

### ● Bridging the Industry Funding Gap for Social Science Research

The growing demand on academia to amplify Research and Development (R&D) outputs, generate impact and contribute to the nation's economic and social development goals has resulted in an increasing need for academic institutions and industry to foster sustainable strategic partnerships. However, there has been limited investment by industry partners to invest in social sciences, in contrast to basic and applied sciences, as focus areas within the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields are widely accepted as areas that drive economic development and job creation.

Social science research outcomes play a key role in the evaluation and influencing policy development, improving socio-economic impact of research, and offering practice-based interventions for society. Social sciences research can further contribute towards understanding the implications and benefits of innovations developed to improve livelihoods.

The social sciences research area presents a number of opportunities for increased impact stemming from collaboration between the industry and academia to accelerate and upscale joint R&D, job placements for students, staff exchanges, and innovation. As such, the establishment of dedicated industry-academia programmes for social sciences can enhance the impact of science on the economy through increased social-economic development programmes, informing public policy, knowledge production and transfer, as well as evidence-based research socio-economic programmes.

#### Target audience:

The panel session seeks to attract representatives from industry (private and public), research managers, researchers / academia, science councils and policymakers.

#### Proposed outcome from the discussions:

The NRF aims to play a significant role in enhancing collaboration between industry and academia to increase socio-economic impact of knowledge and human capacity investments. The recommendations from these discussions will inform the NRF's continued efforts to fund impactful research through dedicated programmes, particularly for social sciences research.

#### Programme Layout:

Topic	Presenter	Time allocated
Setting the scene – NRF Industry Partnerships Strategy & the importance of industry-academia partnerships for social sciences	<b>Mr Koena Motloi</b> , Director: Industry and Strategic Engagement, NRF	10 mins
Presentations – best practices, gaps, and opportunities for increased industry funding for social science research (each discussant will be provided ~10mins to present)	<b>Ms Samantha Coert</b> , Strategic Partnerships Liaison and Business Developer, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) <b>Dr Sepo Hachigonta</b> , Director: Strategic Partnerships, National Research Foundation (NRF) <b>Dr Takalani Makananisa</b> , Property Sector Research Manager, Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA) <b>Mr Nkululeko Tshabalala</b> , Researcher: Africa Centre for Evidence, University of Johannesburg (UJ) (TBC)	35 mins
Discussion	Facilitated by <b>Mr Koena Motloi</b> , NRF	35 mins
Summary of discussions / recommendations	<b>Ms Refilwe Mashigo</b> , Professional Officer: SPP (Industry Partnerships), NRF	10 mins
Closing remarks	<b>Mr Koena Motloi</b> , NRF	5 mins

## Presenters:

- Ms Refilwe Mashigo, National Research Foundation (South Africa)  
Ms Mashigo is currently a Professional Officer: Industry Partnerships at the NRF, contributing towards the NRF's strategy to building long-term purposeful partnerships between academia and industry. Before joining the NRF, Ms Mashigo was with the South African National Energy Development Institute as a Project Coordinator for the EU-funded LEAP-RE programme, and was at the Department of Science and Innovation as an Assistant Director for the Africa Multilateral Cooperation directorate. She has substantial experience in international partnerships, coordinating Africa-Europe research and innovation projects, and experience in leveraging funds and partners for multilateral initiatives that aim to address common challenges.
  - Mr Koena Motloi, National Research Foundation (South Africa)  
Mr Koena Motloi is the Director: Industry and Strategic Engagement at the NRF. With more than 10 years' experience in the NSI, he is an expert in IP Management, business development and commercialisation, and project initiation and management. He holds a BSc in Biotechnology (University of the Western Cape); and a Postgraduate Diploma (Business Management) and a MBA (Regent Business School). Mr Motloi has held various senior management and leadership roles, including Open Innovation Specialist at the Innovation Hub Management Company, Technology Transfer and Commercialisation Manager at Mine Health and Safety Council, and various positions at the Technology Innovation Agency.
  - Ms Samantha Coert, National Research Foundation (South Africa)  
Strategic Partnerships Liaison and Business Developer, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
  - Dr Sepo Hachigonta, National Research Foundation (South Africa)  
Director: Strategic Partnerships, National Research Foundation (NRF)
  - Dr Takalani Makananisa, Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA) (South Africa)  
Property Sector Research Manager, Property Practitioners Regulatory Authority (PPRA)
  - Mr Nkululeko Tshabalala, University of Johannesburg (UJ) (South Africa)  
Researcher: Africa Centre for Evidence, University of Johannesburg (UJ)
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