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Attention: The News Editor

MEDIA RELEASE

Youth Innovators Grant Award Ceremony

The 4th National Call for Youth Innovators Proposals was issued in line with Sections 5 (m) and 24 (3c) of the Research, Science and Technology Act, 2004 (Act No 23 of 2004). The call ran from 1 to 30 June 2015 and is aimed at Namibian youth (between the age of 19 and 35 years) who are able to develop new ideas and creative thinking, while strengthening concepts of innovation and able to address enabling technologies which will provide wide-application solutions that address economic and social challenges within the Namibian society.

In his welcoming remarks, NCRST CEO, Dr. Eino Mvula stated that, *"We have also recognised the challenges that some of the innovators might face and are working on modalities to support them through mentorship. For this reason the NCRST has concluded an agreement with a team of experts specializing in SME Mentoring, Coaching and Business Development Services to provide business development and management training to Youth Innovators. The support will focus on:*

- *Developing training manuals and training materials to be used during the training sessions for Youth Innovators;*
- *Undertaking a Business Training Workshop for Youth Innovators;*
- *Providing advisory services to improve existing business plans / ideas / products for Youth Innovators;*
and
- *Providing Monitoring & Evaluation services during the first 3 months of implementation of business activities by the Youth Innovators.*

11 Youth Innovators were granted an award through the Call which focused on two research areas, namely Manufacturing Technologies and Information & Communication technologies, which have been identified as priority technology enablers in the National Programme for research, science

technology and innovation for 2014/15 to 2016/17 which have the potential to make remarkable national, social and economic impact.

The 2015 Youth Innovators Grant Award Ceremony will provide the Youth Innovators with a platform to engage with key industry stakeholders. The Ceremony will also be a means of exposing and marketing the Youth Innovators within their respective sector.

Mvula concluded with, *“I would like to underscore that innovative thinking and solutions need not be confined to scientists, or be about cutting-edge technology or rocket science. Simple innovations and small improvements can sometimes make a bigger impact as they can be widely applied to enhance the quality of our daily life. I see great potential in the various collaborations to seek practical cost-effective solutions to solve daily problems.”*

Ends:

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