



Queries and responses on the request for research proposals

## Regional growth and development for southern Africa's prosperity

**Q.1 Could you please advise if the research theme must solely look at South Africa? Or will a panel study featuring countries the SADC region (including South Africa) be acceptable?**

A.1 A research theme solely focusing on South Africa would be welcome. However, it would need to link to and inform the policy debate in the region. A panel study incorporating countries of the SADC region would be welcome.

**Q.2 I plan to prepare a proposal reflecting on infrastructure development and investment challenges in Mozambique in the context of the current crisis. Would this be acceptable?**

A.2 For country-specific proposals to be accepted they need to include a regional linkage. This should be feasible within the thematic area proposed, but make sure to highlight this aspect in the submitted proposal.

**Q.3 In assessing the technical merit of a research proposal, what exactly does the technical panel look for?**

A.3 The technical merit score is based on:

- analytical soundness of the proposal
- originality of the methods proposed
- significance of the research question proposed
- expository quality of written proposal

**Q.4 When the technical panel assesses the technical capabilities of a research team, how does the panel go about doing it, and does this team assessment also apply to individual researchers?**

A.4 The team assessment is based on the quality of the individual researchers, including past successful research, publications record, and reputation for delivery.

**Q.5 What exactly does capacity-building allude to, and how is it assessed?**

A.5 The focus of capacity-building is on increasing the capabilities of more junior researchers or less well recognized research organizations to produce research of the minimum standard required by the research programme. The methods will be primarily informal contacts among more senior and junior researchers.

**Q.6 With regards to policy relevance, is policy flowing from the proposed research required or expected to be relevant for most countries in the southern African region or only for South Africa?**

A.6 Both models are acceptable (taking the Q.2 into account). The key question is the impact of the research on the target policy audience.

**Q.7 Finally, in incorporating a key research or policy question from one of the five focus areas, are research proposals expected to adopt a given research or policy question as its main or key research question, or are the proposals required to merely ‘touch on’ a given research or policy question? For instance, by including a key research or policy question as one of its main or key research questions?**

A.7 The research and policy questions are provided for guidance only. We welcome research on any topic that falls within the area of interest. That said, proposals that are well focused on a tractable research question are likely to have a greater prospect of success.