

## Guidelines for Applicants

### NSF Competitive Research Grants

1. Applicants for the Competitive Research Grants Scheme must be Sri Lankan citizens residing in Sri Lanka registered with the STMIS database of the NSF.
2. Principal Investigator should be in the permanent cadre of his/her institution.
3. Early career researchers (Less than 40 years of age and within 04 years of obtaining MPhil/ PhD degree) are especially encouraged to apply; however, applications from other eligible candidates are also welcome.
4. Those who wish to read for postgraduate degrees under the proposed project are not eligible to be Principal Investigator/ Co-Investigators.
5. Principal Investigator should have a postgraduate research degree (PhD, MPhil) and publications/ patents in the relevant area. Applicants with MSc, MD or MS qualifications should have minimum of one year research component in the course and/ or publications in the relevant area.
6. Co-Investigators should have postgraduate qualifications and research experience supported with publications/ patents.
7. If the Principal Investigator is not from a university and the research student is registering for a postgraduate degree, a Co-Investigator from the university where the research student is registering should be included to the research team.
8. A scientist is eligible to hold only 02 ongoing grants as the Principal Investigator. Applicants who have 02 ongoing grants should not apply for a new grant, until the Final Report of the previous grant is submitted.
9. Research proposals which address inter-disciplinary work require to have expertise from each of the relevant disciplines as Co-Investigators or Collaborators. If Collaborators are there, it should be supported with letters of consent (Annex I).
10. Any other member of the research group who does not meet the criteria for co-investigators and expatriates/ foreign scientists could be listed as Collaborators. Letters of Consent should be provided (Annex I and Annex II).
11. The proposed research project should necessarily be an original investigation or continuation of research.
12. Priority will be given to research proposals with high economic impact and/ or social benefits.
13. Maximum project period should not exceed 03 (three) years. However, for Principal Investigators who have not received any research grant before (NSF or other funding sources), the duration of the project should not exceed (02) two years and the total budget should not exceed Rs 3 million (excluding allocations for research personnel).

14. Full-time Research Students registering for a postgraduate degree can be assigned only for Principal Investigators with two years of research experience after their own postgraduate degree. For full time Research Students, not registering for postgraduate degree funds will be provided only up to two years.
15. The title of the project should be brief, reflect concisely and accurately the proposed project and intelligible to a scientifically or technically literate reader. Applicants are advised to avoid titles which convey a distant or potential application of the proposed work, or a greater aspiration or goal than is to be expected from the proposed work.
16. The Executive Summary should contain an overview of the project objectives and brief description on how they will be accomplished; and expected outputs. The maximum word count is 250.
17. A comprehensive literature review should be done and all details should be provided together with the list of references.
18. A detailed time-based work plan (Gantt chart) should be included stating the proposed activities, time frames and key performance indicators clearly. Format is given as Annex III.
19. Projects that require ethical clearance/ necessary permissions should submit the certificate with the application or within one month from the deadline for submission of the application to the NSF. The fee for ethical clearance, if any, can be requested (under miscellaneous vote) and reimbursed if the application is approved for funding.
20. The budget should be reasonable and justified in detail.
21. Cost of equipment should not exceed 50% of the total budget and funds for miscellaneous should not exceed 10% of the total cost of the project.
22. Only one grant will be awarded to an Investigator as the Principal Investigator at one grant call. However, there is no restriction to submitting multiple applications.
23. Narrative CVs of all investigators should be submitted.

**Narrative CV (maximum word count 1000)**

- Profile
- Educational qualifications
- Training and/or research experience in the proposed research area
- National level contributions through research and innovation
- Latest 10 publications/ patents

24. Applicants may indicate persons, that they think should not review the project for reasons of conflict, for consideration by NSF.
25. Soft copy of the application should be sent in both MS Word and PDF formats.

26. Late, Incomplete and Inaccurate applications **WILL NOT** be considered.
27. Please note that the decision of the NSF is final.

### **Guidelines for Non-State Sector Applicants**

Please use the application for Non-State sector applicants.

In addition to the above guidelines,

- (a) The NSF will bear 50% - 70% of funds of the project, whereas the balance 30% - 50% should be borne by the applicants.
- (b) The grantee/s should provide a bank guarantee of 10% of the total project cost, effective for the entire grant period before NSF release funds required for the project.