

National Research Foundation of South Africa

- Experiences in Facilitating Networks -

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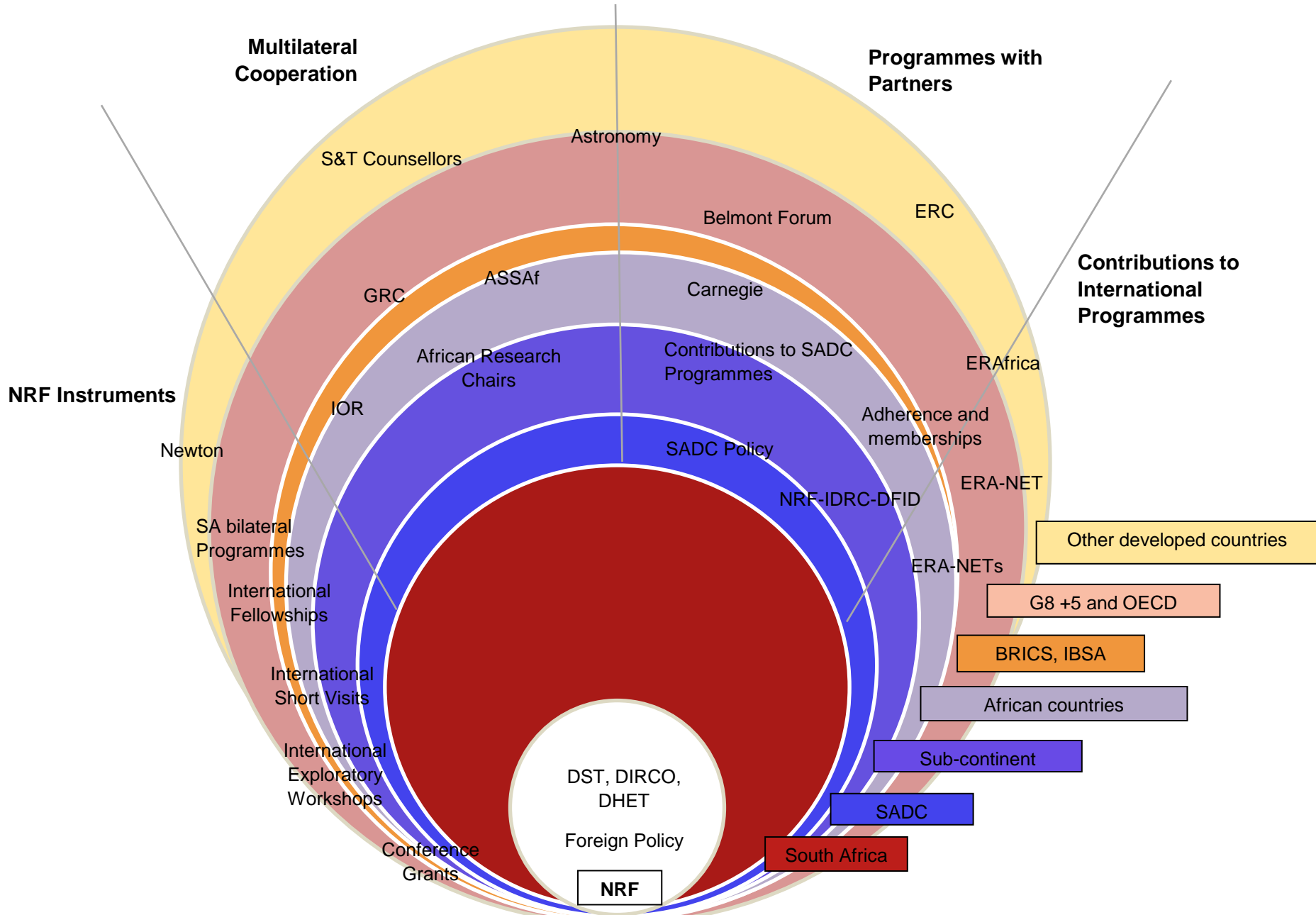
A Science Granting Council

- The NRF strives to be influential, have impact, be productive, be efficient and effective
 - ‘Knowledge and service broker’, and global leadership role
 - Beyond only a granting and research organisation
 - Shapes and informs policy/ strategy
 - *The nature of partnerships has changed, and strategic roles have changed*
 - *Flexibility for new approaches and demand-driven strategies is unique to the SA NSI (and NRF, guided by its mandate)*
 - Strengthening of the intellectual ‘knowledge leadership’ of the NRF
-
- Collaborations that strengthen institutions, unimpeded by geography
 - Support networks with the ability to produce “scientist entrepreneurs,” create professional career structures, ensure gender equity, build economies of scale and serve as leverage points for translating knowledge into innovation and application

Principles

- A comprehensive partnerships approach of the NRF, within the context of the contribution and value addition to and for South Africa
 - Global view – focus on Africa
 - IMPACT orientation
 - Excellence and inclusivity
 - Competitiveness
 - Innovation
- ❖ INVESTMENT IN NETWORKS
- ❖ building a strong human capital development infrastructure and harnessing gains from innovation in the research process

Strategic Partnership Matrix



Networks and Partnerships

- Both tangible and intangible benefits to individual members
- Collaborating to achieve greater outcomes than the institutions alone could achieve
- Widening the scope and scale of research problems which can be addressed
- Share resources for research, capacity building, teaching and learning
- Serve as a space for international exchange and networking

For the NRF, a combined approach to fostering excellence through collaboration

- 'Facilitative' granting: cluster/ cohort models
- Convening for partnership development
- Knowledge, intellectual leadership
- Networking the networks

EXAMPLES



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1. RESEARCH



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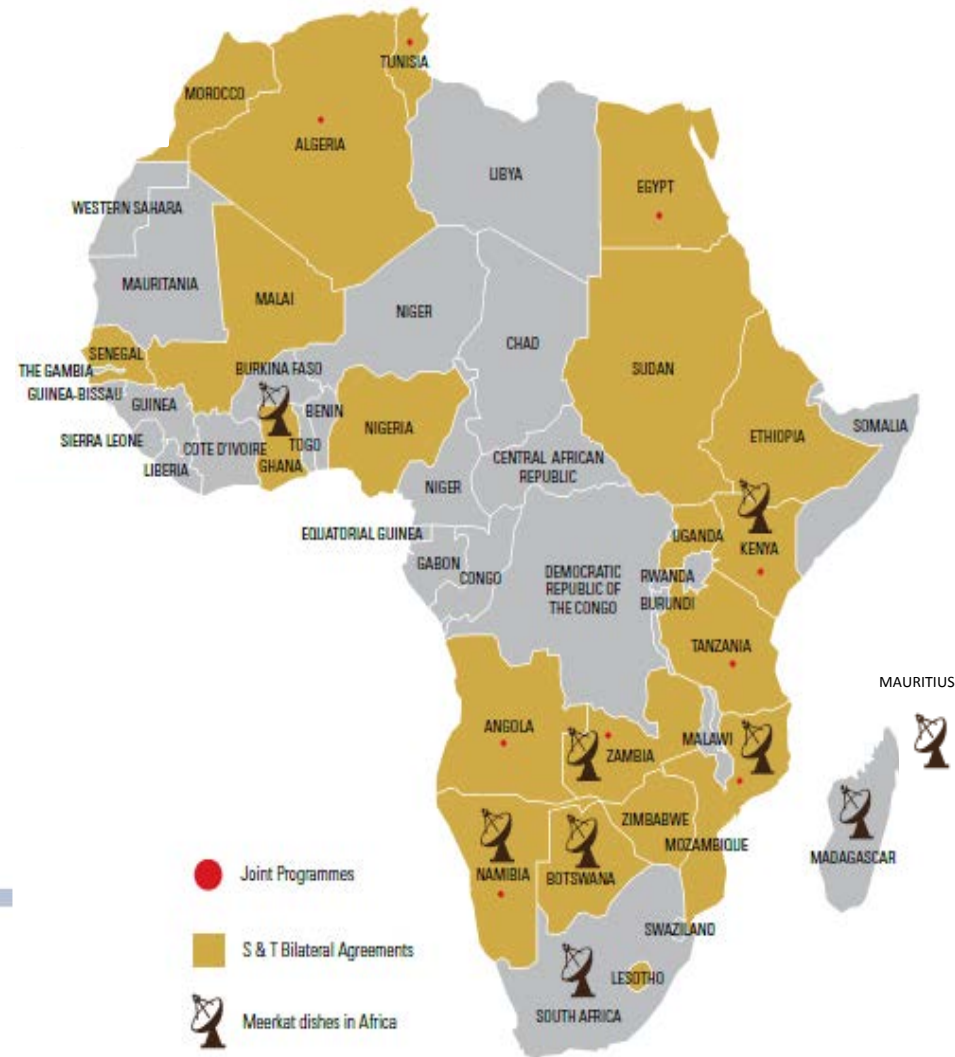


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1. The Africa VLBI Network

The Africa VLBI Network (AVN) includes 9 African partner countries. SKA SA has:

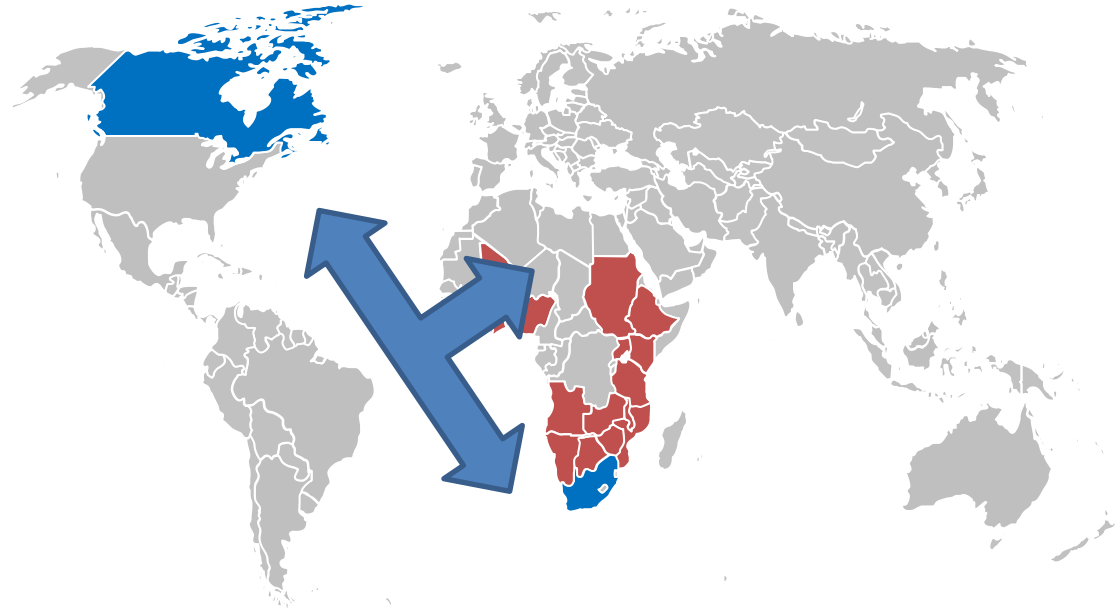
- Awarded 86 bursaries and scholarships to students from the continent (excl SA) of which:
 - 2 were awarded to Ghana; 5 to Namibia; 4 to Zambia; 4 to Mozambique; 30 to Madagascar; 13 to Mauritius; 16 Kenya; and 12 to Botswana.
- Trained 18 engineers, 5 of whom were from African partner countries;
- Trained observatory staff:
 - 8 from Ghana
 - 16 from Kenya
 - 13 from Mauritius
 - 1 from Namibia
 - 5 Interns from Partner Countries



2. South Africa-Canada Chairs Initiative (SACRI)

NRF and the Canadian
Development Research
Centre (IDRC):

1. **South Africa-Canada
Research Chairs
Trilateral Partners
Initiative**
2. **South Africa-Canada
Research Chairs
Mobility Initiative**



3. LEAP-Agri: Food and Nutrition Security

European Countries:


Belgium, Finland,
France, Germany,
Netherlands,
Norway, Portugal,
Spain and Turkey

African Countries:

Algeria, Burkina
Faso, Cameroon,
Egypt, Ghana,
Kenya, Senegal,
South Africa and
Uganda

LEAP-Agri Consortium:

19 Countries (9 African, 9 European)
with 30 funding agencies

 Bi/Multilateral S & T Agreements
Inter-Agency Agreements

2. KNOWLEDGE PARTNERSHIPS/ POLICY



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Global Initiatives

▪ Belmont Forum



▪ Global Research Council

- 75 leading science granting councils in the world; 17 from Africa
- Open access, gender, interdisciplinarity, research integrity, capacity building...

▪ AAUN

▪ ARUA

▪ NSF-NRF – global biodiversity

▪ Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC)

▪ African Open Data Platform

▪ RUFORUM

▪ Indian Ocean Rim Association

▪ International Sciences Council (ICSU and ISSC)

- SA: 300 scientists; 30 committees

3. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



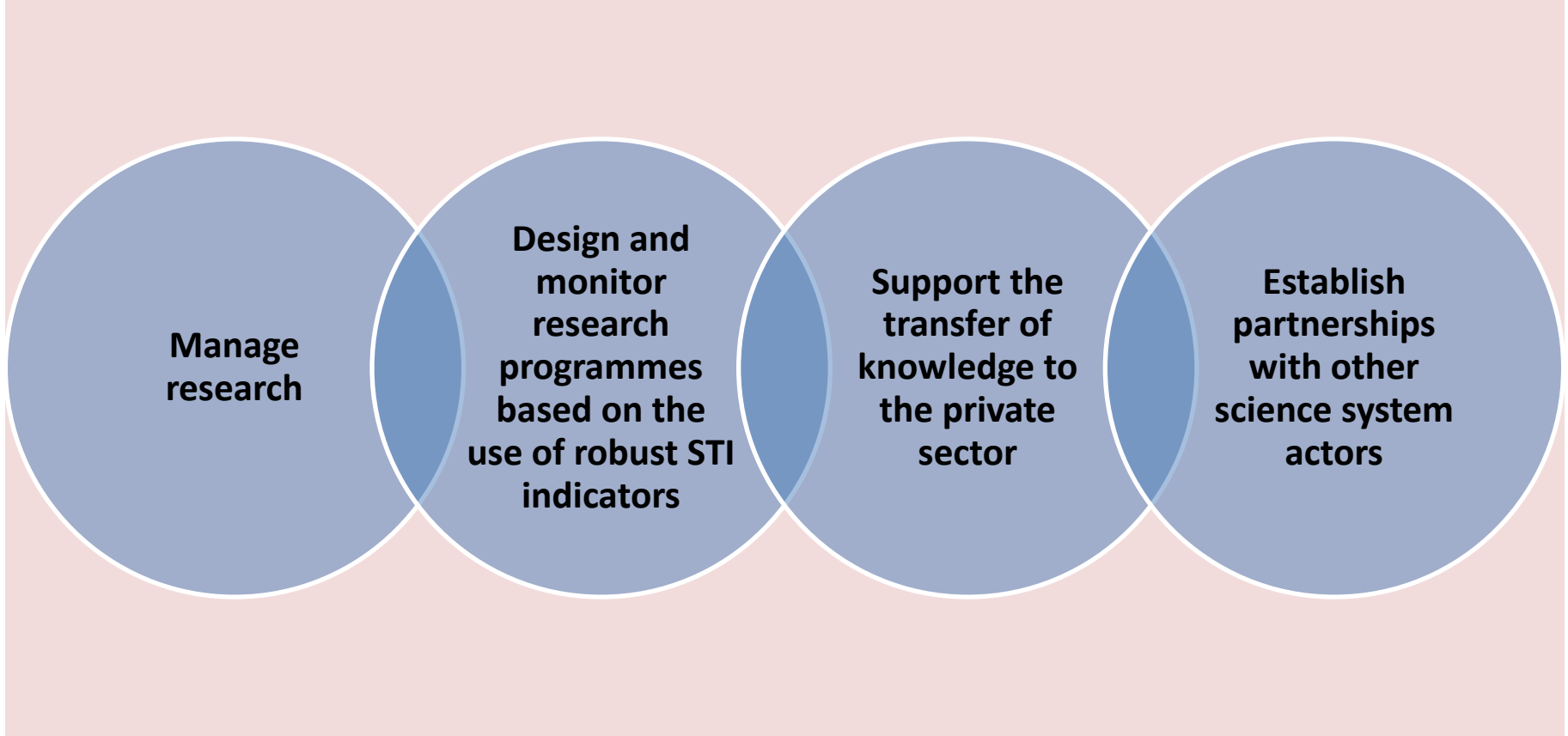
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1. Science Granting Councils Initiative SSA



2. Doctoral Education

- Mega PhD programmes with partners
 - UK DTCs, and Universities South Africa (USAf)
 - DFG: IRTGs (multi partner)
 - Newton: Fellowship Programmes (multi partner)
 - Southern African Centre for Systems Analysis (SASAC)

3. Multilateral Research

- Africa programmes – SANWATCE, AIMS
- BRICS Young Scientists Network

Conclusion

- Strength is in the network
- Affordability
 - Leverage funding
- University networks *with* national funding agencies
 - ecosystems of university-led development
- Return on investment in various forms
- *Planning* for partnerships
- Strong leadership
 - Shared leadership vision/ organisational culture
- Value of co-design, and co-implementation amongst partners
- Research-focused

Catalysts for Impact

Robust networks creates an enabling environment for
global research partnerships

Partnerships, strategic alliances and networks that harness collective strengths and facilitate resource sharing

Diversified funding sources that enable critical connections to policy and practice towards impact

Cutting-edge communication and engagement strategies that inspire, educate and transform

Reduced risk that promotes sustainable and efficient investment impact

Boundary-spanning leadership that bridges divides and disconnects between stakeholders



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Thank you

