. Members of the SAMRC Board of Directors and intramural units may apply for funding provided they have not participated either directly or indirectly in the grant making processes for the relevant funding call and have declared their potential conflict of interest.

2.2. The following are **not eligible** for Funding:

2.2.1. Any individual involved either directly or indirectly in any of the SAMRC grant making processes, with the exception of peer reviewers who have reviewed applications for grant mechanisms other than the current call, may not apply for funding.

2.2.2. Members of the Executive Management Committee (EMC) of the SAMRC may not apply for funding.

2.2.3. The following are not eligible to apply for funding but may be included as sub-contractors if they provide a service or capability that is not available among the project partners or among other eligible organizations:

2.2.3.1. Private and/or for-profit South African and foreign companies and institutions

2.2.3.2. Foreign not-for-profit companies, research institutions, universities, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations other than the UK collaborators

2.3 While there is no limit to the number of applications submitted per institution, Principal Investigators (PIs) may only submit one application each as the PI but may be involved in more than one application if listed as a co-investigator.

2.4 Researchers will be responsible for establishing their own collaborations and, once a research proposal is developed, UK and South African applicants must apply jointly for funding. For administrative purposes, all projects will have a PI based at a UK Research Organisation (RO) and a PI based at a South African RO. Partners must work together to complete one joint application to be written in English and submitted to the MRC UK via the MRC Joint electronic System (Je-S) System.

3. How to apply

3.1. Pre-Award/Application Stage

3.1.1. **MRC UK will** manage the pre-award stage via the JeS system which includes the following:

- Receipt of the Intention to Submit
- Receipt of written applications via JeS system
- The peer review process
- Engagement with PIs on peer reviewer comments

3.1.2. All PIs submitting applications/ proposals must ensure that the relevant research office/authorised representative at their institution has signed off on the application and has verified/certified the appropriateness, completeness, and correctness of all information submitted, including in the application/proposal and associated budget.

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By co-signing the application, the institution commits themselves to administering the allocated funding according to the terms and conditions set out in this document.

3.1.3. Each responsive and complete application received by the due date will be reviewed by local and international reviewers who are experts in the RFA priority areas. The reviews may take the form of separate, written reviews and/or expert review panels.

3.1.4. The relevant Steering Committee and/or Selection Committee for the call or grant program in question will meet to discuss and decide on a list of one or more projects for funding, based on the recommendations made by the Expert review panel/ Peer Review Committee and/or the independent peer reviewer(s). The Steering Committee may also consider additional factors such as:

- the intellectual property position and commercial feasibility
- the strategic requirements of the funders
- SAMRC transformational priorities
- a balance in the range of topics supported

3.1.5. As per the SAMRC's Delegation of Authority Policy and Materiality Framework, the SAMRC's Executive Management Committee will be responsible for final approval of all projects for funding.

3.1.6. Based on the scientific merit of the applications and/or budget limitations, the SAMRC may award fewer or more grants than expected and may elect not to allocate all of the available funds to awards.

3.1.7. The SAMRC reserves the right not to make any awards for a particular RFA if no applications are deemed to be suitable, if funds are no longer available or for any other justifiable reason.

4. Budgets for SA applicants

4.1. VAT: Budget to be calculated excluding 15% VAT

4.2. Allowable costs

4.2.1. Personnel: Soft-funded posts for individuals working on the project (e.g. post-docs, students, technicians, project managers) will be funded/partially funded, provided an accurate estimation of time allocation is provided and they are not already funded from other means.

4.2.2. Consultants: These may include both local and/or foreign consultants who provide a service or capability that is not available among the project partners but is essential for the completion of project deliverables.

4.2.3. Laboratory costs: Direct laboratory or research costs, supplies, consumables. Clearly define the cost line item.

4.2.4. Travel and accommodation: Directly related to the execution of the project, including site visits, staff/students exchange visits, investigator meetings. Clearly define the travel in the line items.

4.2.5. Equipment / Capital Costs: Partial or full support for the cost of equipment may, in some instances, be requested, provided that it is directly required for the project. A budget cap of 10% of the total budget requested. Motivation required.

4.2.6. Other direct costs:

4.2.6.1. Shipping costs for samples

4.2.6.2. Sub-contracts to non-collaborators: These may be to any local or international organization that provides a service or capability that is not

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available among the project partners but is essential for the completion of project deliverables.

4.2.7. Indirect costs/Institutional overhead:

4.2.7.1. An indirect costs rate of 5% to (or any revised indirect costs rate specified by the SAMRC from time to time) is allowed.

4.2.7.2. The SA RO may not charge additional overheads on funding that will be on-granted to UK and other collaborators.

4.3. Non-Allowable costs

4.3.1. Personnel costs:

4.3.1.1. Salaries of permanent or fixed term staff, e.g. tenured staff, professors etc., that are fully covered by the host institutions.

4.3.1.2. Administrative support staff, e.g. Finance officers, Admin assistant, HR staff.

4.3.1.3. Recruitment costs

4.3.1.4. Retrenchment costs for staff.

4.3.2. Equipment / Capital Costs:

4.3.2.1. Purchase or construction of a building.

4.3.2.2. Rental costs for space that is owned by the ROs or collaborator institution participating in the project.

4.3.2.3. Purchase of office furniture.

4.3.2.4. Maintenance of equipment, unless well motivated

4.3.2.5. Insurance of equipment

4.3.2.6. If research equipment is purchased using SAMRC funding, unless specified otherwise by the specific funding mechanism, it becomes the property of the RO. Under no circumstances may equipment become the property of the individual researcher to whom the funding was allocated. The equipment may not be removed from the RO and/or transferred to another institution without the express written approval of the RO and concurrence by the SAMRC. The RO must take responsibility for any necessary maintenance of and insurance on the equipment.

5. Post-Award/Successful grants

5.1.1. SAMRC will manage the post award process for the grants which includes the following:

- Sending grant award letters to the successful PIs.
- SAMRC will conclude a funding agreement with the South African (SA) PI's host Research Organization (RO). The UK PI will then be subcontracted by the South African Institution. SAMRC will not be contracting directly with any UK institution.
- Final UK and SA budgets will be subject to negotiation with SAMRC, and subject to changes due to the exchange rate.
- Managing the grants for the life time of the project.
- The SA PI will be the lead for the project and all correspondence will be with SA Lead PI.

5.1.2. Responsibility of the Principal Investigator and the research organisation

5.1.2.1. PIs and Co-Investigators (CoI) must have a contract of employment with the RO at the time of application and for the duration of the grant. If a PI or a CoI is to leave their post prior to a project ending, the RO is responsible for ensuring there are suitable arrangements in place to replace that PI or CoI.

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- 5.1.2.2. If a suitable replacement cannot be found the SAMRC reserves the right to terminate the award.
- 5.1.2.3. Individuals may be a recipient of more than one SAMRC grant at a time. The award of a grant does not guarantee any further commitment to funding by the SAMRC.
- 5.1.2.4. The SA PI's RO will be responsible for managing all IP, sub-contracts and disbursements to project partners, including, but not limited to, the UK collaborator institution.
- 5.1.2.5. The SA PI's RO must ensure that all relevant research collaboration agreements and funding agreements are in place for the successful management of the grant.
- 5.1.2.6. The SA PI and RO will be responsible for overall reporting, technical and financial, to the SAMRC, including from all the sub-agreements.
- 5.1.2.7. The PI and RO must ensure that all ethics and regulatory requirements for the project are fulfilled.

5.1.3. Fund Management

- 5.1.3.1. The PI and RO are required to ensure that the procurement of any goods, equipment and/or services for the purposes of the project are in strict accordance with the provisions of the RO's procurement and travel policies.
- 5.1.3.2. Funds may be spent solely according to the approved project budget and proposal and any required movement of funds between budget categories that exceeds 15% of the annual budget shall be subject to the agreement of the SAMRC in writing. If this agreement is not obtained, the institution will be responsible for covering the non-approved amounts.
- 5.1.3.3. The RO must open a separate project or book of accounts to record all sums received from the SAMRC for the project and all expenses incurred and is obliged to invest unexpended funds from the funding in a separate interest-bearing cost centre at the RO. Any interest earned on such unexpended funds shall accrue to the RO to disburse on the project and must be reported in the financial statements. At the end of the contractual term and/or upon completion of the project deliverables, any project surplus funds are to be re-paid to the SAMRC unless an alternative use for the funds by the RO has been agreed in writing by the SAMRC.
- 5.1.3.4. The SAMRC is entitled, at any reasonable time during or after the project, to appoint an independent team of auditors to inspect and take copies of the project books of account, records and supporting documents of the RO to the extent necessary to verify any statement on reasonable notice and during office hours. The RO must for this purpose provide the auditors with reasonable access to the books of account, technical reports and all records relating to the management of the project together with any other information required by the auditors for this purpose.
- 5.1.3.5. The RO is also required to inform the SAMRC in writing of any and all prospective funding for the project from third parties, which is used in the furtherance of the project. The institution may not accept any funding from a third party for the purposes of furthering the project without the prior written consent of the SAMRC.
- 5.1.3.6. No funding may be utilised by the PI and RO, for research that requires ethical approval, unless proof of the necessary ethics and regulatory approvals

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for the project have been provided to the SAMRC. Should the investigators fail to obtain the necessary approvals within a reasonable time period, the SAMRC reserves the right to withdraw the award.

- 5.1.3.7. The frequency of funding disbursements will be as stipulated in the approved budget. Funding disbursements are subject to satisfactory progress and financial reports.
- 5.1.3.8. Funding disbursements may be delayed or altered, at the discretion of the SAMRC, if insufficient spending has occurred on previous instalments.
- 5.1.3.9. The SAMRC may, in some cases and at its sole discretion, withhold 10% of the final instalment amount until the final report for the project has been received and approved.
- 5.1.3.10. Funding disbursements will only be processed on receipt of an original VAT invoice in a format acceptable to the SAMRC. The standard payment term of 30 (thirty) days from receipt of the invoice will apply for all invoices.

6. Reporting

- 6.1. For SAMRC-Newton grant programs, PIs are required to submit to the SAMRC written biannual reports within 14 (fourteen) days of the end of each 6-month period following execution of the Funding Agreement and a final report within 30 (thirty) days of completion of the project.
- 6.2. All PIs must submit technical and financial reports using standardized reporting templates as per the reporting schedule.
- 6.3. Additional reports may be submitted by the PIs upon achieving milestones or deliverables in order to request the next disbursement.
- 6.4. The SAMRC may, further, request ad-hoc reports to monitor progress more closely, if needed, especially where there has been slow progress or delays in meeting milestones or deliverables.
- 6.5. The reporting dates for each project will be determined and communicated by the relevant SAMRC Program or Project Manager. The reports must follow the format provided by the SAMRC and provide details on the progress in terms of completion of deliverables as set out in the approved project proposal.
- 6.6. Each report must be accompanied by a financial statement in a manner and form prescribed by the SAMRC.
- 6.7. Funds must be used for the purpose and the research activities for which they were intended and approved by the SAMRC. Any deviations to the approved project objectives, methodology, milestones and/or deliverables must be approved by the SAMRC in writing prior to implementation.

7. Publications

- 7.1. Recipients of SAMRC funding are expected to maximize the impact and utility of their work, including through timely dissemination of their findings, preferably through open access publication.
- 7.2. Recipients may delay the publication of data and results generated from the projects in order to first protect any potential intellectual property therein.
- 7.3. Recipients are also encouraged to make research data available in public databases after a reasonable period of exclusivity to allow the recipient and their collaborators to complete their data analysis and publication.
- 7.4. All publications, press releases and other documents which include results obtained in projects funded through the SAMRC-Newton Programs must acknowledge the source of the

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funding as follows: “Research reported in this [publication/press release] was supported by the South African Medical Research Council with funds received from the South African National Department of Health and the UK Medical Research Council, with funds received from the UK Government’s Newton Fund”

- 7.5. Publications press releases and other documents from Extra Mural Research Units and Collaborating Centres of the SAMRC must further include the SAMRC as a secondary affiliation of any authors from the Unit or Centre.
- 7.6. Principal Investigators are required to report on their publications on a quarterly basis, and to submit a copy of each publication to the SAMRC. Publications which do not contain the correct acknowledgement and/or affiliation will not be accepted as outputs of the project.

8. Intellectual property

- 8.1. Ownership of any intellectual property (IP) and associated rights arising from SAMRC-funded projects (Foreground IP) shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Intellectual Property Rights from Publicly Financed Research and Development Act, 51 of 2008 and associated regulations as amended from time to time (IPR Act) and the institution’s Intellectual Property Policy. The institution is obliged to appropriately protect, manage and commercialize the Foreground IP in accordance with all applicable provisions of the IPR Act and, in the case of some funding mechanisms, in consultation with the SAMRC. The RO / PI is required to report any Foreground IP developed to the SAMRC as part of the reporting requirements.
- 8.2. The SAMRC is committed to ensuring that any Foreground IP resulting from research conducted with public funds (through the SAMRC) is commercialized to the benefit of the people of South Africa. Recipients of SAMRC funding are therefore required to ensure that any agreement concluded for the commercialization of Foreground IP provides that any resulting products shall be made available and accessible at an affordable price to people most in need within developing countries, including the Republic of South Africa.
- 8.3. In some instances, the SAMRC may require participation in the sharing of benefits that may arise from the commercialization of Foreground IP. The participative interest of the SAMRC will be negotiated with the RO and any other relevant parties on a case by case basis, based on the relative contributions of the parties

9. Regulatory and ethical compliance

- 9.1. All SAMRC grantees are required to obtain approval for any research involving human or animal subjects or samples therefrom from the appropriate institutional review board or ethics committee and provide the SAMRC with a copy of such approval prior to embarkation on the research. This requirement extends to all sites participating in the research.
- 9.2. Any such research, in addition to ethical approval compliance, must be conducted in accordance with the generally accepted principles of “Good Clinical Practices”, which shall include but not be limited to, requiring prior informed consent from the human subjects and shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable national and international regulations and guidelines pertaining to research involving human subjects, management of data confidentiality, research involving animals, use or release of genetically modified organisms, research use of recombinant DNA, and/or use of any organism, substance or material considered to be a biohazard, including adherence to all applicable standards for transport of specimens, both locally and internationally, as appropriate.



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10. Contacts details

Each project and grant program funded by the SAMRC is managed by specific Program and/or Project Managers who will be the primary contact for all queries and communications thereon. The primary contact for SAMRC-Newton grants is:

Candice Roux
Project Manager
Grants, Innovation and Product Development
Tel: 021 938 0820
Email: croux@mrc.ac.za

Any general queries in relation to the SAMRC Funding Terms and Conditions may be addressed to:

Michelle Mulder
Senior Programme Manager
Grants, Innovation and Product Development
Tel: 021 938 0937
Email: michelle.mulder@mrc.ac.za