



## Call for Proposals: Framework and Selection Procedure

### Aim

In 2011, The Nederlandse Taalunie (Dutch Language Union) and the Department of Arts and Culture of the Government of South Africa (DAC) signed a Declaration to collaborate in the domain of human language technology (HLT). We seek to support activities that will bring about mutual research and knowledge dissemination in HLT and to strengthen the ties and reciprocal understanding that exist between the people of Flanders (Belgium), the Netherlands and South Africa to the benefit of Dutch and all the official languages of South Africa.

With this call (2014), we are looking to support (**ordered according to priority**) the exchange of academics, one to two training events (preferably as add-ons to existing conferences), meetings, two to three research and/or development projects, and undergraduate student exchange.

### ***Priority 1. Exchange of students and academics***

In order to stimulate the exchange of academics (graduate, postgraduate students and post-doctoral fellows) the programme supports individual visits to the Dutch speaking area or to South Africa respectively. This grant can be applied for international travelling costs, as well as a stipend for a maximum of 6 months. Graduate or PhD students can apply for financial support for internships at academic or commercial institutions.

Although undergraduate students may apply for funding, funding undergraduate students is not considered a priority under this POC and proposals in line with the stated priority areas will enjoy preference.

The maximum subsidy available for each application is €30,000. Supplemental financing by the applicant and/or third parties is encouraged. The exchange programme must start within 10 months after the date of granting.

### ***Priority 2. Training***

Funding is available for the facilitation of courses or summer/winter schools for (post)-graduate students, in which an expert/experts from the Dutch language area is/are invited to South Africa or vice versa, for purposes of providing training. The subsidy can be applied towards travel and accommodation costs, but not to an honorarium.

Although matched funding is not a training project prerequisite, additional funding, either from the organising university or from national subsidy organisations, is an advantage in the evaluation. The funding from this agreement is to be used to add depth to the training programmes by offering extra subjects or by financing the travel of guest lecturers and students. The organising university must make demonstrable efforts to publicise the course among the target group at the regional level. In this regard, training events that are conceptualised as an add-on to existing conferences, such as CLIN or PRASA, are encouraged.

The maximum subsidy available for each application is €30,000. Supplemental financing by the applicant and/or third parties is encouraged. The training programme must start within 10 months after the date of granting.

### ***Priority 3. Travel grants and meetings***

Travel grants are available for meetings, workshops or conferences that are held in the Netherlands, Flanders or South Africa and that are specifically focused on cooperation between the Dutch language area and South Africa. The maximum subsidy available for each application is €30,000. Supplemental financing

by the applicant and/or third parties is encouraged. The event must take place within 10 months after the date of granting

Funding for conference attendance is available to students only, with a maximum of €2,900 for each application.

In all cases, the subsidy can be applied towards travel and accommodation costs only.

**Priority 4. Research and development projects**

Support will be provided for research and development projects. Given the limited budget available, priority will be given to activities that leverage other funding or have strong potential to do so. More specifically, applications for demonstration projects using proven HLT technologies are encouraged as these projects can illustrate the possibilities of HLT to a variety of decision makers in industry, policy and academia and thus can open new domains, new markets and new research and training opportunities.

Funding for *development projects* is open for commercial enterprises (SME’s and start-ups) that may collaborate with a university or universities on the proposed project. The main applicant however, must be a commercial enterprise. Applications in which the applicants themselves make a commitment to contribute a certain percentage towards the project, either in monetary terms or in kind, are encouraged.

Funding for the set-up of *research projects* is open for universities and other scientific organisations. The main goal of these initiatives, which might include the organisation of conferences, has to be the building of a consortium with partners from South Africa and the Dutch language area, the writing of the scientific proposal and obtaining funding for it by other funding organisations/programmes than the POC. Applications in which the applicants themselves make a commitment to contribute a certain percentage towards the project, either in monetary terms or in kind, are encouraged.

The maximum subsidy available for each application is €30,000. Supplemental financing by the applicant and/or third parties is encouraged. The project must start within 10 months after the date of granting.

**General Conditions for all applications**

- **Only proposals for activities in the domain of HLT will be considered.**
- Calls for proposals are open to all legal entities from the Party countries.
- Proposals have to seek participation of both the Dutch language area and South Africa.
- The maximum subsidy for each proposal that can be requested is €30,000. In the case of conference attendance for students, the maximum subsidy is €2,900. Supplemental financing by the applicant and/or third parties is encouraged.
- Projects must start within 10 months after the date of granting.

**Evaluation criteria**

Proposals are reviewed against the following evaluation criteria:

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|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Relevance of the topic</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this a proposal in the field of HLT and does it promote the interaction between the Dutch language area and South Africa in this field?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Network-building</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal contribute to the reinforcement of individual or group networks of academics in a variety of disciplines and/or user groups or end users from South Africa, the Netherlands and Flanders?</li> </ul> |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal include participation of partners, from two or all three POC countries and at least including one partner from South-Africa?</li> </ul>  |
|                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal have the potential to establish sovereign, long-term, formal collaboration agreements between parties?</li> </ul>  |

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|---|---|
| <b>Intellectual merit and commercial value</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal have sufficient quality and academic or commercial relevance?</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal include participation of leading researchers or commercial partners at the national and international levels?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Target group focus</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the relevant target groups as stipulated in the proposal sufficiently participate in the work, meetings and/or courses?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Human capital development</b>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal include participation of young researchers, particularly master students, Ph.D. students and postdocs?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Broader impacts of the proposed activity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent will the proposal enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as networks, and partnerships?</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the results be disseminated broadly (e.g., via the HLT Agency in the Dutch area and/or the Resource Management Agency in South Africa) to enhance scientific and technological understanding?</li> </ul>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the project result in a direct demonstrable impact (on the HLT industry, research or education in the Dutch language area and/or South Africa)?</li> </ul>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the proposal result in high-quality outputs, such as jointly-written publications, technical reports/white papers, technology demonstrators, educational materials, publicity material (e.g. movies) etc.? Will these results be widely available for research and commercial usage?</li> </ul> |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are potential IPR-problems properly addressed (i.e. is ownership cleared)? How is the availability/distribution of the results arranged from a legal point of view (open source license, property transfer to RMA and/or HLT Agency, dual licensing, etc.) - if applicable?</li> </ul>               |
| <b>Technical outputs</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the results of the project be sufficiently communicated and disseminated?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Communication and dissemination</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal for the organisation of a meeting include a clear plan detailing the target group(s) in South Africa, Flanders and/or the Netherlands and how the target group(s) will be informed about the meeting?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Financial aspects</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal include a comprehensive budget setting out the actual deliverables against expenditure?</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the relevant legal entity or affiliated organisation make a contribution towards the project? E.g. does the university with whom the applicant is affiliated, contribute to the project?</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the budget realistic?</li> </ul>  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the project offer value for money?</li> </ul>   |

## Submission procedure

***Proposals can be submitted until 15 22 October 2014.***

Proposals must be filed on the proposal form that can be downloaded from the websites listed below.

The proposal must argue clearly why and how the proposal will meet the objectives and criteria identified above. The completed proposal with supplemental information and a sound budget must be submitted to the Committee electronically (see below). Applicants intending to submit a large proposal are advised to first contact the Committee (see below).

## Decision-making procedure and awards

Proposals received will be evaluated and decisions regarding the awarding of funding will be made within one month after the closing date of the call for proposals.

The proposals are evaluated by the Joint Planning and Monitoring Committee (ref. Declaration, Art. 4.2, hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”). The Committee will rely on the evaluation criteria set out above and seek to achieve a good balance of activities in the approved proposals. In case of a conflict of interest, the involved Committee-members are not allowed to participate in and to listen to the discussion about the submitted project proposal. The Committee may recommend that different initiatives join forces if there proves to be some overlap between them.

The decisions regarding the funding of projects from the allocations from the Department of Arts and Culture or the Nederlandse Taalunie will be made on a case by case basis, and be influenced by the relative benefit of a particular project to each Party.

The Department of Arts and Culture and the Nederlandse Taalunie make the final decisions based on the recommendations of the Committee. The Department of Arts and Culture and the Nederlandse Taalunie may decide to deviate from the Committee’s judgment and to award only part of the subsidy applied for or to make the subsidy contingent on supplemental conditions, based on other reasons than the scientific and/or economic quality of the proposal.

If a proposal is granted, the recipient of the award (hereinafter referred to as “the Beneficiary”) will enter into an agreement with the Nederlandse Taalunie on behalf of the Department of Arts and Culture and the Nederlandse Taalunie.

## Payment

After the signing of an agreement between the Beneficiary and the Nederlandse Taalunie, which includes a declaration of consent with the conditions, 75% of the grant will be transferred to the Beneficiary. The balance will be transferred after the Committee has received and approved the project report and the results, if applicable.

- Should actual expenditure exceed the total amount awarded, only the difference between the total amount awarded and the 75% advance will be transferred.
- Should actual expenditure be less than the total amount awarded, only the difference between the actual expenditure and the 75% advance will be transferred.
- Travel and accommodation costs, however, will be transferred in full as an advance so that the Beneficiary can be able to make travel arrangements.

It will be expected of the Beneficiaries to provide to the Committee a full, pro forma report (template can be downloaded from the websites mentioned below) of all activities within sixty days after the end of a Project.

## Contact and Information

- Applications can be done by completing the application form which is published on <http://tst-centrale.org/nl/over-de-tst-centrale/samenwerking/tst-en-zuid-afrika> or <http://www.dac.gov.za/>.
- Alternatively applicants can request the form from [ulrike.janke@dac.gov.za](mailto:ulrike.janke@dac.gov.za)
- For assistance in locating potential partners in Flanders, the Netherlands or South Africa, or any other enquiries pertaining to this call, prospective applicants may contact Remco van Veenendaal ([rvanveenendaal@taalunie.org](mailto:rvanveenendaal@taalunie.org)) or Ulrike Janke ([ulrike.janke@dac.gov.za](mailto:ulrike.janke@dac.gov.za)).
- For Q&A regarding the evaluation criteria and information about projects funded in previous calls, visit <http://tst-centrale.org/nl/over-de-tst-centrale/samenwerking/tst-en-zuid-afrika>.



## **What is human language technology (HLT)?**

HLT is a multidisciplinary field that draws from linguistics, computer science, engineering, statistics, mathematics, programming etc. to develop computer applications that simulate various linguistic processes and improve human-computer interaction. In all HLT research and development, the computational processing of text and speech is central.

Popular topics for investigation and development include (among others) speech recognition and speech synthesis, machine translation, spelling and grammar checking, intelligent information extraction and artificial intelligence. HLT is dependent on the existence of linguistic resources ranging from annotated corpora to refined methods and thus many of the activities related to the development of these can be considered to belong to the domain of HLT.

For more information on HLT, visit [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural\\_language\\_processing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_language_processing)