



**BRICS STI Framework Programme**  
**Response to COVID-19 pandemic coordinated call**  
**for BRICS multilateral projects 2020**  
*Call is open until 18th August 2020, 15:00 Moscow Time (UTC+3)*

**I. General Description**

**I-1. Joint Funding of Multilateral Research Cooperation and Thematic areas**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2 is one of the greatest global challenges, and as such warrants a global response. BRICS countries account for more than 25% of the world territory, more than 40% of the world population and play a vital role in the world economy. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRICS STI Framework Programme is launching a call for multilateral basic, applied and innovation research projects facilitating cooperation among the researchers and institutions in the consortia which consist of partners from at least three BRICS countries corresponding to the following thematic areas:

- 1. Research and development of new technologies/tools for diagnosing COVID-19.**
- 2. Research and development of COVID-19 vaccines and drugs, including repurposing of available drugs.**
- 3. Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 and studies on the epidemiology and mathematical modelling of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- 4. AI, ICT and HPC oriented research for COVID-19 drugs design, vaccine development, treatment, clinical trials and public health infrastructures and systems.**
- 5. Epidemiological studies and clinical trials to evaluate the overlap of SARS-CoV-2 and comorbidities, especially tuberculosis.**

As part of the initiative the following research funding organizations from the BRICS

countries have agreed to jointly establish a scheme for funding multilateral cooperative activities:

Brazil:

National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq)

Russia:

Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE)

Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR)

India:

Department of Biotechnology (DBT)

Department of Science and Technology (DST)

China:

Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST)

National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)

South Africa:

South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)

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**Please note that the thematic areas and type of supported research vary depending on the particular participating funding organization.** More details can be found in respecting National Annex document (available on <http://brics-sti.org/index.php?p=new/27>) or from national contact points. However, the general information on thematic areas supported by each of the participating funding organization is presented below:

	<i>Thematic areas</i>	Brazil	Russia		India		China		South Africa
		CNPq	FASIE	RFBR	DBT	DST	MOST	NSFC	SAMRC
1	Research and development of new technologies/tools for diagnosing COVID-19	V	V	V	V	V	V		V
2	Research and development of COVID-19 vaccines and drugs, including repurposing of available drugs	V	V	V	V	V		V	V
3	Genomic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 and studies on the epidemiology and mathematical modelling of the COVID-19 pandemic	V	V	V	V	V		V	V

4	AI, ICT and HPC oriented research for COVID-19 drugs design, vaccine development, treatment, clinical trials and public health infrastructures and systems	V	V	V	V	V	V		V
5	Epidemiological studies and clinical trials to evaluate the overlap of SARS-CoV-2 and comorbidities, especially tuberculosis	V	V	V	V	V	V		V

### I-2. Invitation for Proposals and Prospective Applicants

The BRICS STI FP participating funding organizations shall invite applicants from their countries to identify potential partners in at least two other BRICS countries and to jointly prepare proposals for cooperative R&D projects in the five thematic areas of the call.

All applicants must fulfil their respective national eligibility rules for research grant applications (please refer to the National Annex document and consult with national research funding organization participating in the call).

### I-3. Financial Support

The participating funding organizations plan to support cooperative activities including exchange of researchers from the participating counterpart countries. Conditions of support will vary by country and respecting national funding organizations' approaches, with a common rule that each participating funding organization funds its national researchers or institutions.

The duration of a cooperative research project will be two years with expected start of projects in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2021.

## II. Application

A joint project will comprise of at least one Principal Investigator (PI) from each of the participating countries (please also refer to national annexes for additional requirements), with one of the project participants also acting as a Project Coordinator

(or leading PI). Project consortia should consist of partners from at least three of the BRICS countries participating in a specific thematic area of the call.

A **Joint Application Form (JAF)** (link for download: [http://brics-sti.org/files/JAF BRICS Call 2020.docx](http://brics-sti.org/files/JAF_BRICS_Call_2020.docx)) shall first be submitted by the Project Coordinator to the Call Secretariat through the online **BRICS STI Framework Programme Application Management System (BRICS AMS)** at <http://ams.rfbr.ru/BRICS>. JAF must be completed in English.

In addition to the JAF, each national team of a project **shall submit an additional national component** (i.e. proposal) to the relevant national participating funding organization following all required procedures of each particular participating funding organization.

The Joint Application Form includes information on:

- 1) Thematic area;
- 2) Title and acronym of cooperative research project;
- 3) Abstract;
- 4) Proposed period of cooperative research project;
- 5) Research team;
- 6) Budget requested.

The national component to be submitted shall vary in form, terms and information provided depending on the particular participating funding organization. More details can be found in the National Annex document (can be downloaded from <http://brics-sti.org/index.php?p=new/27> page) and on the websites of participating funding organizations.

**The project which does not submit in due date a fully completed Joint Application Form to the Call Secretariat through Application Management System (ams.rfbr.ru) or national components to all respecting national funding organizations will automatically be considered as ineligible.**

## II-2. Preparation of Application Forms

Applicants should agree on the aims, research strategy and management, the title of the project, and agree on the project coordinator. Based on these arrangements the applicants should complete the Joint Application Form (JAF) and national components.

### II-3. Submission of Application Forms by Applicants

Applicants must submit the Joint Application Form (JAF) to the Call Secretariat via the online application submission tool until **15:00 (Moscow Time, UTC+3) on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020.**

To submit the JAF an online-submission form must be completed via the BRICS STI Framework Programme Application Management System (BRICS AMS) at <http://ams.rfbr.ru/BRICS>. The project coordinator should register in BRICS AMS, log in and create a proposal for the BRICS STI FP Call 2020. The Project Coordinator must fill in all the required fields and submit an application. The online submission form fields are identical to the information provided in JAF, however the completed JAF as file attachment to the online form is encouraged to be uploaded in the “upload file” section of online submission form.

Additional partner(s) to the minimum eligible number of required participants is allowed to join a project at their own costs. If any additional partner is joining the project on own costs, requested funding amount should be stated as “0” in the corresponding proposal box item.

Applications submitted to the Call Secretariat by any method other than through online submission form at <http://ams.rfbr.ru/BRICS>, such as post or e-mail, will be rejected.

**An additional national component should be submitted to the respective national funding organization according to its own rules and procedures. Please note that submission deadline for national component may vary from the deadline for JAF submission to the Call Secretariat.**

### II-4. Receipt of Application Forms by Call Secretariat

Following the online submission of an application, the respecting confirmation message with proposal registration number will be shown in confirmation message. On “my projects” page in BRICS AMS the project thereafter will be shown with assigned registration number and status “Registered”.

### II-5. Retraction of submitted application

At any time after online submission of an application before the due date, an applicant can retract the application for modification on “my projects” page in BRICS AMS.

Following retraction action an application is considered as “not submitted”. Re-submission of the application is only possible until the call deadline (15:00 (Moscow Time, UTC+3) on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020).

### **III. Evaluation of Project Proposals**

#### **III-1. Evaluation Procedure**

Each participating funding organization evaluates all proposals where researchers from its own country request funding from their respective funding organization. Based on the results of the evaluation, a joint decision by the participating funding organizations will be made regarding the selected proposals to be co-funded.

#### **III-2. Evaluation Criteria**

The following general evaluation criteria will be considered (please also refer to national call announcements information on national component):

- Scientific quality and innovation of the joint research plan
- Sound project management, methodological approach, feasibility and appropriateness of the joint research plan
- Added value to be expected from the research collaboration
- Balanced cooperation
- Competence and expertise of teams and complementarities of consortium (interdisciplinary / all necessary expertise)
- Appropriateness of resources and funding requested
- Expected impacts: e.g. scientific, technological, economic, societal
- Opportunities for early career researchers
- To encourage the participation and joint research by the business sector.

#### **III-3. Announcement of Decision**

Applicants will be notified of the final decision in fourth quarter 2020 regarding the approved joint projects for funding.

## **IV. Responsibilities of the PI following Approval of Projects**

After the proposals have been approved, the PI and his/her own affiliated institution are required to adhere to the following when carrying out the cooperative research and utilising funding:

### **IV-1. Progress Report**

#### **Progress Report to each participating funding organization**

All researchers must follow their own funding organizations' rules and procedures.

### **IV-2. Final Report**

#### **IV-2.1 Final Report to the BRICS STI Funding Working Group**

After completion of the period of joint research, the project coordinator shall complete and submit within three months an integrated final report to the Call Secretariat on the results of the joint research. The report will be reviewed by the BRICS STI Funding Working Group.

#### **IV-2.2 Final Report to each participating funding organization**

All researchers must follow their own funding organizations' rules and procedures.



**BRICS STI Framework Programme – Joint Call Secretariat**

<http://brics-sti.org/>

Contact person:

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Russian Foundation for Basic Research

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## **V. National Contact Points**

Applicants should contact the following national contact points for information on each Party's national eligibility rules or support conditions:

### **Brazil:**

#### ***National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq)***



**Lelio Fellows Filho**  
General Coordinator of International Cooperation  
National Council for Scientific and Technological  
Development - CNPq  
Tel: +55-61-3211-9247  
E-mail: [leliof@cnpq.br](mailto:leliof@cnpq.br)

### **Russia:**

#### ***Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE)***



**Mrs. Olga Levchenko**  
Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative  
Enterprises  
Phone: + 7 495 231 19 06 (add 165)  
Email: [levchenko@fasie.ru](mailto:levchenko@fasie.ru)

#### ***Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR)***



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## **India:**

### ***Department of Biotechnology (DBT)***



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**Department of Biotechnology**  
Ministry of Science & Technology  
Government of India

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### ***Department of Science and Technology (DST)***



**Department of Science & Technology**  
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## **China:**

### ***Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST)***



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### ***National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)***



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**South Africa:**

***South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)***



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