



**National
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Ms Ellen Prins, MP
Chairperson
Select Committee on Communications and Public Enterprises
90 Plein Street
Cape Town, 8001

Attention: Ms Phumelele Sibisi

Email: psibisi@parliament.gov.za

Dear Ms Prins

NRF SUBMISSIONS ON THE NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION AMENDMENT BILL [B23-2017]

The National Research Foundation (NRF) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the NRF Amendment Bill B23-2017. We particularly welcome the invitation by the Select Committee on Communications and Public Enterprises (the Committee) to make both a written and verbal submission.

To this end, the NRF has, through its management, been working closely with officials of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in the initial formulation of the Bill as well as subsequent adjustments after it was gazetted for public comments. This joint effort enabled us to make a joint submission to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee (PPC) on Science and Technology.

The NRF has also worked closely with the PPC on Science and Technology, resulting in the approval of the Bill by the National Assembly.

The NRF thus welcomes the Bill as approved by the National Assembly, as the amendments are enabling and provide clarity of roles and responsibilities of the organisation. In particular, the NRF:-

- (a) welcomes the reformulation of its mandate, especially the articulation of its role of –
 - (i) supporting and promoting research and human capacity development, through funding and the provision of necessary infrastructure, for the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science and technology; and
 - (ii) supporting and promoting public awareness of, and engagement with science;

- (b) welcomes the amendment empowering the Minister to determine national policy and issue policy guidelines, and looks forward to working with the Ministry and the Department in the formulation of enabling national policy. In this regard, the NRF would welcome the opportunity to suggest areas where national policy is urgently required to bring policy clarity and certainty;
- (c) similarly welcomes the explicit provision introduced by the amendment which enables it (the NRF) to operate outside of the Republic and undertake essential cross-border research in areas such as astronomy, biodiversity and environmental sciences; and
- (d) is pleased with the role clarity provided by the Bill in respect of the establishment, incubation, management and disestablishment of national research facilities, as well as the identification of research institutions eligible to receive grant funding from the NRF.

For the reasons set out above, we confirm the NRF's support for the Bill as approved by the National Assembly.

In conclusion, I wish to confirm that I and other senior managers of the NRF will be in attendance at the public hearings scheduled for the 14th of November 2018. As indicated to the Committee at its meeting on 31 October 2018, we would be grateful if the Committee would allow us to make a verbal presentation.

We trust that the Committee will look favourably on our submission.

Yours sincerely



Molapo Qhobela PhD

Chief Executive Officer

[Signature reproduced electronically on request]

Copy: Dr Thomas Auf de Hyde

DST Deputy Director-General: Research Development and Support

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DST Head: Legal Services