WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION

2025 call FOR CONCEPT NOTES

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

INTRODUCTION

The Water Research Commission's (WRC's) roles and functions are to coordinate and promote water research, development, and innovation (RDI) in South Africa. The WRC effectively undertakes its mandate by prioritising water research as informed by the needs of the water sector and related stakeholders. Supported projects are related to the entire water cycle. The RDI agenda and projects of the WRC are aimed at making a meaningful contribution in addressing water security and socio-economic challenges in South Africa while enabling the country to have an innovation-driven water and sanitation sector. The WRC has introduced five (5) thematic areas through which new knowledge creation, innovation development and capacity building will be pursued. They are:


water availability


water use, water quality and health


water advisory support


knowledge services

These thematic areas generate knowledge solutions which contribute to national priorities.

The overarching aim of this call for research concept notes is to respond to national challenges through research and innovation for the WRC to contribute to water security while paying attention to adaptation and resilience to climate change.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF THE WRC

The WRC has priority outcomes which its strategy is anchored on, namely: an innovative water sector, an informed society, a transformed water sector, and an agile organisation. As such, the WRC is looking for research, development and innovation (RDI) projects which can make remarkable contributions to all these priorities.

The WRC hereby invites all South Africans from various stakeholder groups, backgrounds, and disciplines to submit concept notes.

CONCEPT NOTES

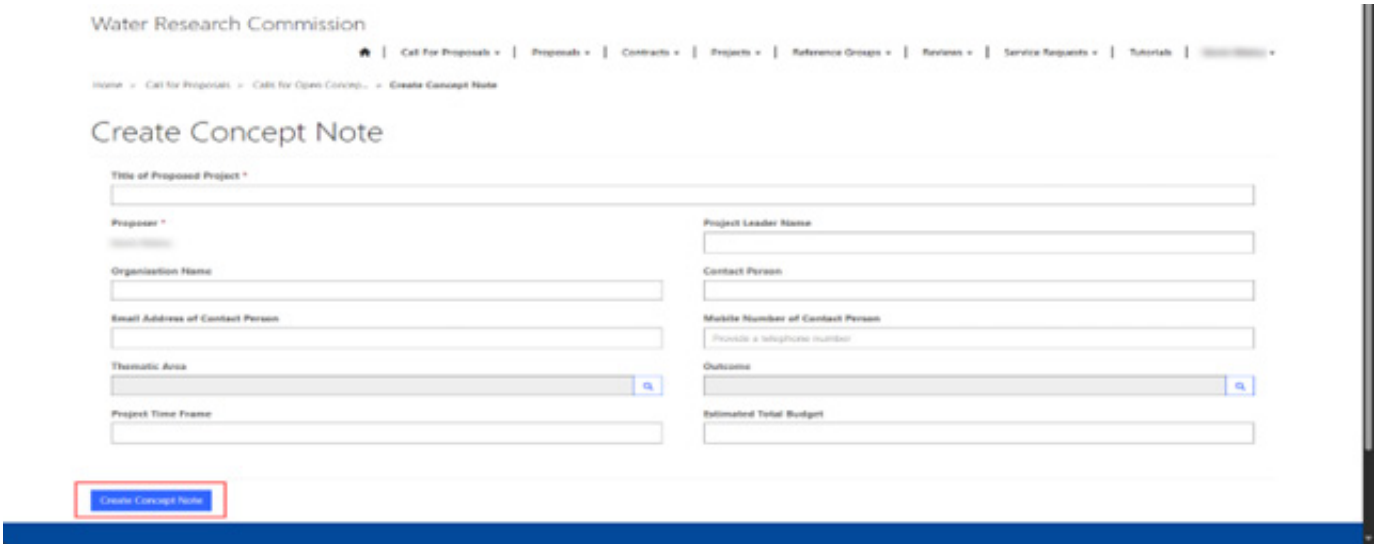
The WRC is encouraging concept notes that promote novelty and support leadership, empowerment and/or participation by:

- Seasoned researchers
- Emerging researchers
- Women, youth, and people living with disabilities
- Cooperatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and environmental groups
- Public and State entities
- Indigenous knowledge systems/non-tech researchers
- Innovation and technology companies (SMMEs and commercial companies)

What is a concept note?
A concept note is a document that summarises a project or idea, including its objectives, methodology, budget, and expected results. It is the first step in a project proposal.

KEY STEPS TO CONSIDER WHEN PARTICIPATING IN THIS CALL

1. The Call requires a submission of a concept note first on or before the due date (see timelines for the 2025 Call for Concept Notes on page 14).
2. Invitations to provide full proposals will only be sent to those whose concepts notes have been approved or accepted.
3. Consider your submission unsuccessful if you haven't heard from the WRC by 01 April 2025.
4. Visit the WRC website to submit a directed concept note. The website address is https://wrc.microsoftcrmportals.com/call-for-proposals-info/call-for-directed-concept-notes/
5. All titles on this call have a Business Management System (BMS) identity number listed. When submitting your concept note please check that it is linked to the correct identity number.
6. If you are a first-time user of the WRC system, you are required to first register to be able to use the system and submit your concept note.
7. Returning users can use their login details to access the system.
8. For any technical assistance relating to submission of the concept note, you can contact Kevin at (012) 761 9304 or or email: bms-support@wrc.org.za



Screenshot of the concept note create screen in BMS:

PDF

WRC BMS Portal
User Guide v2.1.pdf

The BMS Portal User Guide has been provided as an attachment to this document.

The next section provides more details of the call.

RESEARCH PRIORITY AREAS PER THEME

Theme 1: Water availability

Improving water availability through resource expansion and discovery is vital for tackling water stress and ensuring sustainable water management in South Africa. The country faces challenges such as the uneven distribution of water resources, the impacts of climate change, and inadequate infrastructure. Factors such as population growth, urbanisation, and ineffcient water management worsens water availability to meet domestic, environmental, industrial, and agricultural demands. Climate change exacerbates this issue, with changing rainfall patterns, rising evaporation, and increasing temperatures threatening water sources. Climate models predict more frequent and intense droughts in some areas, impacting both water supply and food security. South Africa's water infrastructure, including dams, reservoirs, canals, and pipelines, is essential. However, operation and maintenance, ageing, and lack of infrastructure investment pose additional challenges. Initiatives like water restrictions, public awareness, and water-saving technologies are key to reducing demand while exploring and developing alternative water sources can help South Africa adapt to a water supply mix and build resilience to environmental shocks.

Priority area	**Research question** *Proposals will be considered that aim to answer part or all of these research questions*
Area 1: Climate resilience	How can advanced monitoring and modelling tools, combined with smart technologies and sustainable water management strategies, improve the assessment of water availability, prediction of water scarcity and flooding, and enhance water conservation practices?
Area 2: Explore and develop new supply sources	How can comprehensive studies on water quantity, quality, and distribution at various scales, combined with innovative technologies and infrastructure, improve and unlock freshwater access for settlements and other users in water-stressed regions?
Area 3: Enhance sustainable water management	How can innovative, localised water management strategies, informed by socioeconomic studies, knowledge of water availability and conservation, and enhanced data platforms, be developed to address water scarcity, promote equitable water allocation, and support sustainable livelihoods and economic development?
Area 4: Promote ecosystem protection & sustainable use	How can the protection and integration of blue and green infrastructure, along with the mainstreaming of Strategic Water Source Areas in policies and the adoption of nature-based solutions improve water availability and access?

Theme 2: Water use

South Africa is a water scarce country, the 30th driest in the world, with almost 98% of the available freshwater resources already allocated, leaving little room for future economic growth. The agriculture sector alone uses more than 60% of these available freshwater resources. Cases of overuse and unsustainable use of the resource have been reported. Research should develop innovative smart

technologies and practices that enhance water use in agriculture so that the resource can be availed to other equally important sectors for economic development. These smart innovations should enhance crop-water productivity in both rainfed and irrigated areas. The focus areas should include:

- Mainstreaming underutilised indigenous crops as they are adaptable to local harsh climatic conditions
- Application of transformative and circular approaches to promote the transition from linear approaches to the circular model
- Use of big data platforms and other novel applications to promote and enhance water use efficiency in the agriculture sector

Priority area	Research question
	Proposals will be considered that aim to answer part or all of these research questions
Area 1: Reduced water use consumption and promotion of water use efficiency across water sensitive sectors (mining, agriculture, local government, sanitation etc.)	Research should develop innovative smart technologies and practices that enhance water use in agriculture that the resource can be availed to other equally important sectors for economic development. These smart innovations should enhance crop-water productivity in both rainfed and irrigated areas. The focus areas should include: • Mainstreaming underutilised indigenous crops as they are adaptable to local harsh climatic conditions • Use of big data platforms and other novel applications to promote and enhance water use efficiency in the agriculture sector. • Proposals should showcase and demonstrate some of the tools that have been developed
Area 2: Effective solutions to prevent and mitigate agriculture's contribution to non-point source (NPS) pollution	The agriculture sector has been recognised both locally and globally as a significant contributor of non-point source pollution (NPS). The first scoping review funded by the WRC was 20 years ago was aimed to review existing knowledge, predictive modelling and list any innovative tools existing at that time. This was followed by a 7-year study which was completed in 2012, which modelled agricultural NPS pollution as well as determined the economic and environmental trade-offs of pollution control measures. Twelve years later, the contribution of the agriculture sector to NPS pollution is still a grave and an even more complex issue to deal with due to changes in types of contaminants, climate change, extreme weather events, irrigation and farming practices, etc. The aim of this focus area will be to foster research and activities that showcase agricultural best management practice (technological, economic, and institutional) to prevent or reduce the movement of sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other pollutants from the land to various waterbodies (groundwater included), giving the availability of new tools (earth observation) and improved existing and new models (verified and validated). Demonstration of infrastructure (both grey and nature based) with the involvement of citizens and at different scales (local and national) that will abate NPS pollution from agriculture activities is encouraged. Solutions that are easily acceptable and executable and do not put unnecessary financial strain on emerging farmers are of particular interest.

Theme 3: Water quality and health

Understanding the links between water quality, environmental factors, and health impacts is vital for developing strategies to mitigate risks, enhance resilience to climate impacts, and inform policies that promote sustainable water quality management. Water quality refers to the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of water. It is a measure of the suitability of water for a particular use based on selected indicators, including standards for public and aquatic ecosystems health protection.

Priority areas	Research question *Proposals will be considered that aim to answer part or all of these research questions*
Area 1: Contaminants of emerging concern and health	Contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) include a wide range of substances, such as pharmaceuticals, personal care products, endocrine disruptors, microplastics, and industrial chemicals that are not typically regulated. Tracking the emergence of such chemicals, identifying their sources, and assessing their risks is key to ensuring human and animal health, environmental integrity, and water security. Priority research areas under this topic include: • Investigating the pathways through which these contaminants enter water ecosystems and their potential impacts on drinking water quality and food safety • Developing and testing the application of innovative monitoring technologies and methods, risk communication and data sharing to aid decision making on CECs • Conducting toxicity and risk assessment studies to inform water quality management interventions • Exploring the establishment of protective risk–based water quality guidelines for CECs to guide decisions on the fitness of water for various uses • Exploring innovative treatment and management strategies that can mitigate the effects of CECs, ensuring the sustainability of water resources while safeguarding the health of humans, animals, and aquatic organisms. • Providing actionable insights that inform policy and promote safe water use practices, contributing to enhanced water security and health outcomes.
Area 2: Waterborne diseases and health	Findings from several WRC-funded projects show increased levels of water pollution from contamination events, untreated sewage, anthropogenic sources, natural occurrences such as climate change and social drivers. Coupled with reported cases of water-related disease outbreaks there is now a requirement of new thinking and working around how public health can best be protected from emerging and re-emerging water-related illnesses. Key to this is the need for proper assessment of contaminants in water and regular water quality monitoring as measures for early warning and the prevention of waterborne outbreaks. Priority research areas under this topic include: • Exploring how contaminated water sources contribute to the spread of diseases like cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. • Investigating antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and its transmission through water systems. • Investigating the public health impacts of drinking water contamination with pathogens – research into the links between poor drinking water quality and health outcomes. • Examining the role of irrigation water quality in food safety and human health. • Investigating the impact of waterborne contaminants on livestock health and productivity, and how these affect food systems and human health.

Area 3: Impacts of water pollution on aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity	This focus area takes cognisance of the vastness of the One Health concept in reference to water quality in global literature, particularly looking at the suitability of that water body of concern for fitness for use. Priority research areas under this topic include: • Studying the fate and eco-toxicological effects of pollutants in water bodies on aquatic species. • Investigating how water quality impacts ecosystem services, particularly those that support human health (e.g., fisheries, water purification). • Inputs into the value of aquatic ecosystems integrity through green-blue economies and better water resources management (e.g. merging green/grey infrastructures) • Transitioning from conventional monitoring to real-time data acquisition, archiving, artificial intelligence, and reporting, including cost benefit analysis of this advancement • The better understanding of the arid ecosystems and their role of ephemeral systems in water demand and conservation • Transboundary water quality impacts on ecosystem connectivity, sustainability, and livelihood • Guidelines on water quality for ecosystems, including frameworks, methods, and tools to improve water quality through nature-based solutions • Building water quality monitoring capacity required to implement the outputs/ outcomes leading to making impacts of newly generated knowledge
Area 4: Climate Change, water security, and health	Climate change poses significant challenges to water quality and health. Research aimed at addressing these interconnected issues requires a comprehensive approach that integrates climate adaptation strategies with water quality and health management initiatives, ensuring resilience in the face of changing climatic conditions. Priority topics include: • Focusing on the impact of climate change on water quality (e.g., saltwater intrusion, increased runoff, extreme weather events). • Studying the health impacts of declining freshwater quality, particularly in climate-vulnerable regions. • Involvement of citizen scientists in diverse water quality monitoring, early warning systems and resilience interventions
Area 5: Digitisation of water quality monitoring and management	The adoption of digital technologies can revolutionise water quality monitoring and management, as these tools enable real-time monitoring, rapid data processing, and predictive analytics, which are crucial for ensuring water quality and managing contamination risks. Within the context of water quality and One Health, the transition to digital technologies enables continuous monitoring of water quality, allowing for the early detection of pathogens, chemicals, and other pollutants that could harm human, animal, and environmental health; integration of data across various sectors; predictive analytics and water quality risk assessment; enhanced ecosystem health monitoring, as well as increased public transparency on water quality.

Theme 4: Water advisory

An effective water research and innovation advisory system is critical to enabling readiness of innovations and an uptake of new knowledge and technologies which will ensure long term water security, resilience, and adaptation for South Africa . Getting this right requires focus and planning on how to ensure that the lessons, advice, and solutions coming out of needs-based research can best be implemented, used and embedded in the sector. To this end the Advisory Services thematic area, focuses partners on topics where

there is a strong pull from sector institutions for consolidated advice and guidance, packaged in a way that can enable action and decision-making. This thematic area also develops mechanisms that intentionally enable technology and solution demonstration, transfer, uptake, and co-learning. This theme spans support in terms of establishing centres of excellence and communities of practice that deepen advisory nodes in the sector, scaling models and innovation to solve the most critical problems, completes catalytic projects that benefit the sector and national system of innovation, and builds capacity of emerging researchers and experts for scientific advice.

Priority areas	Research question
	Proposals will be considered that aim to answer part or all of these research questions
Area 1: Economics of water	This open call is looking to grow water economics specialists and produce research that deals with the financial sustainability of water sector institutions, investigate and provide innovative models and tools to evaluate the cost of water, revenue collection, and the valuing of water, infrastructure (built and ecological) and services that allow South Africa to achieve its sustainable development goals and place the country on a trajectory towards a low carbon, green and circular economy.

INVITATION FOR CONCEPT NOTES

In consideration of the themes, priority areas and research topics provided above, submissions of concept notes are invited from all stakeholders and individuals.

The 2025 Call is directed in one way or another, and is divided into four (4) parts as described below.

OPEN RESEARCH CALL

Table 1 shows the category of research which the WRC is promoting through this call. Note that the concept note should be crafted to address the specific water topics (area, theme or field). The priority research areas for each theme are provided above for your reference (see page 4). Take note of the first year budget and the total budget for each field or area. The concept note should put more emphasis on the outputs and the research methodology. Anyone can submit a concept note(s) under this call.

OPEN TARGETED RESEARCH CALL

Table 2 presents the category of research which the WRC is promoting through this call. This call is targeting youth and women who are citizens of South Africa. However, there is a category (in this table) targeting the consortium research projects among universities, science councils and SMMEs. The focus areas for each theme are provided above for your reference (see page 4). Take note of the first year budget and the total budget for each topic. The concept note should put more emphasis on the outputs and the research methodology. Concept notes can only be submitted by those targeted groups stated in the Call (in Table 2).

OPEN DIRECTED RESEARCH CALL (WITH RESEARCH TITLES AND TOPICS)

Table 3 shows specific research titles in which the WRC is directing or guiding researchers to mould their research concept notes. The table is divided into Thematic Tables (Table 3.1;Table 3.2 etc) to emphasise the thematic area in which the research title belongs. Take note of the first year budget and the total budget for each topic. Only the research titles or topics without Terms of Reference (ToRs) are provided. The concept note should put more emphasis on the outputs and the research methodology. Anyone can submit a concept note(s) under this Call.

DIRECTED RESEARCH CALL (WITH TORS)

Table 4 presents the research titles or topics which the WRC is promoting through this directed call. In this case, the terms of references (ToRs) are provided by the WRC and are attached to this call for reference. Researchers should address all the aspects of the ToR in the concept note (or proposal). Anyone can submit a concept note(s) under this Call.

TABLE 1. OPEN RESEARCH CALL

Please note the total budget allocations and the allocation for the first year.

Category	Specific area/field	Researcher or institution invited to submit	First year budget (R)	Total budget (R)	Time period (years)
Knowledge reviews	Water availability in South Africa (ToR: 1009978)	Everyone or All	700 000	1 500 000	2
	Water use (across all sectors) in South Africa (ToR: 1009979)	Everyone or All	700 000	1 500 000	2
	Water quality & health in South Africa (ToR: 1009980)	Everyone or All	700 000	1 500 000	2
	Total		**2 100 000**	**4 500 000**	
Blue Sky RDI	2.1 What is the advanced and futuristic thinking on re-imagining water availability for all? (ToR: 1009981)	Everyone or All	800 000	1 500 000	3-5
	2.2 What are the blue sky areas of research that could transform how large water users build security, sustainability and resilience? (ToR: 1009982)	Everyone or All	800 000	1 500 000	3-5
	2.3 What transformative technologies are emerging to deal with water quality and health challenges of the future? (ToR: 1009983)	Everyone or All	800 000	1 500 000	3-5
	Total		**2 400 000**	**4 500 000**	
Impact studies of WRC RDI	Drinking water innovation(s) (ToR: 1009984)	Everyone or All	1 500 000	1 500 000	1
	Irrigation innovation(s) (ToR: 1009985)	Everyone or All	1 500 000	1 500 000	1
	Sanitation and /or wastewater innovations (ToR: 1009986)	Everyone or All	1 500 000	1 500 000	1
	Catchment management innovations (ToR: 1009987)	Everyone or All	1 500 000	1 500 000	1
	Total		**6 000 000**	**6 000 000**	
Innovation Development (see focus area for more details)	Water availability in South Africa (ToR: 1009988)	Everyone or All	500 000	1 000 000	2-3
	Water use (across all sectors) (ToR: 1009989)	Everyone or All	500 000	1 000 000	2-3
	Water quality & health in South Africa (ToR: 1009990)	Everyone or All	500 000	1 000 000	2-3
	Total		**1500 000**	**3 000 000**	
Economics of Water	5.1 Projects that deal with innovative financing and costing models for the water sector that improves financial sustainability and policy implementation. Economic research that enables SA to achieve its sustainable development goals and place the country on a trajectory towards a low carbon, green and circular economy (ToR: 1009991)	All	500 000	1 500 000	4
	Total		**500 000**	**1 500 000**	

TABLE 2. OPEN TARGETED RESEARCH CALL

Please note the total budget allocations and the allocation for the first year

Open Call Proposals Category	Specific Area/field	Researcher or Institution Invited to submit	First year budget (R)	Total budget (R)	Time Period (years)
Youth researcher development	Water availability in South Africa (ToR: 1009932)	Youth researchers (35 years and younger) (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	500 000 [maximum 100 000 per project, first year]	2 000 000 [400 000 per project]	2-4
	Water use (across all sectors) in South Africa (ToR: 1009933)	Youth researchers (35 years and younger) (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	500 000 [maximum 100 000 per project, first year]	2 000 000 [400 000 per project]	2-4
	Water quality & health in South Africa (ToR: 1009994)	Youth researchers (35 years and younger) (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	500 000 [100 000 maximum per project, first]	2 000 000 [400 000 per project]	2-4
	Total		**1 500 000**	**6 000 000**	
Female researchers development	Water availability in South Africa (ToR: 1009995)	Female researchers (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	1 200 000 [300 000 maximum per project, first year]	2 000 000	2-4
	Water use (across all sectors) in South Africa (ToR: 1009996)	Female researchers (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	1 200 000 [300 000 maximum per project, first year]	2 000 000	2-4
	Water quality & health in South Africa (ToR: 1009997)	Female researchers (ONLY South African citizens need apply)	1 200 000 [300 000 maximum per project, first year]	2 000 000	2-4
	Total		**3 600 000**	**6 000 000**	
Artificial intelligence (& Internet of Things)	3.1 Water data and information processing (ToR: 1009998)	Universities, science councils, and SMMEs [Consortium is preferred]	400 000	2 000 000	2-4
	3.2 Data simulation and projections (forecasting) (ToR: 1009999)	Universities, science councils, and SMMEs [Consortium is preferred]	400 000	2 000 000	2-4
	3.3 Automation in the water sector (ToR: 1010000)	Universities, science councils, and SMMEs [Consortium is preferred]	400 000	2 000 000	2-4
	Total		**1 200 000**	**6 000 000**	

TABLE 3. OPEN DIRECTED RESEARCH CALL (WITH RESEARCH TITLES)

TABLE 3.1. OPEN DIRECTED CALL: THEME 2. WATER USE

Title	Budget 2025/26 (R)	Total Budget (R)	Total years
Water use of underutilised crops in semi -arid areas (ToR: 1010001)	400 000	2 000 000	3
Water footprint of strategic fruit crops (ToR: 1010002)	400 000	3 000 000	3
The role of bridging the gap between science, policy and implementation through the WEF nexus (ToR: 1010003)	400 000	3 000 000	3
Incorporating WRC guidelines and manuals into agriculture colleges (ToR: 1010004)	300 000	1 500 000	2
Application of the Water Research Observatory (WRO) big data platform into water science and conservation (ToR: 1020005)	400 000	2 000 000	2
Total	**1 900 000**	**11 500 000**	

TABLE 3.2 OPEN DIRECTED CALL: THEME 3. WATER QUALITY AND HEALTH

Title	**Budget 2025/26 (R)**	**Total budget (R)**	**Total years**
Economic and water quality consequences of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the seven (7) strategic freshwater aquaculture development zone (ToR: 1010006)	800 000	5 000 000	5
Total	**800 000**	**5 000 000**	

TABLE 3.3. OPEN DIRECTED CALL: THEME 4. WATER ADVISORY

Title	**Budget 2025/26 (R)**	**Total budget (R)**	**Total years**
Development of a water and sanitation efficiency guide for green buildings in South Africa: Enhancing tools toward water efficiency, net zero water and innovation adoption in new developments and commercial and public buildings (ToR: 1010007)	700 000	700 000	1
Total	**700 000**	**700 000**	

TABLE 4 DIRECTED RESEARCH CALL (WITH TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORS))

TABLE 4.1 DIRECTED CALL FOR FOCUS AREA: THEME 1. WATER AVAILABILITY

Title	Budget 2025/26 (R)	Total budget (R)	Total years
Setting-up an operational water resources accounting system for SA. (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010008)	2 000 000	8 000 000	5
Development and pilot of a spatially differentiated (< 100m) recharge estimation method for numerical groundwater models using publicly available data (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010009)	1 500 000	3 000 000	3
State-of-the-art of managed aquifer recharge in southern Africa (Full ToR on the System) (ToR: 1010010)	600 000	1 200 000	1.5
What are the opportunity costs of not being able to access hydrological data in South Africa? (Full ToR on the System) (ToR: 1010011)	600 000	600 000	1
Post-project cross-sectional project implementation review: Operationalising Community-Led Multiple Use Water Services (MUS) in South Africa. (Full ToR on the System) (ToR: 1010012)	600 000	600 000	1
Total	**5 300 000**	**13 400 000**	

TABLE 4.2. DIRECTED CALL FOCUS AREA: THEME 2. WATER USE

Title	Budget 2025/26 (R)	Total budget (R)	Total years
Promoting the use of advanced non-revenue management solutions (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010013)	600 000	1 200 000	24 months
Promoting the uptake and capacity building on the WRC Non-Revenue Water tools and portal (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010014)	300 000	600 000	14 months
Assessing the need for large water reuse, reclamation and recycling as an regulated activity to be licenced and approaches to setting tariffs (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010015)	600 000	1 200 000	14 months
Determining the impact of the infrastructure depreciation methods (straight line method vs replacement value) on the tariff (DWS requested and supported) (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010016)	300 000	600 000	14 months
Assess the effectiveness and sustainability of water infrastructure investments made in South Africa (DWS requested and supported) (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010017)	300 000	600 000	14 months
Strategic analysis of billing and revenue challenges in growing serviced rural and peri-urban settlements on trust and private land (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010018)	400 000	1 000 000	24 months
Examining the potential of water boards supporting and complementing some of the catchment management agency (CMA) functions and activities (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010019)	400 000	1 000 000	28 months
A scoping study investigating alternative and innovative municipal sewerage tariffs (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010020)	300 000	500 000	14 months
Impact of smart water metering and use and revenue collection (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010021)	300 000	1 500 000	24 months
Total	**3 500 000**	**8 200 000**	

TABLE 4.3. DIRECTED CALL FOR FOCUS AREA: THEME 3. WATER QUALITY AND HEALTH

Title	Budget 2025/26 (R)	Total budget (R)	Total years
Detection and assessment of contaminants of emerging Concern (CECs) in non-sewered sanitation (NSS) systems (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010022)	600 000	1 400 000	4
Integrated and risk-based approach to better management of eutrophication in lotic and lentic systems taking into account the role of citizen scientists early warning systems (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010023)	400 000	5 000 000	5
Revision of the national CECs knowledge hub (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010024)	500 000	2 000 000	3
Development and demonstration of a web-based decision support system for the South African water quality guidelines for domestic use (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010025)	400 000	1 000 000	3
Quantifying the impacts of water resources pollution and drinking water quality failures (DWS needs database) (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010026)	400 000	2 000 000	3
Total	**2 300 000**	**11 400 000**	

TABLE 4.4. DIRECTED CALL FOR FOCUS AREA: THEME 4. WATER ADVISORY

Title	Budget 2025/26 (R)	Total budget (R)	Total years
Managing current and future gold mining closure impacts in South Africa for sustainable mining-influenced water use (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010027)	1 000 000	4 000 000	4
Mapping water use, availability and quality requirements for transitioning to a sustainable green hydrogen economy in South Africa (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010028)	2 000 000	3 000 000	3
Piloting the operationalisation of the interlinkages between SDG 6.3 (water quality and wastewater), other SDG 6 targets and the remaining SDGs (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010029)	1 000 000	1 000 000	1
Updating the Guidelines for Catchment Management Strategies (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 101030)	800 000	800 000	1
A national contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) capacity building programme (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010031)	700 000	5 000 000	5
Expression of interest to be a member of the Water Research Commission National Water Quality Advisory Committee (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010032)		500 000	3
Mapping water reuse, recycling and reclamation in the industrial, mining, large commercial and agro-processing sectors (Full ToR on the system) (ToR: 1010033)	1 000 000	4 000 000	3
Total	**6 500 000**	**18 300 000**	

TIMELINES

The stages, dates and activities of receiving and reviewing concept notes and project proposals during the Call are presented below.

Start of Call for project concept notes and Proposals	
22 January – 07 February 2025	Launch and advertise the Call on various platforms WRC 101 workshops
07 – 28 February 2025	BMS enabled to receive concept notes
Screening and pre-selection of submitted project concept notes and proposals	
01 March – 20 March 2025	Initial screening of concept notes Recommend concept notes to WRC Executive Committee (EXCO) for approval
24 -30 March 2025	Project leaders / institutions informed of the successful (approved) concept notes
01 – 20 April 2025	BMS enabled to receive full proposal of approved concept notes only
Evaluation, selection and Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)	
21 April to 15 May 2025	Proposal review BMS enabled to invite and receive reviewer comments
16 – 31 May 2025	Completion of processes and meetings. Recommended proposals to EXCO for approval
20 June 2025	Executive Approval for funding
21 June – 20 July 2025	Outcome of EXCO decision to proposers BMS is enabled to receive proposal amendments
July 2025	Preparation of MoAs to start directly after proposal amendment is approved