

## **OBJECTIVE and POLICY of the NUTRICIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION ( NRF )**

The OBJECTIVE at the start of the NRF was to support research in the area human nutrition. The possibilities for obtaining financial funding for small to medium sized nutrition research projects were very limited in the western world and even fewer possibilities existed for funding for projects in developing countries. The NRF also realized that there was a need for well-trained nutrition research scientists and for well-equipped and strong nutrition research centres. More and more nutrition research data showed the significant role of diet in maintaining health in people and for improving health in ill people. In developing countries a broad scala of inadequate diets and malnutrition caused much illnesses and death, especially in children and in vulnerable groups such as pregnant women. In developed countries the role of diet and diet components in chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and obesity became more evident on the basis of nutrition research.

Over the years, the NRF became increasingly aware of these nutrition & health problems and selected the following focal points for their current POLICY.

- Invest in nutrition research by providing financial support for nutrition research projects
- Invest in promising individual nutrition scientists by providing a training fellowship
- Invest in institutional strengthening of nutrition research centres
- Invest in nutrition leadership programmes in developing countries
- Invest in south-south cooperation programmes between nutrition research centres at universities in English speaking Africa

Since the start of the NRF in 1989, typical financial support was given :

- each year 5-7 research grants
- each year 1-2 training fellowships
- since 2011 yearly 5 training fellowships to the African Nutrition Leadership Programme

In addition to providing financial support to research projects and training fellowships in the area of human nutrition, the NRF has also facilitated the instalment of endowed chairs at universities in the Netherlands to improve the visibility of specific areas connecting to human nutrition and to support relevant research. These endowed chairs are:

- Nutrition during Growth and Development at Rotterdam Erasmus University by Prof. Guenther Boehm (2005-2011)
- Pediatric Allergology at Rijksuniversiteit Groningen by Prof. Ewoud Dubois (2005-2015)
- Immuno-pharmacology of Nutrition at Universiteit Utrecht by Prof. Johan Garssen (2007-2014)
- Early Life Nutrition at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam by Prof. Ruurd van Elburg (2015-2020)

Since 5 years the NRF started an intensive co-operation with the Centre of Excellence in Nutrition (CEN) at North-West University, campus Potchefstroom, in South-Africa to support nutrition training and research in English-speaking countries in Africa. From 2017 onwards CEN started with NRF support a direct co-operation with the University of Ghana in order to strengthen the co-operation with nutrition centres in countries in West-Africa. This collaboration has also resulted in establishing an endowed chair in South Africa:

- Clinical and Therapeutic Nutrition at North-West University Potchefstroom by Prof. Renéé Blaauw (2014-2017)

The above-mentioned POLICY of the NRF will be continued in future.