

Call for proposals (CFP)

REGIONAL INNOVATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME (RISP)

Ref No. RISP/RIS05/2021

Date of Issue	Thursday, 23 September 2021	
Closing Date	Monday, 25 October 2021	
Place	To: GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA cc: NMASHAMAITE@CSIR.CO.ZA	
Enquiries	Gerald Mandla	E-mail: GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA
CSIR business hours	8:00 – 16:30	



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) aims to strengthen and develop the national system of innovation and has developed a number of initiatives in this regard. These include interventions aimed at capacitating the South African population to participate meaningfully in the knowledge economy. This is in line with the South African government's goal to transform the economy into a globally competitive industrialised economy. The NDP outlines a long-term development path towards a prosperous and successful economy characterized by high levels of economic growth, employment generation and an equitable society. Both the New Growth Path and the Industrial Policy Action Plan outline the government's industrial development agenda and the critical jobs drivers, prioritised industrial sectors and a range of interventions required to accelerate economic growth, create jobs and fight poverty and under-development.

One of the DSI's strategic objectives is to strengthen provincial and rural innovation and production systems through analysis and catalytic interventions. This is based on the recognition that strong regional (provincial) innovation systems are some of the building blocks for strong national innovation systems. Currently, this is done primarily through strengthening collaboration between RDI institutions, industry, government and society, to catalyse Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) at regional level to create (or support) technology-intensive companies; and to foster networking between innovation stakeholders within specific regions.

In partnership with provincial and local stakeholders, the DSI has, over the past 9 years, been involved in the implementation of innovation activities and systems at sub-national level. The DSI previously funded specific secretariats to stimulate and support innovation in different provinces and local structures of government, namely: the Regional Innovation Fora (RIF). While there has been some level of success with the implementation and support for the above initiatives, there have also been problems with effectiveness and expected outcomes and impact in most of the programmes.

1.2 Regional Innovation Support Programme (RISP)

The DSI aims to strengthen and develop *regional and local innovation systems*, and has developed a number of interventions in this regard. Stemming from this objective, the **Regional Innovation Support Programme (RISP)** was established to provide the following interventions (elements of support) towards the regions:

1. Regional Innovation Networking Platform

Aimed at establishing Platforms to **bring together** research & development, innovation communities, technology SMMEs, industry and government **to establish an innovation enabling ecosystem** that could also support socio-economic development through innovation.

2. Feasibility study and/or business plan support

Aimed at facilitating planning and establishment of **innovation enabling mechanisms** such as Science and Technology Parks, Techno Parks, Innovation Hubs and other similar concepts in the regions, with the aim of strengthening/expanding RISs.

3. Innovation Baseline Studies

To **assess and analyse the status of Regional Innovation Systems (RISs)**, in a particular location, in terms of their effectiveness and readiness to promote and support innovation in the regions (including provinces and local municipalities). The outcome of these studies is used to develop regional interventions, plans and innovation related strategies.

A **Programme Management Unit (PMU)** was established within the CSIR's Hosted National Programmes to implement and manage the RISP on behalf of the DSI. The RISP interventions are also aimed at facilitating implementation of government policies and strategies such as (amongst others), the new White Paper of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), the National Development Plan (NDP), New Growth Path, regional development plans etc.

2 INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals are hereby invited for the following three separate and independent elements within the RISP:

- A. **Regional Innovation Networking platforms** aimed at establishing networking platforms to bring together research, development and innovation communities, technology SMMEs, industry and government.
- B. **Feasibility study or business plan** support for innovation enabling mechanisms such as:
 - a. Science and Technology Parks, Techno Parks, Innovation Hubs, Tech Hubs or other similar concepts.
 - b. Other innovation enabling mechanisms and initiatives.

- C. **Innovation Baseline Studies** to assess and analyse the status of Regional Innovation Systems (RISs), in a particular location, in terms of their effectiveness and readiness to promote and support innovation in the regions (including provinces and local municipalities).

The successful consortia will work closely with the **RISP PMU** as the implementing agency on behalf of DSI for the RISP. Please note that while not compulsory, preference will be given to studies to be conducted in areas, or to benefit areas, that are underserved in terms of innovation support.

3 VENUE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals must be submitted to the following email address: GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA cc: NMASHAMAITE@CSIR.CO.ZA.

4 CALL FOR PROPOSAL PROGRAMME

The Call for Proposal program, as currently envisaged, incorporates the following key dates:

- Issue of Call for Proposal documents: 23 September 2021
- Closing / submission Date: 25 October 2021
- Target start date of the projects: 01 December 2021

5 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATION

All proposals must be submitted according to the format specified (see the PROPOSAL GUIDELINE/01) in the CFP. However, applicants are welcome to submit additional documents to support their project proposal.

Accordingly, the proposed project must include at least one of the following (as separate proposals):

5.1 Regional Innovation Networking platforms

Regional Innovation Networking Platforms are aimed at strengthening regional/rural innovation systems by establishing **Networking and Collaboration Platforms** that brings together research, development, innovation communities/civil society, technology SMMEs, industry and government. These platforms should take advantage of their spatial closeness of different innovation actors (with complementary knowledge and resources) and create a favourable environment for:

- Harnessing Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) for socio-economic development.
- Promoting, supporting and mentoring technology based technology SMMEs through implementation of innovation-driven activities.

- Initiating and implementing prospective innovation driven projects, programmes and initiatives directed at spurring their regional economies, industrialisation, regional capacity development and creation of job opportunities.
- Enabling innovation, including capacitating stakeholders with respect to innovation.
- Promoting inclusive economic growth.

The proposals must clearly articulate the following minimum requirements for Regional Innovation Networking Platforms:

The Proposal must clearly articulate the following **minimum requirements** for Regional Innovation Networking Platforms:

1. **Mechanisms for meaningful participation of previously disadvantaged individuals** (i.e. black owned technology SMMEs, small businesses owned by females and people living with disabilities).
2. **Co-funding contribution, preferably in cash, from local or regional partner(s)**. There should already be a written confirmation of this contribution. Proof of confirmation must be attached to proposal and detailed in budget.
3. **Structured and relevant Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) capacity buildings programmes** (e.g. technical training, innovation related interventions, networking events/forums, mentorship programmes, workshops etc.) **aimed at enabling improved innovation driven industrial competitiveness**. Financial support will not cover the cost of international conferences and traveling, as well as business incubation activities or general SMME development services (such as financial management, accounting, human resources, customer care, report writing, business writing skills etc.)
4. **Support mechanisms for improved innovation partnership deals** (e.g. access to information, business strategy, legal/IP templates, funding proposals etc.).

In addition, the proposal should also articulate the following:

5. Situational Assessment (relevant to innovation).
6. The platform's Geographic Spread of Development.
7. Mechanisms for meaningful participation of knowledge partners (innovators, universities, science councils, STI institutions etc.), government (provincial/local), innovation communities (civil society) and industry.
8. Demonstrate support towards and development of economic sectors, taking into account social impact and new areas of growth.
9. Demonstrate alignment, linkages and awareness to Provincial and Local development plans and strategies.
10. Promote partnerships and collaborations, including securing co-funding.
11. The proposal must map out stakeholders to constitute the Platform Steering Committee (consisting of various regional stakeholders) and Lead Institution (applicant and the Platform host). This must include contributions and responsibilities (financial or/and non-financial) of each stakeholder, accompanied by a signed letter of support and commitment.

12. The proposal should outline how the applicant's initiative would leverage the relevant innovation mechanisms and instruments.
13. A detailed budget breakdown must be submitted by the applicant, including sources of co-funding and its related expenses.

It is essential that the proposals specify how the platforms will address the highlighted minimum required activities and requirements. Please note that this will be a two-year contract, with one-year funding commitment. Further funding will be dependent on availability of funds, satisfactory progress and approval of a business plan aimed at culminating in concrete collaborative projects between relevant stakeholders.

Applicants from KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga and North West are encouraged to submit proposals.

Please note that there will be DSI and RISP PMU participation in the project steering committee and/or the applicant's entity structures where applicable.

In addition, please note that the applicant's ability to implement the intervention will be an evaluating factor.

5.2 Innovation Baseline studies to assess and analyse the status of Regional Innovation Systems (RISs):

The main objective of an Innovation Baseline study would be to assess and analyse the status of Regional Innovation Systems (RISs), within a specific area with respect to their effectiveness and readiness to support technology and innovation. The outputs of the baseline studies must be such that they could lead to practical implementable outcomes and must be comprehensive enough to:

- Provide an understanding of the socio-economic profile of the region, particularly with respect to skills levels, capacity and capability to innovate and make use of interventions to support innovation in the region.
- Recommend how the regional/local innovation systems could be developed and strengthened.
- Inform the development of regional/local innovation support strategies/plans.
- Guide and inform programmes and initiatives to strengthen regional innovation.
- Inform regional plans/strategies to promote innovation-based enterprise development, industrialisation and sector support.
- To guide inclusive growth and transformation (participation of civil society and underserved areas in innovation) in the regions.

The proposals must clearly articulate the following minimum requirements (**Indicators**) for Innovation Baseline Studies:

1. STI institutional landscape

- The status of the STI institutional landscape - identification and analysis of existing regional STI institutions and programmes (e.g. academia, research institutions, product development centres, digital skills centres, technology-based incubators etc.). This must include their current spatial location and respective roles in promoting socio-economic development through STI.
 - The status of key competencies/expertise of regional/local STI institutions that are aligned with regional economic sectors (e.g. their research centres, technology incubators, skills development centres etc.).
 - Accessibility of these regional and national STI institutions/programmes and incentives support by local communities, industries, SMMEs, inventors and innovators.
 - The role (including support mechanisms) that regionally/locally based STI institutions should play in supporting regional/local innovation, industrialisation and technology-based entrepreneurship.
- 2. Industrialisation and Technology-based entrepreneurship**
- The extent of beneficiation/value-addition through innovation by local/regional industries (do these industries/sectors utilise innovation to be competitive?).
 - The degree of technology and innovation adoption by regional sectors (including SMMEs).
 - The status of technology-based enterprise development.
 - The extent of linkages between regional/local industries and local and national STI institutions (this could be demonstrated through collaborations/partnerships on STI projects and initiatives).
 - Challenges and recommended interventions to promote and support technology based industrialisation and enterprise development.
- 3. Inclusivity and transformation**
- Analysis of the demography of the region as it relates to a regional socio-economic profile, including education level (including Science, Engineering, Technology and Digital skills) , poverty levels, unemployment (including youth unemployment).
 - Community involvement/participation in innovation programme/initiatives, technology-based entrepreneurship and related activities (e.g. through regional/local innovation support programmes or interventions from government, private business and non-government entities etc.).
- 4. Government (national, provincial and local government) enabling environment**
- Assessment of government policies and strategies (such as the NDP, Bio-economy strategy, IPAP, NGP, STI funding, etc.) to support innovation in South Africa.
 - State of regulatory environment, RDI enabling frameworks or instruments and institutional arrangement.
 - Accessibility of national government programmes and incentives support by regional/local communities, industries, SMMEs, inventors and innovators.
 - Assessment of provincial and local government mechanisms and interventions to support regional innovation. This includes enabling policies and strategies, innovation funding and other innovation-enabling mechanisms (e.g. science parks, technology incubators, incentives, innovation funding etc).
 - Policy and strategy alignment - alignment of provincial and local strategy/plans with national STI related policies. This should include policies aimed at promoting industrialisation, technology SMMEs development and positioning the regions/provinces for the fourth industrial revolution.

- The effectiveness of provincial/local government mechanisms and interventions in creating enabling environment to harness innovation for regional socio-economic development.

5. **Linkages, collaborations and partnerships**

- Mapping of potential role players, stakeholders and strategic local and international partners.
- The extent of linkages, collaborations and partnerships between STI institutions (including institutions outside the region/province), provincial/local government, civil society and local/regional industries (including SMMEs, inventors and innovators).
- Existing and/or planned RDI initiatives.
- Challenges and recommendations to facilitate increased linkages, collaborations and partnerships. This should include the role government, academia and private business should play to facilitate participation of regional/local communities, inventors and innovators in technology and innovation.
- **Co-funding contribution, preferably in cash, from local or regional partner(s).** There should already be a written confirmation of this contribution. Proof of confirmation must be attached to proposal and detailed in budget.

6. **Political, Economic, Social, and Technological (PEST) analysis** covering all key Areas above:

- STI institutional landscape
- Government enabling environment
- Industrialisation and technology-based entrepreneurship
- Inclusivity and transformation
- Linkages, collaborations and partnerships
- Other key Areas (if applicable)

The proposals must articulate how the *indicators* above will be investigated. Applicants are encouraged to add their own indicators (if necessary) in addition to the ones listed above.

Applicants are also expected to undertake both primary data gathering (engagements and interviews) and secondary research (desktop study). Most importantly, the baseline study must be location specific and challenges, recommendations and way forward must be informed by the baseline assessment and analysis.

Applicants must submit proof demonstrating that they have obtained buy-in to carry out the baseline study from regional stakeholders (preferably from the public sector, provincial or local government). Applicants are also expected and to ensure co-funding of the study and/or to secure co-funding contribution from local or regional partner(s).

Please note that there will be DSI and RISP PMU participation in the project steering committee and/or the applicant's entity structures where applicable

5.3 **Feasibility study or business plan support for science and technology parks, techno parks, innovation hubs or other innovation enabling mechanisms:**

Innovation enabling mechanisms (such as technology incubators, science and technology parks, techno parks, innovation hubs etc.) are aimed at facilitating the flow of knowledge and technology amongst universities, R&D institutions, companies (including technology SMMEs) and markets. The following are minimum requirements for feasibility study or business plan support for technology incubators, science parks or other innovation enabling mechanisms:

1. **Evidence of firm commitment from key regional institutions or stakeholders (e.g. Provincial/local government and institutions, private business etc.) to implement the plan if shown to be feasible.**
2. Demonstrate linkages and synergies to relevant development plans (3 spheres of Government) such as provincial plans and Municipal IDPs.
3. Meaningful participation of relevant provincial or local government authority (preference will be given to secured funding contributions).
4. Mechanisms required supporting science, technology and innovation related entrepreneurship and incubation.
5. Mechanisms for meaningful participation of Black-owned technology SMMEs, including businesses owned by females and people living with disabilities.
6. Inclusivity and relevance to South Africa's (and region's) developmental context.
7. Demonstrate strong linkages with local universities, science councils and/or other STI institutions.
8. Promote partnerships and collaborations, including securing co-funding.
9. International (and local) benchmarking and best practice with focus on (but not limited to):
 - Relevant Incentives, where they exist and are applicable.
 - Offerings, product and services.
 - The role of key actors.
 - Lessons learnt and challenges.
10. Identification of potential sectors, products and services.
11. The proposal should outline how the applicant's initiative would leverage the relevant innovation mechanisms and instruments.
12. A detailed budget breakdown must be submitted by the applicant, including sources of co-funding and its related expenses.

Applicants are also expected and to ensure co-funding of the study and/or to secure co-funding contribution from local or regional partner(s).

Please note that there will be DSI and RISP PMU participation in the project steering committee and/or the applicant's entity structures where applicable.

6 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Proposals of **no more than 20 pages** (including appendices) must be electronically emailed to GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA and cc NMASHAMAITE@CSIR.CO.ZA. Hard copies

will not be accepted. The CPF Ref Number: RISP/RIS05/2021 must be quoted on the subject line.

- 6.2 Proposals submitted by companies must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised and by the lead consortium member where applicable.
- 6.3 The contract will be awarded to an applicant whose proposal is determined to be aligned with the programme's objectives, taking into consideration factors such as the proposal's solution, investment required and co-support as well as inclusivity.
- 6.4 An electronic copy (email) of each proposal (all pages/documents must be in one PDF and size must be less than 10MB) must be submitted to: GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA and cc NMASHAMAITE@CSIR.CO.ZA.
- 6.4 It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the electronic pack is in **one printable and PDF version**. RISP PMU will not be responsible for consolidating any document. Exception will be on financial document in excel.
- 6.5 All applicants must be tax compliant (proof must be provided).

7 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted on the above mentioned email address by no later than **Monday, 25 October 2021**. The CSIR business hours are between 08:00 and 16:30.

Where a proposal is not received by the CSIR/RISP PMU by the due date and at the specified email address, it will be regarded as late and will therefore **not** be considered.

8 MAXIMUM GRANT SUPPORT

The RISP grant will not exceed:

- **R1 million (including VAT)** per proposal for Regional Innovation Networking Platforms (RINPs).
 - Travelling and accommodation budget must not exceed R20 000.
 - Project coordination/management fee must not exceed 15% of the budget requested from the RISP.
- **R1 million (including VAT)** per proposal for Feasibility Studies/Business Plans.
- **R600 000 (including VAT)** for Innovation Baseline Studies.

A detailed budget breakdown with detailed activities must be submitted by the applicant, including sources and proof of co-funding and its related expenses.

9 ELIMINATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be eliminated under the following conditions:

- Submission after the deadline.
- Proposals submitted at incorrect address.

- Proposals that do not meet the minimum requirements of the CFP.
- Proposals that exceed R1 million (including VAT) (for Feasibility Studies and Regional Innovation Networking Platform) and R600 000 (including VAT) (for innovation baseline study), without an evidence indicating how the amount in excess will be covered and secured.

10 EVALUATION PROCESS

An evaluation panel will assess the proposals. Based on the results of the evaluation process, the CSIR / DSI will approve the awarding of the contract to the successful applicant(s).

The **applicant** must prepare for a possible presentation should CSIR/ RISP/DSI require such, in which case, the **applicant** shall be notified timeously.

Please Note: If you have not heard anything from us within 12 weeks of applying, please consider your application unsuccessful.

11 APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT

- 11.1 The contract will be awarded to the applicant(s) who is recommended and supported via the evaluation process, except where the law permits otherwise.
- 11.2 Successful appointment as a lead institution shall be subject to the parties agreeing to mutually acceptable contractual terms and conditions. In the event of the parties failing to reach such agreement within a mutually agreed date after the provisional appointment date, the CSIR/RISP/DSI reserves the right to appoint or not appoint an alternative entity, or consortium.

12 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE RISP PMU

Any enquiry regarding this CFP shall be submitted in writing to: GMANDLA@CSIR.CO.ZA with “**CFP No RISP/RIS05/2021**” Regional Innovation Support (RIS) Programme” as the subject.

13 MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

All documentation submitted in response to this CFP must be in English, unless otherwise indicated.

14 COST OF PROPOSAL

Applicants are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the conditions, requirements and specifications of this CFP before submitting proposals.

Each applicant assumes all risks for resource commitment and expenses, direct or indirect, of proposal preparation and participation throughout the CFP process. The CSIR/RISP and DSI are not responsible for any costs, directly or indirectly, incurred by applicants.

15 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES

- 15.1** The applicant furthermore confirms their satisfaction regarding the correctness and validity of their proposal and that all prices and rates quoted cover all the work/items specified in the CFP, and that prices and rates quoted cover all obligations under any resulting contract.
- 15.2** The applicant accepts that any mistakes regarding prices and calculations will be at their own risk.

16 CSIR, RISP PMU and DSI RESERVE THE RIGHT TO

- 16.1** Extend the closing date,
- 16.2** Request documentary evidence regarding any issue,
- 16.3** Appoint one or more entities, separately or jointly (whether or not they submitted a joint proposal),
- 16.4** Award this CFP as a whole or in part, or not at all, and
- 16.5** Cancel or withdraw this CFP as a whole or in part.

17 DISCLAIMER

This CFP is a request for proposals only and not an offer document; answers to it must not be construed as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between the parties. By submission of its proposal, applicants shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves with and to have accepted all Terms & Conditions of this CFP. The CSIR/RISP/DSI makes no representation, warranty, assurance, guarantee or endorsements to applicant concerning the CFP, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR/RISP/DSI shall have no liability towards the applicant or any other party in connection therewith.