



WRC - TIA Water Seed Fund Call for Innovations addressing South Africa's Water Challenges

The Water Research Commission (WRC) of South Africa and the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) are launching the Water Seed Fund of up to **R200,000 per project** which will be made available for innovation-oriented projects conducted by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the water sector. The objective of the **WRC TIA Water Seed Fund** is to support pre-seed and seed activities with the intention to develop innovations into next stage “investor fundable” opportunities. With this funding, the WRC and TIA intend to increase the rate of commercialisation of water-related intellectual property (IP) generated from South African research and development.

The funding is provided to support projects run by HEIs and SMEs that seek to commercialise IP aligned to addressing South Africa's water challenges. Proposals will be reviewed by a **Steering Committee** with representatives from the WRC, TIA, and industry stakeholders. The Steering Committee will review new proposals for funding in line with the call and formally assess progress on selected projects on a quarterly basis.

The key funding parameters are:

Item	Seed Fund
Typical Funding Instrument	Conditional Grant
Funding Limit	Up to R 200 000 (two hundred thousand Rands)
TRL/stage of development	3-8
Focus areas	Water Technologies
Funding period guideline	Maximum 12 - 18 months
Valuable rights	Right to participate in further funding rounds

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a South African institution or company registered with the CIPC
- Must be South African citizens with valid identity documents
- Have a locally developed technology that responds to South Africa's water challenges
- Have proof of concept
- Must have protected or protectable Intellectual property



- Have potential for greater economic and social impact through e.g. local manufacture and job creation
- Have the likelihood of receiving follow on funding from TIA (i.e. pipeline) or any other funder once the Seed Fund goals have been achieved.
- All primary technology development activities must be operated within South Africa

Fundable activities:

- Development of initial product, process (prototype development)
- Sourcing of intellectual property opinions;
- Detailed primary market research;
- Refining and implementing designs;
- Conducting field studies to test the assumptions made about the technology, market and/ or customer needs;
- Piloting, and technology scale-up;
- Techno-economic evaluation studies;
- Supporting of certification activities and specification sheet development;
- Production of market samples and/or associated testing;
- Business plan development.

The following activities will not be funded:

- Salary contributions to members who are key investigators on the project and/or who form part of the general operating budget staff;
- Early stage research projects;
- Equipment, except for specialized equipment that is within the budget constraints and required to enable qualifying activities;
- Working capital; and
- Operational costs not associated with the project.

To apply, please complete the attached Expression of Interest (EOI) form. Applications must include in a separate word document, a brief motivation on why they should be considered for support, and evidence supporting the selection criteria highlighted in this call (maximum 2 pages/1000 words).



The deadline for submitting the EOI in PDF format is close of business on 29 January 2021. No late applications will be considered. The Completed EOI in PDF format should be emailed to Mr Thabo Mthombeni on thabom@wrc.org.za and Ms Thembela Ntlemeza on thembin@wrc.org.za.

Any queries can be addressed to Mr Thabo Mthombeni (WRC) on thabom@wrc.org.za or Ms Tshembani Khupane (TIA) on tshembani.khupane@tia.org.za.