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**PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE SMALL GRANT SCHEME**

**October, 2015**

**National Commission for Science and Technology**

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

The National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) was established under section 5 of the Science and Technology Act No.16 of 2003. The mandate of NCST is to advise Government and other stakeholders on all science and technology matters in order to achieve a science and technology-led development. Its mission is to promote, support, co-ordinate and regulate the development and application of science, technology and innovation so as to create wealth in order to improve the quality of life. To execute its mandate and mission, the NCST runs a number of programmes and schemes through its established structure. These programmes and schemes are derived from its legal functions as stipulated in the Science and Technology Act. One such scheme is the **Small Grant Scheme.**

The Small Grant Scheme seeks to provide support either in part or in full in order to promote capacity building and information sharing endeavours related to research, science, technology and innovation. This scheme is demand-driven. Its design has been informed by a stakeholders’ needs assessment survey that was carried out by NCST. The grant offered though this scheme is specifically limited in time and amount as stipulated fully in **section 2** below.

In order to properly govern and administer this scheme, the NCST has set out procedures and guidelines. These procedures and guidelines will help to ensure objectivity, transparency and professionalism in reviewing small grant applications.

1. **PERIODICITY AND GRANT AMOUNT**

The grant offered through this scheme is limited in time and amount as described fully below.

* 1. **Periodicity**

* + 1. The small grant scheme is designed to be administered throughout a given fiscal year on competitive terms and on first-come and first-served basis. In administering this scheme, NCST as a Government body, shall follow the government fiscal year that runs from **1st July to 30 June.**
		2. While applications can be submitted any time in a given fiscal year, **closure date** for submissions and receipt of applications shall be **30th May** in a given fiscal year.
		3. Small grants shall be offered any time during a fiscal year.
		4. Offer of a grant shall automatically lapse on the last date of the fiscal year during which a grant has been offered.
		5. A grant offered in one fiscal year shall not be carried over to another fiscal year.
		6. Any unused grant shall be retained by NCST.
	1. **Grant Amount**
	2. The grant offered through this scheme shall not exceed the value of **MK3,000,000.00**
		1. The NCST reserves the right to review this maximum value from time to time.
1. **AREAS OF SMALL GRANT**
	1. The Small Grant Scheme shall provide support, either in part or in full, to applicants in order to promote **capacity building** and **information sharing** endeavours related to research, science, technology and innovation.
	2. Without prejudice to the generality of sub-section 3.1, the scheme shall offer small grants towards fulfilling endeavours that include the following demand-driven areas/components;
		1. ***Dissertation Grant****:*aimsto support **research** undertaken as part of an academic programme to qualify for a **Master’s or a Doctorate Degree**, provided that the topic of research is addressing any of the identified national research priorities as issued by NCST. The grant is primarily to support research. Funds will not be used to support course work. While the emphasis is on supporting research related training through dissertations for masters and doctorate degrees, consideration may be made under exceptional circumstances to support a research project for a bachelor’s degree provided that such a project is addressing an identified research priority as set by NCST.
		2. ***Travel Grant***: aims to support applicants with travel grants to facilitate their participation in conferences/workshops/seminars, short courses, study tours and exchange visits within or outside Malawi so as to facilitate information sharing and capacity building. The support could cover travel costs including the cost of visas, registration and other applicable costs.
		3. ***Research Dissemination Grant***: This aims at supporting the organising of the research dissemination conferences. The support shall be towards meeting the cost of conference advertisement, venue, refreshments/lunches, review of abstracts, and production of books of abstracts and conference proceedings
		4. ***General Event Grant***: aims at supporting institutions to organise events/activities related to other areas of research, science, technology and innovation, provided that such events are not of the same nature as the research dissemination conference that is described in **section 3.2.3.**
		5. ***Production of Journals Grant***: This grant aims at supporting the production of journals
		6. ***ICT Equipment Grant***: This grant supports towards the cost of the ICT equipment where a research related institution has indicated the need for such equipment assistance. If it is established that the institution would function effectively with such equipment, NCST shall consider funding such a request/application.
		7. ***Technology Transfer and Commercialisation Grant***: This grant supports the technology transfer and commercialisation efforts. It will be provided to institutions or individuals that have developed technologies and would like to be facilitated for popularisation, transfer, replication and spinoffs.

3.3 The NCST shall periodically review these grant areas/components.

1. **ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANT**

The following is the eligibility criterion;

* 1. Individual Malawi citizens, permanent residents and institutions registered and operating in Malawi.
	2. Applicant who is undertaking an endeavour related to capacity building and information sharing in research, science, technology and innovation in Malawi.
	3. Notwithstanding paragraph 4.1, only individuals are eligible for dissertation and travel grants and institutions are eligible for the grants defined in **sections 3.2.3 to 3.2.6** above. Individuals are not eligible for these grants. While both individuals and institutions are eligible for the grant defined in **section 3.2.7**.
	4. Only single applications are eligible at a time.
1. **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The following application requirements shall be adhered to**;**

* 1. **Dissertation Grant**
		1. The applicant who is either a master’s or a doctorate degree student shall submit the following documentation as part of the application package;
* A formal letter from an accredited training institution at which the student is pursuing his/her master’s/doctorate degree programme. Such a letter should indicate that the applicant is indeed registered by the institution.
* Letter from the Head of Department of the institution to which the student is affiliated confirming that all pre-dissertation requirements including course work are near completion or are completed so as to be considered for the grant.
* Letter from the Academic Supervisor indicating that the dissertation research proposal was approved by the internal academic committee
* **A full dissertation research proposal that clearly indicates that the dissertation research is addressing any of the identified research priorities as set by NCST**. The proposal should indicate on the cover page the priority research area/topic as set by NCST that the dissertation research is addressing
* Applicant’s Statement of Declaration indicating whether or not the applicant is requesting partial or full funding and whether or not the applicant has already found a co-funder and is seeking additional funding.
* Applicant’s CV not exceeding four pages. CV should be relevant. Besides the information in the eligibility of applicant section, it should provide at least the following information: Educational qualifications with year and institution of award; areas of study/specialisation; appointments/work or research experience; relevant publications if any; other informational that may be considered relevant to substantiate the application.
* Covering letter from the applicant indicating that the application package contains all the above required documentation.

**Note: Under exceptional circumstances, an applicant who is a bachelor’s degree student shall also be required to submit the same application package.**

* 1. **Travel Grant**
		1. The eligible individual applicant shall submit the following documentation as part of the application package;
* A duly completed travel grant application form that appears in **annex 1**.
* CV not exceeding four pages
* Estimated budget for participating in the event
* Motivation Statement
* In case of travel for an exchange programme or an attachment, a letter from the host institution accepting to host the applicant.
* In case of travel to attend a short training course, a letter of admission into the course.
* Covering Letter from the applicant indicating that the application package contains all the required documentation.

5.3 **Research Dissemination Grant**

5.3.1 The eligible institution making an application shall submit the following documentation;

* Conference concept note describing the following information: Title and theme of the dissemination conference; objectives; structure of the conference including thematic areas/sub-themes in which presentations will be made; expected outcome; venue, target audience, etc.
* Conference budget describing all the cost items
* Motivation Statement describing, among others, how the conference supports initiatives related to research, science, technology and innovation
* Covering letter from the head of the institution making the application (indicating that the application package contains all the above required documentation).

**NB: The scheme shall, as a matter of priority, consider supporting a dissemination conference whose application for a grant demonstrates that the set conference thematic areas and/topics are within the research priorities as set by NCST.**

* 1. **General Event Grant**
		1. The eligible institution making an application shall submit the following documentation;
* Event/conference concept note describing the following information: Title; Theme and sub-themes of the event; objectives; structure of the event; expected outcome; venue, target audience; etc.
* Motivation Statement describing, among others, how the event supports initiatives related to research, science, technology and innovation.
* Budget for the event
* Covering letter from the head of the institution submitting the application indicating that the required documentation has been provided in the application.
	1. **Production of Journals Grant**

5.5.1 The eligible institution making an application shall submit the following documentation;

* Motivation Statement that should include name of the journal, expected minimum number of articles for the publication, target audience and strategy for promoting public awareness of the publication.
* Estimated budget
* Covering letter from the head of the institution or from the authorised official indicating that the required documentation has been provided.
	1. **ICT Equipment Grant**

5.6.1 The eligible institution making an application shall submit the following documentation;

* Motivation Statement that should include full description of the problem that necessitates the acquisition of ICT equipment; description of the required equipment and how this would benefit the institution in endeavours related to research, science, technology and innovation.
* Estimated budget
* Covering letter from the head of the institution indicating that the required documentation is provided.
	1. **Technology Transfer and Commercialisation Grant**
		1. The eligible applicant shall submit the following documentation;
* Technology/innovation **brief** containing the following elements of information: Name of the applicant (i.e either individual technologist/innovator or institution); contact details of the innovator/technologist/institution; name/title of the technology/innovation; description of the technology/innovation (i.e technical specifications, originality, usability of locally available materials in its manufacturing/development, potential for replication and commercialisation); presumptive socio-economic benefits of the technology/innovation to society; description of project activities necessitating the grant; proposed project budget; proposed project output(s); and timelines.
* Covering letter
* Duly completed application form that appears in **annex 2**

**Note: Applications will be accepted either in English or Chichewa.**

1. **REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS**

The applications will be reviewed according to the following mechanisms;

**6.1 Internal Review Committee**

6.1.1 Considering the grant value under this scheme, the mechanism for review shall be an internal review committee that shall be appointed by the Director General from within the structure of NCST.

6.1.2 The committee shall have representatives from all the departments of NCST. However, the Research and Technology Transfer Department shall have at least two representatives while the other departments shall have one each. The committee shall, thus, have five (5) members. The committee may co-opt on **need basis** to help with the review of a specific application. However, a co-opted person shall not have the voting rights but only to provide expert advice that may be needed to help with the review. The committee shall elect its own chair and secretary.

6.1.3 The Internal Review Committee will be reviewing the applications and based on the reviews make recommendations to the Director General for grant approval and payment.

6.1.4 Members of the committee shall serve for a term of two years and shall be eligible for reappointment at the discretion of the Director General. Re-appointed members shall only serve for a further one term.

6.1.5 Upon review and selection by the committee and approval by the Director General, successful applicant(s) will be notified through a letter of offer within two weeks of the decision by the Director General. The letter shall contain all the necessary details including terms and conditions of the grant.

6.1.6 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing within two weeks after the review committee meeting. The letter shall contain reason (s) for not being successful.

6.1.7 The committee shall meet within seven (7) days after receipt of any application to review the application.

6.1.8 The quorum of the meeting shall be three (3) members

6.1.9 A member of the committee with a conflict of interest in the application under review by the committee during the meeting shall declare a conflict of interest and recuse himself/herself from deliberations and decision-making on the particular application under review. Such a member shall be required to go out of the meeting room and be recalled after decision has been made. The recusal shall be documented and properly reflected in the minutes of the meeting.

6.2 **Review Criteria**

 The applications shall be reviewed in accordance with the elements and criteria as described on the review form that appears in **annex 3**.

6.3 **Recording and reporting the outcome of the review**

6.3.1Each member shall individually screen and review the application using the review form that appears in **annex 3**.

6.3.2 The scores of each member present during the review meeting shall be computed to make an average score against each variable/element of review.

6.3.3 The sum of the average scores against each variable shall be the overall score of the applicant.

6.3.4 The overall score of the applicant shall be recorded on the master scoring sheet. The master scoring sheet shall essentially be the fresh review form containing the sum of the average scores.

6.3.5 The individual members review forms, master score sheet(s) and minutes of the meeting of the review committee shall form part of records for proper filing.

6.3.6 The master scoring sheet(s) and the minutes of the meeting shall constitute a report for submission to the Director General for use in determining an approval/disapproval of the award of a small grant. The submission of this report shall be done within **five** days from the date of the review meeting.

6.3.7 Upon receipt of the report from the review committee, the Office of the Director General shall make a final determination for approval/disapproval within **two** working days after receipt of the report.

6.3.8 After the final determination by the Office of the Director General, a grant offer letter (for a successful application) shall be written to the applicant not later than the **following day** after the determination. Similarly, applicants whose applications were determined unsuccessful shall be notified not later than the **following day** after the determination. The Director General shall directly make the communication to the applicant or may ask the review committee chairperson to make the communication about the offer or about the notification of having been unsuccessful.

1. **DISBURSEMENT OF THE GRANT**

7.1 The disbursement of the approved grant shall be contingent upon a signed agreement between the awardee and NCST.

7.2 The agreement shall specify the contact information for both parties, statement describing purpose/usage of the funds under the grant, amount of the grant, terms and conditions of award. Depending on the type of the grant, the terms and conditions to be specified may include but not limited to the following; reporting obligations, timelines, financial management, procurement procedures (if applicable), effective and closure dates, and method of dispute resolution. Each awarded grant shall attract a specific agreement/contract.

7.3 Notwithstanding **section 7.1** above, the disbursement of the dissertation research grant shall require the applicant to submit to NCST documentation of evidence of research ethics approval from the NCST recognised local research ethics committee, if the dissertation research involves humans as research participants.

8.0 **SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION**

Applications containing the required documentation for the specified grant shall be submitted during the period as specified in section 2.1. Submission shall be both as a **hard copy** and a **soft copy** to the following address;

**Director General**

**National Commission for Science and Technology**

**Lingadzi House**

**City Centre**

**Private Bag B303**

**Capital City**

**LILONGWE 3**

**Malawi**

**Tel: 265 1771 550**

**Fax: 265 1772 431**

**E-mail:** **directorgeneral@ncst.mw**

**Annex 1: Travel Grant Application Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 1: Personal Information** |   **Office Use** |
| 1.1 Name of Applicant  |   |
| 1.2 Postal Address |   |
| 1.3 Cell and/or ground phone number |   |
| 1.4 E-mail address |   |
| 1.5 Institution of affiliation if applicable |  |
| 1.6 Date of Birth: | 1.7Sex: | 1.8 Nationality:  |   |
| 1.9 Highest educational qualification   |   |
| 1.10 Field of Specialty  |   |
| 1.11 Year and institution of Award   |   |
| **Section 2: Reason for Travel**  |   |
| 2.1 Indicate, by ticking, a reason for which you are applying for the grant1. Attending a conference
* Title of the conference

Also indicate if paper/presentation has been accepted for presentation)1. Attending a training course
* Title of the course
1. Participating in an exchange programme
* Title of the programme
1. Attachment
* Nature of the attachment (describe the attachment )
1. Any other (Specify)
 |   |   |
| 2.2 Role of Applicant at the Meeting [if reason for grant application is 2.1 (a) above]* If role is a presenter, indicate title of the presentation and evidence of the presentation/paper/poster having been accepted.
 |  |
| 2.3 For any chosen reason in 2.1, indicate date, place of travel, period of stay and description of the actual activity for which you are travelling:   |   |
| 2.4 State the relevance of your intended travel to research, science and technology initiatives in Malawi and how it links and contributes to the achievement of national priorities in research, science, technology and innovation.    |   |
| 2.5 Briefly, describe the likely benefits that you and/or your organisation are envisaging to gain from the reason for your travel  |   |
| 2.6 Please attach documentation to this form to substantiate your application for travel (Such documentation may include correspondence with the conference organisers, invitation letter, acceptance/course admission letter etc).    |     |
| **3.0 Funding**  |
| **3.**1 Estimated budget for your travel**:** 3.2 State if you have received a travel grant from NCST before. If so, how much was the grant, and state the reason for travel that warranted offer of the grant. **NB: Attach the full budget of the grant being applied for now (budget should indicate all the cost items)** |  |
| **4.0 Signature of the Head of Institution (if applicant is affiliated to an institution)** Name of Head:Signature :Date:Official Stamp: |  |
| 1. **Application form Checklist**

*[Please make sure that your application includes all the required information. Incomplete form will not be considered. Please tick in the blank space to the right before you submit this form].*  |  |
| I have completed the application form (all applicable questions answered) |   |
| I have attached all the required documentation as specified in this form **and** as per application requirements for the travel grant (*see application requirements* under **section 5.2.1** of the guidelines) |   |
| Signature of the Applicant :Date:  |

### **Annex2: Technology Transfer and Commercialisation Grant Application Form**

**Part A: Application Form For Individuals and Group of Individuals Only**

**Section 1 - Applicant Details**

1.1 Name of Applicant/Group:......................................................................................

1.2 Postal Address:........................................................................................................

1.3 Cell number:............................................................................................................

1.4 E-mail (if any):........................................................................................................

1.5 Age:....................... 1.6 Sex............................ 1.7 Nationality..................

1.8 Qualifications:........................................................................................................

**Section 2 – Grant Details**

2.1 Expected Commencement Date:.............................................................................

2.2 Expected Completion Date:....................................................................................

2.3 Project Title:...........................................................................................................

2.4 Detailed Description of the Technology or Innovation:................................

2.5 Potential impact of the proposed project:......................................................

2.6 Proposed Project Activities:..........................................................................

2.7 Expected Outputs of the project:..................................................................

2.8 Describe the commercialisation potential of the technology/innovation

 ..............................................................................................................................

 ..............................................................................................................................

2.9 Proposed Budget (**Please attach a detailed itemised budget**)

2.10 Have you received a grant from other sources for this project? Yes / No

If yes please complete the following:

Date Amount

Funding Agency

 *(please supply supporting documentation)*

2.11 Innovators/Technologists

2.12 Location of the proposed project (i.e *Location of operation/performance site)*

**Declaration of applicant**

I /We *(Name)* do attest that the information given in this application form is true *(False disclosure will render the application void)*

 *(Signature) (Date)*

The completed application form together with a Covering Letter, Technology/Innovation Brief and any required supporting Documents should be submitted as both a hard copy and soft copy to:

Director General

National Commission for Science and Technology

Lingadzi House

First Floor

City Centre

Private Bag B303

Capital City

Lilongwe3

Phone: +265 1 771 550

E-mail: directorgeneral@ncst.mw

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**Part B: Application Form For Institutions Only**

*Please ensure that you have read the guidelines before filling the form*

**Section 1 - Applicant Details**

1.1 Name of Institution:......................................................................................................................

1.2 Postal Address:.............................................................................................................................

1.3 Cell/telephone numbers:.............................................................................................................

1.4 E-mail ........................................................................................................................................

**Section 2 – Grant Details**

2.1 Expected Commencement Date:................................................................................................

2.2 Expected Completion Date:.......................................................................................................

2.3 Project Title:..............................................................................................................................

2.4 Detailed Description of the Technology or Innovation:..................................................

2.5 Potential impact of the proposed project:.......................................................................

2.6 Proposed Project Activities:...........................................................................................

2.7 Expected Outputs of the project:...................................................................................

2.8 Proposed Budget (**Please attach a detailed itemised budget**):............................................

2.9 Describe the commercialisation potential of the technology/innovation

 ..........................................................................................................................................

 ..........................................................................................................................................

2.10 Have you received a grant from other sources for this project? Yes/No

If yes please complete the following:

Date:....................................................... Amount:......................................................................

Funding Agency

 *(please supply supporting documentation)*

2.11 Innovators/Technologists

**Declaration of the Authorised Institution’s Official**

I /We *(Name)* do attest that the information given in this application form is true *(False disclosure will render the application void)*

 *(Signature) (Date and stamp)*

The completed application form together with a Covering Letter, Technology/Innovation Brief, and any required supporting Documents should be submitted as both a hard copy and soft copy to:

Director General

National Commission for Science and Technology

Lingadzi House

First Floor

Private Bag B303

Capital City

Lilongwe3

Phone: +265 1 771 550

E-mail Address: directorgeneral@ncst.mw

**Annex 3: Small Grant Application Review Form**

*[This form has two parts. The first part focuses on eligibility screening of the applicant. The second part is on the review of the merit of the application relative to the requirements of the specific grant that has been applied for]*

**Name of Applicant**: -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Applicant’s institution (if applicable):** --------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Name of Reviewer:** -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Signature:** ------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Date:** -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Part A: Eligibility Screening**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Variable** | **Write****{Yes or No}** |
| **1** | Is the applicant an individual Malawi citizen, permanent resident or an institution registered and operating in Malawi? |  |
| **2** | Is an applicant undertaking an endeavour related to capacity building and/or information sharing in research, science, technology and innovation in Malawi? |  |
| **3** | Is the application for the grant in any of the specified small grant areas? |  |
| **4** | Is the requested funding within the stipulated grant value of the small grant scheme? |  |
|  | **NOTE: Only applications with a “yes” in all cases shall be technically reviewed as in Part 2.**  |  |

**Part B: Review of the grant application**

*[Note: The review shall be in relation to the type of grant applied for. Members of the review committee must be conversant with the application requirements of each of the grant before making any review. Similarly, members must be familiar with the stipulated national priorities in research, science, technology and innovation prevailing at a given time.* **The scoring below shall in the light of the application requirements for the specific grant that has been applied for***]*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1** | State name of the grant which has been applied for and whose review is being made (e g, dissertation research grant) |
|  | **Weight** | **Score** |
| **2** | **Compliance and completeness of the application package**: For the grant that has been applied for, has the applicant provided all the **required** documentation? | **20** |  |
| **3** | **Quality** of the submitted documentation for the particular grant in light of addressing priorities in research, science, technology and innovation endeavours | **20** |  |
| **4** | **Contribution** of the undertaking (for which the grant is being applied) to the realisation of individual or institutional **capacity building or contribution to the realisation of information sharing** in **priority areas** of research, science, technology and innovation endeavours  | **30** |  |
| **5** | **Potential benefits** of the undertaking to the general advancement of research, science, technology and innovation in Malawi | **15** |  |
| **6** | **Value for money**: Does the undertaking for which the grant is applied create a value for money in relation to achieving the objectives of the small grant scheme  | **15** |  |
|  | **Total** | **100** |  |

**Reviewer’s Comment/Recommendation: -----------------------------------------------------------------**

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