

# NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

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## PRESS RELEASE

16 April 2007

### **NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION (NRF) INVITES RESEARCH PROPOSALS FOR NEW \$250 MILLION COMPETITIVE RESEARCH PROGRAMME (CRP) FUNDING SCHEME**

*- New scheme was approved by the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC) in March to support bottom-up innovative research programmes for intellectual and human capital development*

The National Research Foundation (NRF) today launched the inaugural call for proposals for the new Competitive Research Programme (CRP) Funding Scheme. This scheme aims to encourage high-impact research and enhance intellectual and human capital development for R&D. The CRP scheme was approved at the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC) meeting chaired by the Prime Minister on 16 Mar 2007.

2. The CRP is open to all areas of science and technology. Multi-disciplinary research is strongly encouraged as is partnership between industry and academia. The CRP proposals will be assessed by an eminent Evaluation Panel chaired by Dr Rita R. Colwell, a member of NRF's Scientific Advisory Board and a former Director of the US National Science Foundation. (Please see annex for Dr Colwell's CV.)

3. Interested applicants need to submit a **White Paper** of up to five pages describing their research proposal and objectives as well as expected outcomes by 8 June 2007. NRF will shortlist promising White Papers to be developed into **Full Proposals**, which will be put through an international peer review process. The Evaluation Panel will select the final proposals for funding support. Proposals will be evaluated on the criteria of research excellence, manpower development potential, economic impact and industry involvement.

4. The CRP scheme aims to fund a broad base of research ideas at the programme level through a competitive bottom-up approach. Each programme may be made up of several related projects sharing a common unifying theme. This will allow a coordinated, integrated and sustained way of supporting high-impact interdisciplinary research because a larger budget can be allocated to

fund a number of smaller related projects that address a given problem. The tight linkage among the projects in a programme will also facilitate the commercialisation of research results.

5. In addition, the CRP scheme provides a way to identify future strategic research areas. It will therefore complement the top-down manner in which the present three strategic research programmes<sup>1</sup> have been identified. The CRP scheme offers funding support of up to S\$10 million per programme over three to five years. Two grant calls are expected to be made yearly. Supported programmes from public sector organisations will be fully funded, while programmes from private sector organisations will be given partial funding. NRF has allocated S\$250 million for the CRP scheme, and expects to grant up to S\$50 million worth of programmes for this inaugural call.

6. Interested applicants should log onto NRF's Research Portal – the Research, Innovation and Technology Administration system or RITA at <https://rita.nrf.gov.sg> to submit their White Papers.

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<sup>1</sup> The three strategic research programmes are Biomedical Sciences Phase II (with focus on translational and clinical research), Environmental and Water Technologies and Interactive and Digital Media.



**Dr. Rita R. Colwell**

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**Distinguished Professor, University of Maryland College Park and Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health  
Chairman, Canon US Life Sciences, Inc. Former Director of NSF**

Dr. Rita Colwell is Chairman of Canon US Life Sciences, Inc., which aims to identify and develop applications of Canon's core technologies to the field of life sciences, and Distinguished University Professor both at the University of Maryland at College Park and at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her interests are focused on global infectious diseases, water, and health, and she is currently developing an international network to address emerging infectious diseases and water issues, including safe drinking water for both the developed and developing world.

Dr. Colwell served as the 11th Director of the National Science Foundation, 1998-2004. In her capacity as NSF Director, she served as Co-chair of the Committee on Science of the National Science and Technology Council. One of her major interests include K-12 science and mathematics education, graduate science and engineering education and the increased participation of women and minorities in science and engineering.

Dr. Colwell has held many advisory positions in the U.S. Government, nonprofit science policy organizations, and private foundations, as well as in the international scientific research community. She is a nationally-respected scientist and educator, and has authored or co-authored 16 books and more than 700 scientific publications. She produced the award-winning film, *Invisible Seas*, and has served on editorial boards of numerous scientific journals.

Before going to NSF, Dr. Colwell was President of the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute and Professor of Microbiology and Biotechnology at the University Maryland. She was also a member of the National Science Board from 1984 to 1990.

Dr. Colwell has previously served as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the American Academy of Microbiology and also as President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Washington Academy of Sciences, the American Society for Microbiology, the Sigma Xi National Science Honorary Society, and the International Union of Microbiological Societies. Dr. Colwell is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society.

Dr. Colwell has also been awarded 47 honorary degrees from institutions of higher education, including her Alma Mater, Purdue University. Dr. Colwell is an honorary member of the microbiological societies of the UK, France, Israel, Bangladesh, and the U.S. and has held several honorary professorships, including the University of Queensland, Australia. A geological site in Antarctica, Colwell Massif, has been named in recognition of her work in the polar regions.

Born in Beverly, Massachusetts, Dr. Colwell holds a B.S. in Bacteriology and an M.S. in Genetics, from Purdue University, and a Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Washington.