

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSALS UNDER TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION GRANTS**

1. **BACKGROUND**

The National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) is a parastatal organisation created by the Science and Technology Act number 16 of 2003. Its Mission is to promote, support, co-ordinate and regulate the development and application of research, science, technology and innovation so as to create wealth in order to improve the quality of life. The Act establishes a Science and Technology Fund under Section 24 whose main object is to advance science and technology in Malawi. To achieve this objective, the Commission has set aside funds from the Fund to support innovation projects in the electronics sector through Technology and Innovation Grants (TIGs). The aim of TIGs is to promote the commercialisation of locally produced innovative technologies and support development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for wealth creation and sustainable development.

The commission therefore is calling upon interested and eligible individuals or institutions to respond to this call in accordance with these guidelines

1. **RATIONALE**

The transition to knowledge-based economies has put the role of knowledge at the pinnacle of trade, investments, manufacturing and socio-economic development. In this regard, the contribution of the innovators, their linkages with the private sector and the potential for knowledge exchange and technology transfer has become central.

Developing and maintaining infrastructure to support production of electronic devices in Malawi remains a persistent challenge. For instance, Malawi's imports on electrical and electronic equipment in 2022 totaled to US$240 million (United Nations, 2023). This just shows how much money Malawi is spending on electronic imports.

The national development blue print, Malawi 2063, acknowledges the central role that industrialization plays in wealth creation and self-reliance through creation of secondary industries that enhances import substitution and export growth. It furthermore, articulates Government’s commitment to promote research, science, technology and innovation towards enhancing industrialization in the country.

It is against this background that NCST would like to support innovation projects through TIGs. TIGs will support institutions and individuals that have technological innovations (where innovation means something **new or better**) that have a demonstrable viable business model and social benefit.

1. **SCOPE**

The grant will support activities in the following categories:

* 1. *Product Manufacturing:*

This includes the following activities:

* + 1. Acquisition of equipment for technology production and/or distribution
		2. Product design improvements
	1. *Product Distribution and Marketing*

This includes the following activities:

* + 1. Organising product demonstration event in target market
		2. Replication of industry-ready prototypes to meet market need

**Note: TIGs will not support research activities to establish proof of concept.**

1. **THEMATIC FOCUS**

The Commission will support projects in the fields of electronics with demonstrable innovativeness, contribution to import-substitution, value addition, scalability, and social benefit.

1. **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

It is expected that interventions of the projects will lead to creation of secondary industries that will enhance import substitution, export growth and job creation.

1. **FUNDING LEVEL AND DURATION**

The maximum grant value for each category is Ten Million Malawi Kwacha (MK10,000,000.00). Each project will be implemented for a period not exceeding **twelve months** (12 **months) from 1st November 2023 to 30th October, 2024**.

1. **ELIGIBILITY**

Innovators, technologists, and institutions wishing to apply for the technology and innovation grants must be:

* 1. Malawian nationals or other technologists and innovators working with Malawian nationals
	2. Malawian-owned institutions operating and registered in Malawi
	3. Projects that demonstrate use of over 60% locally available resources
	4. Led by a project leader as a main applicant, based in Malawi and of Malawi origin. The Project leader will bear the overall responsibility for the project, including its technical and administrative co-ordination as well as the timely delivery of technical and financial reports.
	5. Supported by a letter from the host institutions of the project leader where the applicant is an institution. Proposals without institutional approval through support letters will not be considered.
	6. Innovative projects in the electronics thematic area.
	7. Projects that demonstrate the application of scientific principles
	8. Projects that demonstrate a viable business model for taking the product to the market and solving real life challenges.

NB: It is acceptable for an individual, group of individuals or institution to apply for technology and innovation grants for more than one project.

1. **NCST EXPECTATIONS FOR INCLUSION IN THE PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**
	1. **Cross-cutting considerations**

The proposal should demonstrate how risk management and intellectual property issues will be addressed in the project. Projects led by women and youth are strongly encouraged and will be given more weight during the review and selection process of the projects.

* 1. **Project impact and beneficiaries**

Applicants should clearly define the major outputs and value expected from the project and describe how the project will impact the society. The target beneficiaries should be clearly outlined as well as how the project will influence trade-related policy and practice?

* 1. **Team Composition**

The applicant shall provide a list of all individuals or organisations:

* + 1. That made a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the innovation
		2. That made financial contribution to the innovation.
		3. That will take part in the project and their roles and include a one or two paged CV for the Project team leader and any letters of support from the institution.
	1. **Budget**

The maximum budget is as stated in section 6.0 above. Presentation of detailed budgets is a must. The grant will not support the following: salaries, rentals, maintenance of fleet, purchasing of vehicles and office furniture.

Permissible budget items include the following:

* + 1. Purchase of equipment, if they are directly linked to the project
		2. Travel expenses or third party charges;
		3. Direct costs incurred through the use of infrastructure linked to the project;
		4. Costs of organising marketing events in connection with the funded project.
		5. Capacity building
		6. Product design cost
		7. Product replication cost

**Use the Budget template in the annex 2 below.** Co-funding of projects is

encouraged.

* 1. **Proposed Project Timeline (work plan)**

The applicant should provide a chart of key activities, timelines and key milestones.

* 1. **Project partners**

The Commission is encouraging the applicants to leverage on existing or new partnerships. The applicant should clearly indicate the partners they intend to engage in implementing the project and the reasons.

* 1. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

NCST will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation. Successful applicants will be provided with Reporting Templates to aid monitoring and evaluation.

1. **SUBMISSION AND PROCESSING OF PROPOSALS**
	1. The full proposals should be submitted electronically to directorgeneral@ncst.mw and with a copy to nrdc@ncst.mw with the subject heading: “***Full Proposal in Technology and Innovations Grants (2023)”*** clearly specified.
	2. Application package shall include fully filled application form as provided in **annex 1** below; project leaders’ covering letter; registration certificate and letter of support from an institution (if the applicant is an institution).
	3. When the full application package is duly completed save the document as **‘TIGs-Call for Proposals 2023”.**
	4. All proposals must be submitted in the prescribed application form in **annex 1** below.
	5. All documents (full proposal, CV, detailed budget, work plan, support letters) can be submitted in either PDF or MS Word files.
	6. All proposals will be received and processed in strict confidentiality and with complete acknowledgment of Intellectual Property Rights of the proponents.
2. **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**
	1. The deadline for submission is **10th October, 2023 at 12:00 mid-night Central Africa Time.** Applications received after the deadline will not be evaluated.
3. **CONTACT INFORMATION**

All enquiries should be sent to nrdc@ncst.mw and copy ichingota@ncst.mw

**Annex 1: Application Form – Technology and Innovation Grants (For Individuals and Institutions)**

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

1. **Section 1 A - Applicant Details (*Individual applicants only)***
	1. Name of Applicant/Group:...............................................................................
	2. Postal Address

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* 1. Telephone/Cell number: .................................../.................................................
	2. E-mail (if any): ..............................
	3. Age range: Below 25 [ ]  Between 25 and 40 [ ]  Above 40 years [ ]
	4. Sex: [ ] Male [ ] Female
	5. Nationality :......................................
	6. Highest Qualifications (i.e. MSCE, Certificates Diploma, Bachelors etc)

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**Section 1 B - Applicant Details (***If applicant is an Institution****)***

* 1. Name of Institution:..................................................................
	2. Postal Address

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* 1. Physical address

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* 1. Telephone/Cell number: ..................................../............................................
	2. E-mail (if any): ..............................

**Please attach registration certificate**

1. **Section 2 – Grant Details**
	1. Grant Category:………………………………………………..
	2. Project Title: ........................................................................
	3. Expected Commencement Date: .....................................................

* 1. Expected Completion Date : .............................................................

* 1. Detailed Description of the Technology or Innovation (*Describe what the technology is, how it works. Highlight what you think is novel/unique about the technology. Include picture, diagrams or schematics where appropriate. Attach extra sheets if necessary.*) **maximum 1500 words**

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* 1. Who owns the technology?

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* 1. Please list the people/companies that contributed to developing the technology to where it is now

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Role played in developing technology** | **organisation** | **-Tel.(Mob)****-Tel. (Work)****-Email** | **Home Address** | **Nationality** | **Contribution to the technology(%)** |
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* 1. Potential impact of the product (*clearly describe the problem that the technology intends to solve and the community and target group affected by the problem*) **maximum 1500 words**

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* 1. Describe how the technology will help in import substitution, and how the technology is better than what is already available on the market (**maximum 1000 words)**

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* 1. Discuss the challenge(s) you are facing to which you are applying for this grant **(maximum 1500 words)**

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* 1. Provide list of activities that you are going to do with the grant, and its justification (Clearly state how you are going to use the grant)

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| **Activity** | **Description** |
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* 1. What is the total amount of money being requested (**Please attach a detailed itemised budget and work plan. Use the budget template in annex 2**)

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* 1. Describe any partners you intend to work with in implementing the project and their role

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| --- | --- |
| **Partner name** | **Role** |
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* 1. Discuss how you are going to commercialise the technology **(maximum 1500 words)**

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* 1. Please describe whether the technology has been protected by patent, trademark or industrial design (*Please provide copies of certificates if applicable*)

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* 1. 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)*

* 1. Please provide details of the project team (attach CV of the project team leader)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role in Project** | **Name** | **Organisation** |
| Project team lead |  |  |
| Other (*please specify*) |  |  |
| Other (*please specify*) |  |  |
| Other (*please specify*) |  |  |
| Other (*please specify*) |  |  |

**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 and the required supporting documents should be submitted by email to:

Director General

Private Bag B303

Capital City

First Floor Lingadzi House

Lilongwe

Phone: +265 1 771 550

directorgeneral@ncst.mw

**ANNEX 2: BUDGET TEMPLATE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **ITEM** | **UNIT** | **UNIT COST** | **QUANTITY** | **FREQUENCY** | **TOTAL** |
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