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1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to assist designated employees, in an effective and efficient manner, with the development, administration and management of research related projects that are managed and overseen through the day-to-day running of a Research Department at the LGSETA, following best practices, value chain, operational and sector needs. This ensures that every person who performs a task does it in the same, consistent, and correct manner, every time it is performed.

The SOP also serves to outline the responsibility that each employee has towards effective and efficient development and management of research and observing the applicable legislative framework, policies, and reporting framework.

2. SCOPE

The SOP is applicable to all staff members of the Research Department (and any other indirectly involved staff) responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities and duties relating to research inherent in their positions. As per the amended SETA Grant Regulations (dated 03 December 2012), the type of research conducted and managed by SETAs can be defined as *“Institutional and sectoral research which means research commissioned by a SETA on any aspect of the administration or management of a SETA as well as research into sector supply and demand” (Government Gazette, 2012).*

The SOP covers the below key processes within Research Management:

- a. Appointment of Researchers/Research Organisations/Research Partners
- b. Development and approval of the Conceptual Strategy/Framework for Research Projects
- c. Researching the institutional and sectoral research relating to the local government sector
- d. Management of appointed Researcher/Research Organisation/Research Partner
- e. Compiling the SSP and Supporting Documents and Submission to the DHET
- f. Consultation with the Local Government Stakeholders
- g. Dissemination of Research Reports
- h. Implementation of Research Recommendations

3. RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Procedures for the performing of responsibilities and duties of Research Management provide the staff in the Research Department with procedures and guidelines on the operational management aspects of the day to day running of the Research Department in the LGSETA.

This SOP is intended to be a practical guide, assisting the LGSETA to maintain a research repository that informs the value chain of the LGSETA as well as the local government sector.

Each section of the SOP indicates the staff involved for that specific section. LGSETA can adjust the staff members involved, based on their own circumstances. In assigning different responsibilities to staff members, care must be taken that each procedure is monitored (verified) by a staff member senior to the person performing the procedure. A staff member senior to the verifier must review the procedure/s as indicated in the timeframes. This will reduce the opportunities to allow any person to be able to both perpetrate and conceal errors or fraud during a person's work duties. It will also ensure that management directives are carried out.

When monitoring/reviewing procedures performed by staff members, sufficient evidence must be available to confirm that specific procedure was performed. This evidence can then be used for

performance monitoring of staff members. The level of involvement of each official is indicated at each procedure and are summarised as follows: The level of involvement of each official is indicated at each procedure.

4. DISTRIBUTION LIST

Details
Chief Executive Officer
Interim Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Acting Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Acting Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning
Senior Manager: Monitoring and Evaluation
Manager: Research
Manager: SSP

5. TRAINING

LGSETA staff involved or impacted by this SOP should be trained on the implementation thereof on an on-going basis as deemed necessary by management. It is however of utmost importance for newly appointed staff to be trained as part of the induction processes of the entity.

6. REVIEW

The SOP should be reviewed on an annual basis or as and when there are changes in legislation, policy, or the control environment to ensure that the procedures are still relevant and commensurate with the GSETA internal resources.

7. PROCESS FLOW

This flow chart provides a high-level overview of all procedures covered in Research Management. A detailed flow chart of business processes is included in the document.

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8. PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

8.1. APPOINTMENT OF RESEARCH/RESEARCH ORGANISATION/RESEARCH PARTNERS

The main purpose of this process is to ensure that a researcher/research organisation/research partners is appointed to assist the LGSETA Research and/or Skills Planning Units with conducting research in the local government context and aligned to the specified research needs in the Research Agenda.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	Host the round-table discussions with all relevant stakeholders in the local govt sector to solicit views on the local government issues.	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
2.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	The research manager sends the research scoping document to the respective research partners and stakeholders in the Local Government sector	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
3.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	The research manager sends a reminder to the respective research partners and stakeholders in the local government sector to submit their inputs to be incorporated in the research agenda	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
4.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	Stakeholders make their inputs to the Local Government SETA relating to research agenda through the round-table discussions	M	Stakeholders	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
5.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	Inputs are received from respective research partners and stakeholders in the Local Government sector for scrutiny by the research manager to be incorporated in the research agenda	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
6.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	A draft research agenda is compiled and sent to the Executive Manager who will then present to the MANCO for further input/feedback	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Reviewer) MANCO (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
7.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	Research Manager incorporate inputs (if applicable) from the relevant internal stakeholders (MANCO; Board structures; Management) in the Research Agenda	M	Research Manager	MANCO (Approver)	N/A
8.	Compiling and approval of Research Agenda	Research Agenda is approved by the Board	M	Research Manager	Board (Approver)	N/A
9.	Terms of Reference (ToR)	An advertisement is compiled for the appointment of research partners for a period of 3 years and indicating the work that is required to be completed informed by the cluster of identified topics outlined in the approved research agenda.	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
10	Appointment process	A ToR is submitted to the Discretionary Grant Committee (DGC) who will sendout requests for project proposals and quotations informed by the topics of the approved Research Agenda. Thereafter, the DGC evaluates and conducts due diligence of the research partner/organisation and recommends to the Board for approval.	M	Research Manager	Discretionary Grant Committee (Approver)	N/A
11	Appointment processes	A Discretionary Grant Window period is used to appoint a panel of research organisations to conduct research projects that contribute to the Annual Performance Plan (APP) target and informed by the approved research agenda.	M	DG Committee/ Chairperson	CEO (Approver)	N/A
12	Appointment process	Once the research partner is approved by the Board, a Letter of Award is prepared for the approved research organisation. Thereafter, the contract is finalised and submitted for approval by the CEO and signed by both parties	M	Research Manager	Board (Approver)	N/A
13	Appointment process	A Terms of Reference is compiled indicating the work that is required to be completed and informed by the research agenda, as well as indicating key objectives for each study	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Reviewer)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
14	Appointment process	A Letter of Award is prepared for the approved research organisation and approved by the CEO based on the approval of research partners by the Board	M	Research Manager	CEO (Approver)	
15	Appointment process	Once the research organisation has been appointed and contract in place, the Research Unit or responsible Unit must meet with the appointed researcher/research organisation to confirm expectations and deliverables and provide required templates and documents to inform and develop a project plan and manage the research processes and outcome	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A

8.2 DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF CONCEPTUAL STRATEGY/Framework FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

The main purpose of this process is to develop a conceptual framework for research to be conducted by the LGSETA which clearly outlines the research focus area as well as research process and methods to be undertaken by the appointed researcher/ research organisation.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Incorporation of Research Reports in Sector Skills Plan	The SSP Strategy/Research Project Strategy must be approved and is used to inform the development and monitoring of the SSP/research project deliverables in conjunction with the contract or Memorandum of Understanding.	M	Research/SSP Manager	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
2.	Incorporation of Research Reports in Sector Skills Plan	SSP Update is informed by the finalised research reports and the finalised research reports are submitted to the manager to incorporate into the Sector Skills Plan.	M	Research/SSP Manager	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.3 RESEARCHING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

The main purpose of this process is to ensure the research is conducted to provide relevant, current, and quality baseline data and/or information together with any empirical research which will assist the sector with recommendations in identifying priorities that inform planning and decision-making processes.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Researching local Government	Obtain project plans with clear deliverables and timeframes developed by the appointed research partners/organisations for feedback and approval	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
2.	Researching local Government	Develop introductory letters for the research partners/ organisations to inform necessary stakeholders for engagement purposes	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
3.	Researching local Government	Manage or conduct the research based on agreed and approved project plan	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
4.	Researching local Government	Regular progress meetings are held with the research partners/organisations to ensure delivery according to project plan and to identify potential risks and problematic areas for further intervention	M	Research Manager	CEO (Approver)	N/A
5.	Researching local Government	Progress reports and draft research reports are engaged with, and written feedback is provided to ensure deliverables and quality written documents are prepared accordingly	M	Research Manager	Executive Manger: Strategy and Planning	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.4 MANAGEMENT OF APPOINTED RESEARCHER/RESEARCH ORGANISATION/RESEARCH PARTNER

The main purpose of this process is to manage and monitor the project from the initial beginning to ensure research activities are completed, and key deliverables are met and resulting in a closure report of the project once completed.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Management	Progress reports, draft and final research reports are received and feedback provided to the appointed researchers/research organisations/research partners to ensure requirements are met in accordance with outlined deliverables and within the required timeframes	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Reviewer)	N/A
2.	Management	All tranche payments are monitored to ensure deliverables are met timeously, and payments are made within the required and agreed timeframes	M	Research Administrators	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning	N/A
3.	Management	All documentation supporting the submission of the final research report must be submitted by the researchers/research organisations/research partner	M	Research Manager	Research Analyst (Reviewer) Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
4.	Management	Research project closure reports are written and signed by both parties (Research Manager and researchers/research organisations/research partner) and are required as part of the last tranche payment	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.5 COMPILING THE SSP AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND SUBMITTING TO THE DHET

The main purpose of this process is to compile the LGSETA SSP Update on an annual basis informed by relevant empirical research in order to establish skills priorities for the LGSETA sector as well as inform LGSETA strategic planning processes.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Compiling	Relevant research reports, analysis of Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) data, and other relevant sources of data and information are used to compile the local government SSP document in accordance with the prescribed DHET SSP guidelines and criteria	M	SSP Coordinators	Manager: Research/SSP (Approver)	N/A
2.	Compiling	The Local Government Sector SSP Update should reflect the current skills development needs of the sector and guide the implementation of appropriate interventions, including strategic partnerships to support relevant programmes	M	SSP Coordinators	Manager: Research/SSP (Approver)	N/A
3.	Compiling	The Local Government Sector SSP Update must be developed to meet specific timeframes including LGSETA Board meetings and DHET deadlines as stipulated	M	SSP Coordinators. SSP Manager	CEO and Board (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.6 CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS

The main purpose of this process is to ensure that draft research documents including the LGSETA SSP document and related provincial SSP documents are prepared for stakeholder engagement including the Research and Evaluation Committee, LGSETA Management, provincial stakeholder engagements such as SDF forums so that feedback can be received and used to finalise the research reports or SSP Update before final approval.

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Consultation	Consultative processes for the SSP are arranged with all relevant LGSETA stakeholders in order to receive feedback	M	SSP Coordinators	Manager: SSP/Research (Approver)	N/A
2.	Consultation	The draft and/or final SSP should be circulated to stakeholders and LGSETA related structures for engagement and feedback purposes once finalised	M	SSP Coordinators	Manager: SSP/Research (Approver)	N/A
3.	Consultation	Receive and acknowledge feedback from relevant structures including Management and Stakeholder forums, DHET feedback, and consultation with the Board	M	SSP Coordinators	Manager: SSP/Research (Approver)	N/A
4.	Consultation	Attend any relevant meetings/workshops regarding the draft/final version of research document and/or SSP	M	SSP/Research Manager	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
5.	Consultation	Action any required instructions, where needed, to ensure the research report/SSP Update meets the necessary requirements	M	SSP/Research Manager	Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
6.	Consultation	A final research report is developed for approval by the Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning	M	Research Analyst	Manager: SSP/Research (Reviewer) Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
7.	Consultation	A final SSP is approved by the LGSETA Board	M	SSP Manager	CEO and Board (Approver)	N/A

8.7 DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH REPORTS

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Presentation of Research Projects – Research Seminars	Arranging face-to-face or virtual Research Seminar Series and Research Round Table discussions to solicit input on research topics and research reports/presentations	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
2.	Presentation of Research Projects – Research Seminars	The Research Seminar Series Invite and Programme is drafted by the Research Manager	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
3.	Presentation of Research Projects – Research Seminars	The Research Manager then forward a draft invite and Programme to the Executive Manager for review	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A
4.	Presentation of Research Projects – Research Seminars	The Research Manager revises a draft Invite and Programme to be sent back to the Executive Manager	M	Research Manager	Executive Manager (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
5.	Research Projects – Research Seminars	A revised Invite and Programme is sent to the respective research partners and LGSETA Provincial Offices	M	Research Manager	Executive: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
6.	Research publications	Number of research publications that will be published for public consumption by various media platforms, such as magazines, LGSETA website and DHET journals	M	Research Manager	Executive: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
7.	Research Publications	The Research Manager communicates with the respective institutions that had conducted the research in the previous financial year to begin with the preparations of writing articles to be published on the recognized journals	M	Research Manager	Executive: Strategy and Planning (Approver)	N/A
8.	Research Publications	Upon finishing writing articles, the respective institution sends draft work to the Research Manager who will then go through the draft articles	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
9.	Research Publications	The draft articles will be sent to the respective institutions to revise the work should there be a need to do so, the Research Manager will then identify the magazines (popular sources) that should feature in the publications	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
10	Research Publications	Upon identifying such magazines (popular sources), the Research Manager will advise respective Institutions on the name of the magazines	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A
11	Research Publications	The Research Manager will submit the articles to the institution that is hosting the magazines for publications	M	Research Analyst	Research Manager (Approver)	N/A



LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.8 IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

No	Sub process ID	Procedure	M/A	Responsible Official	Reviewer/ Approver	System used
1.	Implementation	Develop a research recommendation implementation plan informed by the recommendations indicated in the approved research reports	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
2.	Implementation	Present the implementation plan to the Research and Evaluations Committee	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
3.	Implementation	Prepare correspondence to be sent to the relevant LGSETA Department and implementing agent (strategic partner appointed)	M	Research Analyst	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
4.	Implementation	Arrange a meeting with the implementing agents (minutes of resolutions of the meeting are to be drafted and filed appropriately)	M	Research Analyst	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
5.	Implementation	Present the research recommendations to the relevant Department Manager/Strategic Partner for the purpose of brainstorming and decision making.	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
6.	Implementation	Provide progress report to the Research and Evaluation Committee	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A
7.	Implementation	Management of the implementation of the Research recommendations by the relevant LGSETA Department and appointed Strategic Partner	M	Research Manager	Research and Evaluation Committee (Approver)	N/A

LGSETA RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

9 APPROVAL

Role	Name	Position	Date	Signature
Approver	Ineeleng Molete	Chief Executive Officer	11/15/2023	
Recommender	Josie Singaram	Acting Executive Manager: Strategy and Planning	11/16/2023	
Compiler	Matodzi Ralushai	Manager: Research	11/15/2023	