

# South African Circular Agriculture Initiative (SACAI)

## Host Organisation

### CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

2024

<b>Date of Issue</b>	Wednesday, 25 September 2024	
<b>EOI Number</b>	CISA/EoI/2024_002	
<b>EOI Description</b>	Host Organisation: South African Circular Agriculture Initiative	
<b>Non-Compulsory Briefing Session (online)</b>	Date and Time	4 October 2024 @ 12h00
	Address/Link	<a href="#">Microsoft Teams Link</a>
<b>Enquiries</b>	Circular Innovation South Africa, hosted by the CSIR Prof Linda Godfrey E-mail: <a href="mailto:LGodfrey@csir.co.za">LGodfrey@csir.co.za</a>	
	Please use EOI Title as email subject for reference	
<b>Last date for enquiries / clarifications</b>	Tuesday, 22 October 2024 @ 17h00	
<b>Electronic Submission</b>	<a href="mailto:LGodfrey@csir.co.za">LGodfrey@csir.co.za</a> (If EoI submission should not exceed 10MB in file size)	
<b>CSIR business hours</b>	08h00 – 16h30	
<b>Closing Date and Time</b>	Friday, 25 October 2024 @ 17h00	

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) is pleased to announce a **Call for Expressions of Interest** to identify a host organisation for the new **South African Circular Agriculture Initiative**, commencing in 2025.

The DSI, in the STI White Paper (2019) and STI Decadal Plan (2022-2032) has recognized the circular economy (CE) as a new source of economic growth for South Africa. The circular economy is identified as one of two cross-cutting priorities in the STI Decadal Plan, which also prioritizes three economic sectors for advancing science, technology and innovation – mining, manufacturing and agriculture.

Applicants are requested to familiarise themselves with the information provided in this Call, before preparing their Expression of Interest (*using the template provided with this Call*).

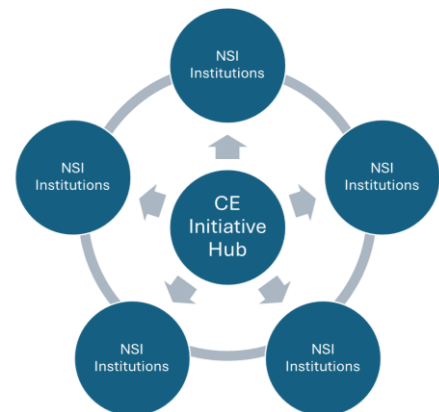
## 2 THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY INITIATIVES PROGRAMME

The DSI, plans to launch three new, sector-specific Circular Economy Initiatives in 2024/25. The Initiatives are aimed at advancing science, technology and innovation (STI) for a circular economy in South Africa –

- The South African Circular Minerals and Metals Initiative (SACMMI) – *awarded*
- The South African Circular Manufacturing Initiative (SACMI) – EoI published
- The South African Circular Agriculture Initiative (SACAI) – EoI published

The DSI aims to find a suitable host organisation to help drive and coordinate circular economy STI for the sector. The Initiative will act through a hub-and-spoke model. The host organisation will act as the hub and will receive funding support from the DSI (dependant on the annual available allocation) for some administrative and STI functions. The host organisation will be required to drive and coordinate strategic STI for the sector, in partnership with other public and private research organisations. The intention of the Circular Economy Initiatives Programme, is to help –

- Build and strengthen national CE STI capability;
- Minimize the duplication of CE STI across the NSI, through more coordinated and directed activities;
- Build new areas of CE STI excellence;
- Raise the profile of sector-specific CE STI locally and internationally;
- Use the government seed funding to mobilise additional co-funding to support CE STI
- Strengthen CE STI collaboration between NSI institutions and the private sector, for greater impact.



Hosting of the initiative will be for a contracted period and will be performance based, with the opportunity to renew. The Circular Economy Initiatives Programme, and all branding, is owned by the DSI, but will be provided to the successful host organisation for use during the contracted period. In the case of non-performance or the termination of the contract, the initiative, its name and branding, will be returned to the DSI.

The Circular Economy Initiatives will report directly to Circular Innovation South Africa (CISA), an initiative of the DSI, hosted by the CSIR, responsible for giving effect to government's Circular Economy STI Strategy (2024).

### 3 THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE

Research undertaken by the CSIR in 2021-22 showed that significant opportunity exists for greater uptake of circular economy interventions in the agriculture sector, a resource intensive sector of the South African economy. While the circular economy concept is not new to South Africa or to the agriculture sector (Figure 1), more needs to be done to achieve the scale required for meaningful economic, social and environmental impact. There is a strong role for science, technology and innovation in achieving these objectives.

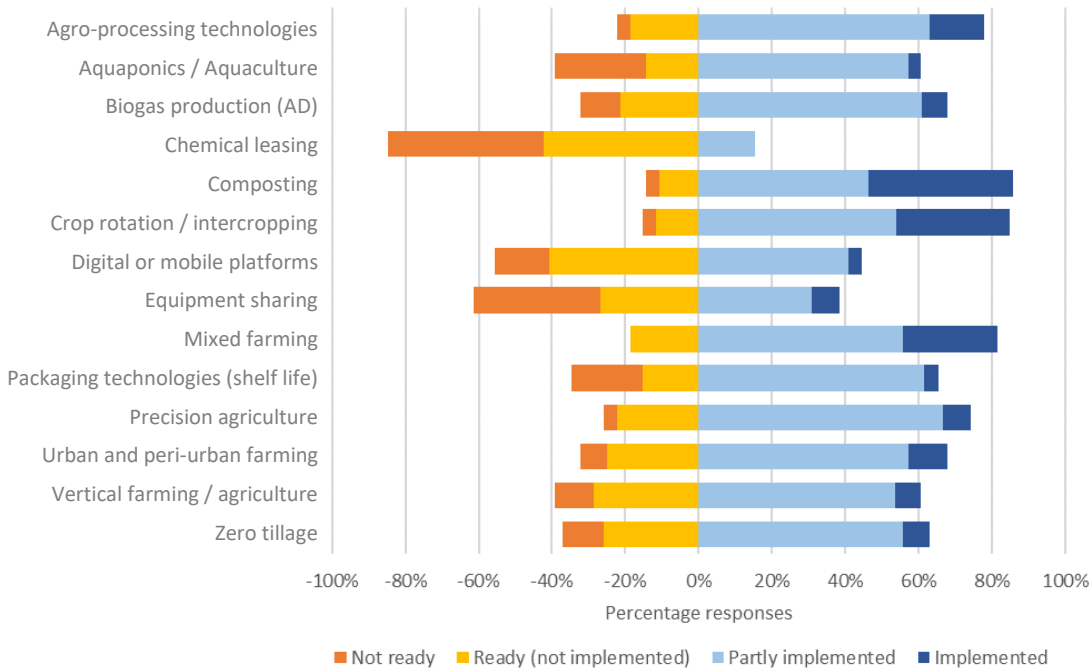


Figure 1. State of readiness and level of implementation of circular economy interventions in South Africa (CSIR, 2022)

The Circular Economy STI Strategy (2024) has identified the following four STI priority areas for the short- to medium-term:

- **Resource Efficiency:** Decoupling food and feed production from resource consumption (water, energy, materials); including the adoption of innovative technologies such as smart irrigation schemes, precision agriculture. There are also opportunities that fall under water reuse that could play a big role in optimising water consumption.
- **Regenerative Agriculture:** Mainstreaming regenerative agricultural practices including zero till, permaculture; adoption of less harmful, natural pest control.
- **Agro-processing:** Ensuring sustainable practices in agro-processing; sustainable packaging (link to manufacturing); reduced wastage across the agriculture value chain.
- **Biorefinery:** Unlocking high-value product recovery from residual organic waste, through biorefinery approaches.

These four priority STI areas will help to shape and guide the activities of the South African Circular Agriculture Initiative (SACAI) in partnership with other STI organisations (public and private).

## 4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### 4.1 Eligible Organisations

To be eligible for consideration as the host of a Circular Economy Initiative, the applying organisation must be a public research organisation, e.g., a South African University, Science Council or other public research institution.

Business, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), other private sector organisations are not eligible to apply to host a Circular Economy Initiative.

### 4.2 Capability, Experience and Expertise

The organisation must detail the technical and programme management expertise that brings to this initiative.

- Demonstrate a track record in the administration of, and/or research in, circular agriculture projects. A track record of longer than five years in circular agriculture administration and/or research would be advantageous
- Demonstrate having the necessary systems and capabilities in place to support the rapid implementation of the South African Circular Agriculture Initiative in South Africa.

## 5 FUNDING

### 5.1 Funding amount and duration

An initial amount of R500,000 (excl. VAT) will be transferred to the successful host organisation upon finalization of contracting. This funding will be for the period up to 31 March 2025. An amount of R1,500,000 (excl. VAT) is earmarked for this initiative for the period 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, but additional funding may be routed depending on the availability of funds from the Department of Science and Innovation, and other potential funders.

The successful organisation will also be encouraged to leverage co-funding as additional contribution to the implementation of the circular economy initiative, and will be monitored as one of the KPIs.

### 5.2 What will be funded

The funding to be allocated to the host organisation will cover the administrative role of implementing the initiative, the development of a targeted STI sub-agenda (first task) to support the uptake of greater circularity in the sector through STI. The establishment of research partnerships with other research institutions in South Africa, through a hub-and-spoke model, with the contracted organisation acting as the 'hub'. Funding can cover time and minor running, but can not be used for large capital infrastructure. Ideally no more than 30% of the budget should be retained by the host organisation for administrative costs.

### 5.3 Recipient of the funding

Upon award of the successful project, the CSIR, as host of Circular Innovation South Africa (CISA) and the custodian of the Circular Economy Initiatives Programme on behalf of the DSI, will enter into a contract with the successful organisation (applicant). Funding will be disbursed by the CSIR only to the contracted organisation, who will then be responsible for any payment of funds to its partner(s), as/if applicable.

#### 5.4 Funding transfers

Funding will be paid to the contracted organisation in instalments, upon successful completion of the agreed milestones, as set out in the contract.

## 6 SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- 6.1 Expressions of Interest (Eol) must be submitted electronically via email to [LGodfrey@csir.co.za](mailto:LGodfrey@csir.co.za) on the “*South African Circular Agriculture Initiative Call for Expression of Interest Template*” (issued with this call). Eol should be submitted in PDF or MSWord format.
- 6.2 The naming / labelling syntax of Eol files must be short and simple.
- 6.3 An Eol will only be considered if received by the CSIR before the closing date and time (*as indicated on the cover page of this document*). No late proposals will be accepted.
- 6.4 All dates and times in this Call are South African Standard Time (SAST).
- 6.5 Email submissions are to be clearly subject-referenced with the EOI number and EOI Description (*as indicated on the cover page of this document*).
- 6.6 The Eol must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised by the submitting organisation.
- 6.7 An Eol submitted to an incorrect location and/or address, will not be accepted for consideration.
- 6.8 An Eol submitted via cloud solutions such as: WeTransfer, Google Drive, Dropbox, etc. will not be considered.
- 6.9 The CSIR will award the contract to qualified bidder(s) whose Eol is determined to be the most advantageous to the DSI, taking into consideration the capability of the organisation, specific goals and objective criteria.
- 6.10 All applications will be regarded as valid for 90 days from the closing date, whereafter the CSIR may request an updated application, should this become necessary.
- 6.11 All applicants will be notified about the outcome of their applications before the end of November 2024 to allow sufficient time for finalisation of project preparations before the 1 January 2025 start.

## 7 CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT

All applicants will receive a confirmation of ‘receipt of proposal’ email. If you do not receive such a confirmation within one week of application, please follow up with the CSIR to ensure that your proposal has been received. Proof of submission before the closing date will be required.

## 8 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE CSIR

Any enquiry regarding this Call shall be submitted in writing to the CSIR to the email and format outlined in the table on the cover page of this document.

## 9 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

Bidders should check the numbers of the pages to satisfy themselves that none are missing or duplicated. No liability will be accepted by the CSIR in regard to anything arising from the fact that pages are missing or duplicated.

## 10 ELIMINATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be eliminated under the following conditions:

- Applicant that submits a late EoI will not be considered.
- Applicants that submit to the incorrect location or email address will not be considered (*see cover page of this document*).
- EoI which are not submitted on the “*South African Circular Agriculture Initiative Call for Expression of Interest Template*” (*issued with this call*).

## 11 EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications will undergo evaluation by an independent review panel, to assess the suitability of the proposal in terms of the DSI's objectives.

All proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

i.	Public research organisation
ii.	Organisational capability (team strength)
iii.	Alignment with organisational strategy
iv.	Staff member for admin / technical lead
v.	Collaborative network / partnerships
vi.	Relevant project / programme experience
vii.	Co-funding which could contribute to this
viii.	Organisational experience in this technical field (years)

## 12 RESERVATIONS

The CSIR and DSI expressly reserve the following rights:

- To reject all or any proposals
- To waive any or all irregularities in the proposals submitted
- To retain the right not to select any application/s even if meeting all the requirements

## 13 CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

The successful applicant will be required to enter into a written Agreement with the funder, in this case the CSIR, who manages the Circular Initiatives Programme on behalf of the DSI.

## 14 DISCLAIMER

This Call is an Expression of Interest only and not an offer document. Answers to this EoI Call must not be construed as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between the parties. By submission of its proposal, bidders shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves with and to have accepted all Terms & Conditions of this Call. The CSIR makes no representation, warranty, assurance, guarantee or endorsements to bidder concerning the EoI Call, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR shall have no liability towards the bidder or any other party in connection therewith.