

**Darwin Initiative
16th Round of Funding**

Guidance Note for Applicants for Fellowship Awards



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Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
DAC	Darwin Advisory Committee
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DI	Darwin Initiative
ECTF	Edinburgh Centre for Tropical Forests
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
EOI	Expression of Interest

1. Background

The Darwin Initiative seeks to help safeguard the world's biodiversity by drawing on UK biodiversity expertise to work with local partners in countries that are rich in biodiversity but poor in financial resources.

Further information on the Initiative can be found on the Darwin website at <http://darwin.defra.gov.uk>

Applicants should be aware that Defra has contracted the Edinburgh Centre for Tropical Forests (ECTF) to manage the administration of the applications process and that all queries about the application process should be addressed to the Darwin Application Unit.

Applications are assessed by the Darwin Advisory Committee (DAC), which consists of experts from the government, academic, science and private sectors. The DAC advises Ministers on the development of the Initiative and makes recommendations on applications for funding. For a list of current DAC members see <http://darwin.defra.gov.uk>

The Guidance for Main Round applications contains overall application guidance for all Darwin projects and should be read in conjunction with this document. **This guidance is intended for those applying for Fellowship funding for Darwin Initiative projects and contains specific additional guidance.**

Please ensure you read this guidance carefully, particularly noting the application deadlines, and complete the forms accordingly.

2. Darwin Fellowships

Fellowship (formerly Scholarship) funding was introduced as part of the new phase of the Darwin Initiative aiming to enhance the legacy and impact of the Initiative.

A review of the Darwin Phase 2 schemes in 2005 found that the focus of the Scholarship scheme on work experience was too restrictive, and might limit uptake of the scheme; and that the pool of applicants was heavily restricted by the requirement that Fellows be employed on current or recent Darwin projects. This revision led to broader criteria which include the possibility for acquiring academic qualifications as well as skills development, including the possibility of gaining policy skills. The change of name has been introduced to reflect this and to encourage mid-career as well as early-career applicants.

Darwin Fellowships are targeted at promising individuals who have links with recent or current Darwin Initiative projects, who are working in biodiversity or related fields or whose work may have an impact on biodiversity and are from countries rich in biodiversity but poor in financial resources (including the Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom).

By drawing on expertise in biodiversity from the United Kingdom, the Darwin Fellowship Programme aims to give Fellows the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and experience in biodiversity, in order to assist their organisations, communities and countries in working towards the objectives of the Biodiversity Convention.

Details of previous Fellowship grants awarded can be found at <http://defra.darwin.gov.uk>

3. Eligibility for Fellowship funding

The Darwin Fellow should:

- Be a national of a country rich in biodiversity but relatively poor in financial resources, including the Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom;
- Be associated with a recent or current Darwin Initiative project;
- Have at least five years relevant work experience, or a degree from a university/equivalent higher-education institution and at least two years work experience in a relevant field;
- Demonstrate the ability and willingness to train others and/or disseminate knowledge (including for policy development) and technology upon their return to their respective communities, organisations or work;
- Provide evidence of support for their application from their government or organisation;
- Have a good working knowledge of the English language (if they are to be based in the UK).

Age will not be a consideration. Applications for Fellowships for mid-career as well as early-career applicants are encouraged.

The UK Host Organisation (the Applicant)

- Applications must be submitted by the UK Host Organisation (when this is in the UK) or otherwise by the UK institution of the original Darwin project.
- Eligible organisations or institutions must be based in the UK with expertise in the sustainable use or conservation of biodiversity, or in disciplines that are biodiversity-related and whose work has an impact on the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity. Applications are invited from both public and private sectors.
- The UK Host Organisation will provide experts from within their organisation with a proven track record and at the forefront of their discipline(s) to work closely with or supervise the Fellow. This expertise is typically expected to be of at least postdoctoral quality or equivalent professional standard.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that the Fellowship work upholds, and operates in accordance with, the objectives of the Biodiversity Convention (CBD), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and/or the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). Where relevant, applicants should show how the work will have regard to the Convention's provisions on access to genetic resources, especially with regard to any removal of material. Applicants should also note that the Department would encourage any benefits arising from an innovation or discovery obtained through the grant activity to be shared by the participating bodies in accordance with Article 15.7 of the Convention and the Bonn Guidelines¹ adopted under the Convention. In addition, the Department may seek repayment of a share of any such income, profit or receipt up to the total amount of Fellowship monies paid.

The UK Host Organisation is responsible for imposing terms of engagement or codes of conduct on the Darwin Fellow appropriate to their position as a member of the Darwin Initiative Fellowship Programme.

Defra assumes no liability for damage to persons or property caused by Darwin Fellows.

¹ The Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization

4. Start date, length and location of Fellowships

Fellowships will be provided for **up to one year**. Fellowships should start after 1 July 2009 and finish before 1 October 2010.

Fellowship work plans should not underestimate the time required to develop new ideas and establish practice. The Advisory Committee will consider the feasibility of proposals within the specified timeframe.

Darwin Fellows will typically be based in UK institutions for the majority of the Fellowship, but we will also consider Fellowships based in the Fellow's own country or other Darwin target countries (for example, on a regional project) where this is appropriate. In such cases there should still be an appropriate level of UK input.

Fellows are not limited to working in or with the UK Host Organisation. They should be given the opportunity to establish contacts with other biodiversity institutions, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. The value of contact with, and work in, the private sector should also be considered.

5. Fellowship Criteria

Annex 1 contains a list of key criteria against which Fellowship applications will be evaluated.

Where needs are clearly identifiable and demonstrable, the Department is willing to consider support for Fellows:

- undertaking formal qualifications (where these are linked to the broader criteria of scheme and fall within a Fellowship length of one year);
- developing policy skills (for example, attendance at relevant national or international workshops or meetings).

At the end of the Fellowship, the Fellow should be able to do at least one of the following:

- be capable of giving training within their communities and organisations in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and more generally provide a reliable source of good practice and information;
- have the tools to solve practical country-specific problems related to the sustainable use and/or conservation of biodiversity and/or to make a greater contribution to policy development in the field of biodiversity;
- be able to disseminate widely the information and knowledge gained during the Fellowship.

6. Reporting

The UK Host organisation is responsible for ensuring that the following reports are submitted:

- an interim report, at six months, providing a brief account of experience gained and showing progress against the work plan;
- a final report, no more than one month after the completion of the Darwin Fellowship, showing how the Fellow has achieved his/her objectives, and the objective and criteria of the Darwin Fellowship Programme.

Both reports should be compiled by the Darwin Fellow in consultation with the Host Organisation and using the templates provided on the Darwin website.

7. Funding

Funding will be paid quarterly **to the UK Host Organisation** on receipt of claims. The UK Host Organisation will be responsible for making necessary payments to the Darwin Fellow.

Eligible costs (depending on the nature of the Fellowship) include a monthly subsistence, UK host organisation expenses, fees for academic qualifications and travel costs. Details are set out below.

Up to the equivalent of £1,300 per month for subsistence will be provided where the Fellow is based in the UK (outside London) or £1500 per month (within London). Fellowships taking place outside the UK will be less. In such cases you should contact Helen Beech at the Darwin Applications Unit to establish rates. The monthly amount consists of:

- £1,000 per month for Fellows based within the UK but outside London, and £1,200 per month for within London to cover the Darwin Fellow's food, accommodation and incidental costs. **Fellowships taking place outside the UK will be paid at a lesser amount.**
- £300 per month to contribute towards the UK Host Organisation's expenses (and any other institutions working with the Fellow) including "bench fees" (eg the cost of lab and desk space), overheads, IT equipment, costs of employment, supervision and research costs. **This rate may be reviewed by Defra where a Fellowship takes place outside the UK.**

Reasonable fees for academic qualifications will be granted but a Fellowship consisting entirely of a programme of study towards an academic qualification will not be eligible for bench fees in addition to course fees.

Up to £2,000 will also be available for the Fellow's actual² travel costs. This is available to cover the following costs:

- one standard return economy airfare for the Darwin Fellow from their home country to the UK, plus travel to and from airports.
- the cost of any visas or other necessary travel documents including appropriate insurance and medical cover for the duration of the Fellowship.

An additional provision (up to £500 for travel within the host country or up to £1,500 for international travel) may be included for travel and conference fees during the course of the project where this will contribute to development of policy skills (for example, attendance at national or international workshops or meetings).

Please be aware that we have introduced a *de minimis* level of £5,000. In other words, the last 10% of your final award, or £5,000, whichever is the larger will be retained pending a satisfactory final report review.

Applications will be considered on their merits in the light of available resources. There are limited funds available in each financial year for new Fellowships, subject to monies being voted by Parliament. The Department will not be able to fund all eligible applications.

The Department reserves the right to terminate the Fellowship at any time and reclaim any monies paid for part or full months remaining.

² That is, can only be claimed against receipts for actual costs incurred

8. The application process

8.1 Applications

Fellowship applications must be received electronically by 2359h GMT on **Friday 20 February 2009**. A paper copy of the application should be sent, with a postmark not later than **Monday 23 February 2009**. You will receive an email acknowledgement that your application has been received not later than **midday on Wednesday 25 February 2009**. If you do not receive an acknowledgement by this date, please call 0131 440 5180.

The application should be submitted on the prescribed forms in Microsoft Word in font size no less than Arial 11pt (unless otherwise specified). **Please observe word limits (and page limits) where specified. Applications which exceed word limits will be automatically rejected. This will be strictly enforced for this Round.** If you wish to send a PDF version (to overcome any layout concerns), please also include the Word/Excel versions as information will be automatically extracted from these documents into the Darwin Management database and some of this information will be made available through the Darwin website if your application is successful.

Your application must also include:

- **One page CVs** for the proposed Fellow and for the principal UK experts listed in Section 5 of the application form;
- **One** written reference in support of the proposed Darwin Fellow from their government or employing organisation;
- **One** written reference in support of the participants (the proposed Darwin Fellow and the UK Host Organisation, including their nominated expert) and the proposed work. This is likely to be in the form of a letter from the UK Host Organisation confirming support of the work and naming the individuals involved.
- A copy of your organisation's most recent audited accounts and annual report. These may be submitted by electronic link to your website, if appropriate. If sending hard copy, please only send one copy per organization, irrespective of how many Fellowship applications are being submitted.

Additional documents or annexes will not be passed to the Committee for their consideration unless they have been specifically requested.

8.2 Submission of your application

All applications must be made on the prescribed forms found on the Darwin website at <http://darwin.defra.gov.uk/apply> (marked "Round 16"). If you have any problems downloading the forms, please contact Helen Beech on 0131-440-5180 or at darwin-applications@ltsi.co.uk

Please send completed applications to the Darwin Applications Unit by email to darwin-applications@ltsi.co.uk. The name of the proposed Fellow should be in the subject line of the email. A hard copy of the full application plus any documents not available electronically should also be sent to Darwin Applications Unit, Pentlands Science Park, Bush Loan, Penicuik, Edinburgh EH26 0PL. These should be postmarked no later than Monday 23 February 2009.

8.3 Application Results

The Darwin Advisory Committee will assess all written applications. The Advisory Committee may then request telephone interviews with the UK Host Organisation and the proposed Darwin Fellow before making their final selection.

Defra expects to announce the successful applicants and Darwin Fellows by the end of April 2009. No correspondence concerning the result of the evaluation is possible prior to the official announcement.

Annex 1: Darwin Initiative Fellowship Criteria

Darwin Fellowship applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Fellowships will draw on **UK expertise** in the field of biodiversity, of post-doctoral or equivalent professional level.
- Fellowships will result in the **transfer of knowledge and/or technology** relating to biodiversity between the UK and the Fellow's country.
- Fellowships will be **collaborative**, involving the Darwin Fellow and the UK Host Organisation in a dual partnership at all stages (including development of the proposal). Where relevant, the Fellow should demonstrate their own consultation and collaboration with local institutions or communities in the target country/ies.
- Fellowships will contribute, directly or indirectly, towards implementation of the **Biodiversity Convention, and/or CITES and/or CMS**.
- Where appropriate, Fellowship work will raise awareness of the potential worth of natural resources and encourage their sustainable use in order to directly or indirectly help eliminate poverty and develop **sustainable livelihoods** in those countries.
- Fellowship work will be of high **quality** and **scientific (or other appropriate professional) excellence**.
- Fellowships will leave a **legacy**, through a real and lasting **impact** on the Fellow's capacity to help his/her country meet its obligations under the Conventions. Fellows should demonstrate the expectation of related work after the Fellowship ends and demonstrate how the skills and knowledge they acquired during the Fellowship will be applied in their country to spread knowledge or expertise (e.g. through training others, practical application, or wider dissemination). Where relevant, a strategy should be developed during the term of the Fellowship for effective implementation of skills learnt during the training period.
- The outputs and outcomes from Fellowships should be **additional**, and will not cut across work being funded through other mainstream environmental or research programmes. Research projects, in particular, must tackle work in an area of biodiversity that has previously been neglected or undervalued.
- Fellowship work should be, wherever possible, **innovative and distinctive**. It should show a new approach to a problem or issue and not cover old ground - although tested methodology may be used for a new area or issue. To ensure Fellowship work is distinctive, applications should identify how any outputs will be badged and in what ways the Department's name and the Darwin name and logo would be used to help raise the Darwin profile.
- Fellowships will demonstrate good **value for money**. Both actual results from the Fellowship work, as well as the benefits of the Fellowship to the Fellow and their country's capacity to meet the objectives of the Biodiversity Convention, will be taken into account.