



NSTC (ZAMBIA) – NCRST (NAMIBIA)

CALL GUIDELINES FOR THE BILATERAL CALL FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS IN CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGIES

APPLICATION PERIOD: 4TH SEPTEMBER TO 13TH OCTOBER 2023

FUNDING PERIOD: 18 - 21 MONTHS

1. PREAMBLE

The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) of the Republic of Zambia and National Commission on Research Science and Technology (NCRST) of Namibia are Science Granting Councils (SGCs) participating in the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) for Sub Saharan Africa. The SGCI seeks to strengthen the capacities of the participating SGCs in supporting research and evidence-based policies that will contribute to socio-economic development of the countries. The Initiative is jointly funded by the the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the German Research Foundation (DFG). These partnerships will continue to focus on enhancing the roles of Science Granting Councils as key intermediary or bridging organizations within national science systems.

In contributing to their national research systems, the NSTC and the NCRST secured grant funding from the International Development Research Centre of Canada, under the auspices of the SGCI. The said Grant, aimed at supporting research projects in **Climate-smart Agriculture Technologies**, is based on a co-funding arrangement between the IDRC on one hand and the NSTC and NCRST on the other hand.

2. BACKGROUND

Agricultural development in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region is an indisputable pre-requisite for poverty reduction as well as a key supplier of raw materials for the industrialization of the region. The SADC Agricultural Policy provides an overarching policy framework for the Region's agriculture sector. It defines common agreed objectives and measures to guide, promote and support actions at regional and national levels in the SADC agricultural sector towards the attainment of the SADC Common Agenda. The policy aims to enhance sustainable agricultural production, productivity and competitiveness; improve regional and international trade and access to markets of agricultural products; improve private – and public sector engagement and investment in the

agricultural value-chains; and reduce social and economic vulnerability of the region's population in the context of food and nutrition security and the changing economic and climatic environment

Zambia and Namibia like many other countries in the region have placed the livelihood of people at the centre of socio-economic development and agriculture is one key driver to achieve this development. However, climate change poses challenges to agriculture, particularly in developing countries. Climate change is estimated to have reduced global maize and wheat yields by 3.8% and 5.5% respectively. It is predicted that climate change will increase the frequency and severity of floods and droughts in the coming decades and this will increase agricultural production risks.

To contribute towards efforts to enhance sustainable agricultural production and the need to develop and increase productivity, the National Science and Technology Council has partnered with the National Commission on Research Science and Technology of Namibia to support a collaborative research project in Agriculture. It is against this background that the NSTC and NCRST are inviting eligible researchers from Zambia and Namibia affiliated to institutions at recognized public or private universities, research institutions to apply for funding to undertake bilateral collaborative research in Agriculture with focus on **Climate-smart agriculture technologies** that are to provide a means to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.

The overall goal of this Joint Call is to contribute to generation of critical knowledge anchored on increasing agriculture productivity and incomes and enhancing resilience of livelihoods and ecosystems under climate variability.

3. CALL OBJECTIVE

The objective of the call is to minimize the impact of climate change on the agriculture sector through utilizing climate smart technologies and techniques that will enhance market access for agricultural producers.

4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS/RESULTS

- Developed strategies that would sustainably increase agriculture productivity and incomes.
- Climate-smart products/technologies that can be adopted and utilized by industry to advance socio-economic development.

5. ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL AND INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED

- 5.1. Research Proposals must fall within the broad research thematic area of Climate-smart agriculture technologies.
- 5.2. The proposed research should be **applied research**, practical and focused towards problem solving in the identified priority area and must be innovative, with strong potential for utilization and or commercialization

- 5.3. Proposals must demonstrate strong inter and multi disciplinarity and collaborative approach among researchers and institutions.
- 5.4. The proposed project must contribute to human capital development including early career researchers
- 5.5. **Cross-cutting considerations** - The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the project will address issues of diversity, gender equality and inclusivity, public-private partnerships, risk management and intellectual property issues
- 5.6. Research projects led by women Principal Investigators are strongly encouraged. During the review and selection process of the projects, more weight will be given to a team that has female co-investigators.
- 5.7. **Results and Dissemination** - Applicants should clearly define the major outputs expected from the research project and describe how the research findings will be disseminated or used. Who are the target audience/ beneficiaries? How will the findings be used to influence policy and practice? What media engagements plans are envisaged? Indicate how open access will be fostered.
- 5.8. **Project Governance** - Explain how the project will be governed; the composition of the research team, their qualifications, field of expertise and specific roles in the proposed project. What is the role of the university's/institution's management (if any) and how might this governance structure influence the success of the project?
- 5.9. **Partnerships** - Describe the planned partnerships with other universities/ research institutes? How will the private sector or beneficiaries be involved in the design/management/execution of the project?
- 5.10. **Ethical clearance** - Where applicable, the Principal Investigator in the respective country shall obtain ethical clearance from an appropriate research ethics committee before any grant disbursement and implementation of the project.
- 5.11. **Budget** - An explanation and justification should be provided for each budget item. All rates to be used for the budgeting purpose are the ones acceptable by the respective institutions of the Principal Investigators hosting the projects. Some of the project eligible cost items are stated in section 5.

6. ELIGIBILITY

IN ZAMBIA

- i. This Call is open to Researchers in Public and private science and technology Research and Development (R&D) Institutions/Centres and Institutions of Higher Learning
In Zambia, these institutions/centres must be registered with NSTC.
- ii. The Principal Investigator must hold a PhD degree, preferably in a related field of the thematic area or a Masters degree with 8 years of research experience.
- iii. The research team must have significant capacity, capability and leadership in the proposed field.

- iv. The applicant's service contract must be valid during the period of the proposed project and contractual documents must be furnished as proof of employment for the period.
- v. Projects funded through this call should be located and carried out in Zambia unless otherwise indicated in the proposal. The project may contain eligible activities that can be carried out abroad when fully justified for addressing the objective(s) of this call.
- vi. Principal Investigators may participate in any number of NSTC-funded projects at the same time but can only **lead** one (1) project at a time unless otherwise agreed on with the NSTC.

IN NAMIBIA

- i. Namibian citizens or Researchers with a valid work or study permit or permanent residence in Namibia may apply.
- ii. The call is open to all researchers and groups of researchers or Namibian citizens who are employed on a permanent or contractual basis and affiliated to the following entities:
 - Accredited Public or Private Higher Education Institutions
 - Private/Public Research Institutions/Centres in Namibia
 - Offices / Ministries or Agencies (OMAs) in Namibia
 - Private Sector
 - NGOs
- iii. Principal Investigator (PI) must apply and submit the proposal on behalf of the project team. The PI must be an expert in the field and be in possession of a PhD degree in the related field of thematic area or a Masters degree with 8 years of research experience
- iv. Non-Namibians working under a contract with any of the above institutions are eligible to apply. However, the project must include a Namibian co-researcher/ investigator who is permanently working on the project from any institution in the country, well-versed with the project, to ensure its completion in the event the contract is no longer valid.
- v. The applicant's service contract must be valid during the period of the proposed project and contractual documents must be furnished as proof of employment for the period.
- vi. Projects funded through this call should be located and carried out in Namibia unless otherwise indicated in the proposal. The project may contain eligible activities that can be carried out abroad when fully justified for addressing the objective(s) of this call.
- vii. Principal Investigators may participate in any number of NCRST-funded projects at the same time but can only **lead** one (1) project at a time unless otherwise agreed on with the NCRST.

Note:

- All Applications must have a letter of support from the host institutions by the research office or its equivalent authority in Namibia and Zambia. Proposals without institutional letters of support will not be considered.

- The responsibility to find research partners in the collaborating country is on the applicants.

7. FUNDING CEILING AND ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

A. The funding ceiling on the Namibian side is N\$ 890, 878.00 per project.

The funding may cover the following expenses:

- i. Data collection through laboratory, desk or field research, payments to people who gather data or provide casual labour;
- ii. Consumable goods, for example laboratory reagents/supplies and non-capital equipment for projects;
- iii. A maximum **N\$ 150,000 (N\$ 50,000 per student)** should be reserved to not more than three MSc and/or doctoral students for their field research activities within the capacity building component; and should be budgeted under direct research activities.
- iv. Reference materials, for example books and articles related to the project;
- v. Stakeholders' consultations and field visits (in country travel);
- vi. Exchange visits in case of meetings, research visits and exchange of scientists, personnel and experts, as well as reciprocal visits undertaken as part of research and the attendance of seminars, symposia and other meetings funded under this call;
- vii. Subsistence allowance for workshops and seminars, local or international, subject to the percentage limits provided;
- viii. Equipment rentals for seminars and conferences and printing, and any other activity necessary for a proper implementation directly related to the proposed research project in consultation with the NCRST;
- ix. Project indirect cost, which may include stationery, and telecommunications, stipend and benefits of personnel supporting the project, such as Secretaries, Clerks and Accountants;
- x. Contingency: contingency reserve not exceeding 5% of the project cost may be included in the budget

Non-Eligible costs:

- xi. Purchases of fixed assets;
- xii. Currency exchange losses;
- xiii. Direct or indirect taxes, including VAT;
- xiv. Overheads;

- xv. Tuition fees;
- xvi. Salaries and continuous stipend

B. The funding ceiling on the Zambian side is **ZMW577,500.00 per project**.

The funding may cover the following expenses:

- xvii. Research materials and supplies
- xviii. Research equipment and accessories
- xix. Local travel
- xx. International travel (Travel to partner countries)
- xxi. Transportation and shipment of research materials
- xxii. Special services
- xxiii. Human Resource Development (student support at Masters and PhD levels is a prerequisite for all projects)
- xxiv. Organization of workshops/seminars
- xxv. Dissemination of results including publication cost
- xxvi. Institutional Administrative cost at 5% of the total budget
- xxvii.** Monitoring and Evaluation cost at 5% of the total budget

Non-Eligible costs:

- i. Salaries and Honoraria for the research team
- ii. Institutional financial management costs such as audit fees
- iii. Insurance costs not related to the project.

Note:

- Two (2) separate budgets will be required, one for each side

8. PROJECT DURATION

The collaborative research project will be **from October 2023 to March 2025**.

9. HOW TO APPLY

A. In Zambia

- Applications must be submitted via the online **NSTC Grant Management System** at nstcms.nstc.org.zm. A guide on how to use the system is available on the NSTC website www.nstc.org.zm. Applications that are not submitted via the online application system shall not be accepted.

B. In Namibia

- Go to www.ncrst.na.
- Applications must be submitted via the online NCRST Grant Management System at <https://gms.ncrst.na>. A guide on how to use the system is available on the NCRST website www.ncrst.na. Applications that are not submitted via the online application system shall not be accepted.

Note:

- Applications must designate two (2) Principal Investigators (PIs); one in Namibia and one in Zambia. The PIs will be responsible for the technical and administrative coordination of the project including scientific and financial reporting.
- Applications must be completed jointly, but must be submitted separately to the respective funding agency in the two countries.
- The NSTC and NCRST will not be held responsible for non-submission;
- The Closing Date for submitting applications is **Friday, 13th October, 2023**

10. EVALUATION, REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS AND SELECTION OF PROJECTS

A three-tier evaluation and review process will be used as follows:

- i. Screening of applications by each collaborating agency
- ii. Joint review of proposals by an equally represented review panel nominated by the collaborating agencies to make recommendations for funding
- iii. Funding decisions by a Joint Committee of the collaborating agencies

Note:

Proposals will be evaluated and reviewed by independent experts. Selection of projects will be on merit and priority, taking into consideration the following:

- Scientific merit and quality of the proposed research;
- Evidence of the capacity and capability of the research teams and significant contribution to and leadership in the proposed field
- Demonstration of collaboration, inter and multi disciplinary of the proposed research
- Originality, innovativeness of the proposed research and strong innovation/commercialization potential
- Potential for human capital development for research and innovation
- Consideration for gender and inclusivity dimensions

See below the evaluation criteria scoring

Criteria	Score
1. Scientific quality and innovativeness of the research proposal	15
2. Feasibility of the research proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Practicality, realistic, feasibility and consistency of the proposed activities with the objectives of the call b. Clarity and feasibility of the methodology provided c. Addressing contemporary challenges 	20
3. Added value and capacity to be expected from the collaboration	10
4. Gender consideration and inclusivity within the project team	5
5. Competence, expertise and experience of the principal investigators and scientists/researchers involved;	10
6. Clear deliverables	10
7. Relevance and impact of the research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Industrial development; b. Capacity building (institutional and/or human); c. Commercialization of research results; d. Potential impact on the end-use (market needs). e. Technology capability (is there a prototype, or proof of concept that is illustrated and has been proven to work). 	20
8. Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consistency to budget ratio or percentage given by the call guideline b. Does the proposed expenditure reflect the true cost of the proposed activities? 	10
TOTAL SCORE	100

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