



iThemba LABS
 Laboratory for Accelerator Based Sciences

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

GOODS **SERVICE**

Request For Information Number:	iThemba LABS – iiLABS/RFI 2026/27:01
Date Issued:	24 April 2026
Description:	Provision of Land Access, Operational Support, and Optional Pilot/Drone Services for Drone-Based Research Activities.
Closing Date:	8 May 2026
Closing Time:	11:00 am
Delivery Address:	iThemba LABS, ATT: Tender Box, Main Security Gate, Old Faure Road, Faure, Western Cape, 7131
Submit RFI to:	scm2@tlabs.ac.za
Date Goods or Service Required:	2026/27
For More Information (Technical):	scm2@tlabs.ac.za
For More Information (Supply Chain Management):	scm2@tlabs.ac.za

THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS WILL APPLY:

- Price(s) quoted must be firm and must be inclusive of VAT.
- A firm delivery period must be indicated.
- Provide CSD Summary Report (www.csd.gov.za)

REGISTRATION ON THE CENTRAL SUPPLIER DATABASE (CSD):

The bidder must be on the National Treasury's Central Supplier Database in order to do business with the NRF and for the NRF to award a bid and sign the subsequent contract. Registration on the CSD (www.csd.gov.za) is compulsory and bids from unregistered bidders are not considered.

National Treasury Contact Details: +27 (0) 12 406 9222 or email csd.support@treasury.gov.za.

SCHEDULE 1 - SPECIFICATION

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE NRF

The National Research Foundation ("NRF") is a juristic person established in terms of the National Research Foundation Act, Act 23 of 1998, and a Schedule 3A Public Entity in terms of the Public Finance Management Act. The NRF is the government's national agency responsible for promoting and supporting research and human capital development through funding researchers, provision of the National Research Platforms, and science outreach platforms/programs to the broader community. The NRF provides these services in all fields of science and technology, including natural science, engineering, social science, and humanities. The NRF delivers its mandate through its internal business units which are both functional and geographical diverse. All contracts flowing from bidding only apply to iThemba LABS Cape Town.

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE NRF BUSINESS UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS BID

iThemba LABS (Laboratory for Accelerator-Based Sciences) is a multi-disciplinary research laboratory based at two sites in the Western Cape and Gauteng respectively, these provide facilities for:

- Basic and Applied Nuclear Physics Research using Particle Beams
- Research Radiation Biophysics
- The supply of Accelerator-produced Radioactive Isotopes for Nuclear Medicine and Research

The Business Administration and Finance Department is responsible for this RFI.

iThemba LABS seeks to appoint a reputable Service Provider as required by National Treasury Regulations (NTRs) and Public Financial Management Act (PFMA) through an open and competitive process so that it can realise the benefits of the strategic sourcing which includes, amongst others:

- Reducing the cost of effort and administration
- Minimising price inconsistencies
- Reducing inadequate contract management and service delivery

This Request for Proposal is intended to allow the successful bidder to specify and present their skills, expertise and price for the above-mentioned services to iThemba LABS. Final acceptance of any proposal is not guaranteed, this being the exclusive right of iThemba LABS.

The purpose of this RFI is to invite proposals for the appointment of a suitably qualified service provider to provide land access, operational support, and optional pilot/drone services for drone-based research activities at NRF iThemba LABS, located on Old Faure Road, Faure, Cape Town.

3 OBJECTIVES OF ITHEMBA LABS

Duration and Usage Requirements

Access period: Two (2) years

Expected usage: Approximately 2 hours per week

Activity type: Research flights using iThemba LABS' octocopters, including deployment of sealed radioactive sources

Location: 100km radius from iThemba LABS (Faure)

Supplier Response

Registered Name of Supplier:	
Trading As:	
Represented By:	

Capacity:	
Address of Supplier:	
Contact Tel:	
Email Address:	
CSD Supplier Number:	MAAA.....
CSD Summary Report Attached:	
Brand:	
Formal Quotation Submitted:	
Payment Terms: 30 Days from date of Invoice	

DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS:

1. Introduction

iThemba LABS issues this Request for Information (RFI) to identify individuals, organisations, or aviation clubs capable of providing land access, operational support, and optional pilot or drone services for research activities involving unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

This RFI is exploratory and does not constitute a tender or contractual commitment. Research activities may include the use of sealed radioactive sources under strict regulatory control.

2. Purpose of the RFI

This RFI aims to collect information from interested parties able to provide:

- Access to suitable land for drone testing and research flights
- Landowner permission for research and UAV operations
- On-site safety support
- Acceptance of activities involving sealed radioactive sources
- Optional provision of qualified drone pilots
- Optional provision of supplier-owned drones
- Any other relevant capabilities

3. Duration and Usage Requirements

- Access period: Two (2) years
- Expected usage: Approximately 2 hours per week
- Activity type: Research flights using iThemba LABS' octocopters, including deployment of sealed radioactive sources

4. Requirements

4.1 Land Requirements

- Sufficient land area to enable drone operations safely
- Proof of landowner permission
- Permission for sealed radioactive source deployment

4.2 Safety Support Requirements

- Access to fire extinguishers
- First-aid equipment
- Safety procedures or designated safety contact

4.3 Compliance & Insurance Requirements

iThemba LABS will provide third-party liability insurance. Drone operations will comply with SACAA aviation regulations and all radiation safety requirements.

4.4 Responsibilities of iThemba LABS

- Provide trained personnel
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Supply laboratory-owned drones and research equipment
- Manage logistics for operational activities

5. Information Requested from Respondents

- Location and description of proposed site
- Landowner permission confirmation
- Description of safety measures
- Any site restrictions or limitations
- Costs or usage fees (if any)
- Contact information of responsible person/organisation
- Optional: information on pilot or drone provision
- Any additional relevant information

6. Optional Additional Capabilities

6.1 Provision of Qualified Drone Pilots

Interested respondents may optionally provide certified drone pilots to operate iThemba LABS' octocopters as needed. Required information includes:

- Proof of valid Remote Pilot Licence (RPL) in accordance with SACAA Part 101
- Details of endorsements for heavy-lift or multirotor platforms
- Demonstrated experience with octocopter-class drones
- Pricing structure (hourly or daily)
- Availability response times

iThemba LABS reserves the right to assess and approve proposed pilots.

6.2 Supplier-Provided Drones

Respondents may offer to supply their own UAV platforms instead of operating iThemba LABS drones. Required information:

- List of UAV models the supplier proposes to use

- Technical specifications (MTOW, payload, endurance, sensors, datalink, navigation, redundancy, etc.)
- Proof of SACAA Part 101 regulatory compliance
- Suitability for research mission profiles

All supplier-provided UAVs must be approved by iThemba LABS prior to use.

7. Disclaimer

This RFI is solely for information gathering. It does not represent a tender, request for proposal, or contractual offer. iThemba LABS may or may not proceed to a formal procurement process