



science
& technology

Department:
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



2018/2019

Call for Proposals: Standing Call

Issue date: [12 December 2017]
Submissions open: [31 January 2018]

This call will remain open until all available funds have been allocated.



Introduction

The South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR) is a new research infrastructure set up by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) as part of the new South African Research Infrastructure Roadmap (SARIR). This centre focuses on the digitisation of language resources, and the high-level training of scholars in methodological aspects related to the use of digital language resources in research and development endeavours.

In order to achieve these aims, SADiLaR runs:

- a digitisation program, which entails the systematic acquisition, creation, enhancement, management, and distribution of digital text, speech, and multi-modal resources related to all the official languages of South Africa. Furthermore, SADiLaR also supports the development of natural language processing resources, both software and data, for research and development purposes; and
- a Digital Humanities programme, which facilitates research capacity-building by promoting and supporting the use of digital data and innovative methodological approaches within the Humanities and Social Sciences (see <http://www.digitalhumanities.org.za>).

Aims of the call

As part of SADiLaR's enabling function, this call aims to:

- support the development of digital language resources for South African languages in all modalities, including, but not limited to the:
 - digitisation of text and speech data;
 - creation of mono- and multi-lingual corpora;
 - creation of annotated corpora;
 - creation of digital dictionaries and terminology; and
 - collection of digital language data.
- promote research activities and outputs within the domains of Digital Humanities or language technology;
- promote research in language topics within the methodological commons of Digital Humanities, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - humanities and social science research enabled through digital media, artificial intelligence or machine learning, software studies, or information design and modelling;
 - social, institutional, global, multilingual, and multicultural aspects of Digital Humanities;
 - computer applications in literary, linguistic, cultural, and historical studies, including public humanities and interdisciplinary aspects of modern scholarship; and
 - quantitative stylistics and philology.
- further capacity building related initiatives, such as workshops as well as summer and winter schools.

Requirements

All projects must adhere to the following criteria:

- digital language resources developed with funding from the project must be made available for distribution by SADiLaR under the most open license possible;
- all digital language resources should have explicit copyright clearance, where applicable, that allows for further use and distribution by the research community;
- all digital resources must be developed in compliance with the relevant international standards and should be stated in the proposal;
- an evaluation plan to validate the quality of the project deliverables must be formulated;
- proposals must state explicit project deliverables, including digital resource(s), research outputs, training opportunities, and capacity building;

- proof of ethical clearance must be provided along with an associated ethics clearance number from the hosted institution for the collection and distribution of data if the project proposal is approved; and
- successful projects will need to enter into a formal contract with SADiLaR outlining the specific deliverables, reporting, and evaluation of project deliverables.

Who may apply

- This call is open to researchers employed at any official higher institute of learning as listed on <http://www.dhet.gov.za/> whose research interest is aligned with the aims of the call and ethical process.
- This call is open to working researchers residing in South Africa and who are affiliated with a recognised higher education or research institution such as a university, university of technology, or science council. International researchers are eligible to be part of the project team, but cannot be the principal applicant.

What can be applied for

Projects can apply for motivated funding of between R50,000 and R500,000 per project, and all project deliverables must be submitted before February 2020.

The funding can be used to cover any of the following activities, where the activities are specifically related to the deliverables specified in the project proposal:

- research-related costs, which include any activities, including research equipment, consumables, accessories, research-related trips, field work;
- short-term mobility or travel expenses;
- placements for young, post-graduate students, including Honours, Masters, Doctoral or Post-doctoral level researchers. These placements must provide the candidates with an opportunity to access facilities, learn new skills, or build research relationships that would not otherwise be available; and
- knowledge sharing activities where national or international experts participate in colloquia, seminars, symposia, lectures, etc., that further the dissemination of knowledge in the fields of Digital Language Resource Development, Digital Humanities, and/or Natural Language Processing.

Duration of projects

Projects will be supported for a minimum period of one year and a maximum of two years, with conclusion of the project by February 2020 at the latest.

Intellectual property

There are no policies or regulatory regimes, apart from ethical considerations and IP rights that govern the acquisition of language resources, whether it is a text, speech, or multimodal resource. There are, however, a number of best practices that are followed by researchers and/or developers, which are normally open to public and academic scrutiny and will be implemented by the centre. SADiLaR commits itself to act in accordance with the directives of the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO).

How to apply

- Kindly complete the following pre-proposal [template](#), for initial consideration and feedback.
- Feedback on the pre-proposal will be provided within 10 business days.
- Approval of the pre-proposal does not imply successful final application.
- On acceptance of the pre-proposal, a detailed project proposal template will be provided for completion.
- Proposals must be submitted via e-mail to Juan.Steyn@nwu.ac.za
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applications will follow a peer review process.

How final applications will be evaluated

All project proposals will be submitted to various nationally and internationally recognised experts in the specific fields addressed by the proposal. Projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- adherence to the requirements set out above;
- scientific relevance;
- feasibility;
- competence and expertise of the researchers involved in the project;
- impact;
- capacity development of young researchers;
- value for money; and
- decisions will be communicated within 3-6 weeks after submission.

SADiLaR reserves the right to, within reason, request changes to shortlisted proposals to better align with its strategy, medium-term expenditure framework, etc. Such requests may be directed at, amongst others, specifications, deliverables, budgets, and evaluation criteria.