

camera

DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence for Integrated Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis



science, technology
& innovation

Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



RISA
Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

https://drive.google.com/file/d/15F_To5asHy-MqZrE2RQJS-UY-UzeA6RC/view?usp=drive_link



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DSTI-NRF CIMERA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SESSION | 20 April 2026

You're Invited!

Join us for our annual online engagement session, bringing together current and future collaborators to connect, share insights, and explore opportunities.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- > Update on DSTI-NRF CIMERA
- > 2026 Funding Applications Overview
- > Interactive Q&A Session

Enquiries: cimera@uj.ac.za

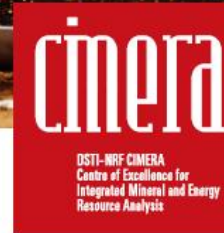
CLICK HERE



To join via MS Teams 2PM - 3:30PM

TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Who we are
2. Panel feedback on 10-year review
3. 2025 APR Steering Committee presentation summary
4. 2026 proposed budget
5. CIMERA strategy
6. 2027 call for proposals



DSTI-NRF CIMERA CALL FOR PROJECT FUNDING 2027

CIMERA is issuing the 2027 funding call two months earlier than previous years. This is to enable academics to receive confirmation of 2027 funding prior to the close of the NRF scholarship application process or other scholarship application deadlines. Supervisors may therefore advertise and source the most appropriate student for the approved project.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

- PhD Projects
- MSc Projects
- Honours Projects
- Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Projects
- Non-scholarship Projects (Running Costs Only)
- Outreach Projects

CALL OPENS ON MARCH 16, 2026 | CALL CLOSE MAY 4, 2026

IMPORTANT NOTES

- All scholarship-linked applications must also be submitted via the NRF website once the call opens.
- Refer to the NRF website for Honours, MSc and PhD scholarship application deadlines.
- CIMERA will provide initial feedback to academics by **5 June 2026**.
- Academics must link approved projects with suitable students.
- DSTI-NRF CIMERA will only consider scholarship applications for **South African Black students**.

All academics are encouraged to submit new project proposals related to the broad fields of economic geology, energy, and geology for society. We strongly encourage the development of multi-university and/or industry linked projects, clearly demonstrating the benefit of the research in terms of the CIMERA vision and mission and guiding documents.

SUBMISSION AND ENQUIRIES

Submission email: bmaphalala@uj.ac.za / Subject line: 2027 Project Funding Call
Enquiries email: cimera@uj.ac.za / Subject line: 2027 Project Funding Call.



Image: AdobeStock_1620864274

DSTI-NRF CoE MANDATE

- CoE's are national assets
- Aims:
 - PG training
 - Fundamental and applied research
- CIMERA
 - Geoscience for society
 - Economic geology
 - Energy

3rd funding cycle 2024 - 2029

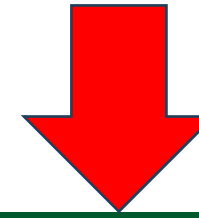
- www.cimera.co.za

CIMERA

DSTI-NRF CIMERA
Centre of Excellence for
Integrated Mineral and Energy
Resource Analysis



Pertinent Guiding Documents



**SCIENCE
TECHNOLOGY
AND INNOVATION
DECADAL PLAN
2022-2032**

Science, technology and innovation
enabling inclusive, sustainable
South Africa development in a
changing world

Making sure it's possible

**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

2025/26 - 2029/30

mineral & petroleum resources
Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**CRITICAL MINERALS
AND METALS STRATEGY
SOUTH AFRICA**

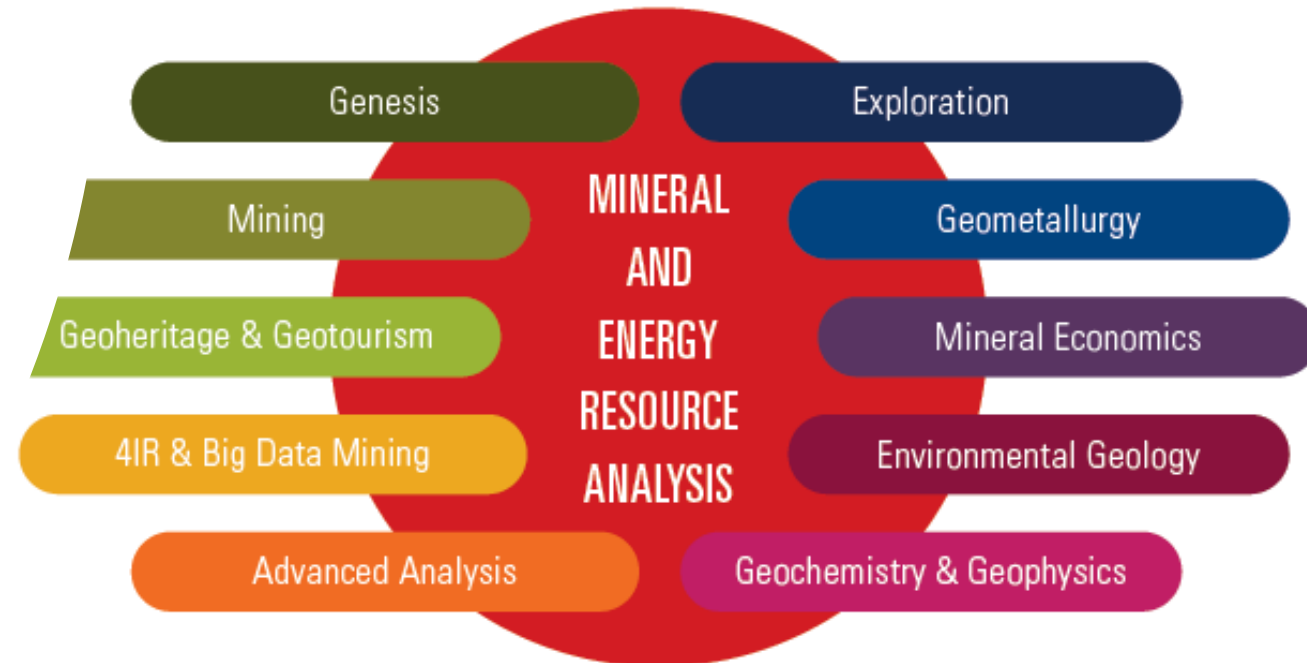
OUR VISION

- Top geoscience research centre in South Africa, based at universities and accessible to academia, government, industry, and society.

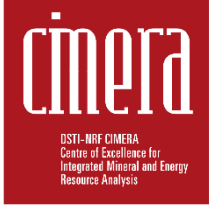
OUR MISSION

- Serve as a vibrant hub for research, learning, human resource development, and partnerships in economic geology, energy, and geoscience for society, contributing to insights into ore-forming processes and exploration, as well as Earth stewardship

• SPHERE OF INFLUENCE



DSTI-NRF CIMERA Funding & Collaborator Organogram



Department of Science, Technology & Innovation (DSTI)

National Research Foundation
Centre of Excellence (CoE) Program

OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS

DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Integrated
Mineral and Resource Analysis (CIMERA)
National Asset

HOST INSTITUTION
University of Johannesburg (UJ)
(legal entity; recipient of NRF grant)

CO-HOST INSTITUTION
University of the Witwatersrand
(Wits)

CIMERA COLLABORATING SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES
with signed MoA under the main NRF-UJ-Wits grant contract
(funding distributed via UJ)

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Stellenbosch University | University of Fort Hare | Rhodes University | University of Pretoria | University of the Free State | University of Western Cape | University of Cape Town | University of Venda | University of Limpopo | University of Kwazulu-Natal |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|

FUNDED POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS, POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS, ACADEMIC STAFF
(approx. 60, 11, 50 respectively in any 1 year)

DSTI-NRF CoE MANDATE

- CoE's are national assets
- Aims:
 - PG training
 - Fundam

CIMERA INTENDS TO CONTINUE AFTER
2029
HOW CAN WE (COLLECTIVE) ACHIEVE
THIS?



Unique impact

- **Breaking institutional silos in South African geoscience.**
- **Strengthening national collaboration and visibility.**
- **Building a cohesive geoscience community.**
- **Expanding international opportunities and competitiveness.**
- **Raising international visibility through global research programs.**
- **Building sustained international collaborations and projects.**



NRF CoE 10-year evaluation feedback

NRF CoE 10-year evaluation feedback



2014 - 2023

- ‘translation of research’ rather than a CoE clustered in ‘basic and strategic research’
- CIMERA is commended as one of the few CoE’s clearly demonstrating collaboration with industry
- CoE should strive to secure additional funding sources



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National Research
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Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



DSTI-NRF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

INTEGRATED MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCE ANALYSIS

(DSTI-NRF CIMERA)

Annual Progress Report 2025

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION AT THE 23RD STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

(12 MARCH 2026)

Prepared by:

Mrs Busisiwe Maphalala (CoE Manager)

Prof Nicola Wagner (Director)

With input by DSTI-NRF core team and collaborators

Prepared: 27 February 2026

Approved: Date: _____

Signed: CIMERA _____

Signed: NRF: _____

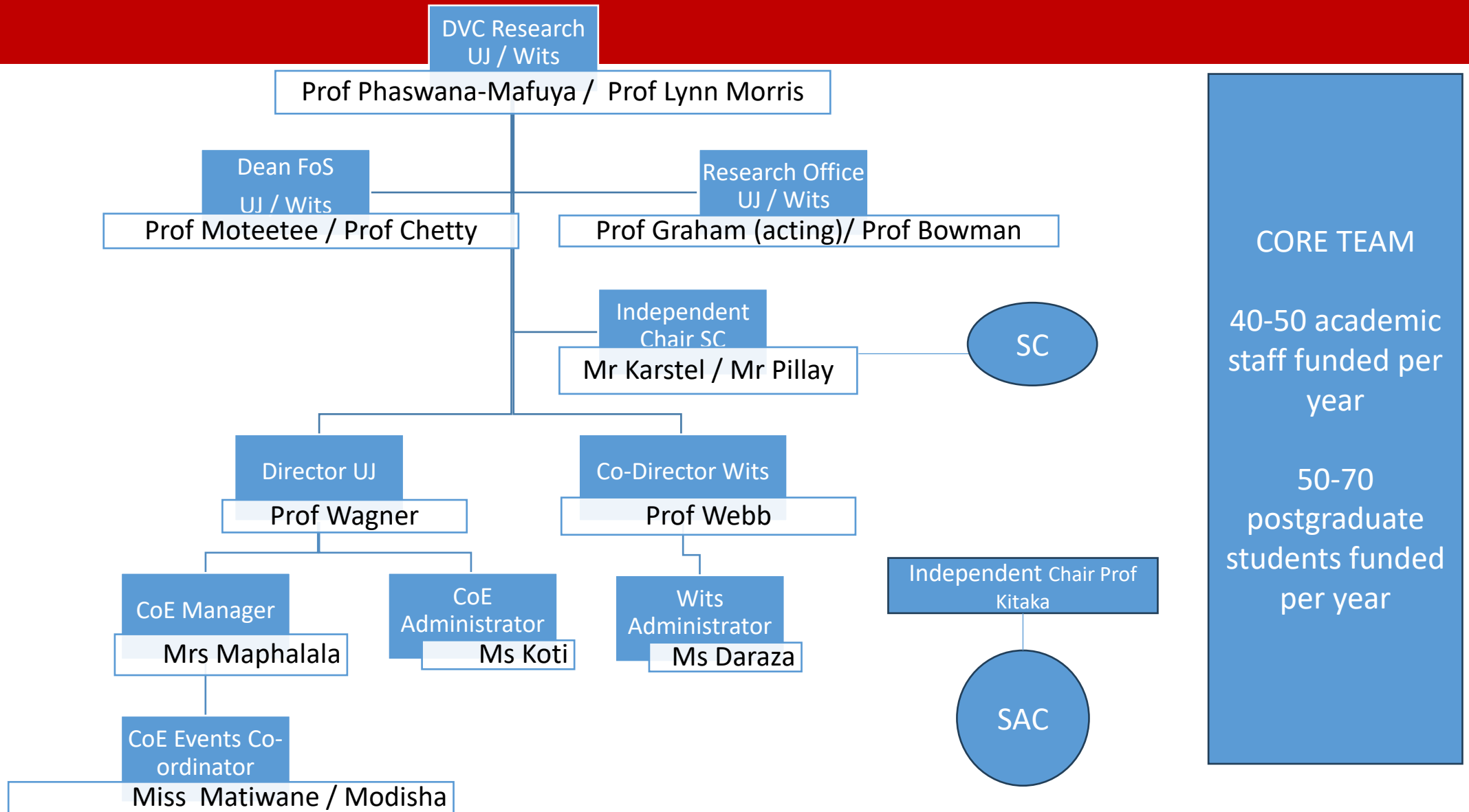
CIMERA focuses on research excellence and training and supports a diverse group of postgraduate students and academic staff across South Africa.

The CoE's strategic intent is towards inclusive synergistic collaborative partnerships along the geosciences value chain, promoting geoscience education and research, available to academia, government, industry, and society.

APR construction attention paid to:

- ROI: progress in 5 key performance areas: Section 6
- NRF 'RIISA:' more emphasis on research outputs clustered per focus area (FA): Section 7.
- Finances: Section 9
- NRF Impact Framework: Section 8.
- NRF CoE 10-year review conducted in 2023/2024 & sustainability : Section 10

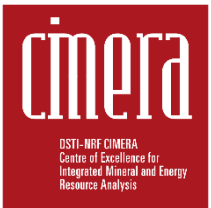
DSTI-NRF CIMERA Management 2025 Organogram



CORE TEAM

40-50 academic staff funded per year

50-70 postgraduate students funded per year



All SAC & SC members are thanked for their voluntary involvement in the CoE.



DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence for
Integrated Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis



DSTI-NRF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

INTEGRATED MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCE ANALYSIS

(DSTI-NRF CIMERA)

Annual Progress Report 2025

(Updates to Service Level Agreement Section)

9 March 2026

2. Updated SLA section

The 2025 SLA targets versus achievements are provided in Table 1. The signed 2025 SLA is available in Appendix 2.

Table 1: 2025 SLA and achievements

Item	Target	Achieved	Notes
Total number of postgraduate students supported	≥ 55	73	1
Total postgraduate students supported from HDIs	10 %	19 %	2
Postdoctoral fellows	≥ 5	11	3
Female postgraduate students	≥ 55%	55 %	
Black postgraduate students	≥ 90%	85 %	
South African citizens and /or permanent residents	>95%	91 %	
Average duration of submitted MSc degrees (post Hons)	≤ 2.5 years	≥3	4
Average duration of submitted PhD degrees (post MSc)	≤ 3.5 years	≥4	4
Average duration of submitted PhD degrees (upgraded from MSc)	≤ 4.5 years		Limited data
Core team members undertaking at least one scientific review per annum on behalf of the NRF	50 %	10%	
Number of publications in ISI journals	≥ 50	60	5
Number of 1st author papers by students / PDRF	60 %	68 %	
% female 1st author publications	40 %	33 %	
% black 1st author publications	80 %	49 %	
Proportion of publications in journals within Q1 of the discipline	80 %	45 %	5
Number of local conferences or symposia organised by the CoE Management Team	2	4	6
Number of international conferences/workshops attended by the CoE Management Team	1	4	7
Number of outreach events	≥ 2	3	8

Notes:

1. Directly funded 33; 73 including running cost support; URC funded 3; Anglo-American Kunene Complex project 8; Extension grant 3 students.

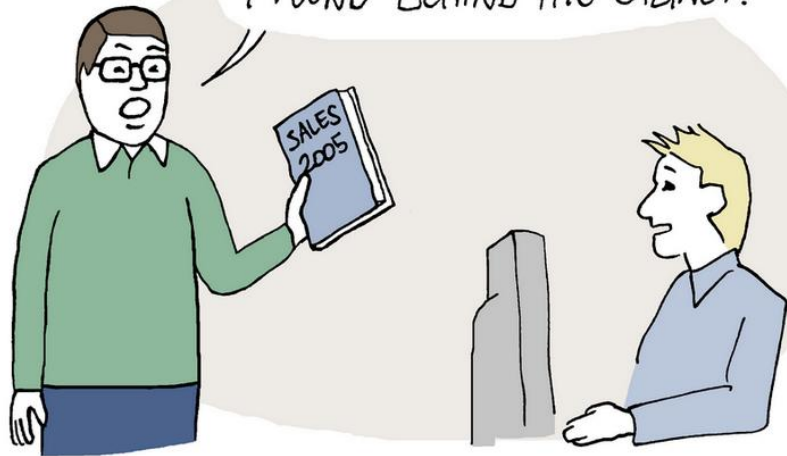
2. 14 CoE funded

APR COMPILATION

- It is vital that APR's are completed in full and on time.
- Without accurate data we cannot meet our SLA targets.
- Without YOUR PAR submission you will not be funded the following year.

DATA DISCOVERY

HEY JIM, LOOK WHAT I FOUND BEHIND THE CABINET.



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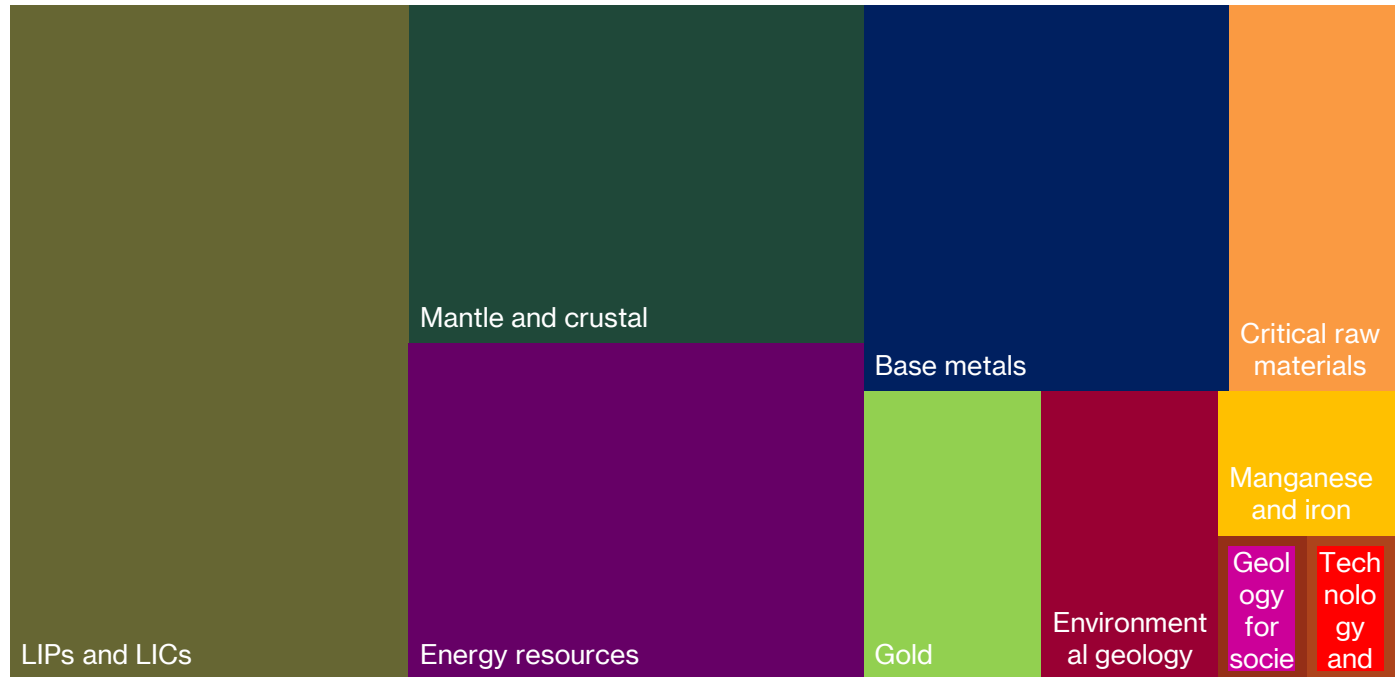
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DSTI-NRF CIMERA Highlights 2025

- **MI25:** CIMERA was able to secure 8 fully funded delegate passes & 5 postgraduate panellists;
- hosted the **International Continental Scientific Drilling Program** (ICDP) including 2 field excursion days
 - it is estimated that the leveraged South African ICDP funding is in the order of R116 850 440;
- finalist in the **NSTF-South32 ‘Science Oscars’**, in the Communication section;
- **X4P collaboration** staff and students visit Germany, and other students and industry representatives to attend in person workshops / symposia;
 - DSTI–NRF CIMERA Annual Research Colloquium UL new Earth Science Building, thus celebrating the successes;
 - hosted a focused Soft Skills Workshop in collaboration with Women in Mining South Africa (**WiMSA**);
 - the 2025 CIMERA **Science Writing Competition** finalists were from two historically disadvantaged universities;
- Anglo-Kunene project continues to be fruitful; **Anglo-America discussions for future projects**;
- **Exhibitor** at Geocongress & GSSA AES; GSSA **Sponsorship Appreciation award** received;
- **Graduation of 12 students, +9**;
 - **53 core team** members supported, promoting their research;
 - **73 PG’s** holistic support;
- Funding applications: **PPhDP**; CMMI; Horizon-MCSA-2025 (REALI3E)
 - **ROI evident**;
 - **Impact increasingly so.**



1. Mantle and Crustal processes, and associated metallogenesis, inc. diamonds
2. Metallogeny and palaeogeographic implications of LIPC's and LIP's.
3. Gold metallogenesis and metallurgy
4. Manganese and iron ore deposits
5. Critical raw materials
6. Base metals
7. Energy resources
8. Environmental geology
9. Geology for society
10. Technology & innovation (new)



2025 clustering

Focus Area Highlights 2025 (Table 8)

AS PROVIDED IN APR'S

FA	Research output highlights
1	<p>Dr Smith (Wits): invited keynote presentation, 8th Brazilian Symposium on Diamond Geology, Cuiabá, Brazil. June 2025</p> <p>Dr Tau (UCT) completed his PhD in 3 years</p> <p>Most productive FA: 21 journal publications; 23 conference presentations</p> <p>Dr Smith (UJ) was a co-author on a Nature Communications paper (IF15.7)</p>
2	<p>Dr Mapiloko (Wits PhD BF graduate): 1st author for a Geology publication (IF4.6); she also presented her work at SEG25, Brisbane</p> <p>FA with most funding and projects, including 5 PDRF</p> <p>Miss Walker (SU, MSc) completed her degree within 2 years, and presented at a number of conferences nationally and internationally.</p>
3	<p>Mr Kgarabjang (UL, PhD): presented at the 18th SGA Biennial Meeting 2025, USA. He was the finalist in the CIMERA 2025 'translate your research writing' competition.</p> <p>Mr La Cock (SU, MSc graduate): 1st author for a Geology publication (IF4.6)</p>
4	<p>A.Prof Smith works closely with industry</p> <p>1 HIF-linked PhD at UJ falls under the FA</p>
5	<p>Prof Wagner was involved in the G20 African Critical Minerals Partnership panel discussion.</p> <p>FA with the greatest number of university collaborators (7)</p> <p>Mr Ferrar (SU, MSc): best oral presenter at the CIMERA Colloquium</p> <p>Mr Ramphabana (UV, PhD): panellist at MI25</p>
6	<p>Niche FA, includes the 2nd HIF-linked PhD project.</p> <p>Miss Malelu (Wits, PhD) undertook a study visit to HIF, under the X4P collaboration.</p>
7	<p>Miss Chitlango (UJ, PhD BF): best oral presenter, 41st meeting of The Society for Organic Petrology conference, Indonesia</p> <p>Mr Radebe (UJ, MSc) will graduate with distinction, completed in 2 years (PT)</p> <p>Dr Matlala (UJ, PhD), completed her degree with 3.5 years (as well as producing her 3rd baby); she has accepted a job offer at Sol Plaatje University</p> <p>It is commendable that all 11 journal articles listed have student first authors</p> <p>Dr Agbor (UWC, PDRF): best poster at the CIMERA Colloquium</p> <p>Prof Wagner: panel moderator MI25</p>
8	<p>Dr Humbulani (UV) published 2 papers and graduated 2 students.</p> <p>Dr Munyai: panellist at MI25 and also was a finalist in the CIMERA 2025 'translate your research writing' competition.</p>
10	<p>Charl Cilliers (UWC PDRF) completed his fellowship; he has been selected to attend MI26.</p>

Financial overview 2025

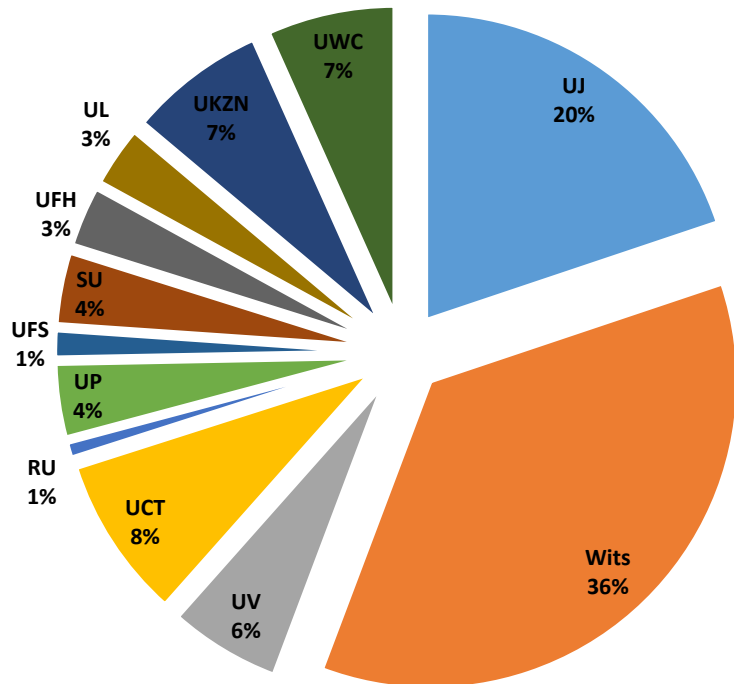
Income versus Expenditure 2025

Total expenditure 2025	18,741,804
Grant income 2025	15,754,249
Overspend in 2025	-2,987,555
Total income 2025	19,195,065
Underspend in 2025	453,261

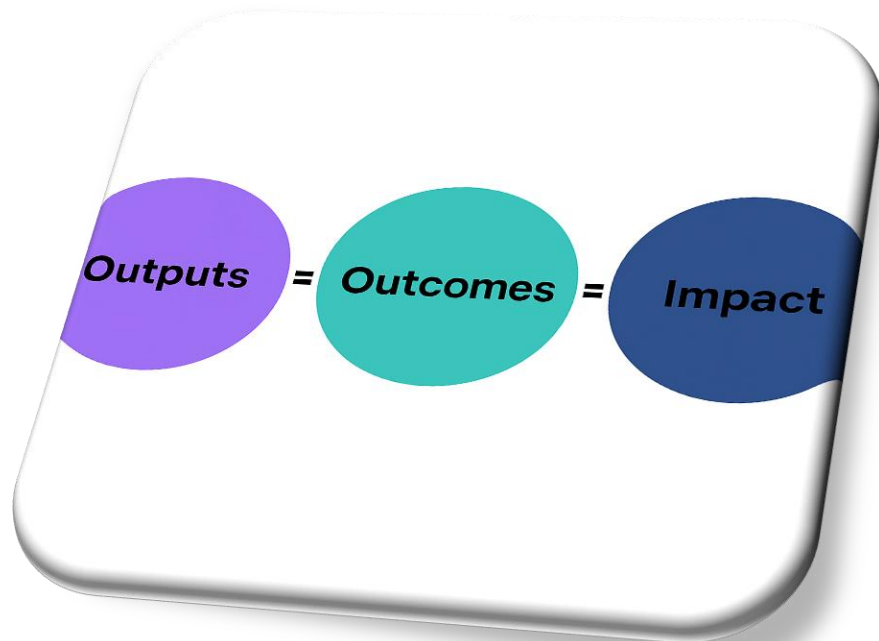
CATEGORY	Value
INCOME	
i. Initially awarded grant	R13 400 956,80
ii 2023/24 carry forward 3	R798 079,94
iii 2024/25 carry forward	R1 639 736,56
iv Difference between initial awarded grant of 2025/26 (R 13 400 956,80) and amended grant value inclusive of value of mitigation grant plus "inflation" increment (R 15 413 344,06)	R2 012 387,26
v Total Amended NRF 2025/26 grant value	R17 851 160,56

The CoE confirms utilisation of the full amended 2025 grant, and a portion of the mitigation grant.

FUND ALLOCATION 2025



University	Expensed Amount (ZAR)	Budget BP	% of research funding
UJ	2,548,845	3,097,454	19
Wits	4,608,347	6,522,744	35
UV	747,472	792,472	6
UCT	1,093,246	1,094,246	8
RU	100,000	100,000	1
UP	493,631	766,467	4
UFS	180,000	280,000	1
SU	482,318	661,210	4
UFH	593,631	638,631	3
UL	402,836	402,836	3
UKZN	921,467	1,241,467	7
UWC	860,000	875,000	6
Total University cost	12,546,326	16,472,527	100
Researcher RC	225,000	180,000	
Tot. research-related	12,771,326		70
Total salaries	3,915,729	3,961,783	21.5
Total other expenses	1,569,282	2,720,000	8.6
Total Expenditure vs Budget 2025	18,741,804	23,334,310	100



Outputs are the research products, new knowledge, policy briefs and policy proposals, engagement and collaboration, methods, patents and skills produced as a result of the NRF's (and other) inputs.

Impact is a beneficial change in society or knowledge advancement, brought about as a direct or indirect result of the NRF's research support interventions, whether planned or unintended, immediate or longer-term

(NRF Framework to Advance the Societal and Knowledge Impact of Research, 2022)

Knowledge impact:

1. Graduations and employability of students
21 \longrightarrow academia, industry
Alumni
2. Publications
Q1&2 journals
Student 1st authors 68%
3. Conferences
Keynote addresses
Panel moderation
4. Policy
Critical Minerals Framework

Gender impact:

Female management team
50% female cohort
Not realized in industry yet?

Commercialization:

3 projects show potential
Most assist incrementally

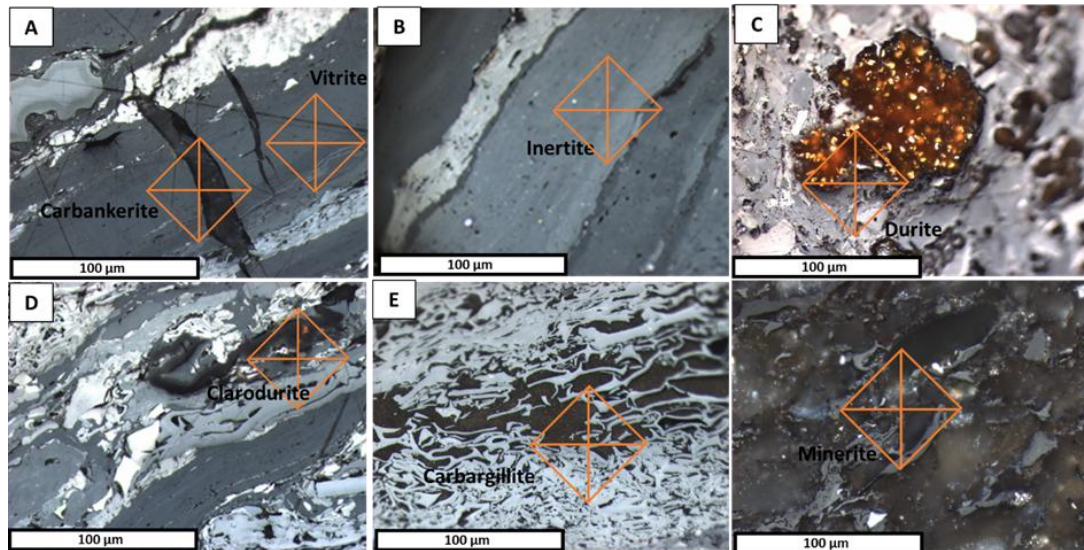
Completed projects with potential industry uptake

Macromolecular structural characterization of Highveld coals (South Africa), with a consideration of the influence of the depositional environment on coal beneficiation

Itumeleng Venessa Matlala

PhD Geology, University of Johannesburg

Supervisors: Prof Nicola Wagner; Dr Marvin Moroeng



Matlala et al., 2025

Geochronology and Metallogenesis of Pegmatoidal Pods Hosted in the Kunene Complex, Angola

Glenance Ngomane

MSc geology, University of Pretoria

Supervisors: Prof Lorenzo Milani, Prof Grant Bybee



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EGU25-10002, updated on 15 Mar 2025
<https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-egu25-10002>
EGU General Assembly 2025
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Prolonged (>100 Myr) magmatic and thermal evolution in the world's largest massif-type anorthosite complex (Kunene Complex, Angola and Namibia)

Glenance Ngomane¹, Thoriso Lekoetje², Lorenzo Milani¹, Grant M Bybee², Ben Hayes², Trishya M Owen-Smith³, Jérémie Lehmann³, and Hielke Jelsma⁴

¹Department of Geology, University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20, Hatfield 0028, South Africa (glenancengomane@gmail.com, lorenzo.milani@up.ac.za)

²School of Geosciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 1 Jan Smuts Avenue, Braamfontein 2000, Johannesburg, South Africa (thorisoлекоetje@gmail.com, grant.bybee@wits.ac.za, ben.hayes@wits.ac.za)

³Department of Geology, University of Johannesburg, P.O. Box 524, Auckland Park 2006, Johannesburg, South Africa (trishyaos@uj.ac.za, jeremiel@uj.ac.za)

⁴Anglo American Group, Discovery and Geosciences, Johannesburg, South Africa (Hielke.Jelsma@angloamerican.com)

Projects with potential for commercialization

A geophysical examination of the SW African continental shelf: insights into the reciprocity of ore grade and postglacial sea level trends

Dr Engelbrecht

PDRF, University of Kwazulu-Natal

Host: Prof Andrew Green

Geological controls on unconsolidated sediment and non-diamond placer distribution in the 20 to 14 A-C diamond concessions, Saldanha Bay to Strandfontein shelf

Miss Jazmeen Eksteen

MSC, University of Kwazulu-Natal

Host: Prof Andrew Green

- Interpretations have been fed directly into the mine planning process (Engelbrecht) and the exploration plans (Eksteen) for Transhex Marine.

Rendering and Utilization of three-dimensional models of critical geological outcrops

Dr Charl Daniel Cilliers

PDRF, University of the Western Cape

Host: Emeritus professor Jan van Bever Donker

- It put us on the international map in terms of the Virtual Field Trips and has landed us the invitation to organise the next Virtual Geoscience Conference in 2027 in Cape Town. Furthermore, other universities in South Africa have shown interest in the Virtual Field Trips we have produced.

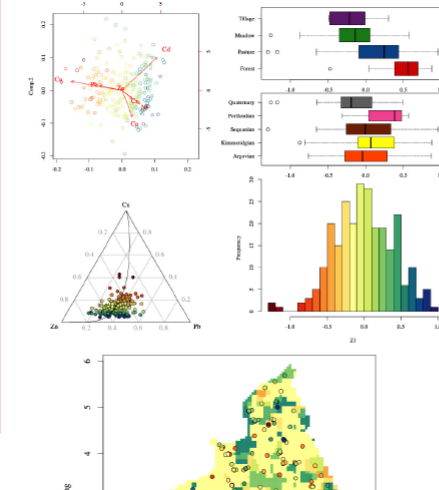


Courses with potential for commercialization

- Earth Observation combined with Remote Sensing for a week long course
- Data Analysis in R (or other language) combine with Predictive Geometallurgy for a week long course
- Critical materials short course
- Participation from other Universities in the AfricaArray Geophysics Field School



www.cimera.co.za



19-23 May 2025

DSTI-NRF CIMERA Workshop

DSTI-NRF CIMERA in collaboration with Helmholtz Institute Freiberg for Resource Technology invite you to attend a workshop: **Introduction to data analysis with R for geoscientists.**

The workshop is designed for Honours, MSc and PhD students, Postdocs and Industry representatives with basics of data analysis and a background in geosciences / engineering of the mineral value chain sector.

Workshop	Introduction to data analysis with R for geoscientists
Duration	32 UE (1UE = 45min)
Date	Lunchtime 19 May, end lunch-time 23 May 2025
When	from 19.05.2025 to 23.05.2025 – Monday from 12:45 to 16:00 – Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00 to 16:00 – Friday from 09:00 to 12:15

Sustainability: Alternative / additional funding sources

2025

Investing in the Future: DSTI-NRF CIMERA PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

CIMERA is launching a scholarship fund to support exceptional postgraduate students in **economic geology** and **geoscience for society** and invites industry partners to help shape South Africa's geoscience future.

Contact us at:

nwagner@uj.ac.za / susan.webb@wits.ac.za / cimera@uj.ac.za

DSTI-NRF CIMERA ANNUAL RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM 2026

The DSTI-NRF CIMERA Annual Research Colloquium is the Centre's flagship event which brings together postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and researchers to present their cutting-edge research findings and engage with industry, academia, and government.

- **Sponsorship opportunities are available for the 2026 Colloquium**, offering partners visibility, talent engagement, and alignment with a nationally recognised Centre of Excellence.
- **Sponsorship enquiries:** imodisha@uj.ac.za

- Industry-based, eg Anglo
- CGS collaborations, eg student bursary, samples, etc.
- Presidential PhD Program EoI, Just Energy Transition theme: "Advancing South Africa's Just Energy Transition Through Strategic Development of Upstream Battery and Critical Mineral Value Chains."
- DSTI EoI South African Circular Minerals and Metals Initiative (SACMMI)
- HORIZON-MSCA-2025-SE-01 (Marie Curie Doctoral Network): focuses on machine learning applications in petrology and critical mineral deposits.
- MQA, GSSA bursary / mobility opportunities
- Alumni

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DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence for
Integrated Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis



science, technology
& innovation

Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



RISA
Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



Thank you for
your attention

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Mrs Busisiwe Maphalala, Ms Viwe Koti,, Miss Khanya Matiwane, Miss Itumeleng Modisha, Prof Susan Webb, Ms Zintle Daraza, Dr George Henry
- NRF RIISA CoE colleagues
- Core team members, collaborators, and students
- Respective Deans and HoD's
- UJ Graphics, Linguistics, Procurement, HR, Finance
- Wits Finance, HR
- External partners and industry affiliates
- Steering Committee and Scientific Advisory Committee

**Your contributions have made DSTI-NRF
CIMERA the very active and successful CoE that
it is!**

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/cimera-dst-nrf>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CimeraSA>

Web site: www.cimera.co.za

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DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence for
Integrated Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis



science, technology
& innovation
Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



RISA
Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



DSTI NRF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INTEGRATED MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCE ANALYSIS (DSTI-NRF CIMERA)

Business Plan 2026

Revision of finances and student cohort

9 March 2026

Summary for Steering Committee approval

Change: 4 projects and student funds declined (2 MSc, 2 PDRF)

Change: 8 projects added (from the SAC-approved B, C, and top 20 list) (6 MSc, 1 PhD, 1 PDRF)

Previously: Twelve new projects were approved for funding by the SAC: 5 MSc, 3 PhD, and 4 PDRF

Now: Total of nineteen new projects: 11 MSc, 4 PhD and 4 PDRF

Previously: The anticipated 2026 student cohort consists of 44 postgraduate students

Now: The anticipated 2026 student cohort consists of 52 postgraduate students

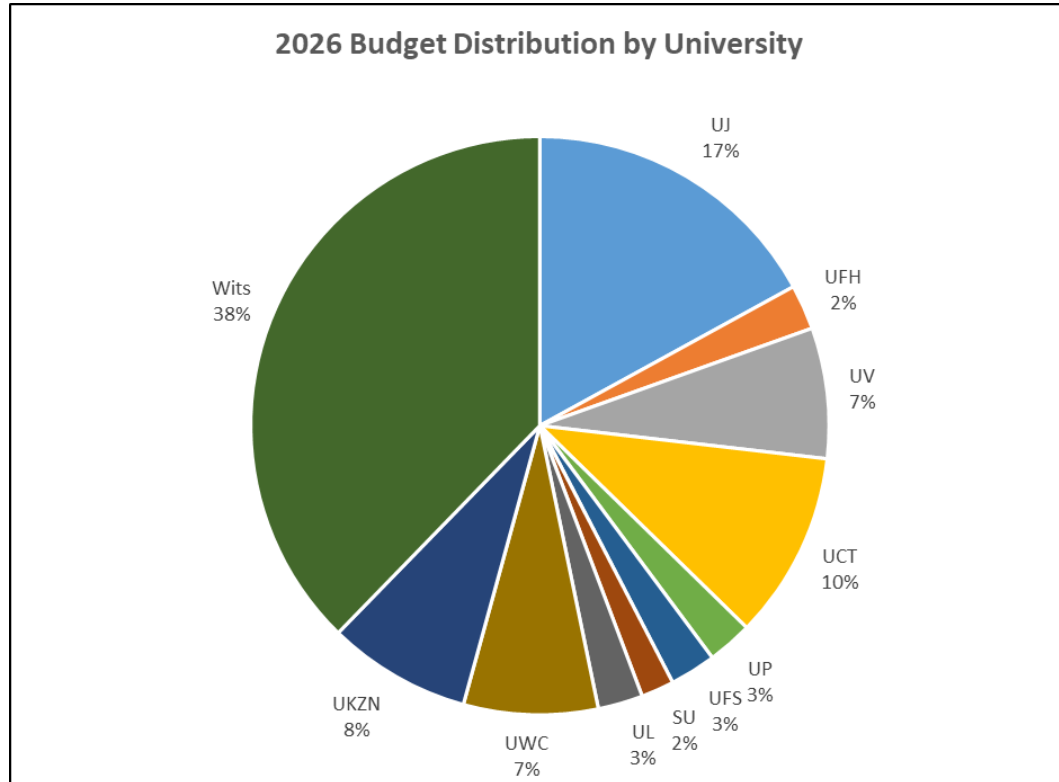
Only additional running cost (RC) funds have been provided – no NRF scholarships

Change: demographic statistics of entire cohort 85% black, 50% female and 83% South African, student TBC 2% (gender)

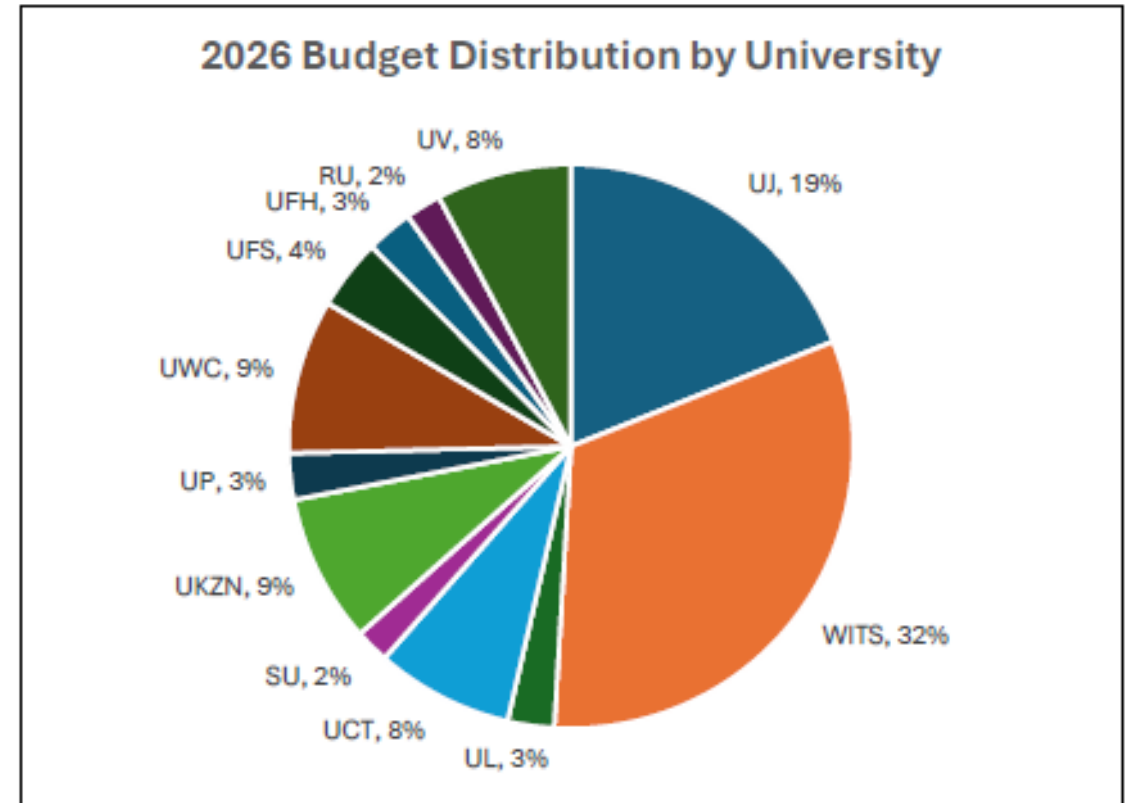
Change: demographic statistics NRF scholarship cohort 86% black, 55% female and 86 % South African

Change: Rhodes University is now funded; hence, all 12 collaborating universities are funded in 2026

PREVIOUS



UPDATED



Previously: university allocated 2026 budget: R10 885 167

Previously: total 2026 budget: R16 505 844

Now: university allocated budget: R10 228 923 *

Now: total 2026 budget R15 878 200 *

Total 2026 NRF+URC income remains as: R16 252 246

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RISA

Research and Innovation
Support and Advancement



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG



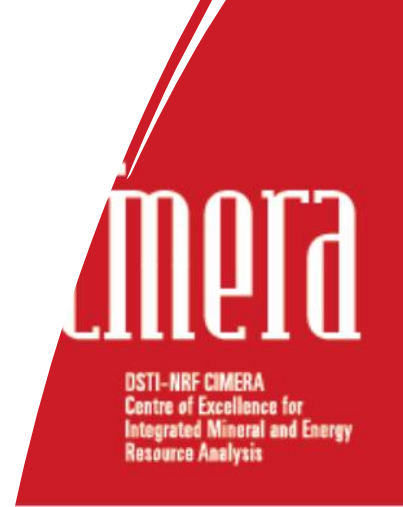
CIMERA Strategy: Securing a Sustainable Future

Transitioning to an Industry/Grant Integrated Funding Model (2026 - 2030)

Unique Positioning

What makes CIMERA distinctive

- National network across South African universities
 - Strong international collaborations
 - Interdisciplinary integration
 - Flexible, student-centered support model
-
- **Key point:**
CIMERA operates at a **scale and connectivity unmatched locally**



Advancing Holistic Geoscience Research in South Africa

The DSTI-NRF Centre of Excellence for Integrated Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis (CIMERA) is a national research centre. CIMERA advances geoscience research, postgraduate training, and skills development aligned with South Africa's minerals, energy, and environmental priorities. Through scholarships and collaborative research partnerships, CIMERA supports postgraduate students and academic staff across 12 South African universities to drive impactful, outcome focused research and critical skills development.

The **Research School X4P (Exploration in Predictive Geometallurgy)** in collaboration with **Helmholtz Institute Freiberg (Germany)** and programs such as the **International Continental Drilling Program (ICDP)**, industry and public-sector collaborations, including **MoUs with the Council for Geoscience, Anglo American** and other stakeholders, further enhances CIMERA's research impact, skills and professional development opportunities.

Our Impact Since 2015



Strategic Pillars

1. National Integration

Break down silos across SA institutions

2. Talent Development

Expand and align postgraduate training (short courses, international opportunities, GSSA sponsorship, etc.)

3. Industry Partnerships

Build long-term, structured collaborations (structures already in place and functioning – scientific review) “Bringing talent to Industry”

4. International Grants/collaboration

Partnerships in place with HiF, others in development

5. Research Translation

Link fundamental science to applied outcomes, and outreach



CIMERA faces a structural funding risk

- ~90% NRF government-funded
- Increasing uncertainty in public funding
- Limited revenue diversification
- Seventy % of income is distributed to students and academics at the 12 collaborating universities, to execute approved research projects
- **Critical reality:**
Without DSTI / NRF / government / grant / industry funding and successful grant applications within ~5 years, CIMERA is unlikely to remain financially viable.



Enhancing industry partnerships: win-win

1. High-value exploration research

- Ore-forming processes
- Mineral system understanding
- Basin and energy system evolution

2. Access a trained talent pipeline

- Postgraduates aligned to industry needs (Scientific review)
- Reduced recruitment risk and onboarding time (Courses, GSSA, etc)
- Access to cutting-edge analytical techniques

4. Leverage national-scale expertise (opening up the silos)

- Multi-institutional capability in one platform

Bottom line:

CIMERA reduces cost, risk, and uncertainty in exploration and resource development



Implementation Roadmap

Years 1–2 (we started here)

- Formalize partnerships
- Launch pilot industry-funded projects
- Build engagement mechanisms

Years 3–5 (we are developing here)

- Scale partnerships
- Achieve funding diversification
- Embed industry integration

Critical milestone:

Secure meaningful industry funding within 3 years



Without this expansion, CIMERA is unlikely to survive.

With it, CIMERA becomes a national and global leader in applied geoscience

Support transition to a National Institute

2027 FUNDING PROPOSALS



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DSTI-NRF CIMERA
Centre of Excellence for
Integrated Mineral and Energy
Resource Analysis

DSTI-NRF CIMERA CALL FOR PROJECT FUNDING 2027



Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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CIMERA is issuing the 2027 funding call two months earlier than previous years. This is to enable academics to receive confirmation of 2027 funding prior to the close of the NRF scholarship application process or other scholarship application deadlines. Supervisors may therefore advertise and source the most appropriate student for the approved project.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

- PhD Projects
- MSc Projects
- Honours Projects
- Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Projects
- Non-scholarship Projects (Running Costs Only)
- Outreach Projects

CALL OPENS ON MARCH 16, 2026 | CALL CLOSE MAY 4, 2026

IMPORTANT NOTES

- All scholarship-linked applications must also be submitted via the NRF website once the call opens.
- Refer to the NRF website for Honours, MSc and PhD scholarship application deadlines.
- CIMERA will provide initial feedback to academics by **5 June 2026**.
- Academics must link approved projects with suitable students.
- DSTI-NRF CIMERA will only consider scholarship applications for **South African Black students**.

All academics are encouraged to submit new project proposals related to the broad fields of economic geology, energy, and geology for society. We strongly encourage the development of multi-university and/or industry linked projects, clearly demonstrating the benefit of the research in terms of the CIMERA vision and mission and guiding documents.

SUBMISSION AND ENQUIRIES

Submission email: bmaphalala@uj.ac.za / Subject line: 2027 Project Funding Call
Enquiries email: cimera@uj.ac.za / Subject line: 2027 Project Funding Call.



PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

1. DSTI-NRF CIMERA

DSTI-NRF CIMERA serves as a central hub for research and human resource development in mineral and energy resource analysis in Africa. The primary focus of DSTI-NRF CIMERA is to perform high-quality, world-leading, basic and applied research on the vast mineral and fossil fuel resources in, not only South Africa but in Africa as a whole. The knowledge so obtained ensures optimum and sustainable extraction and utilization of natural resources. This is aligned with one of the South African Government's national strategies, recognizing that mineral and fossil energy resources represent cornerstones of the country's economy. Geologists, geophysicists, and mineralogists appear on the South African Critical Skills list (Gazette of the Republic of South Africa, 2022, updated in October 2023), and a degree of a MSc is suggested.

DSTI-NRF CIMERA is considered a national asset and is funded by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) and the National Research Foundation (NRF), with contributions from the University of Johannesburg and the University of the Witwatersrand. CIMERA has Memoranda of Understanding with twelve local universities, the South African Council for Geoscience, and two international institutions. The respective host and co-host institutions. Centres of Excellence (CoEs) are mandated by the DSI to supplement funding through collaborative industry and internationally funded projects.

DSTI-NRF CIMERA places much emphasis on funding postgraduate student scholarships and project running costs for student research projects aligned with our strategic intent in order to ensure the supply of suitably qualified human resources for the future of the mineral and energy resource industries on the continent and abroad. Typically, 70% of the funds allocated to DSTI-NRF CIMERA by the NRF directly supports research projects.

2. 2027 PROJECT funding application process

Academic staff supervising / intending to supervise postgraduate students and/or postdoctoral research fellows (PDF) at the 12 collaborating South African universities must submit the completed application form in **MS Word** within the required timeframe.

Applications may or may not include students / PDF details at this time.

Applications must clearly indicate if the funding request is to include funds for a student scholarship (Hons, MSc, PhD) or PDF stipend, as well as project running cost support; or if the

funding request is only relevant to cost support (i.e. no scholarship). The CIMERA Scientific Advisory Panel will assess all proposals in which CIMERA intends to inform. **SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME** Applicants may then advise appropriate student for the project.

Academic staff who already receive CIMERA funding and have students, may be ineligible for funding until their current students complete their studies.

Academic staff who have received a previous year APR will be eligible to submit proposals for consideration.

Please complete the project description accurately, providing all the details. It is a distinct advantage if the project is industry, and / or parastatal / or other universities (SAC) is evident.

The benefit of the research project is demonstrated.

All projects awarded in 2027 commence **MUST** be resubmitted for consideration against the 2027 **PLEASE NOTE ON THE APPLICATION HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN** reason for the unsuccessful outcome.

All projects where the MSc student convert to a PhD **MUST** be resubmitted via this process.

PDF: the supervisor / host institution most appropriate PDF; pre-2027 South African PDF and PDF unless agreed with CoE PDF will require approval of commencement of funding.

All supervisors are required to submit the NRF scholarship application approved proposal and the **As soon as the student's Scholarship application MUST inform the CoE MSc the student application; CIMERA can track the a**

3. FUNDING

The NRF scholarship award covers the cost of study (FCS) or a stipend (PCS). The actual value awarded will be determined by the financial means test. Student



degree mark above 75% should automatically be approved for FCS. DSTI-NRF CIMERA can top-up PCS awards to match the FCS. Students must refer to the NRF website to determine the scholarship values for 2027.

ALL APPLICANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR ADDITIONAL OR ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDING. Grant holders on FCS or PCS funding may receive supplementary funding from another private-sector source, another South African government source, the NRF supervisor's running expenses (SARCH, CoEs, etc.) or any other source (e.g., Merit Awards), provided that the total funding received from the NRF and the other source(s) does not exceed institutional maximum limits for the respective levels of study. Holders of other bursaries can apply to DSTI-NRF CIMERA for running costs and top-up bursaries, if required and where the total amount does not exceed the values noted above.

The electronic study device allowance (FCS scholarships only) is provided as a once-off for the duration of the postgraduate studies. Students must apply directly to the NRF for this allowance and not via the CoE.

The supervisor must alert the student to the conditions of the scholarship contract with the NRF, signed on the commencement of the study. **The contract obligates the student to repay the scholarship to the NRF if she/he does not complete their degree.** In addition, the student must sign our CoE Specific Grant Conditions that lists additional conditions she/he has to accept. The 2nd or 3rd year of funding is only released on receipt of an acceptable annual student progress report (APR) submitted by the supervisor and student. Funding is linked to performance, which is managed by the supervisor.

The NRF requires students to complete their MSc studies in 2.5 years, and PhD studies in 3.5 years; MSc – PhD conversions need to be completed within 4.5 years. NOTE: Funding is for 2, 3 and 4 years, respectively. DSTI-NRF CIMERA funding cannot be used to fund overtime students, even if they previously received a bursary from another source (i.e., DSTI-NRF CIMERA funding cannot support the 3rd or subsequent years of an MSc registration). **Students likely to require extension funding must apply on the NRF online system.**

Successful PDF project applications are awarded R320 000 towards the PDF salary. The PDF is encouraged to apply for supplementary funding support as per the NRF or institution guidelines.

DSTI-NRF CIMERA will continue to provide the following funding towards student project running costs (per project and disbursed by the supervisor):

- Hons: R15 000 (max.)
- MSc: R45 000 (max.)
- PhD: R65 000 (max.)
- PDF: R60 000 + R15 000 (max.)

- Running costs for CIMERA Research irrespective of these funds they are NRF

Outreach projects as per the terms with your re-co-funding is

It is highly recommended that 2+ students apply under CIMERA free-standing scholarships for successful the NRF system funding from CoE

NRF SCHOLARSHIPS

1. All NRF MSc, PhD by the DSI system. **PLEASE NOTE and further**
2. Students (NRF scholars) before the deadline (using the CIMERA system) their application
3. Only black for scholar all other NRF General
4. All student and age related
5. Students must be funded resubmitted
6. Please use reference to second reference
7. All student to PhD are NRF online degree is not reapproved NRF
8. No overtime this call. Please extension (August). **Over time funding.**
9. CIMERA application SAC will be 2026.
10. CIMERA, inform student October 20



Image: AdobeStock_94711373

Timelines for 2027 applications

16 March 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA Project Funding call opens
20 April 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA Stakeholder Engagement Session (Online)
4 May 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA Project Funding call closes
9-25 May 2026	Evaluation and assessment by SAC
2 June 2026	SAC Meeting + Finalisation of 2027 funding applications
5 June 2026	CoE Manager to provide successful outcome of funding application to supervisors
June 2026	Supervisors to link approved project to student
April-July 2026	Students to apply for CIMERA NRF Scholarships via NRF platform
July TBC	NRF Scholarship applications close
August 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA SAC to screen NRF Scholarship applications and confirm acceptance
September 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA to provide formal award letters to supervisors
October 2026	DSTI-NRF CIMERA with NRF to inform successful students of funding
January 2027	Students must register; Supervisors must confirm student registrations with the CoE

2027 FUNDING PROPOSALS

PLEASE READ THIS CALL along with the NRF Application and Funding Guide for NRF Master's and Doctoral Scholarships 2027.

Geoscience research is imperative on the African continent and globally.

CRITICAL MINERALS
CRITICAL ENERGY
CRITICAL HUMANS
CRITICAL RESEARCH
CRITICAL TRAINING
CRITICAL THINKING



