



## **International Science Council (ISC)-South Africa Scientific Events/ Travel Grants**

**Closing Date: Consult the General Application Guide 2025**

**Only members of national ISC committees are eligible to apply**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The International Science Council (ISC) is a non-governmental organisation with a unique global membership that brings together over 250 organisations, including International Scientific Unions and Associations from natural and social sciences, and national and regional scientific organisations such as Academies and Research Councils.

The ISC was created in 2018 as a result of a merger between the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC). The mission of the ISC is to act as the global voice for science. As part of that mission, the ISC:

- Speaks for the value of all science and evidence-informed decision-making;
- Stimulates and supports international, , interdisciplinary scientific research and scholarship on major issues of global concern;
- Articulates scientific knowledge on such issues in the public and policy domain;
- Promotes the continued and equal advancement of scientific rigour, creativity and relevance in all parts of the world; and
- Defends the free and responsible practice of science.

This is in line with the strategic performance goals set in the National Research Foundation's (NRF) Vision: striving towards an internationally competitive science, technology and innovation system.

### **2. SOUTH AFRICAN ISC SECRETARIAT**

South Africa is the national member of the ISC through the support of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI). South Africa's adherence to the ISC is through the NRF and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). The South African ISC Secretariat serves the scientific

community and the ISC scientific unions and affiliates to which South Africa adheres. The national ISC Secretariat provides support and organisational services to the ISC National Governing Council of SA, and to the ISC SA National Committees to advance South Africa's position in international platforms. The total membership of these committees is in excess of 200 scientists. A significant number of South Africans serve on ISC-related commissions and working groups. The ISC activities in South Africa are executed in line with and subscribe to the following principles:

- Science-for-policy: Stimulate and support national and international scientific research and scholarship, and to communicate science that is relevant to national and international policy issues;
- Policy-for-science: Promote developments that enable science to contribute more effectively to major issues in the national and international public domain;
- Science-for-society: Stimulate science engagement with society;
- Scientific freedom and responsibility: Support the free and responsible practice of science;
- Adherence: Support committees through payment of ISC membership dues.

### 3. TYPES OF GRANTS

**ONLY** applications for ISC-related activities that align with the committees (as listed in Annex 1) will be considered eligible for ISC grants.

The three types of grants supported under this instrument are:

1. **Travel Grants (and/or connectivity):** This grant area is aimed at supporting travel and networks and partnerships in order for South African researchers to participate in ISC-related international conferences, workshops, and relevant meetings.
2. **Local Events:** Support for hosting of ISC-related events (e.g. seminars, symposia, workshops). These may be hybrid events. Under this grants, applicants can also apply for support to disseminate ISC aligned research outputs to broader society, including thought pieces to media houses, audio and video communication etc.
3. **National Committee support:** for hosting of national committees networking meetings, including virtual meetings.
4. **Science to policy engagements:** Includes activities that positioning committees to increase visibility and impact in the NSI. Activities can include: 1) hosting events to engage policymakers; 2) Media Engagement- Hosting workshops to work with journalists and media outlets to amplify scientific findings; 3) Science-Policy Networks: Establishing platforms for ongoing dialogue between committees and policymakers; Training for Policymakers – training events help policymakers and researchers to evidence-based decision-making, aligned with ISCs mandate.

Outcomes of events should include publication of scholarly reports and outreach materials.

'Conference' is used in its broadest sense, to include all types of scientific meetings/gatherings for exchange of ideas and sharing knowledge, including: seminars, symposia and workshops.

### 3.1 International Travel Grants

#### ***Purpose***

To support international travel and attendance of events related to ISC programmes and activities and for hosting experts from abroad. The maximum value for this category is **R50 000**.

#### ***Eligibility Criteria***

- Be a member of an ISC committee or a member of ISC-related working groups, task groups or commissions;
- Capacity building delegates (presently completing a PhD or recently completed a PhD) appointed to the SA committee of a specific Union. Up to two capacity building delegates will be eligible to apply per year per scientific committee or union;
- Applications will be supported on a competitive basis;
- A maximum of three delegates will be funded to attend a ISC international scientific unions and associations General Assembly or Congress;
- Delegates will be funded for a maximum stay of five days;
- Applications are considered on a value-add, representative and strategic basis;
- Additional funding for the same event from other NRF instruments will not be considered;
- Applicant should clearly indicate financial contributions from other sources.

### 3.2 Support for Local Events

#### ***Purpose***

To promote excellence in research through financial support for hosting national and international research events such as symposia, seminars, workshops, meetings and colloquia in South Africa, related to the ISC. This grant also supports hosting of virtual events and activities to disseminate ISC aligned research outputs to broader society, including thought pieces to media houses, audio and video communication etc.

The maximum value for this category is **R150 000**. However, the NRF reserves the right to deviate from this amount should a convincing case be made by an applicant. In this case, an award that exceeds R150 000 may be considered under rare circumstances.

#### ***Eligibility Criteria***

- Organisers are encouraged to promote science outreach by involving the public and students in the event.
- The funding may be utilised for conferencing and mobility costs related to the event (e.g. air travel and accommodation), or specific publication costs related to, or as a result of, the event.
- Activities such as audio-visual equipment hire, honoraria, student assistance and administration costs will not qualify for consideration.
- The applicant should clearly indicate financial contributions from other sources. Co-investment from own/other sources is a minimum requirement.

\* **Grants for hosting global conferences (more than 500 participants) is provided under the DSI-NRF Conference Fund. This funding instrument makes provision for strategic, large events of an international nature.**

### 3.3 ISC National Committee support

#### **Purpose**

To promote engagements between ISC committees, learned society and unions through national research events such as symposia, seminars, workshops, meetings and colloquia in South Africa. This grant also supports hosting of virtual events and activities to disseminate ISC aligned research outputs to broader society, including thought pieces to media houses, audio and video communication etc.

The maximum value for this category is R 50 000. However, the NRF reserves the right to deviate from this amount should a convincing case be made by an applicant. In this case, an award that exceeds R50 000 may be considered under rare circumstances.

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

- Organisers are encouraged to promote science outreach by involving the public and students in the event.
- National committees are encouraged to host national meetings in parallel with learned society workshops or other related events.
- The funding may be utilised for conferencing and mobility costs related to the event (e.g. air travel and accommodation), or specific publication costs related to, or as a result of, the event.
- Activities such as audio-visual equipment hire, honoraria, student assistance and administration costs will not qualify for consideration.

### Summary of ISC Supported Activities

Category	Item
Travel Grants for Individual Researchers/ connectivity to virtually organised events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flights (economy)</li> <li>▪ Accommodation</li> <li>▪ Conference registration fees</li> <li>▪ Subsistence</li> </ul>
Local Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flights and accommodation (speakers and or students)</li> <li>▪ Ground transport</li> <li>▪ Venue hire</li> <li>▪ Refreshments</li> <li>▪ Organisation of virtual events</li> <li>▪ Outreach and dissemination</li> <li>▪ Online platforms for science to policy dialogues</li> </ul>
National Committee support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel costs</li> <li>▪ Venue hire</li> <li>▪ Refreshments</li> <li>▪ Organisation of virtual events</li> <li>▪ Outreach and dissemination of ISC related activities</li> </ul>

#### 4. APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications should be submitted on the NRF Connect system at <https://nrfconnect.nrf.ac.za>
- Please follow the steps in the Manual on how to Register/Login, published on the NRF website at [www.nrf.ac.za](http://www.nrf.ac.za), with all the call documents.
- Select the Category: Travel, Training and Conference Grants;
- Thereafter, create an application for the Funding Opportunity: **ISC Grants for Travel and Hosting Events**
- Complete all compulsory sections and the relevant non-compulsory sections (i.e. CV sections).
- Please attach the necessary supporting documents/attachments in **PDF format**.
- Should you not follow the guidelines for attaching the necessary supporting documents, your application may not be considered.
- Remember to **submit** your application on completion.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- All applications should be submitted at least three (3) months prior to the event. **No applications less than three months prior to the event will be accepted.**
- *The NRF will not be held liable for server/IT problems experienced by any applicant or institution for non-submission of applications.*

#### 5. REVIEW PROCESS

In line with the NRF's endeavour for a fair and objective granting process, all applications are subjected to the following:

- All grant applications should be submitted to the NRF electronically via an online application.
- For ISC members at qualifying institutions, the NRF Designated Authority (DA) need to sign off and validate the application, as per usual NRF application procedure.
- In **ALL** cases (as well as for those members not attached to an institution), **please enter the contact details and a letter of support of your Head of Department and/or Chairperson of the specific committee**. The latter is to ensure alignment, fairness and consistency with applications.
- Applicants should upload the following:
  - an invitation letter from the host organisation/institution/person being visited or an official acceptance of conference presentation/poster, or a letter from the SA ISC Secretariat informing the delegates of their appointment as National Voting Delegate or Capacity Building Delegate, whichever might be applicable;
  - Itinerary
  - Minutes of the committee where nominations of attendees were discussed;
  - Draft programme for the event (where the applicant is applying to host an event)
- ***Applicants have five (5) days to query from date of email receipt should your application be rejected in the screening phase.***
- Applications are reviewed by an NRF panel

- ISC reviewers will make recommendations concerning the merit of applications under review including the budget request, in the form of written comments.
- **Given budgetary limitations, funding is not guaranteed. It is important to note that the applicant should clearly indicate financial contributions from other sources.**
- This call is strictly for ISC related activities taking place until **December 2026**
- The next call will be launched on 1 August 2026

## 6. REPORTING

Following the event, applicants must submit reports, and proof of travel where applicable. The report of the event should be submitted to the NRF no later than 30 days after the event. Applicants who have not submitted previous reports to the NRF will not be considered for funding again. The NRF support should be acknowledged in all publications and presentations (oral or poster). Use of the NRF logo should be according to the branding policies of the organisation and can be obtained from the contact persons below.

## 7. CONTACTS

Ms Busiswa Molefe  
Professional Officer: Researcher Links  
RIISA: International Grants and Partnerships  
Telephone: +27 12 481 4028  
Email: [BV.Molefe@risa.nrf.ac.za](mailto:BV.Molefe@risa.nrf.ac.za)

## ANNEX 1 – ISC COMMITTEES

1. The South African National Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA)
2. The National Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) & the Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics (SCOSTEP)
3. The International Astronomical Union (IAU)
4. The National Committee of the International Cartographic Association (ICA)
5. The South African National Committee for the International Geographical Union (IGU)
6. The South African National Committee for International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA)
7. The International Union of Crystallography (IUCr)
8. The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG)
9. The South African National Committee of the International Union of Geological Science (IUGS) and the International Correlation Programme (IGCP)
10. The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)
11. The South African National Committee of the International Union of Physiological Sciences (IUPS)
12. South Africa's National Committee for International Union of Psychological Studies (IUPsyS)
13. The National Committee for the International Union of Nutrition Sciences (IUNS) and the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IUFOST)
14. The International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics (IUTAM)
15. The South African Committee of the International Mathematics Union (IMU)
16. The International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS)
17. The Science Committee on Ocean Research (SCOR)
18. The International Union of Radio Science (URSI)
19. International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (IUPHAR)The International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP)
20. The International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS)
21. The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)
22. The International Brain Research Organization (IBRO)
23. The International Union of Immunological Societies (IUIS)
24. International Union of Forestry Research Organization (IUFRO)
25. Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)]
26. International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB)
27. International Water Association (IWA)
28. International Council for Scientific and Technological Information (ICSTI)
29. International Council on Laboratory Animal Science (ICLAS)