

Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation

Instructions for Applicants

Revised July 2018

IMPORTANT NOTE

Applicants for a Rufford Small Grant should be based in a non-first world country **AND** in the early stages of their conservation career.

Please also ensure that you also fulfil at least one of the other current main criteria listed below.

- Projects with direct conservation benefits to threatened habitats or species.
- The fieldwork element of PhD or MSc studies, where there is a clear conservation output.

We will **NOT** consider projects from first world applicants unless the project is in a non-first world country, has a very significant local capacity building element and is a high conservation priority.

Introduction

This document outlines the criteria and procedures for applying for a Rufford Small Grant from The Rufford Foundation. It is vital that you read and understand this document before submitting your application. A large percentage of applications are rejected because they have not followed these guidelines or do not fit the application criteria.

Applications for grants are only accepted through the online submission system at The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org). This document contains the full application form and it is recommended that you study all the questions in detail and compose your answers before using the online submission system.

You can only apply for funding once in any 12-month period. If you apply and are rejected, you will not be able to re-apply for at least 12 months.

Applications are normally processed within 3 months. You can check the progress of your application on the website. **Please note that applications cannot be processed until the requisite three references have been received by the Foundation.** This is the main reason for delay in the processing of applications. If all three references have not been received 12 weeks after submission of an application, that application will be considered invalid and withdrawn from the review process - **this will mean that you will not be eligible to re-apply for funding for at least 12 months.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Because of the number of applications received by the Rufford Small Grants Programme, the Trustees made the decision that it would not be possible to enter into direct discussions with applicants as to the reasons why their applications have been rejected.

Completion Grants

Please note that the application procedure for **Completion Grants** is different from that for other grants and applicants must complete a different application form which has to be downloaded from the website. Details on the application procedure are given on the website. The application form gives detailed notes on the process that needs to be followed.

What Sorts of Projects are Generally Funded?

There are five different types of grants available from The Rufford Foundation. Details of these grants are given in the section below. For all the grants there are basic eligibility criteria as outlined below.

- Projects must have a nature/biodiversity conservation focus.
- Rufford Small Grants are designed to support small-scale or pilot projects, rather than providing a small amount of funding for a large-scale project.
- The Foundation has a broad scope of interest - as well as the conservation of particular threatened charismatic species, the protection of which is likely to benefit their natural habitat, it is also interested in those often neglected or less well known species. In addition, the Foundation is also keen to support projects which go beyond a species-specific focus to provide habitat protection at a wider scale. Beyond this, the overriding requirement is that the work must be structured to provide long-lasting and practical conservation outcomes on the ground. There will often be a significant human element to a successful proposal, with community education / involvement being very important.
- In general, the Foundation favours work at a habitat or ecosystem level rather than species-specific work. However, we recognise that data gathering may be a critical element in developing a conservation or management strategy.
- The Foundation seeks to fund those project leaders who intend to make a significant and long-lasting impact on their chosen subject. This means that the applicant should intend to devote a considerable period of time to the project and set it up in such a way that it can have a long-term future - hence local team members are an essential part of the equation so that the project can carry on functioning usefully once the team leader moves on to other work.
- The Foundation almost never funds projects in first world countries. **We do not support projects undertaken within EU countries.** We will **not** consider projects from first world applicants unless the project is in a non-first world country, has a very significant local capacity building element and is a high conservation priority. Projects in less developed areas will take priority. Those projects which offer opportunities to train local team members in the running of the project and those with an educational element for local communities are strongly preferred.
- If the work is part of a postgraduate study (MSc or PhD), there needs to be a strong emphasis on fieldwork with clear conservation benefits. Any award will be for the

field-based element. Moreover, the judging panel will scrutinise how any application sits within our general criteria. Any grant will need to cover a significant part of the MSc or PhD's overall fieldwork costs.

Before Submitting an Application

We strongly encourage you to ask a mentor or someone who has experience to review your application BEFORE you submit it. Such people may have valuable comments or suggestions that could improve the chances of your proposal being funded.

Grants Available from The Rufford Foundation

The Grant-Making Process

The Rufford Foundation provides a staged funding process with five different types of grant. In sequence, these are:

- **Rufford Small Grant (up to £5,000).**
- **2nd Rufford Small Grant (up to £5,000).**
- **Booster Grant (up to £10,000).**
- **2nd Booster Grant (up to £10,000).**
- **Completion Grant (up to £15,000).**

On receipt of a **Completion Grant**, applicants will not be able to apply for any further funding. This is because by this stage we would expect the organisation we have supported to be financially stable and supported through other larger-scale funders.

General Criteria for All Grants

- Projects should focus on nature/biodiversity conservation activities in non-first world countries.
- The grant requested must make up a significant part of the total budget.
- The project should be a minimum of 12 months duration although each application is assessed on its own merit and the project length can be flexible.
- Funds must be used predominantly for field-based activities.
- The impact of the project must be pragmatic, measurable and long-lasting.
- For projects where The Rufford Foundation is not the only funder, we will require evidence of support from the other sources before the funds are released.

General Exclusions for All Grants

The following types of projects will not generally be eligible:

- Projects in first world countries.
- Pure research with no obvious conservation benefit.
- Expeditions, particularly where the applicant has to raise funds in order to participate.
- Attending conferences or seminars.

Background Information on Different Grants

The following boxes give detailed information about the five different grants available from the Rufford Foundation.

Rufford Small Grant

Background Information

This is the entry-level type of funding from The Rufford Foundation.

A **Rufford Small Grant** is for up to £5,000.

Applications are accepted from individuals or small groups.

Main Exclusions

See above under ***General Exclusions for All Grants***.

Reporting

Recipients of a **Rufford Small Grant** will be provided with a webpage on The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org) and must supply updates on their project throughout the year and a formal report on completion, copies of which may be published on the site.

Further Funding

On successful completion of a **Rufford Small Grant** and having provided satisfactory feedback and a final report, applicants are welcome to apply for a **2nd Rufford Small Grant**. **Any application for a 2nd Rufford Small Grant must be directly related to the subject of the Rufford Small Grant.**

2nd Rufford Small Grant

Background Information

This is the second stage of funding from The Rufford Foundation.

A **2nd Rufford Small Grant** is for up to £5,000.

Applications are accepted from individuals or small groups.

Activities must focus on developing important elements identified in the project supported by the Rufford Small Grant.

Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **Rufford Small Grant**.

Of the three required referees, at least one should not have been used for the previous application.

The application must include a new budget.

There should be a minimum of 12 months between submitting an application for a **Rufford Small Grant** and a **2nd Rufford Small Grant**.

Main Exclusions

Applicants cannot apply for a **2nd Rufford Small Grant** unless they have already received a **Rufford Small Grant**.

Also see above under ***General Exclusions for All Grants***.

Reporting

Recipients of a **2nd Rufford Small Grant** must supply updates on their project throughout the year and a formal report on completion, copies of which may be published on their webpage on The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org).

Further Funding

On successful completion of a **Rufford Small Grant** and having provided satisfactory feedback and a final report, applicants are welcome to apply for a **Booster Grant**.

Booster Grant

Background Information

This is the third stage of funding from The Rufford Foundation.

A **Booster Grant** is for up to £10,000.

Applications are accepted from individuals or small groups.

Activities must focus on developing important elements identified in the project supported by the 2nd Rufford Small Grant.

Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **2nd Rufford Small Grant**.

Of the three required referees, at least one should not have been used for a previous application.

The application must include a new budget.

There should be a minimum of 12 months between submitting an application for a **2nd Rufford Small Grant** and a **Booster Grant**.

Main Exclusions

Applicants cannot apply for a **Booster Grant** unless they have already received a **2nd Rufford Small Grant**.

Also see above under **General Exclusions for All Grants**.

Matched Funding

You should be considering how the project might be sustained in the long-term. Ideally, you should have plans to approach other funders for support, especially if you intend to apply to Rufford for further funding in the future (see **2nd Booster and Completion Grants** information).

Reporting

Recipients of a **Booster Grant** must supply updates on their project throughout the year and a formal report on completion, copies of which may be published on their webpage on The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org).

Further Funding

On successful completion of a **Booster Grant** and having provided satisfactory feedback and a final report, applicants are welcome to apply for a **2nd Booster Grant**.

2nd Booster Grant

Background Information

This is the fourth stage of funding from The Rufford Foundation.

A **2nd Booster Grant** is for up to £10,000.

Applications are accepted from individuals or small groups.

Activities must focus on developing important elements identified in the project supported by the Booster Grant.

Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **Booster Grant**.

Of the three required referees, at least one should not have been used for a previous application.

There should be a minimum of 12 months between submitting an application for a **Booster Grant** and a **2nd Booster Grant**.

Main Exclusions

Applicants cannot apply for a **2nd Booster Grant** unless they have already received a **Booster Grant**.

Also see above under **General Exclusions for All Grants**.

Matched Funding

The Rufford Foundation stresses the importance of long-term sustainability of projects. Applicants for a **2nd Booster Grant** are thus encouraged to look for funding from sources other than Rufford. This will be considered as being of importance when The Rufford Foundation is assessing the application. **We suggest you aim to raise at least £3,000 of funding from other sources.** We will require evidence of support from the other sources before the funds are released.

Reporting

Recipients of a **Booster Grant** must supply updates on their project throughout the year and a formal report on completion, copies of which may be published on their webpage on The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org).

Further Funding

On successful completion of a **2nd Booster Grant** and having provided satisfactory feedback and a final report, applicants are welcome to apply for a **Completion Grant**.

Completion Grant

Background Information

This is the fifth and final stage of funding from The Rufford Foundation. Once an applicant has received a **Completion Grant** they cannot apply for any further support from the Rufford Foundation.

A **Completion Grant** is for up to £15,000. There is a separate [application form](#) for a **Completion Grant** that must be downloaded from the website. Full information on the application procedure is given on the website.

Applications are made by individuals but the grants will only be paid to an organisation.

Activities must focus on developing important elements identified in the project supported by the 2nd Booster Grant.

Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **2nd Booster Grant**.

Of the three required referees, at least one should not have been used for a previous application.

There should be a minimum of 12 months between submitting an application for a **2nd Booster Grant** and a **Completion Grant**.

Main Exclusions

Applicants cannot apply for a **Completion Grant** unless they have already received a **2nd Booster Grant**.

Also see above under ***General Exclusions for All Grants***.

Matched Funding

The Rufford Foundation stresses the importance of long-term sustainability of projects. Applicants for a **Completion Grant** are thus expected to look for funding from sources other than Rufford. This will be considered as being of great importance when The Rufford Foundation is assessing the application. **Ideally, we would expect funding from other sources equivalent to the amount which you are requesting from Rufford.** We will require evidence of support from the other sources before the funds are released.

Reporting

Recipients of a **Completion Grant** must supply updates on their project throughout the year and a formal report on completion, copies of which may be published on their webpage on The Rufford Foundation website (www.rufford.org).

Further Funding

Once an applicant has received a **Completion Grant** they cannot apply for further funding. It is expected that by this stage the applicant will be in a position to access much larger-scale funding.

The Application Form

The application form must be completed online at www.rufford.org. Please note that if you are applying for a **Completion Grant** you will need to download a different application form from the website. Full details of the procedure for applying for these grants is given on the website.

To assist with your application process, the form questions are reproduced below. It is recommended that you prepare your answers carefully before submitting them on The Rufford Foundation website. Please note that there is a strict word limit on most questions - the online form will not allow you to exceed that limit. Submitted applications are final and may not be edited: you will, however, have the opportunity to save and return to your application as you complete it online, before final submission. Once submitted, you will also be able to download a PDF version of the completed application for your records.

Please note that if you are working on your proposal offline in Word or some other editor, when you paste this information into the form, only line and paragraph breaks will be retained in the text. Other formatting, such as bold and italic text will be discarded. Also, do not attempt to copy and paste tabular data into the form as you will lose any formatting.

Before submitting an application for the first time, you must create a **User Account** that includes a username and your email address - the website gives instructions on how to do this. You will be then sent a password by email to allow you to log in to the system. Once you are logged in you can change your password if required. You can also request a new password if you have forgotten your original one. You will then need to create a **Profile Page** that includes your contact and biographical information - this is important as it will be included in your application. Once created, the **Profile Page** can also be used for any future applications. If you need to edit your **Profile Page** select the **My Profile** link on the website, and click on **Edit -> Applicant Profile**.

Application Form Questions

Title

The title of your project in **no more than 160 characters**.

Executive Summary

Your project summary (**Word limit 100 words**).

Publications

Do you plan to publish your results? If so, where? If not, why not? **(Word limit 100 words)**

Making your results available to others is very important. You should aim to publish information where it is publicly accessible, such as in a peer-reviewed journal. See the section below ***Publishing Your Results***.

Principal Project Countries

Select one or more countries from the list.

Amount Applied for in Pounds Sterling

Your budget must be converted from your local currency into Pounds Sterling. You must state the rate of conversion used in the Financial Information section of the form. This amount **must** match the Total RSG Amount figure shown in your budget.

Category

You must choose a category or categories that best fit your project from the following list: Amphibians, Bats, Biodiversity, Birds, Carnivores, Caves, Cetaceans, Communities, Conflict, Corals, Ecotourism, Education, Elephants, Farming, Fishes, Forests, Fungi, Habitats, Hunting, Invertebrates, Mammals, Marine, People, Plants, Primates, Reptiles, Trade, Turtles.

1. Background

1.1 The Origin of Your Work

Please explain why you decided to undertake this work. **(Word limit 200 words)**.

1.2 The Contribution of Your Work

Please explain briefly what the work is going to achieve. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

2. Project Activities

2.1 Project Site

Provide a brief description of your project site(s) (including geographic location, habitat and conservation importance) (if relevant). **(Word limit 300 words)**.

2.2 Fieldwork

How long will you be in the field? **(Word limit 100 words)**.

2.3 Activities and Timescale

Describe the key activities you will carry out and when these will be undertaken. **(Word limit 500 words)**.

3. Methods

3.1 Methods to be Used

Describe in detail the research methods/techniques will you use to undertake each of the activities outlined in Question 2.3 **(Word limit 700 words)**.

3.2 Reasoning

Explain why you have chosen these research methods/techniques. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

4. Conservation Benefits

4.1 Conservation Outputs

What will be the practical conservation outputs from this work? **(Word limit 300 words)**.

4.2 Conservation Evidence

If undertaking a conservation action/intervention, what is the evidence that suggests that it will work as desired (suggested resource: www.conservationevidence.com)? **(Word limit 300 words)**

As part of our commitment to evidence-based conservation, we would like grantees who are implementing conservation interventions/actions (such as reducing crop raiding to reduce conflict with wild animals, adding nest boxes, undertaking an education programme, or providing alternative livelihoods) to check the evidence for the effectiveness of their proposed actions. Evidence can be drawn from previous work, unpublished reports, peer reviewed papers, and Conservation Evidence (www.conservationevidence.com). Tell us what evidence there is that a particular action works, how relevant the evidence is to your local context, and provide references for the evidence that you cite. If the evidence is scanty or mixed for an action, tell us how you will try to ensure it works in your context.

www.conservationevidence.com is a free online resource that summarises evidence for thousands of conservation actions, with more added all the time. You can use the search function to see what evidence exists on the database relevant to actions you wish to undertake, such as 'education', or browse the actions for a particular taxon in a summary e.g. the amphibian summary.

4.3 Conservation Importance

What species of conservation concern, either nationally or globally, will benefit from this work (if relevant)? Please include common and scientific names and any relevant status (e.g. IUCN Red List status). **(Word limit 500 words)**.

5. Monitoring

How will you monitor the success of your work? If undertaking a conservation intervention/action, then look at www.conservationevaluation.org for help with evaluation methods **(Word limit 300 words)**.

6. Your Team and Other Contacts

6.1 Team Description

Please describe who will be working with you on this project, and explain what experience they bring. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

6.2 Your Skills

Why do you feel you are qualified to lead this team? **(Word limit 100 words)**.

6.3 Links

Describe what links you have formed or plan to form with other interested parties, for example non-governmental organisations, community groups, media, etc. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Financial Information

This is one of the most important parts of your application. Please ensure that you provide as much information as possible to ensure that the panel can fully understand your application. The information that you provide will be subject to close scrutiny. **Figures MUST be stated in Pounds Sterling.**

We are looking for a summary of your expenditure over the period of your proposed project. It is important to see detailed expenditure using categories such as food, fuel, equipment, subsistence payments for local team, etc. Salaries other than essential subsistence payments are generally not favoured unless well justified in the application.

You should provide an itemised budget using the supplied fields. For each item state the Total Cost. If you have obtained or hope to obtain any funding from other sources for this item, include the amount in the appropriate box. The total funding requested from The Rufford Foundation will be calculated automatically and **must** match the figure shown under Amount Applied for in Pounds Sterling at the top of the form.

Please include any other information about your budget in the Notes to Budget box. In particular this should include any additional information about how the Total Cost of each budget item was calculated. This box should also contain your assumed exchange rate from your local currency to Pounds Sterling.

If you have obtained or hope to obtain funding from other sources, please provide details in the Additional Funding box. For projects where The Rufford Foundation is not the only funder, we may require evidence of support from the other sources before the funds are released. For the larger grants, **Booster**, **2nd Booster** and **Completion**, we would expect you to have some co-funding in place or to have a plan as to how additional funds would be raised. For more information, see the individual background information boxes above.

Completion Grants

For applications for **Completion Grants** you will need to provide a financial statement for your organisation for the last financial year and a 2-year financial statement that includes income and expenditure over the past year and the projected budget for the next year. The application form gives more detail on what is required.

Referees

References are critical to your application. We rely very heavily on these objective opinions of your project. Applicants must provide three references - applications will not be reviewed until all three references have been received.

Other important points:

- Applicants will receive an automated response 4 weeks after submission if some or all of their references are still outstanding.
- If all references have not been received 12 weeks after the application has been submitted, that application will be considered invalid and removed from the review process - you will then not be able to re-apply for funding for at least 12 months.
- It is the job of the applicant to ensure that all references are received promptly. You can always check the current status of your application online.

There are other issues to be considered when choosing your referees.

- If you apply for a **2nd Rufford Small Grant, Booster Grant, 2nd Booster Grant** or **Completion Grant** then at least one of the referees should not have been used for any previous application.
- Provide the full contact details (name, address, position, telephone and email) for your referees - a name and an email address is not enough.
- All three references must come from an institutional/organisational email address. References from web-based email services such as Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. will not be accepted.
- Of the three referees, one should be a person in the country where you will be working. This person needs to be able to comment with authority as to the usefulness, validity and practicality of your work, and preferably will be able to comment on the level of support given by the host country to the project - whether through government or non-governmental organisations. Also, at least one of the remaining two referees should be from outside the country where you will be working.
- **All referees should know you personally.** Do not choose referees you have never met or who have little knowledge of your proposed project.
- Choose referees who you know will be able to provide a timely reference. If a referee is on extended fieldwork and non-contactable, it is up to you to find a suitable replacement.
- Do not choose referees who will be participating in the project either directly or in an advisory capacity.
- All references should, where possible, be on a letterheaded document and signed by the referee. At least one of the references must come from a well-established institution (major conservation NGO, university or government body) on official letterhead.
- **Finally, the Rufford Foundation takes the issue of fraud very seriously. If we consider that an applicant is using fraudulent references to try and obtain funding, their application will automatically be rejected. They will not be eligible to apply for funding in the future and the suspected fraud will be reported to the relevant authorities.**

Publishing Your Results

The Rufford Foundation stresses the importance of making the results of your project available to the wider conservation community. In addition to interim or final reports that you may provide to The Rufford Foundation or information that you may publish on your webpage on The Rufford Foundation website, you should, where possible, aim to publish your results in peer-reviewed journals. Information published in this way will then be available to others via mainstream search facilities such as Google Scholar. Simply including your results in an MSc or PhD thesis does not necessarily mean they will be publicly available for all to see.

We encourage grant recipients wherever possible to consider publishing results, even if they are of a preliminary nature. Preliminary results can act as an encouragement to generate additional information that will help provide a more complete picture about a particular topic. Preliminary data can also be helpful for informing project development, working hypotheses, etc., for future, perhaps larger projects. This may be particularly true of studies of poorly known threatened species where there may be little or no published data available. In this case, local national journals that are searchable may represent an appropriate outlet for preliminary data. In general, all studies in the field of nature conservation that are sound scientifically, but with small sample sizes, are valuable and worth publishing particularly if they are unlikely to be expanded into larger projects.

There will be national and regional peer-reviewed journals that may be appropriate for publishing your results – examples might be the *Raffles Bulletin* (<http://rmbr.nus.edu.sg/rbz/>) in Asia or *Forktail* (<http://orientalbirdclub.org/forktail/>) focusing on birds, again in Asia. At an international level, *Oryx – The International Journal of Conservation* (<http://www.oryxthejournal.org/>) has an excellent track record in publishing papers written by in-country scientists. *Oryx* also has a section for Short Communications, ideal if you feel you do not have sufficient material to warrant a full paper but want to ensure your results are publicised. Likewise the Conservation Evidence journal (<https://www.conservationevidence.com/collection/view>) publishes tests of conservation interventions, accepts short communications (as little as one A4 page) and is both open access and free to publish in. These are just examples, there will be many more at a national regional and international level.

Effective conservation will almost always have strong science/social science underpinnings that need to be documented rigorously. Using peer-reviewed publications can create the longer-term knowledge base that is critically needed.

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