

Nutrition Innovations

CONTRACTING AUTHORITIES:

The National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development's (NEPAD) Flagship Programme, the Southern Africa Network for Biosciences (SANBio) with the support of the Finnish-Southern African Partnership to strengthen the NEPAD SANBio Network (BioFISA II).

FUNDING

Submit an application for your innovative solution in the nutrition sector, covering value addition to indigenous foods, post-harvest technologies and other nutrition innovations that address the nutrition challenges of the SADC region. The solution proposed should at least be at proof of concept leading to scale-up to manufacturing or prototypes at small scale production leading to industrial scale production. Up to R1 million will be provided to the selected innovator to implement the project over a 12 months period.

OPPORTUNITY:

TECHNOLOGY

The challenge owner is seeking solutions that have reached at least proof of concept stage and can be developed to a commercial product.

MATURITY:

ELIGIBILITY:

Innovative SMMEs and research groups from SANBio member states (Angola, Mozambique, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia) can apply. For this call, at least two SANBio member states should collaborate in finding a solution and one of the countries in the consortium must be from Namibia. Applicants should ensure that the consortium has an industrial partner as part of the applicants. Project teams must include at least a business expert, the lead innovator and other experts needed to implement the project.

CALL STATEMENT:

Food and nutritional security has been highlighted as one of the top priorities at global, continental, regional and national frameworks. At global level, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include nutrition as one of the priority areas. At continental level, the **African Union's Science Technology and Innovation Strategy (STISA 2024)**, highlights "*Eradicate hunger and ensure Food and Nutritional security*" as a priority for continental concern and at regional level, SADC has developed a Food and Nutritional Security Strategy 2015 – 2020. Countries like Namibia have also prioritised social progression and economic advancement – cross cutting issues linked to food and nutritional security – for the years, 2016 - 2020.

In response to the global, continental, regional and national frameworks, SANBio/BioFISA II Programme in collaboration with the NCRST in Namibia are providing funding of the value of R2 million to support two projects (maximum R 1 million per project) targeting the impact area of nutrition. This funding will support projects that provide a scalable solution on nutrition for the SADC region. Projects that will be supported should have prototypes that have been tested in the relevant environments and are aiming to scale up production. Such solutions should be affordable to the populations at the lower end of the pyramid (low-income households).

BACKGROUND

In Southern Africa deep levels of food insecurity exist in rural areas with 85% of rural households unable to afford even the 'below average dietary energy costs' – a problem that has been exacerbated by the current drought. International organisations and governments have tried to respond to this problem through frameworks and strategies.

The Global Nutrition Report 2015 (GNR)¹, indicates that the cost benefit ratio of improved nutrition for low and middle income countries is at least at 1:16, meaning that, for every \$1 spent on better nutrition for children between the ages of 0 and three, the return can be \$16. Such returns easily outperform returns generated by the US stock market over the past 70 years. Yet, for most countries, nutrition does not receive much from public funding. In response to the regional need to provide affordable nutritious products, the SANBio/BioFISA II Programme has partnered with NCRST to seek innovations that can address this need.

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

The successful technologies must be:

1. Safe for human consumption;
2. Affordable to the low income consumers;
3. Ready to use or require only short term development;
4. Made from ingredients with a well-established supply chain.

SOLUTIONS NOT OF INTEREST

The following technologies are not of interest:

1. Ideas or concepts that have not been proven;
2. Fortified products with no health claims;
3. Solutions that require long term development;
4. Solutions made from ingredients that cannot be sourced locally;
5. Solutions that require large capital investments.

PROJECT APPROACH

Phase 1. Expression of interest submission – submit an expression of interest clearly outlining the solution, cost of production per unit and any regulatory approvals needed before the product is commercialised, the market size and the target customer segment. This application should include any IP issues.

Phase 2: Expression of Interest evaluation – external panel of evaluators and candidates shortlisted to develop full proposals.

¹ International Food Policy Research Institution. 2015. Global Nutrition Report 2015. Actions and Accountability to Advance Nutrition and Sustainable Development. Washington, DC

Phase 3: Full proposal submission and evaluation – candidates will be trained in the lean start-up approach during the full proposal development phase over a five day period. Submitted full applications will then be evaluated by an external panel of evaluators for the science, business case and the innovation.

Phase 4: Contracting – The main contract will be signed by the lead applicant with the SANBio/BioFISA II Programme, and the Namibian applicant will sign a contract with the NCRST for funding.

EVALUATION

CRITERIA:

The following minimum administrative checks should be met, failure to which the application will be automatically disqualified:

1. A completed and signed application;
2. Applicants from at least two different SANBio Member States, one of which should be Namibia²;
3. A maximum request for R1 million for the grant amount with a supporting cash contribution of at least R142 857.

Solutions are open to anyone with the necessary insight and will be evaluated on the below criteria:

- The scientific and/or technical merit and the ability of the proposed solution to meet the stated specifications;
- The feasibility of executing the project and commercialising the product;
- The stage of readiness of the proposed solution;
- The business case including projected revenues and investment, regulations, cost of product per unit;
- Communication and explanation of any associated proprietary or 3rd party intellectual property aspects involved in the proposed solution;
- The ability of the respondent to work successfully in a team proposed;
- The capability and experience of the respondent and associated track record;
- The presentation, motivation and data to support all scientific and/or technical claims.

² Should you have any problems obtaining a partner, please contact NCRST on biofisa@ncrst.na and SANBio/BioFISA on info@nepadsanbio.org