

Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation Guidelines for Applicants

Introduction

This document outlines the criteria and procedures for applying for a 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 12 weeks, except for Continuation / Completion grants where the review process can take up to six 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have not been received 12 weeks after submission of an application, that application will be considered invalid and withdrawn from the review process - **this will mean that you will not be eligible to re-apply for funding for at least 12 months.**

Continuation and Completion Grants

Please note that the application procedure for Continuation and 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 developed countries. We do not support projects undertaken within EU countries. Projects in less developed areas are likely to 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.
- Due to finite resources the Foundation can only award grants to a few post-graduate applications. 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 PhD's overall cost.

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).**
- **Continuation Grant (up to £25,000).**
- **Completion Grant (up to £25,000).**

Applicants can apply for more than one grant but need to have completed a previous stage of funding before moving on to the next stage. For example, an applicant can only apply for a **2nd Rufford Small Grant** after they have received a **Rufford Small Grant** and for a **Continuation Grant** after they have received a **Rufford Small Grant, 2nd Rufford Small Grant** and a **Booster Grant**. On receipt of a **Completion Grant**, applicants will not be able to apply for any further funding.

General Criteria for All Grants

- Projects should focus on nature/biodiversity conservation activities in developing countries.
- The grant requested must make up a significant part of the total budget.
- The project should normally be of 12 to 18 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.

General Exclusions for All Grants

The following types of projects will not generally be eligible:

- Projects in developed 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 main 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**.

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 should 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 generally be minimum of 18 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.
- Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **2nd Rufford Small Grant**.
- Applicants must clearly outline the impact of the work supported by the **Rufford Small Grant** and **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 generally be minimum of 18 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**.

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 **Continuation Grant**.

Continuation Grant

Background Information

- This is the fourth stage of funding from the Rufford Foundation.
- A **Continuation Grant** is for **up to** £25,000. Applicants are required to complete two budgets, one for up to £15,000 and one for up to £25,000. Please note that only in exceptional circumstances will the maximum be awarded, applicants should concentrate on a £15,000 budget.
- There is a separate [application form](#) for a **Continuation Grant** that must be downloaded from the website. Full information on the application procedure is given on the website.
- The Review process can take up to six months.
- Applications are accepted only from organisations. This grant will not be given to individuals.
- Projects must be an extension of the work supported by the **Booster Grant** - the **Continuation Grant** will not support totally new projects.
- 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.
- The application must include new budgets – one for up to £15,000 and one for up to £25,000.
- There should generally be minimum of 18 months between submitting an application for a **Booster Grant** and a **Continuation Grant**.

Main Exclusions

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

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

Reporting

Recipients of a **Continuation 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 **Continuation 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** £25,000. Applicants are required to complete two budgets, one for up to £15,000 and one for up to £25,000. Please note that only in exceptional circumstances will the maximum be awarded, applicants should concentrate on a £15,000 budget.
- 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.
- The review process can take up to six months.
- Applications are accepted only from organisations. This grant will not be given to individuals.
- Projects must be an extension of the work supported by the **Continuation Grant**.
- Applicants must have submitted interim reports and a final report on the work supported by the **Continuation Grant**.
- Of the three required referees, at least one should not have been used for a previous application.
- The application must include new budgets – one for up to £15,000 and one for up to £25,000.
- There should generally be minimum of 18 months between submitting an application for a **Continuation Grant** and a **Completion Grant**.

Main Exclusions

Applicants cannot apply for a **Completion Grant** unless they have already received a **Continuation Grant**.

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

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 – the Foundation no longer accepts applications submitted by e-mail. Please note that if you are applying for a Continuation or 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.

Before submitting an application for the first time, you must create a **User Account** that includes a username and your e-mail address- the website gives instructions on how to do this. You will be then sent a password by e-mail 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

Project Title

Maximum 160 characters.

Principal Project Country

Include only one country name.

Executive Summary

An outline of your proposed project in **no more than 100 words**.

Categorisation

You must choose a category that best fits your project from the following list: Mammals, Bats, Cetaceans, Primates, Birds, Reptiles, Turtles, Amphibians, Fish, Coral, Insects, Plants and Seeds, Forests, Landscapes, Wetlands and Mangroves, Ecotourism, Education, Farming, Hunting, People - community, People - conflict, Pet Trade.

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.

IMPORTANT NOTE: With effect from 27/03/14 the maximum amount for a 1st Rufford Small Grant and 2nd Rufford Small Grant will be up to £5,000 and for a Booster Grant up to £10,000.

The Origin of Your Work

Please explain the origin of your work in **no more than 200 words**.

The Contribution of Your Work

Please explain what the work is going to achieve in **no more than 300 words**.

Outcomes

Please explain the key outcomes of this work and how these will make a long-lasting contribution to nature/biodiversity conservation in **no more than 300 words**.

Activities and Methodology

Please provide information on the methods you plan to use and a list of your project's major activities with an associated timescale. Explain exactly what you plan to do and why it is needed in **no more than 500 words**.

Benefit of the Grant (Continuation and Completion Grant applications ONLY)

How will the Continuation/Completion Grant help in your work? Please explain what the funds will help you to achieve and how the profile of the grant might assist you in the future in **no more than 300 words**.

Outputs (Continuation and Completion Grant applications ONLY)

Please describe the measurable outputs of your work:

OBJECTIVE (from above)	OUTPUT	HOW WILL SUCCESS BE MEASURED?
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Your Team and Other Contacts

Please describe who will be working with you on this project and explain what experience they bring. Describe what links you have formed and plan to form with other interested parties, for example non-governmental organisations, community groups, media, etc. Also provide information on why you feel you are qualified to lead this team in **no more than 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.**

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 should match the amount of the grant you are applying for from the Foundation.

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.

Continuation and Completion Grants

For applications for Continuation and 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. You will also be required to provide two project budgets, one for up to £15,000 and one for up to £25,000.

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, Continuation 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 e-mail) for your referees - a name and an e-mail address is not enough.
- All three references must come from an institution/organisation email address. References from web-based email services such as Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. will not be accepted.
- At least one of the three 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.
- 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 letter headed document and signed by the referee. At least one of the references must come from a well-established institution (major 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.

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 more obscure 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://rmbf.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. 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 we can create the longer term knowledge base that is critically needed.