

Call for Applications

SAMRC Extramural Research Units (EMUs)

Closing date for Expression of interest: **1 May 2025**

Closing date for full proposal: **30 June 2025**

Please direct all queries to Prince Khoza at (prince.khoza@uct.ac.za)

The SAMRC's mission is to improve the health of South Africans through research, innovation, and technology transfer. For the SAMRC to be able to fulfil its mandate, it needs to conduct and fund research that addresses health priorities in South Africa. At present, the SAMRC has several Intramural Research Units (IMUs) and Extramural Research Units (EMUs); 10 IMUs and 25 EMUs as of 1 April 2025. The SAMRC has, as part of its long-term goal, the need to increase support of under-represented scientists engaged in health research. This RFA is for the establishment of new EMUs to expand and complement the existing EMUs.

The funding for the EMUs represents a secure, discretionary, financial incentive which is approved in 5- year cycles, for a maximum of 15-years depending on performance, and should facilitate efforts to leverage external research funding. It is expected that institutional co-funding and the sum of external grants should exceed the amount invested in the EMU by the SAMRC by several-fold. Becoming an EMU also provides research institutions with the opportunity to contribute to the development of the next generation of research leaders.

SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate that their proposed research addresses priority public health challenges, innovative solutions, and emerging issues in the health fields. These can include but are not limited to the following:

- Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- Digital Health
- Climate Change and One Health
- Indigenous Knowledge Systems
- Food security
- Aging Populations
- Regenerative Medicine and Tissue Engineering
- Health Policy Research

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be South African citizens or permanent residence permit holders.

Applicants should apply for one of the following:

Tier 1 Unit

This category is open for an applicant heading a well-established and highly respected Research Unit and team dedicated to advancing health knowledge and solutions, often within a specific field of health research. This Unit is characterised by its extensive history of producing high quality, impactful research, and its leader is an expert with a proven record of significant contributions to the field, recognised on an international scale. The leader's work typically influences global health policies, clinical practices, and further research. This Unit will be led by one Unit Director.

Tier 2 Unit

This category is open for an applicant that has a well-established Research Unit, making significant strides in advancing health knowledge or addressing important health challenges. The Unit is rapidly gaining recognition for its innovative research, contributions, and growing influence. The Research Unit has a focused research agenda, moderate funding support, and a growing team of skilled researchers. The leader of this Unit is recognised for their expertise and accomplishments, either within a specific niche or field of health research and is beginning to make a notable impact on both national and international levels. This Unit will be led by one Unit Director

Joint Unit

This category is open to a group of researchers who are affiliated with multiple research institutions to propose the formation of a unified Research Unit. Such a Unit will be led by Co-Directors; one from each of the research institutions; and collectively, they will lead all the EMU's research efforts and activities. We encourage innovative approaches to collaboration that leverage diverse expertise and promote interdisciplinary research. These proposals should clearly define the roles and contributions of each partner and illustrate how joint efforts will enhance outcomes and foster an inclusive research environment.

FUNDING

- The baseline funding cap for EMUs is R1 million per annum.
- Subject to availability, EMUs will also receive incentivised funding on an annual basis based on the EMU's previous year's outputs.
- The funding will be allocated to the Host institution where the Unit Directors are currently employed.
- Non-allowable costs include:
 - Purchase or construction of a building;
 - Rental costs for space that is owned by the host institution; and
 - Purchase of office furniture.
 - Topping up the salary of permanent staff employed by the research host institution.

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

- This call involves a two-stage application process. The first stage will involve an **expression of interest (EOI)**, and the second stage will involve the submission of a **full proposal**.
- **Outcomes will only be communicated after the full proposal.**
- All applications and supporting documents for this RFA must be submitted online.
- All sections of the online application must be comprehensively and accurately completed.

1. Expression of interest

As the first step in the application process, applicants are invited to submit an initial, formal EOI using the online form: [Express of Interest](#) by **1 May 2025**.

2. Full Application

As the final step in the application process, applicants are invited to submit a [Full Application](#) using the online form by **30 June 2025**. Supporting documents for the Full Proposal include:

- Full CV of the Unit Director(s) and key research staff
- The biosketch(s) of collaborators, their positions, qualifications, and details of the institution where they work
- Letter of support from the host institution (the letter should give an indication of the infrastructure and resources that will be provided to the Unit)
- The project budget in Microsoft Excel
- Declaration by the Deputy Vice Chancellor research attesting that they approve and authorise the application to the SAMRC.

IMPORTANT NOTE

It is of utmost importance that applicants consult the [Funding Framework](#) document for more detailed information about the evaluation process, guidelines, and other additional important information.