

## 2025/26 CALL FOR FUNDING: WORKING GROUPS PROGRAMME

The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) is pleased to invite academics based in South African public universities in the faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences as well as research institutes, to submit their applications for funding for the Working Groups Programme.

The NIHSS reserves the right to extend the closing date or withdraw the call before the closing date based on the volume of applications received.

### ABOUT THE WORKING GROUPS PROGRAMME

The Working Groups Programme contributes to meeting the Institute's Strategic Objective of "promoting the integrity, reputation and recognition of the humanities and social sciences within the higher education community, the science and technology community, and society." The Working Groups programme is intended to give effect to the recommendations in the Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences on the HSS entity that will fundamentally change the existing higher education landscape to make it more responsive to, and inclusive of, the HSS and its disciplinary particularities. These Working Groups are also aimed at ensuring the integrity and excellence of the HSS in South African higher education institutions.

### The NIHSS will fund the following academic activities:

- Publication of books, journals and creative output;
- Opportunities for local and international collaboration(s); and
- Hosting of conferences, Annual General Meetings, Workshops, Seminars, Dialogues, Colloquia and similar academic strategic initiatives.

The following ten (10) themes will be prioritised for the Working Group Programme:

- 1 Agriculture, Rural Livelihoods and Development;
- 2 Arts, Performance and Sources of Creativity (creative fields from various settings across the HSS, to study cultural formations and social changes);
- 3 Digital Humanities (the integration of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the HSS and Arts, an HSS perspective of digital tools, techniques, and platforms, and how these impact society and how 4IR technologies present new opportunities to knowledge production, research, teaching and learning in HSS fields);
- 4 Ecosystems, Climate, and Technology;

- 5 Global Economy, Development Challenges and Socio-Economic Alternatives;
- 6 Higher Education, Teaching, Research, and Innovation;
- 7 Indigenous Languages (the development of African languages for scientific use);
- 8 Pandemics, Medicine, Disease and Curing;
- 9 Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Postcolonial Histories (historical construction of South Africa from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries and link this to the broader region of southern Africa); and
- 10 Transformation, Race, Culture, and Identity.

### ELIGIBILITY

- All applications/proposals must be endorsed by the relevant institutional representative.
- Applicants must be researchers and academics based in South African public universities in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and research institutes. Priority will be given to South African citizens.
- Applications/proposals will be assessed based on collaborations, innovative methodology, capacity building for post-graduate students and quality of outputs/publications.
- Emerging academics/researchers who completed their PhD in the last five (5) years are encouraged to apply.

### GRANT AMOUNT

Funding for the Working Groups Programme is limited to a maximum grant of R100 000.00 (One Hundred Thousand rand only).

### SELECTION CRITERIA

- Applications will be considered on the basis of scientific and technical merit, the purpose of the project, and innovative methodology.
- The proposal should highlight how the published research output/s will be disseminated through engagements including community engagement.
- The proposal should outline collaborations that would be established by the project.
- The proposal should promote equality and redress/capacity-building in the case that the researcher applies for training of South African postgraduate students (Master's and Doctoral).
- The project must be completed within twelve (12) months from the date of contract signature, and close-out report submitted to the NIHSS.
- Only proposals not exceeding R100 000.00 (One Hundred Thousand rand only) will be considered.

### APPLICANTS RESPONDING TO THIS CALL SHOULD SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION FOR APPLICATION:

1. Application forms should be accessed at <https://gms.nihss.ac.za>.
2. Detailed proposal (One with author details and the other anonymised).
3. Detailed project budget (with projected income and expenditure).
4. A motivation letter (not longer than 1000 words).
5. Full curriculum vitae of the applicant (principal researcher, team member details to be included in CV).
6. Letter of endorsement of institution(s), where the project will be based (relevant Dean/s, Head of Department/institutional representative)
7. Certified South African ID copy or passport of the applicant.
8. In the case of emerging academics/researchers, a certified copy of a PhD certificate.

Enquiries may be directed to Dr Katlego Scheepers ([Katlego@nihss.ac.za](mailto:Katlego@nihss.ac.za)) and Mr Senkhu Maimane ([Senkhu@nihss.ac.za](mailto:Senkhu@nihss.ac.za)). For technical queries only, please call 011 480 2328.

**Closing Date: 29 January 2026 at 13h00 SAST**