Stage 2 Webinar

FAQs & Common Issues:
the 'easy wins'

Welcome!

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Agenda

- Welcome from Defra
- Administrative eligibility
- Meeting objectives
- Finance
- Project team expertise and letters of support
- Avoiding common issues
  Questions
- Gender & safeguarding
  Questions
- Communications
  Questions

Welcome from Defra

Seun Alaba

Defra Policy Advisor

Biodiversity and Climate change resilience in the Overseas Territories

- Roles and responsibilities
- Darwin Plus Projects and Fellowships

Themes of Darwin Plus

The **themes for Darwin Plus in Round 11** are:

- **Biodiversity:** improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;

- **Climate change:** responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities

- **Environmental quality:** improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;

- **Capability and capacity building:** enhancing the capacity within OTs to support the environment in the short- and long-term.

Key information

- Apply page:
  https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/apply/
- All key documents, including guidance and templates, there including:
  - Guidance for applicants
  - Finance guidance
  - Flexi-Grant guidance
  - Terms & Conditions
  - Draft Word form – but submit via Flexi-Grant!
- Deadline – 23:59 BST Monday 17th October 2022

The schemes and how to apply

Darwin Plus Main

Darwin Plus Main is a continuation of the existing Darwin Plus scheme, now in its eleventh year. Darwin Plus Main invites applications for environmental projects from £100,000 to £1,000,000.

You need to apply online for Round 11 Darwin Plus projects and fellowships through the Flexi-Grant Application Portal.

Before applying, you should first read:

- Round 11 Guidance for applicants
- Round 11 Finance Guidance
- Flexi-Grant Guidance
- Privacy Notice
- Biodiversity Challenge Funds Terms and Conditions 2022
- Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance
- Biodiversity Challenge Funds Risk Management Guidance

Once you have read the guidance, complete the Darwin Plus Round 11 – Stage 1 application form on the Flexi-Grant application portal. For drafting purposes, you may find the Darwin Plus Round 11 – Stage 1 application form useful.

If you are invited to Stage 2, you will be asked to complete the Stage 2 application form on the Flexi-Grant portal. For drafting purposes, you may find the Darwin Plus Round 11 – Stage 2 application form useful.

Administrative Eligibility

- Word counts are strictly enforced in Flexi-Grant
- Supporting docs including:
  - **Cover letter** outlining how you have responded to feedback from St1 (but should also be in application)
  - **Letters of support** *including applicant organisation* – in one PDF document (partners, government, stakeholders…)
  - Last *2* sets of **signed/audited accounts** *in English and currency clear*
  - **Budget table** (matches request and certification in application)
  - **CVs** for key personnel: *partners and project teams* – in one PDF document
  - **Logframe** in correct template
  - **Safeguarding policy** with statement on commitment to safeguarding and zero-tolerance statement on bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse
- Past experience and awards (if new as a lead) including contacts for references (all in application – no uploads)
- Ensure you **check websites for any updates to templates**

Meeting D+ broader objectives

- Outlined in full in guidance
- Which convention priority & why
  - Link your application to the relevant Conventions and national priorities – flag links to relevant targets – including UKOT National Plans and priorities
  - Don't just list relevant agreements – sign-post **how** your project is contributing towards these
  - Can you demonstrate communication with the Convention focal point – perhaps by letter?

Finances - Budget

- PL normally expected 10% or more on project: if less please clarify

- 'Consultancy costs' and 'Other' – provide adequate detail

- Capital costs normally <10% otherwise clearly justify in text

- Allow for exchange rates to fluctuation – but no 'contingency'

Finances – Audit costs

Make sure you only include audit costs for the Lead Partner: check T&Cs for requirements and totals you can claim
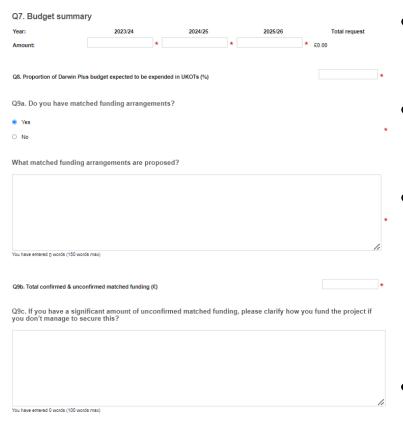
- Projects £100,000 + – up to £3,000 in last FY of project

Matched Funding – in Flexi-Grant

Example for Darwin Plus application form

- Ensure dates are eligible for this round

- Budget figures should match spreadsheet and certification

- For matched funding, the % should be of the **total** project cost (not compared to the Darwin request) i.e. if the Darwin % of total project cost is 70% then matched funding is 30%

- Large % matched funding unsecured is risky - we ask you to outline how you will manage if this is not secured

Finances – general

- It is good to see a significant % of funds going directly to host country partners/costs – but no specified amount

- Consider budget spread across FYs – don't front load

- % of funds on M&E (between 5% and 10%)

- Refer to Finance Guidance

Attention to Risk - Financial

Ensure you fully consider the financial risks and threats to your project including
- Fraud
- Bribery
- Misappropriation of funds e.g. ineligible allowances, arithmetical errors, lack of reconciliation of funds
- Exchange rate fluctuations. You cannot increase the budget later
- Recruitment delays leading to shift in timescales and funds being approved for the wrong financial year
- Ongoing effects of Covid e.g. travel, partner income, time to source and take delivery of equipment etc

These are different to the Assumptions in the logframe which may also include
- Staff retention and reliance on key people
- Natural disasters e.g. weather, disease, physical
- Change of government/partner personnel

Project team expertise

- Include CVs or ToRs of team members *critical* to delivery
- Ensure skills presented match all the work proposed
- Tailor CVs to ensure *skills* are clear and avoid long lists of publications
- Relate CVs presented to budget table i.e. roles and names
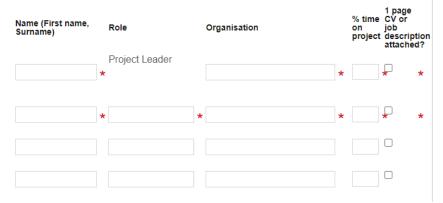- Avoid submitting teams with too many 'TBC' posts

Project team – in Flexi-Grant

Q10. Project Staff

Please identify the key staff on this project, their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project. Further information on who should be classified as key project staff can be found in the guidance.

Please provide 1 page CVs for these staff, or a 1 page job description or Terms of Reference for roles yet to be filled. These should match the names and roles in the budget spreadsheet. If your team is larger than 12 people please review if they are key project staff, or whether you can merge roles (e.g. 'admin and finance support') below, but provide a full table based on this template in the PDF of CVs you provide.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	Organisation	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
*	Project Leader *	*	*	* *
*	*	*	*	* *

Make sure that staff names here match the names and roles in the budget

This is for project staff key for delivery – no need to list **all** staff (up to 12 slots). If more than 12 needed, provide a full table with CV pdf

For anyone named here:

- 1 page CV must be provided
- If funded, permission needed to change

Project partners

- Clear evidence of **buy-in from partners is needed at Stage 2** through provision of **Letters of Support**

- Important that listed partners actually reflect true partnerships – are they critical to project delivery and involved in project management/decision making? (vs stakeholders who may well be involved but not actually delivering activities)

- Evidence of **support from the OT government is particularly critical**

Letters of Support

Avoid 'template' letters of support. Strong letters of support are expected to include the following elements:

- the extent to which partners have been involved in the development of the proposal

- an outline of how the proposed work aligns with organisational priorities **and** the priorities of the OT

- information on the capacity of partners to support the project

- specify actual level of support e.g. any matched funding your organisation is proposing, either financially or in kind

Poll

How is the pace of this webinar?

- Far too slow

- A bit slow

- About right

- A bit fast

- Far too fast

Risk Framework

- Risk management
  - 6 key risks need to be included in the app form table
  - 3 mandatory risk categories – fiduciary, safeguarding and delivery chain
  - 3 other risks

Q18. Risk Management

Please outline the 6 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, one Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register using the Risk Register Template provided, and be prepared to submit this when requested if they are recommended for funding. **Do not attach this to your application.**

Definitions:

Fiduciary: funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated).

Safeguarding: 'doing harm' incl. sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, staff safety and welfare, or unintended harm.

Delivery Chain Risk: the overall risk associated with your delivery model.

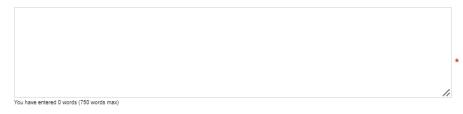| Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation Header	Residual Risk
Fiduciary (Financial)					

Additional materials

Q12. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- How have you reflected on and incorporated evidence and lessons learnt from past and present activities and projects in the design of this project?
- The need for this work and a justification of your proposed approach.
- How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).
- How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, etc.).

Please make sure you read the guidance documents before answering this question.

(This may be a repeat from Stage 1, but you may update or refine as necessary)

You have entered 0 words (750 words max)

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below:

Choose your file(s)   or drag and drop files here to upload

File name	Date uploaded	Action

Methodology should be clear and link to logframe

Additional links/maps/ToC (for example) can be included as **one PDF** – but be reasonable! **5 page limit**

They must not be used as a means of providing additional information or avoiding word limits!

Other common issues

- SMART logframes – separate session focused on M&E

- Partnerships take time – new partnerships vs old and time taken to establish working relationships

- Don't underestimate how long it may take at project start up to finalise agreements, visas, staff recruitment etc.

- Consider how project results will be taken up (policy and research projects common offenders!). Communication strategies should be clear and consider who the audience is, how they will use the results, when they will be engaged etc.

Flexi-Grant FAQs

I have completed my application, but I can't see the "submit" button.

I am not the lead applicant but would like to be – how do I do this?

I use Flexi-Grant for other grant schemes and they require another stage of sign off – do you have this stage?

For all of the above, if you continue to have problems, please get in touch – if you can't submit at the deadline, please send us an email and we will get in touch the following morning.

Gender and safeguarding

What is gender?

Gender is a social construct referring to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being men and women

- When considering "gender" it is also important to consider broader aspects of social inclusion:
  - Men and women are not homogenous groups
  - Consider other vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, or people with disabilities

Do no harm

- Consider not only the benefits but the potential **costs** of project activities

- Are there any project components that could potentially make life harder – for men or women?

- If so, how will this risk be mitigated?

Gender in your applications

- We need to see that you have considered gender in your applications. From the Guidance:

  All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender.

- Avoid only including generic statements, such as that your organisation is an equal opportunities employer – we are interested in this **project specifically**, not your broader work

- Demonstrate you have analysed and understand the context.

Exploring gender dimensions

- Speak with people living in communities where project implemented

- Focus groups and interviews

- If you aren't working directly with communities – who are your stakeholders? Who will be benefiting from the project? Will proposed policy impact men and women differently?

Gender in your projects

4 steps to integrate gender into your projects:

1. Understand and examine gender dimensions of the project and setting – different Darwin Plus projects may be able to incorporate gender in different ways based on the UKOT you are working in

2. Develop project elements and activities

3. Develop project indicators for monitoring gender integration

4. *Develop broader institutional process to further gender integration*

Source: Conservation International's "Guidelines for integrating gender into conservation programming"

Gender in your applications

Focus on the specific gender context of your proposed work:

"most stakeholders that currently receive a direct benefit from the marine park (fishers, charter boat operators, dive operators, restaurant owners) are men"

And, if possible, directly link your gender analysis with how your proposed work will address it:

"men and women have different roles/personal responsibilities, but we will ensure equal opportunities for all genders in training events, taking into account the availability of participants in relation to their parental responsibilities during the organisation of training workshops and meetings"

What is "Safeguarding"?

Safeguarding in its broad sense means protecting people from unintended harm, and ensuring measures have been put in place to protect the health, welfare and human rights of individuals.

UK Government supported projects must ensure that they fully protect vulnerable people at all times, wherever the project is located.

Who should be safeguarded?

All projects are expected to provide a **safe and trusted environment** which safeguards anyone who the organisation has contact with.

This includes:

- Beneficiaries
- Project staff
- Volunteers

This includes where **downstream partners** are involved in project delivery.

Key safeguarding principles

- Everybody has responsibility for safeguarding

- Do no harm

- Be transparent and accountable

Safeguarding Requirements

In order **to receive funding** the Lead Partner must:

- Have a **safeguarding policy** in place (and include with application)
- Keep a detailed **register of raised safeguarding issues**
- Have **clear investigation and disciplinary procedures**
- **Share your safeguarding** with project partners
- Have a **whistle-blowing policy**
- Have a **Code of Conduct** in place for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours

You need to also clearly outline how you will put your policies into practice through your proposed project

Additional resources

- Conservation International has a number of resources on how gender interacts with conservation, including [guidelines for integrating gender into conservation programming](#) . Further resources can be found on their [website](#)

- Fauna and Flora International implements conservation programmes with integrated gender components. Their [website](#) includes information on their overall approach, lessons learned and key questions to consider

- Resources on minimum operating standards can be found [here](#) as well as resources on [core humanitarian standard](#) on quality and accountability

Any questions?

Communicating about projects

The importance of communication

What stages of the project cycle do you think communication is relevant to?

- Design/application stage?

- Starting up your project?

- During implementation?

- As your project nears its end?

- Project reporting?

All stages of the project…!

Design/application stage	✔
Starting up your project	✔
During implementation	✔
As your project nears its end	✔
Project reporting	✔

DARWIN
PLUS

What can communication help you with?

Design/ application stage	To **EXPLAIN** your proposed project and articulate your intended approach and its value
During implementation - from start to end	To **ENGAGE** stakeholders in your project, create a positive attitude towards it, and demand for its results
	To manage people's **EXPECTATIONS** about what you can and will achieve
	To **INFLUENCE** people, and change their behaviour to support or take up your results
Project reporting	To **DEMONSTRATE** how well you are delivering your project and what you are learning

A tailored approach

Communication with key stakeholders is important as they can often impact the overall success of a project. Effective communication can ensure buy-in and project support.

When communicating with stakeholders it is important to remember that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be the most effective.

Different stakeholder groups have different levels of understanding and interest and therefore this should be considered.

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Policy makers

National government officials

Conservation community

Local community

Project partners

The challenging of communicating complexity

- Darwin Plus projects are inherently complex

- At Stage 2 you have a limited number of words to outline the problem your project will attempt to address

- Need to identify the core, central problem, this informs the logframe

Consider perceptions

- How might other people perceive what you say about your project?

- The world is not full of conservationists

- Don't assume people make the same mental links to global good

- A catchy title to get your project noticed? By who?

- Short & snappy, but err on side of caution

Newsletters

Get in touch with the newsletter team at BCF-Comms@niras.com