

# Darwin Plus



## What makes a good application?



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



**BIODIVERSITY**  
**CHALLENGE FUNDS**

# Welcome!



Welcome to Stage 2 applicants from Round 11 of Darwin Plus!

## Your panelists:



**Jonathan Hall**

- Head of UK Overseas Territories Unit, RSPB
- Member of the Darwin Plus Advisory Group



**Kelly Forsythe**

- Supports applicants and projects across all funds



**Victoria Pinion**

- Programme Manager for the Biodiversity Challenge Funds, including Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus and Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund (IWTCF)

Key contact for application queries: [BCF-DPLUS@niras.com](mailto:BCF-DPLUS@niras.com)

Flexi-Grant specific queries: [BCF-Flexigrant@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Flexigrant@niras.com)

# Agenda & Housekeeping



- Welcome
- Darwin Plus Advisory Group Presentation
- Questions

If you have any questions, please feel free to type them in the Chat.



# What makes a good Darwin Plus application?

**Jonathan Hall,  
Head of UK Overseas Territories,  
RSPB**





# What makes a good application



Darwin Panel

Guidance documents

Project development

Project relevance

Project impact

Proposal writing

- General
- What you will need to demonstrate
- Logical Framework
- Outputs

Project Evaluation

- Policy
- Impact
- Technical excellence

Top tips

# Darwin Plus Advisory Group

## Members

- **Chair:** Howard Nelson
- **FCDO & DEFRA staff**
- **UK Government Agency Members:**
  - Amanda Gregory, JNCC
  - Colin Clubbe, RBG Kew
  - Ed McManus, CEFAS
- **Technical Experts:**
  - **OT Governments:** Laura Sinclair Willis (SGSSI Govt); Nancy Pascoe (BVI Govt)
  - **Independents:** Debbie Pain, Lee Hardy, Tara-Jane Sutcliffe
  - **Other institutions:** Jonathan Hall (RSPB); John Turner (Bangor University)

# Guidance documents

## Four Themes:

- **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;
  - **Environmental quality:** improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
  - **Capability and capacity building:** enhancing the capacity within OTs to support the environment.
- 
- *Preference will be given to projects implementing existing identified environmental solutions on the ground.*
  - *Research and scoping work in projects should be clearly justified. It should be clear how new research will be applied for meaningful environmental outcomes on the ground.*



# Project Development

- **Within Territory**
  - Do you have the **skills and manpower needed**?  
If not, **who will help**?
- **For those outside OTs:**
  - Consultation, buy in and true **partnership** with OT organisations and all relevant OT govt departments
  - Be demand-led not supply-led!
  - Maximise in-Territory spending
- **For all:**
  - **Understand & build** on other projects / work
  - Address **gender equality**- not just a list of staff genders
  - **Real impact**- not just a report 'for decision-makers'. How will you secure adoption of actual change? Science alone is not enough. See climate change!
  - What is the **exit strategy**?





# Explaining Project Relevance

- **Address Darwin Plus theme/s**
- **International treaties**  
(e.g. CBD, Ramsar, ACAP, CCAMLR)
- **OT Government priorities**  
(e.g. Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP))
- **Explain timeliness / urgency**  
(there are 100s of actions in a BAP, why is *this* one a need-to-have now, and not a nice-to-have?)



# Project Impact

- What on the ground change will you bring about?
- Who will realistically benefit?
- Does the methodology fit the problem?
  - Why is yours the best method?
  - If policy or cultural changes are needed, are your methods informed by political or social science?
- Do partners have expertise/capacity to deliver?
- Can you evidence that innovative methods are likely to work?
- Broad stakeholder buy in achieved / achievable?
- Credible and sustainable exit strategy **for a small island** e.g. very unlikely to be sufficient local capacity for long-term monitoring of every Darwin projects' focus species, habitats or parameters





# Proposal Writing

- **Don't** leave it to the last minute
- **Budget** properly at Stage 1
- Think about what other OT Govt depts might be relevant e.g. Planning
- Letters of Support need to **specify actual level of support** (finance, in kind, time, space, logistics, political)
- Respond methodically to **feedback** at Stage 2
- Explain how fits with other active / completed Darwin projects
- **Answer what is asked** in each section, aiming to use all available wordcount
- **Kick the tyres on your budget** – often more than first thought
- **Risks:** Financial and project





# What you need to demonstrate

- ✓ What problem are planning to solve?
- ✓ What is the current situation – baseline?
  
- ✓ Why is this work needed?
- ✓ How was the problem identified?
- ✓ Who is impacted?
  
- ✓ How will your project help?
- ✓ Cost – value for money
  
- ✓ How will you prove your project worked?
- ✓ Indicators – plan for regular deliverables



# Logical Framework

Defines **scope** of your project (what's in and what's out).  
(Therefore great starting place to work with partners and ensure all are on same page.)

Sets out all the elements of the project and links between them

Master tool:

- Basis for **budgeting** activities, project **implementation plan** & the **Monitoring and evaluation plan**

Framework against which evaluate project progress

Make sure that the **log-frame/application support/complement** each other.

Indicators should be **SMART**. Outputs are not activities.

Do not be afraid to **ask for guidance, help** or **support** from NIRAS-LTS



# Proposal Writing- Long-Term Outputs

- Don't promise too much. **Be honest.**
- Some projects achieve objectives long after funded part of the project:
  - how are these **recorded and communicated** and what is a realistic **time-line**?
  - what **commitments** can project partners make to post-project implementation?
- How will **final reporting writing** and **publication page charges** *etc* be covered after the project ends?





# Project Evaluation

- Each project will be scored by 3 members of the DPAG according to transparent criteria.
- Put yourselves in our shoes.
- In particular, remember that, odds are, at least one of your reviewers will never have visited the Territory concerned. Context is therefore essential!



# Project Evaluation- Policy Criteria

- The project implements an existing identified environmental solution;
- Any research or scoping work is clearly justified and shows how it will be applied for meaningful environmental outcomes on the ground;
- The project demonstrates substantial measurable outcomes in at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus, either by the end of the project's implementation or via evidenced mechanisms for post-project delivery;
- The project contributes to the delivery of existing commitments [...]
- The project has good local ownership, as evidenced by commitment from relevant local stakeholders including UKOT Governments or UKOT civil society;
- The project outcomes will contribute to embedding good environmental decision-making in UKOT policies and processes.

# Project Evaluation- Impact Criteria

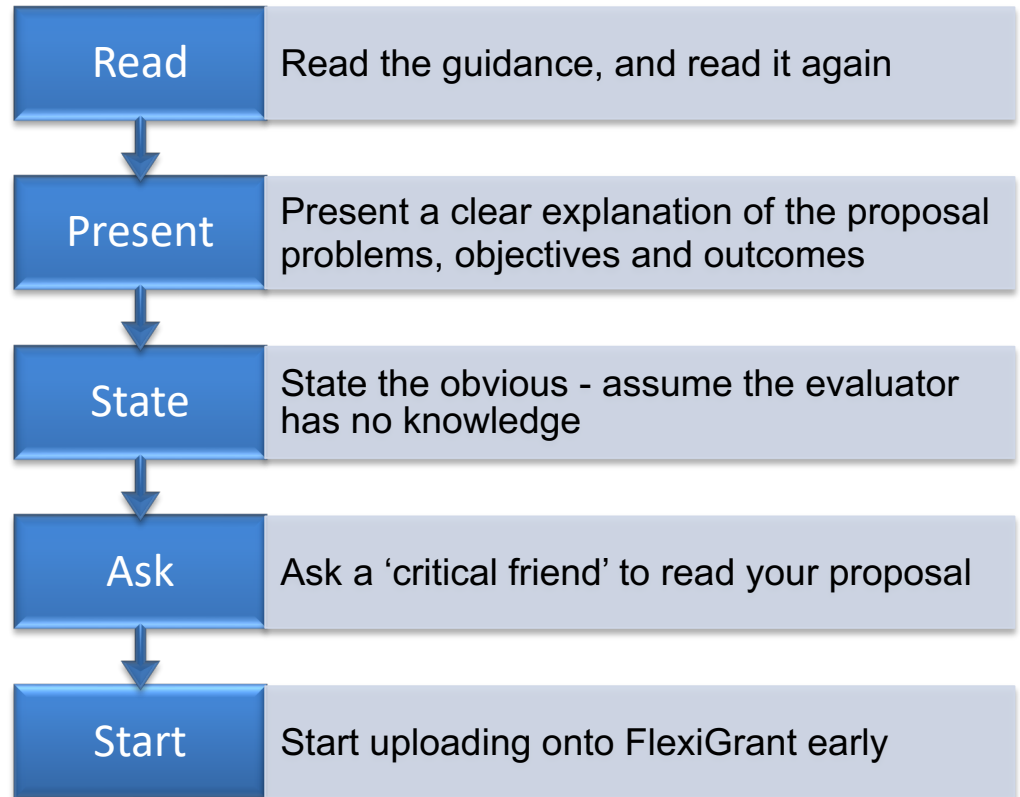
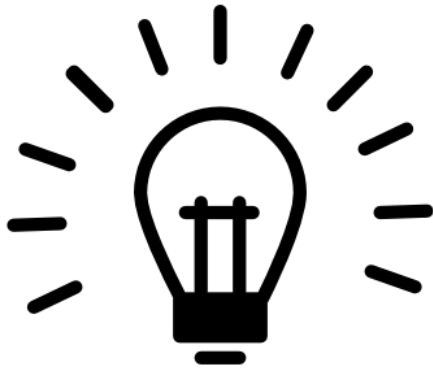
- The project applicant has the capacity and capability to deliver the project;
- The project contributes to environmental goods and services within the UKOT(s);
- The project is sustainable – the outcomes will be sustained after the funding is finished;
- The project demonstrates how it will strengthen the capability and capacity of local partners.



# Project Evaluation- Technical Excellence

- The project has been well-planned and has a clear goal, purpose and outputs;
- The activities are practical and achievable;
- The risks are identified, assessed and have clear mitigation actions;
- The monitoring and evaluation plan ensures changes are measurable and exhibits a clear understanding of the evidence needed to demonstrate these changes, and how this evidence will be shared and made publicly available;
- A well-defined exit strategy is in place from the start of funding;
- The project represents value for money;
- Gender inequality is understood and reflected in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the project; intentional or unintentional increase inequality will be prevented.

# Top Tips

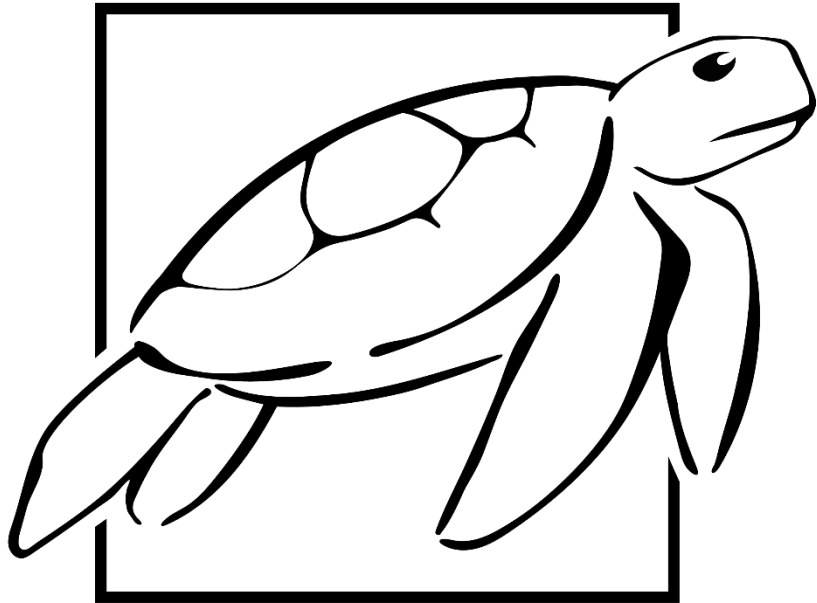


**Thank You & Questions**





**Thanks for listening!**



**DARWIN**  
PLUS

