



Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI)

CALL FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Addressing Pervasive Social Challenges through Regional Collaboration

Submission Deadline: 30 April 2026

Seed Funding per Successful Regional Cluster: R25 000

Project Period: May 2026 – September 2027

Submission: info@asaswei.org.za

1. Background and Rationale

ASASWEI seeks to strengthen collaboration among universities offering social work education in South Africa. Universities are encouraged to work together through regional clusters to develop research initiatives that respond to pervasive social challenges affecting communities within their regions.

This initiative promotes solution-oriented research that contributes to policy development, curriculum transformation, professional practice innovation, and community impact.

A maximum amount of R25 000 will be made available to four successful projects on a seed funding basis. Seed funding is intended to enable a project to start up. It may not necessarily cover the full costs of a project. Researchers are encouraged to source funding from other sources based on the size and scale of the project.

2. Purpose of the Initiative

- Promote inter-university collaboration in social work education.
- Support research that produces practical and policy-relevant solutions.
- Strengthen regional research networks within ASASWEI.
- Encourage collaborative knowledge production addressing regional challenges.

3. Formation of Regional Clusters

- A cluster is defined as more than one university in a particular region offering social work education. Refer to the table in section 12 for proposed regions. More than one university in a region can form a cluster.
- One university may take the lead in coordinating the proposal in collaboration with its partner university/universities.
- Evidence should be provided on the input from participating institutions regarding the design and implementation of the project.
- The proposal must demonstrate mutually beneficial collaboration.

4. Focus Areas for Research Proposals

- Graduate Unemployment and Professional Transition
- Poverty, Inequality, and Social Protection
- Gender-Based Violence and Family Wellbeing
- Mental Health and Community Wellbeing
- Open Category: Regionally Identified Challenge

5. Expected Outcomes

- Evidence-based solutions addressing regional social challenges.
- Scholarship informing curriculum transformation
- Policy briefs and recommendations.
- Community intervention models or programmes.
- Academic publications or practitioner guidelines.

6. Seed Funding

Each regional cluster with a successful proposal will receive seed funding of up to R25 000 to support collaborative research activities, community engagement, pilot initiatives, and dissemination of findings.

7. Project Duration

Projects should run between May 2026 and September 2027. Extensions may be requested by submitting formal motivation to the ASASWEI Executive.

Extension requests: info@asaswei.org.za

8. Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted via email: info@asaswei.org.za

Submission deadline: 30 April 2026

9. Proposal Requirements

- Project title
- Regional cluster and participating universities
- Lead institution and principal investigator
- Problem statement
- Research objectives
- Methodology
- Collaboration plan
- Expected outcomes
- Ethical Clearance Protocol
- Timeline
- Budget

10. Evaluation Criteria

- Strength of collaboration
- Relevance of the social challenge
- Feasibility of the research design
- Potential policy and practice impact
- Alignment with ASASWEI mission

11. Example Budget Template

The seed funding should support collaborative research activities that enable regional engagement, data collection, and dissemination of findings.

Budget Item	Description	Estimated Cost (R)
Collaborative Meetings	Travel or meeting costs for participating institutions	
Community Engagement	Workshops or consultations with stakeholders	
Research Activities	Data collection or fieldwork expenses	
Student/Research Assistance	Short-term support for research tasks	
Dissemination	Policy briefs, reports, or stakeholder presentations	
Contingency	Minor unforeseen costs	
TOTAL		25 000

Note: Clusters may adjust the budget categories as appropriate, provided that the total allocation does not exceed R25 000.

12. Proposed ASASWEI Regions

Northern & Pretoria Region	Johannesburg & Central Region	KZN & EC Region	Western Cape Region
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNIVEN 2. UL 3. UP 4. UNISA 5. UMP 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UJ 2. WITS 3. SACAP 4. NWU 5. UFS 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNIZULU 2. UKZN 3. NMU 4. WSU 5. UFH 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SU 2. UWC 3. UCT 4. HUGENOTE