



**National
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Foundation**

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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

PARTICIPATION IN DEDICATED RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS 2024, 2025 and 2026

In 2015, The Department of Science and Technology (DST) facilitated the first dedicated oceanographic winter expedition on the *SA Agulhas II* from 23 July – 14 August 2015. The success of this expedition and others that followed demonstrated the need expressed by the wider marine and Southern Ocean research community and has prompted the DSI to secure funds for additional dedicated research expeditions in 2024, 2025 and 2026. The number of dedicated research expeditions will depend on the need expressed and the funding available. The core objective is to develop a comprehensive marine and Antarctic research expedition plan for 2024-2026, underpinned by the Marine and Antarctic Research Strategy (MARS) and contributing to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for sustainable development. These dedicated research expeditions will not only encompass oceanography but will provide research opportunities for marine-related *and* South African National Antarctic Programme (SANAP) –related research.

MARS was developed to provide a platform from which to coordinate marine and Antarctic research. The assumption is that improved coordination of a currently fragmented science system will improve returns on investment. Structured planning and a guided strategic focus will maximize human capital development and bring South Africa to the international forefront of knowledge production in these research areas. From this will follow innovation, increased international influence, and ultimately, economic growth.

The NRF and the South African Polar Research Infrastructure (SAPRI) have been tasked with coordinating various activities that will feed into improved planning and coordinating of marine and Antarctic research activities. As such, the NRF together with SAPRI would like to maximise on the opportunities for dedicated expeditions based on research community needs to enable long-term planning for expeditions, including sourcing funding for such expeditions. Dedicated expeditions may be implemented in periods where the *SA Agulhas II* is available. The schedule for the annual relief voyages indicate periods when the *SA Agulhas II* is not available (relief voyages for Antarctica, Marion Island and Gough Island). The direction (expedition transects), duration (including number and types of stations) and research focus of each dedicated research expedition would then be decided on by the DSI, together with the NRF, based on such variables as proposed participation, research area alignment, MARS theme alignment, contribution to the Ocean Decade and overall return on investment (data collection and capacity development.). To this end, SAPRI can support the costs of any in person meetings required to discuss collaborative research expeditions.

It should be noted that the attached [annexure](#) may change depending on the activities of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE). For example, an emergency may require DFFE to deploy the *SA Agulhas II* to enable the Department of Public Works to do building maintenance and repairs at any of the three bases. As such, all potential dedicated expeditions will need to be approved by the DFFE before final planning can begin.

Please complete the template below and return to tj.klarenbeek@risa.nrf.ac.za no later than 15 August 2023. The completed templates will give an indication of research community demand. More detailed research plans will be requested hereafter.

PROJECT DETAILS	
NAME OF THE PROJECT	
PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT	
EXPECTED RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROJECT	
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	Name: Institution: E-Mail:
CO-INVESTIGATOR (add blocks as appropriate)	Name: Institution: E-Mail: Role:
STUDENT INFORMATION (add blocks as appropriate)	Name: Race/Gender/Nationality: Institution: Study Level (Hons, Masters, PhD, and Post Doc only):
PREFERRED EXPEDITION (more than one may be selected)	Please refer to the attached expedition schedule Please motivate for participation, including possible flexibility in terms of specific expedition timing
GEOGRAPHIC FIELD OF RESEARCH (include your ideal expedition plan. If more than one expedition is selected, submit more than one expedition plan)	Please motivate for the proposed expedition plan, including possible flexibility in terms of specific routes.
DURATION (number of days requested per expedition)	

STATION PLANNING (Station type, number, depth, etc.)	
INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION (if any; this would include international student participation)	Name: Institution: E-Mail: Role:
TECHNICAL SUPPORT (indicate additional support required, if any)	
OTHER (include any other additional information that may enable a comprehensive assessment)	

Annexures: SA AGULHAS II VOYAGE SCHEDULE: 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26, and 2026/27

SA AGULHAS II VOYAGE SCHEDULE 2023/24

DESTINATION	ETD CPT	ETA BASE	ETD BASE	ETA CPT	DURATION	REMARKS
Marion Island	14/04/2023	18/04/2023	12/05/2023	18/05/2023	35 Days	Annual relief Voyage. Cape Town to Marion Island
SA Agulhas II Open Day	08/06/2023			11/06/2023	04 Days	SA Agulhas II Open Day, East Pier, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town
SEA MESTER cruise	19/06/2023			29/06/2023	11 Days	SEA MESTER cruise window Off-load 30 th /06/2023
Tristan da Cunha	07/09/2023	12/09/2023	15/09/2023		08 Days	Voyage to Tristan da Cunha. 60 Hour stop-over to discharge cargo
Gough Island		16/09/2023			08 Days	Voyage to Gough Island Offload passengers/cargo/fuel
Ocean Obs			23/09/2023		05 Days	Ocean Observations
Gough Island		28/09/2023	03/10/2023		05 Days	Back-load cargo/passengers
Tristan da Cunha		04/10/2023	05/10/2023	10/10/2023	07 Days {Total no. of voyage days: 33}	24 Hour stop-over at Tristan, back-load pax and cargo Voyage to Cape Town
Prince Edward Island	19/10/2023			09/11/2023	21 Days	PEI Scientific Voyage
SANAE	07/12/2023	17/12/2023	31/01/2024	08/02/2024	63 Days	Annual relief voyage Cape Town to Antarctica.

All schedules are subject to change, subject to funding approvals/confirmations. Final confirmation to be provided with Sailing Instructions, ONE MONTH prior to sailing.

SA AGULHAS II VOYAGE SCHEDULE 2024/25

DESTINATION	ETD CPT	ETA BASE	ETD BASE	ETA CPT	DURATION	REMARKS
Marion Island	11/04/2024	15/04/2024	10/05/2024	14/05/2024	33 Days	Annual relief Voyage. Cape Town to Marion Island
SA Agulhas II Open Day	12/06/2024			17/06/2024	05 Days	SA Agulhas II Open Day (Not sure which coastal town this event will be held)
Dedicated Voyage Window	04/07/2024			29/07/2024	25 Days	Winter Cruise - SEAMESTER II
Tristan da Cunha	05/09/2024	11/09/2024	13/09/2024		08 Days	Voyage to Tristan da Cunha. 60 Hour stop-over to discharge cargo and passengers
Gough Island		14/09/2024	21/09/2024		08 Days	Voyage to Gough Island Offload passengers/cargo/fuel
Ocean Obs / Geosearcher Survey(UK) Geosearcher Survey(UK)			21/09/2024		05 Days +05 Days	Ocean Observations / Geosearcher Survey(UK) Possibly to Add on for Geosearcher survey (UK)
Gough Island		01/10/2024	06/10/2024		06 Days	Back-load cargo/passengers
Tristan da Cunha		07/10/2024	08/10/2024	14/10/2024	08 Days{Total no. of voyage days:39}	48 Hour stop-over at Tristan, back-load cargo/passengers. Voyage to Cape Town
Prince Edward Islands	25/10/2024	29/10/2024	07/11/2024	11/11/2024	17 Days	PEI Scientific Voyage
SANAE	03/12/2024	15/12/2024	25/01/2025	04/02/2025	63 Days	Annual relief voyage Cape Town to Antarctica.

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SA AGULHAS II VOYAGE SCHEDULE 2025/26

DESTINATION	ETD CPT	ETA BASE	ETD BASE	ETA CPT	DURATION	REMARKS
Marion Island	20/02/2025	24/02/2025	10/05/2025	25/03/2025	33 Days	Annual relief Voyage. Cape Town to Marion Island
Mouse- Free-Marion	01/04/2025	05/04/2025		16/04/2025	16 Days	Mouse-Free-Marion
SA Agulhas II Open Day	26/05/2025			31/05/2025	05 Days	SA Agulhas II Open Day (Not sure which coastal town this event will be held)
Dedicated Voyage Window	23/06/2025			18/07/2025	25 Days	
Mouse- Free-Marion	02/08/2025	05/04/2025		18/08/2025	16 Days	Mouse-Free-Marion
Tristan da Cunha	04/09/2025	10/09/2025	12/09/2025		08 Days	Voyage to Tristan da Cunha. 48 Hour stop-over to discharge cargo and passengers
Gough Island		13/09/2025			07 Days	Voyage to Gough Island Offload passengers/cargo/fuel
Ocean Obs			19/09/2025		06 Days	Ocean Observations
Gough Island		25/09/2025	30/09/2025		05 Days	Back-load cargo/passengers
Tristan da Cunha		01/10/2025	02/10/2025	07/10/2025	07 Days {Total no. of voyage days: 33}	60 Hour stop-over at Tristan, back-load cargo/passengers. Voyage to Cape Town
SANAE	04/12/2025	14/12/2025	25/01/2026	05/02/2026	63 Days	Annual relief voyage Cape Town to Antarctica.

All schedules are subject to change, subject to funding approvals/confirmations. Final confirmation to be provided with Sailing Instructions, ONE MONTH prior to sailing.

SA AGULHAS II VOYAGE SCHEDULE 2026/27

DESTINATION	ETD CPT	ETA BASE	ETD BASE	ETA CPT	DURATION	REMARKS
Marion Island	09/04/2026	13/04/2026	06/05/2026	11/05/2026	33 Days	Annual relief Voyage. Cape Town to Marion Island
SA Agulhas II Open Day	03/06/2026			06/06/2026	04 Days	SA Agulhas II Open Day, East Pier, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town
Dedicated Voyage Window	19/06/2026			13/07/2026	25 Days	
Tristan da Cunha	10/09/2026	16/09/2026	17/09/2026		08 Days	Voyage to Tristan da Cunha. 60 Hour stop-over to discharge cargo
Gough Island		18/09/2026			08 Days	Voyage to Gough Island Offload passengers/cargo/fuel
Ocean Obs			25/09/2026		05 Days	Ocean Observations
Gough Island		30/09/2026	04/10/2026		05 Days	Back-load cargo/passengers
Tristan da Cunha		05/10/2026	07/10/2026	12/10/2026	07 Days {Total no. of voyage days: 33}	24 Hour stop-over at Tristan, back-load pax and cargo Voyage to Cape Town
Prince Edward Island	19/10/2026			09/11/2026	21 Days	PEI Scientific Voyage
SANAE	09/12/2026	19/12/2026	02/02/2027	10/02/2027	63 Days	Annual relief voyage Cape Town to Antarctica.

All schedules are subject to change, subject to funding approvals/confirmations. Final confirmation to be provided with Sailing Instructions, ONE MONTH prior to sailing.