

Applicant: **Crudge, Brian**  
Organisation: **Free the Bears Fund Inc**  
Funding Sought: **£360,000.00**

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# IWTR8S2\1006

## **Combating illegal trade of bears and diversifying livelihoods in Laos**

The placement of confiscated wildlife remains a major obstacle to effective law enforcement in Laos. By rapidly increasing capacity to house confiscated bears, this project will enable responsible government agencies to effectively implement legal deterrents in order to end the trafficking of bears in Laos and help maintain the ecological intactness of forest ecosystems. Additionally, we will demonstrate the role that well-run wildlife sanctuaries can play in poverty reduction through the creation of diverse livelihood and educational opportunities.

## PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

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|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Title</b>        | Mr                      |
| <b>Name</b>         | Brian                   |
| <b>Surname</b>      | Crudge                  |
| <b>Organisation</b> | Free the Bears Fund Inc |
| <b>Website</b>      | [REDACTED]              |
| <b>Tel (Work)</b>   | [REDACTED]              |
| <b>Email (Work)</b> | [REDACTED]              |
| <b>Address</b>      | [REDACTED]              |
|                     | [REDACTED]              |
|                     | [REDACTED]              |
|                     | [REDACTED]              |
|                     | [REDACTED]              |

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## Section 1 - Contact Details

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### PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

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|              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Title        | Mr                      |
| Name         | Brian                   |
| Surname      | Crudge                  |
| Organisation | Free the Bears Fund Inc |
| Website      | [REDACTED]              |
| Tel (Work)   | [REDACTED]              |
| Email (Work) | [REDACTED]              |
| Address      | [REDACTED]              |

### GMS ORGANISATION

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| Type           | Charity/ trusts         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Name           | Free the Bears Fund Inc |
| Phone (Work)   | [REDACTED]              |
| Email (Work)   | [REDACTED]              |
| Website (Work) | [REDACTED]              |
| Address        | [REDACTED]              |

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## Section 2 - Objectives, Species & Summary

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### Q3. Title:

Combating illegal trade of bears and diversifying livelihoods in Laos

### What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. IWTR8S1\1001

IWTR8S1\1145

### Q4. Which of the four key IWT Challenge Fund objectives will your project address?

Please tick all that apply. Note that projects supporting more than one will not achieve a higher score.

- Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents
- Strengthening law enforcement

### Q5. Species project is focusing on

Where there are more than four species that will benefit from the project's work, please add more boxes using the selection option below.

Asiatic Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*)

Sun Bear (*Helarctos malayanus*)

Pangolin (*Manis sp*)

*No Response*

**Do you require more fields?**

No

## Q6. Summary

**Please provide a brief summary of your project, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking. Please note that if you are successful, this wording may be used by Defra in communications e.g. as a short description of the project on the website.**

**Please write this summary for a non-technical audience.**

The placement of confiscated wildlife remains a major obstacle to effective law enforcement in Laos. By rapidly increasing capacity to house confiscated bears, this project will enable responsible government agencies to effectively implement legal deterrents in order to end the trafficking of bears in Laos and help maintain the ecological intactness of forest ecosystems. Additionally, we will demonstrate the role that well-run wildlife sanctuaries can play in poverty reduction through the creation of diverse livelihood and educational opportunities.

## Section 3 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

### Q7. Country(ies)

**Which eligible host country(ies) will your project be working in? Where there are more than four countries that your project will be working in, please add more boxes using the selection option below.**

**Country** Laos  
**1**

**Country** *No Response*  
**2**

**Country** *No Response*  
**3**

**Country** *No Response*  
**4**

**Do you require more fields?**

No

### Q8. Project dates

**Start date:**

01 July 2022

**End date:**

31 March 2025

**Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):**

2 years, 9 months

### Q9. Budget summary

| Year:          | 2022/23     | 2023/24     | 2024/25    | 2025/26 | Total request          |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|------------|---------|------------------------|
| <b>Amount:</b> | £100,000.00 | £180,000.00 | £80,000.00 | £0.00   | <b>£</b><br>360,000.00 |

## Q10. Proportion of IWT Challenge Fund budget expected to be expended in eligible countries: %

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### Q11a. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

### What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

The Lead Organisation (Free the Bears) will provide full or matched funding of approximately [REDACTED] for the salaries of key implementation. In addition, Free the Bears will provide [REDACTED] of salaries for all additional staff employed during the course of this project, and will assume full responsibility for salaries for positions that continue following completion of this project.

## Q11b. Total confirmed & unconfirmed matched funding (£)

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### Q11c. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you fund the project if you don't manage to secure this?

Matched funding of [REDACTED] in year 2 and 3 of the project is unconfirmed. These funds will be secured through ongoing fund raising efforts throughout the year 1 and 2 of the project. As this project is a core focus of the programme in Laos it will be prioritised for allocation of funds.

## Section 4 - Problem statement & Gap in existing approaches

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### Q12. Project stage

With reference to the application guidance, please select the relevant project stage.

Main

### Q13. Problem the project is trying to address

**Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in terms of illegal wildlife trade and its relationship with poverty. Please describe the level of threat to the species concerned. Please also explain which communities are affected by this issue, and how this aspect of the illegal trade in wildlife relates to poverty or efforts of people and/or states to reduce poverty.**

**Please cite the evidence you are using to support your assessment of the problem (references can be listed in your additional attached PDF document).**

Laos is a major source and transit point for IWT. Asiatic black bears and sun bears are highly sought-after for use in Traditional Medicines and to replenish stocks on bile farms domestically and internationally (Burgess et al., 2014; Livingstone et al., 2018). Both species are CITES Appendix 1. Despite legal protection, populations are declining, with illegal hunting and trade recognised as the most immediate threats (Garshelis & Steinmetz, 2020; Scotson et al., 2017).

Recent improvements to legislation in Laos have sought to strengthen protection of wildlife but the placement of live confiscated animals remains a major obstacle to effective law enforcement. Since euthanasia of protected species is not permitted legally or culturally in Laos, a major barrier to confiscation of illegally held bears is the lack of available space for their subsequent placement and care. Without adequate infrastructure for placement of animals, there is low political will to enforce existing laws which, as a result, fail to act as effective deterrents to IWT. The situation of bear bile farming in Vietnam clearly demonstrates this issue. Over 4,000 bears were held on farms when bile farming was banned in 2005 but,

without sufficient space for the placement of animals, trade continues illegally to this day (Crudge et al., 2020). By contrast, Cambodian authorities, in partnership with Free the Bears since 1997, and with support from other NGOs, have confiscated over 210 live bears and bear bile farming was never allowed to establish. Consequently, over a 12-year period Cambodia reported the highest total number of bear seizures in Asia (Burgess et al, 2014).

In Laos Free the Bears and other NGOs provide technical and financial support to the authorities during investigations and interdiction of wildlife trade. The Department of Forestry Inspection in Laos is currently in the process of establishing rapid response teams, similar to the model that has proved successful in Cambodia. Working in partnership with the Lao government since 2003, Free the Bears established a dedicated bear rescue centre and, since 2017, has been developing Laos' first official government-owned wildlife sanctuary in order to help combat IWT. Interdiction rates for live animals have increased exponentially since 2016. However, illegal bear trade remains a pervasive issue, with ~100 bears held on bile farms and ongoing trade in live bear cubs.

As large, wide-ranging species, bears are important seed-dispersers, particularly for fruit trees with large seeds. Consequently, bears play a vital role in maintaining species diversity and allowing fruit tree species to adapt to climate change (via dispersal) (Corlett, 2017). Healthy bear populations therefore are important to the long-term health of the forest and the ecosystem services which forest provides.

The livelihoods of rural communities in Laos remain reliant on forest resources such as Non-Timber Forest Products. Recognising the role that healthy forest can play in poverty reduction and the environment, the National Green Growth Strategy of the Lao PDR has identified forest restoration, forest protection and sustainable use as priority goals for sustainable development by 2030 (Green Growth Strategy, 2018).

## Q14. Gap in existing approaches

**What gap does your project fill in existing approaches? Evidence projects should describe how the improved evidence base will be used to design an intervention and the gap the intervention will fill. Extra projects should also provide evidence of the intervention's success at a smaller scale.**

There has been concerted effort to improve wildlife trade law enforcement in Laos in recent years through the provision of technical assistance and capacity building, and there are clear signs of improvement. Working with government partners, since 2003 Free the Bears has helped in the placement of 106 confiscated bears, 60% of which have been seized since 2017. This has effectively stemmed to flow of bear cubs into illegal bile farms (where captive breeding does not occur) and has prevented growth of bear bile farming in Laos. However, development of facilities in which to place bears has only just kept pace with confiscation rates. Without ample sanctuary facilities available, political will for law enforcement agencies to close illegal bear bile farms containing large numbers of live bears may be lacking and advocating for increased effort is challenging. This project will strengthen wildlife law enforcement and ensure effective legal deterrents in Laos by rapidly increasing capacity to provide immediate short-term housing for confiscated bears such that Lao authorities can be further encouraged and have the ability to confiscate bears from bile farms whilst continuing to prevent further bears from entering farms through effective investigation and rapid interdiction.

## Section 5 - Objectives & Commitments

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**Q15. Which national and international objectives and commitments does this project contribute towards?**

**Consider national plans such as NBSAPs and commitments such as London Conference Declarations and the Kasane and Hanoi Statements. Please provide the number(s) of the relevant commitments and some brief information on how your project will contribute to them. There is no need to include the text from the relevant commitment.**

Lack of suitable facilities in which to place confiscated wildlife is a major barrier to effective wildlife law enforcement in Laos because it prevents the authorities from confiscating live animals which can be dangerous and/or difficult to care for. In addressing this problem, this project will facilitate effective law enforcement to combat illegal wildlife trade and assist prosecution as a deterrent to trade. As such the project contributes to London commitment B, action16.X.

Through the expansion of a wildlife sanctuary, this project will increase the capacity of local communities to pursue

sustainable livelihoods and help combat poverty in the area through increase livelihood diversification, sustainable tourism and training opportunities. As such this project also contributes to London D.18.XVIII.

The wildlife sanctuary will provide further opportunities for demand reduction (London A.15.I), and awareness raising among the judicial sector (London B.16.XI). In 2019 we hosted a visit of World Bank Lao Environment and Social (LENS2) Project managers; provided 5 days of training in "Primary Care for Rescued Wildlife" 50 Dept. Forestry Inspection officers; welcomed a group of 40+ Lao Dept. of Forestry and Vietnamese Forest Protection Dept. officers bilateral meeting on combatting transboundary wildlife trade; and 26 officers from Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, Dept. Forestry Inspection and Dept. of Forestry joined wildlife burning ceremony. In 2020, the sanctuary welcomed visits from Lao-Wildlife Enforcement Network, the Director General of Luang Prabang Forestry Office, 50+ Environmental Police, and ambassadors from UK, Australia, and Singapore.

## Section 6 - Method, Change Expected, Gender & Exit Strategy

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### Q16. 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, risks etc.).

Free the Bears (FTB) has been collaborating with government partners in Southeast Asia to provide facilities for the placement of bears confiscated from illegal trade since 1997. Besides establishing the first bear rescue centre in Laos in 2003 and expanding this work with the development of a larger, multi-species sanctuary in 2017 with dedicated facilities to house confiscated pangolins, small carnivores, and primates, we have supported the establishment of the Lao-Wildlife Enforcement Network, and delivered training in wildlife handling techniques to >100 government officers. FTB has worked with Lao authorities to confiscate over 100 bears, with interdiction rates increasing drastically upon the establishment of the multi-species sanctuary in 2017, demonstrably limiting the expansion of bear bile farming.

Two key lessons learned from past experience are at the crux of this project: Firstly, that available space for the placement of confiscated animals is prerequisite for effective wildlife law enforcement; Secondly, that the development of wildlife sanctuaries can contribute to socio-economic development through livelihood diversification opportunities, which in-turn builds community and government support.

This project will strengthen capacity for effective wildlife law enforcement and help ensure effective legal deterrents while demonstrating the role that wildlife sanctuaries can play in poverty reduction through the creation of sustainable livelihoods for forest-edge communities. By providing direct support and facilitating the flow of information we will enable the Department of Forestry Inspection (DOFI) to monitor illegal trade in bears, build stakeholder support for enforcement actions.

After bears and other protected species are confiscated, they are officially signed over into the care of FTB and the Luang Prabang Provincial Department of Agriculture and Forestry (which is the legal custodian of the LPWS). At this time, they are still considered evidence of a criminal offence. FTB is responsible for keeping clear records of all animals, reporting annually (and if an animal dies) to the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office which conducts regular inspections and is responsible for maintaining the chain of custody.

Temporary holding pens will be created using a modular design that can be disassembled when not in use, and even transported to select DOFI stations across Laos, in order to facilitate the rapid closure of bile farms and secure short-term placement of bears pending the construction of permanent housing at the sanctuary (permanent infrastructure will be funded by other donors). Post-confiscation mortality is a major issue for certain species or individual animals that need specialist care, such as pangolins. Chances of survival significantly increase if proper care is provided within the first 24hours following confiscation. During this project, at least 40 DOFI officers will participate in work placements at the wildlife sanctuary to build capacity in animal handling and short-term care to ensure safety of animals and people during

confiscations and reduce mortality. When possible, and following best practice guidelines, commonly traded species such as macaques, leopard cats, civets, etc. will be released to suitable protected habitat in order to ensure continued capacity for the placement of confiscated animals.

The six villages closest to the sanctuary, are all adjoining or within Protection Forest, have limited livelihood options and, as such, the sanctuary will become an important and secure source of income and a resource for the communities. Contracts have already been signed with 50 households to grow a variety of crops for the sanctuary, increasing from 17 in 2020. As the number of bears and other animals at the sanctuary increases, so too will the demand for animal food. Multi-year contracts will be signed with local households to grow produce to supply the sanctuary at fair market prices, thus reducing the need for families to travel by motorbike up to 25km on unsurfaced road to the market.

A flatbed truck will be purchased in the first year of the project in order to allow simultaneous transfer of multiple bears at a time, providing a cost-effective alternative to vehicle rentals during rescues and allowing for additional support to local communities when not engaged in rescue activities.

International tourism is an important aspect of Laos' sustainable development strategy. The sanctuary, which is situated close to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Luang Prabang – will serve as an additional attraction to the region.

Importantly, development of a wildlife sanctuary provides economic opportunities that are not solely linked to the presence of tourists which provides a safety-net for communities during times of low visitor numbers – as evidenced by continued expansion of the sanctuary and provision of employment opportunities throughout 2020 and 2021 while there was no international tourism.

## **Q17. Capability and Capacity**

**How will you support the strengthening of capability and capacity in the project countries at organisational or individual levels, please provide details of what form this will take and the post-project value to the country.**

To facilitate the rapid investigation of illegal wildlife trade and confiscation of protected species in trade, project staff will facilitate the flow of information between relevant government agencies regarding reports of wildlife trade and coordinate the placement of live confiscated animals which may be placed in Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary or, alternatively for non-ursids, at the Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife in Vientiane Province.

Laos has a land area equivalent to the UK and travelling from the sanctuary remote areas often take more than 12 hours on difficult mountainous roads. Therefore, it is not always possible for Free the Bears animal care staff or equipment to be present at the time of confiscation. During this project, training in animal handling and short-term care will be provided to DOFI officers during work placements at the sanctuary. Capture nets and robust transport crates will be distributed to Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices to be available as soon as reports of captive protected species are confirmed.

Veterinary training and capacity within Laos is extremely limited, including for domestic animals and livestock but especially for wildlife. A veterinary internship will be created at the Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary to receive on-the-job training with Free the Bears' veterinary staff, including Laos' only trained wildlife veterinarian.

Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary is government-owned. While development of permanent infrastructure for the long-term placement of confiscated animals is not included in the proposed project it is a large component of the organisational strategy and will be funded by other means. Once fully developed it is expected that the sanctuary population will plateau as effective law enforcement deters illegal trade, ultimately reducing confiscation rates, and through natural attrition of older individuals creating space for continual placement of animals should it be required.

## **Q18. Gender equality**

**All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Explain how your understanding of gender equality within the context your project, and how is it reflected in your plans.**

Laos is ranked 113 out of 162 countries in terms of gender inequality (Gender Inequality Index, 2019). Female participation in the labour market is 76.8%, comparable to 79.7% for males. Creation of non-farming jobs helps reduce poverty in rural Laos but increases the vulnerability of women who lack non-farming skills. Free the Bears is expected to remain a major employer in the area for the foreseeable future and the opportunity exists to identify desired skills and competencies for



those in the local communities who are considering training options.

This project will create livelihood and training opportunities for six communities around the Wildlife Sanctuary through direct employment and ancillary services such as crop diversification and production. Lao women play an important role in agriculture and spend an equivalent amount of time on agricultural work as do men but there exists a tradition of task division between genders. Consideration will be given when signing contracts to ensure equitable division of labour in crop production and harvest. Additional opportunities for direct employment, training workshops, or engagement in alternative livelihood activities, such as local handicraft production, will be made available equally and monitored throughout in order to ensure equitable gender balance.

Creation of the sanctuary, and Free the Bears presence, has allowed additional links to be formed with other organisations such as the UN Population Fund in Laos with which Free the Bears has discussed opportunities for providing reproductive health services.

Currently Free the Bears Laos Programme staff comprises 20% female and 80% male. Free the Bears is actively seeking to redress this imbalance through targeted employment of women for any new roles over the next 3 years. Additionally, 25 labourers (all female) are casually employed on a daily basis to carry out maintenance of the sanctuary lands and prepare grounds prior to construction.

## Q19. Change expected

**Detail the expected changes to both illegal wildlife trade and poverty reduction this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who will benefit, considering both people and species of focus a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).**

**When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail - number of households should be the largest unit used. Demand reduction projects should demonstrate their indirect links to poverty reduction.**

In the short-term, this project will improve the effectiveness of wildlife law enforcement as a deterrent to illegal wildlife trade within Laos, primarily to reduce trade in bear species but also other priority trade-threatened species such as native pangolins. Creation of additional capacity to house confiscated animals in the short-term will be used to leverage political will and provide impetus to enforce laws pertaining to keeping and trading in bears, resulting in stricter and more timely interdictions and greater deterrents to illegal trade.

At least 40 wildlife law enforcement officers will benefit from training at Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary improving their capacity to carry out their work safely. Necessary equipment will be distributed to Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices for use during confiscation of wildlife.

Successful wildlife confiscations will be shared in the media to act as a deterrent to other would-be traders, and the positive longer-term outcomes for the individual animals will also be shared to encourage others to report wildlife crimes. Wildlife law enforcement officers who see the positive impact of their work will be more motivated to enforce wildlife laws which will be of greater deterrence to traders.

In the short-term this project will directly benefit at least 110 households from communities within 10 – 20 km of the wildlife sanctuary through income generated through employment and the provision of goods or services. Development of the sanctuary will provide livelihood opportunities for at least the next 30 years through the provision of life-long care to bears and associated requirements for skilled labour and opportunities for tourism. Within the next five years it is expected that at least 50 individuals will be employed full-time at the sanctuary, with an additional 80 households benefitting from sale of produce.

In the long-term, this project will contribute to reducing hunting pressure on wild bear populations in Laos, allowing bears to fulfil their role in maintaining a biodiverse forest ecosystem for the benefit of all who depend on it. By demonstrating the role that government-owned sanctuaries can play in livelihood development and effective wildlife law enforcement, this project will provide a scalable model by which to address the issue of illegal wildlife farming for species such as tigers, which remains a challenge. As highlighted by the CITES Secretariat at the 69th Standing Committee meeting following an official visit to FTB facilities in Luang Prabang: the two rescue centres offered a solution at zero cost for the Government of

Lao PDR to close irregular bear farms and confiscate the specimens found in these farms. This positive and constructive cooperation between the Government, an international NGO and the local communities provides a good example of how practical and implementable solutions could be envisaged to support the seizure and placement of live animals illegally held in captivity in the country (Article 35, SC69 Doc. 29.2.1.); and that the approach used by the organization Free the Bears appears to be a good model that makes a difference on the ground (Article 47c, SC69 Doc. 29.2.1.).

## Q20. Pathway to change

**Please outline your project's expected pathway to change. This should be an overview of the overall project logic and outline how you expect your Outputs to contribute towards your overall Outcome and, longer term, your expected Impact.**

Recent improvements to legislation in Laos have sought to strengthen protection of wildlife but challenges remain. Limited options for the placement of live animals seized as a result of government-led wildlife law enforcement remains a major obstacle to effective wildlife law enforcement in Laos - a Buddhist country where euthanasia is not culturally acceptable. Without appropriate facilities in which to place confiscated wildlife, the agencies responsible are constrained in their ability to enforce wildlife laws and prosecute violators.

Increasing capacity to house bears at the Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary will strengthen law enforcement agencies' ability to confiscation illegally traded bears, thus increasing their ability to prosecute wildlife crimes. This in turn will serve as a strong deterrent to future illegal wildlife trade, particularly the trade in wild bears, and encourage others to report wildlife crimes.

Furthermore, development and operation of the Wildlife Sanctuary will benefit the local communities through direct and indirect livelihood opportunities and will demonstrate that sustainable wildlife tourism has the potential to contribute significantly to the development of the region. This will further encourage authorities to shut all bear farms and combat the unsustainable and disreputable illegal wildlife trade in Laos and the region.





## Q21. Exit Strategy

**How the project will reach a sustainable point and continue to deliver benefits post-funding? Will the activities require funding and support from other sources, or will they be mainstreamed in to "business as usual"? How will the required knowledge and skills remain available to sustain the benefits? How will your approach, if proven, be scaled?**

With bears living 30-40years in captivity, provision of life-long care requires a long-term commitment that is currently beyond the technical and financial capacity of Lower Income Countries. Free the Bears has almost 25years' experience supporting governments combat illegal bear trade issues in Cambodia (1997-present), India (2002-2019), Laos (2003-present) and Vietnam (2008-present). Throughout these programmes we have witnessed rapid initial growth in the population of confiscated or surrendered bears, requiring significant investment in building facilities and capacity. However, once the key issue has been addressed the population (and consequently level of investment) stabilises. In Laos we expect similar growth in the population and infrastructure. The proposed project will provide temporary holding to allow rapid confiscation of bears through Laos. Free the Bears commits to securing the additional funding required for permanent housing and long-term care of rescued bears. It is envisaged that high-end tourism will contribute to on-going running costs but international fundraising efforts are likely to remain integral. The Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary is the only government-owned rescue facility in Laos. The nature and scale of input required from Free the Bears will be reviewed on a regular basis until such time that financial and/or technical support is no longer required.

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

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 [IWTR8S2\\_1006 References, supporting information](#)  
 21/03/2022  
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 pdf 3.16 MB

## Section 7 - Risk Management

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### Q22. 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 Risk, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register, using the [Risk Assessment template](#), and be prepared to submit this when requested if you are recommended for funding. Do not attach this to your application.

| Risk Description   | Impact   | Prob.    | Gross Risk | Mitigation  | Residual Risk |
|--|----------|----------|------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Fiduciary</b><br>External goods and services providers fail to deliver on agreed terms.   | Moderate | Unlikely | Moderate   | Use established organisational practices to ensure accurate and transparent accounting. All expenditure is invoiced. Accounts are updated and reviewed on a monthly basis. Use known and/or reputable providers. When advanced payment is required ensure it is under a signed agreement. | Minor         |
| <b>Safeguarding</b><br>Involvement of community members and other individuals in project activities impacts their ability perform their usual household responsibilities such as caring for vulnerable family members. | Possible | Minor    | Moderate   | Comply with organisational Safeguarding Policy at all times. Ensure that participation in project activities is voluntary and that planning of activities is collaborative and sensitive to potential safeguarding issues.  | Minor         |
| <b>Delivery Chain</b><br>Collaborative relationship between project partners breaks down, resulting in delays or failure to meet project objectives.   | Rare     | Severe   | Major      | Maintain collaborative relationship between project partners through clear communication and regular reporting in accordance with MOU.  | Minor         |
| <b>Risk 4</b><br>Safeguarding: Wildlife law enforcement officer injured during confiscation of live animals.   | Rare     | Moderate | Minor      | Coordination between in-country organisations to accompany law enforcement agencies during confiscation of live animals whenever possible. Provide equipment and training in the safe handling of animals.  | Minor         |
| <b>Risk 5</b><br>Contextual: Global pandemic impacts local availability and/or cost of supplies and materials needed for the delivery of the project, such as steel and medicines.                                     | Possible | Moderate | Major      | Use suppliers known to the organisation, or identify new suppliers, in neighbouring countries and regionally to import the required supplies and/or materials.  | Moderate      |

|   |      |          |       |   |       |
|---|------|----------|-------|---|-------|
| <b>Risk 6</b>   | Rare | Moderate | Minor | Monitor potential changes to the status quo through collaborative government and non-government networks such as the Lao Wildlife Enforcement Network and 15.7 Working Group (on illegal wildlife trade in Laos) and adapt accordingly. | Minor |
| Contextual: Restructuring of ministries and departments, or their associated responsibilities, reduces capacity or political will for wildlife law enforcement. |      |          |       |   |       |

## Section 8 - Implementation Timetable





### Q23. Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities

Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the Word template as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project.

[Implementation Timetable Template](#)

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and fill/shade only the quarters in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

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 [IWTR8S2\\_1006 Implementation Timetable](#)  
 21/03/2022  
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 pdf 514.72 KB

## Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation

### Q24. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe how the progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project's M&E.

**IWT Challenge Fund projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an 'add' on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E (see [Finance Guidance](#)).**

The Project Lead will be responsible for M&E of this project, with the assistance of Free the Bears Laos Programme Manager. As M&E is integral to the successful completion of this project it falls within the scope of the terms of references for management staff. Organisational capacity to deliver the project will be ensured by maintaining staff in key roles, monitored by internal HR records.

From the outset of the project, all activities will be conducted in a way that ensures project indicators are measured appropriately and assessed. Progress towards reaching the indicators detailed in the logframe will be assessed on an ongoing basis during Free the Bears Laos Programme monthly meetings, and monthly reports.

A key measure of success for this project will be the increased capacity to house bears at the Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary. Free the Bears maintains a secure Animal Records Database and Monthly Reports for each country programme

which clearly details the size of the current animal population, including and arrivals, transfers and deaths. Free the Bears also conducts biannual internal Welfare Audits which details the percent occupancy of total housing capacity for each sanctuary. These records will be monitored throughout the project to ensure that targets are being met. If results are not on track towards being met in a timely manner, contributing factors will be discussed with the project team, mitigation measures identified and work plans will be adapted accordingly.

Project partners, Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office annual inspections of the sanctuary and review of project activities and progress to ensure compliance with local/national laws and agreed objectives.

Department of Forest Inspection are responsible for conducting annual audits of captive prohibition category wildlife. These data will be used to monitor the numbers of bears remaining in bile farms throughout this project as a major indicator of success on this front.

Household surveys will be conducted in the participating communities in the first and final year of this project in order to assess the livelihood impact of sanctuary development in comparison to 2017 baseline data and publicly available statistics from national censuses.

Risks to the delivery of the project will be reviewed regularly using the risk register, with risks and mitigation measures updated and adapted as required.

Annual and Half Year progress reports and a Final Project report complying with IWT CF requirements will be submitted by Free the Bears for review. These reports will provide robust reporting against the intended objectives and outputs indicators detailed in the logframe. A complete audit will be conducted in the final year of the project and submitted to IWT CF.

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|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Total project budget for M&amp;E in GBP (this may include Staff, Travel and Subsistence costs)</b> | ██████████ |
|---|------------|

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|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Percentage of total project budget set aside for M&amp;E (%)</b> | █ |
|---|---|

---

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Number of days planned for M&amp;E</b> | 200 |
|---|-----|

---

## Section 10 - Logical Framework

---

### Q25. Logical Framework





IWT Challenge Fund projects will be required to monitor and report against their progress towards their Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you expect to measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

- [Stage 2 Logframe Template](#)

Please complete your full logframe in the separate Word template and upload as a PDF using the file upload below – **please do not edit the template structure other than adding additional Outputs if needed as a logframe submitted in a different format may make your application ineligible**. Copy your Impact, Outcome and Output statements and your activities below - these should be the same as in your uploaded logframe.

**Please upload your logframe as a PDF document.**

---

 [IWTR8S2\\_1006\\_Logical Framework](#)  
 21/03/2022  
 07:46:44  
 pdf 478.45 KB

### Impact:

Reduction in number of bears traded and held in bile farms in Laos, and demonstrable poverty reduction stemming from

opportunities  
created through proper placement of confiscated wildlife.

**Outcome:**

Improved capacity to enforce wildlife laws reduces the number of bears being traded and/or held illegally, and the care of confiscated animals provides opportunities for livelihood diversification in local communities.

**Project Outputs**

---

**Output 1:**

Increased capacity to house confiscated bears at the Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary.

---

**Output 2:**

Increase in confiscation rates for bears and other protected wildlife throughout Laos.

---

**Output 3:**

Reduce poverty in local communities adjacent to Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary.

---

**Output 4:**

*No Response*

---

**Output 5:**

*No Response*

---

**Do you require more Output fields?**

**It is advised to have fewer than 6 Outputs since this level of detail can be provided at the Activity level.**

No

**Activities**

**Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.**

- 1.1 Design of temporary modular holding pens, by Y1Q3.
- 1.2 Fabrication of temporary holding pens, +5 by Y1Q4, +15 by Y2Q4, +10 by Y3Q4.
- 1.3 Animal keeper recruitment and training, +2 by Y1Q4, +2 by Y2Q4, +2Y3Q4
  
- 2.1 Procurement of dedicated rescue vehicle by Y1Q2
- 2.2 Build capacity of government agencies in short-term handling and care of wildlife, through month-long on-site training of at least 20 officers in Y1 and Y2.
- 2.3 Fabricate bear-safe transportation crates and distribute to 6 of 18 provinces by Y1Q4.
- 2.4 Assist government agencies in the transportation and placement of confiscated of bears and other protected species, throughout Y1Q2 - Y3Q4
- 2.5 Advocate for bear farm closures and demonstrate increased capacity to house confiscated bears with a site visit to wildlife sanctuary for key government stakeholders, Y2Q2
  
- 3.1 Recruit members of the local communities as labour, 40 by Y2Q4
- 3.2 Sign agreements with households to grow produce (fruit, veg, rice) for the sanctuary, +30 by Y1Q4, +20 by Y2Q4
- 3.3 Handicraft workshops, twice per year, attended by at least 15 households from the local communities, with at least 50% female participants.
- 3.4 Agreements made with 4 villages to assist in transporting produce to market, by Y1Q2.
- 3.5 Conduct follow-up and endline socioeconomic surveys in 300 households by Y1Q2 and Y3Q3, respectively.

## Section 11 - Budget and Funding

---

### Q26. Budget

Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.





Note that there are different templates for projects requesting under £100,000 and over £100,000. Please refer to the [Finance Guidance](#) for more information.

- [Budget form for projects under £100k](#)
- [Budget form for projects over £100k](#)

Please ensure you include any co-financing figures in the Budget spreadsheet to clarify the full budget required to deliver this project.

**N.B.:** Please state all costs by financial year (1 April to 31 March) and in GBP. The IWT Challenge Fund cannot agree any increase in grants once awarded.

Please upload your completed IWT Challenge Fund Budget Form Excel spreadsheet using the field below.

 [Budget-for-IWT-R8-over-100k-Mar22 IWTR8S2 1006](#)  
 21/03/2022  
 07:51:20  
 xlsx 100.21 KB

### Q27. Funding

**Q27a. Is this a new initiative or does it build on existing work (delivered by anyone and funded through any source)?**

- Development of existing work

**Please provide details:**

This project builds on Free the Bears' existing work supporting wildlife law enforcement in Laos since 2003. It is important to note that the majority of funding secured by Free the Bears is restricted to ongoing running costs of sanctuaries and specific projects such as community engagement or construction of housing to accommodate the existing bear population, with limited scope to facilitate greater law enforcement effort. The proposed project will be an additional activity that will rapidly increase temporary holding capacity which would accommodate an influx of bears, from the closure of a bear farm for example. Since 2017 we have helped rescue 63 bears, placing considerable pressure on the existing sanctuary and limiting our ability to advocate for closure of bear farms. With this project we will be able to increase capacity to provide essential short-term housing for bears and will be able to increase our advocacy efforts to encourage the relevant authorities to enforce the wildlife legislation and close bear bile farms.

In addition to individual sponsorship supporting the running costs of the sanctuary, construction of bear houses, quarantine area, pangolin facility and wildlife hospital have been supported by various donors, including; Wildlife Reserves Singapore; Shining Foundation Limited.

**Q27b. Are you aware of any current or future plans for similar work to the proposed project?**

- Yes

**Please give details explaining similarities and differences, and explaining how your work will be additional and what attempts have been/will be made to co-operate with and learn lessons from such work for mutual benefits.**

There are ongoing efforts by government departments in Laos to increase wildlife law enforcement capacity through training programmes, funded by the World Bank for example. However, training is of limited success in terms of combatting IWT, in part because the law enforcement agencies lack the resources and infrastructure necessary to confiscate living wild animals such as bears which are frequently encountered in IWT. The proposed project will support these capacity building efforts by providing government-owned facilities in which to place confiscated animals.

The Lao Conservation Trust for Wildlife (LCTW), based at the Lao Zoo in Vientiane, which also has some capacity to rescue and release certain species. Key points of difference between Free the Bears and LCTW include government ownership of the wildlife rescue facilities (the Lao Zoo is privately-owned) and Free the Bears' long history of successful collaboration with the Lao government since 2003. We work closely with the team at LCTW to determine the most efficient way to provide support for the government whenever IWT interdictions take place, with cases being discussed based on geography (LCTW focusing on central/southern Laos), species (including relevant experience with sensitive species) and existing capacity at the respective facilities at time of rescue.

## Q28. Capital items

**If you plan to purchase capital items with IWT funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.**

A flatbed truck (██████████) will be purchased in the first year of the project in order to transport bears during confiscation operations. This provides a cost-effective alternative to vehicle rentals and will facilitate rapid response to reports of illegally held wildlife. A dual-cab vehicle will allow multiple staff to travel in one vehicle, further reducing costs. A truck will provide additional benefit to local communities in the transportation of goods to market, when not engaged in rescue activities.

Materials for temporary holding pens constitute a large proportion of capital costs (██████████ over three years). Where possible, materials will be purchased locally to ensure that funds are channeled towards the target communities.

These capital items will be retained beyond the life of the project. If Free the Bears no longer has need for these items they will be offered, free of charge, to our government partners, as per our MOU.

## Q29. Value for Money

**Please describe why you consider your application to be good value for money including justification of why the measures you will adopt will secure value for money.**

This project aims to end bear bile farming in Laos, one of five bear bile farming nations worldwide, and halt illegal trafficking of bears. This represents value for money when weighed against the consequences and long-term cost of allowing the practice to continue. Bear bile farming in Southeast Asia has proven to be unsustainable, difficult to regulate, and completely reliant on continual restocking with bears captured illegally in the wild (Crudge et al., 2018; Livingstone et al., 2018). Bear bile farms represent a major threat to the conservation of bears: facilitating the laundering of bear bile and live bears; increasing ambiguity as to the origin of bear parts, and potentially increasing demand for wild bear parts. Bear farming is still in a relatively nascent stage in Laos, and at scale where bears in illegal farms can be transferred to official facilities within a realistic timeframe. If farming is allowed to continue and grow, it may expand beyond a point where it is manageable, to the detriment of wild populations. For example, in Vietnam bear bile farming expanded rapidly, from ~500 bears in the mid-90's to a peak of ~4,300 bears ten years later, to the detriment of wild bear populations (Crudge et al., 2016; 2018). Since the introduction of legislation in 2006, the number of bears in farms has dropped to fewer than 500 currently. However, with just 300-350 bears placed in sanctuaries in Vietnam, the remaining almost 3,500 bears ultimately profited the illegal traders and perpetuated the trade.

## Section 12 - Safeguarding and Ethics

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### Q30. Safeguarding



**Projects funded through the IWT Challenge Fund must fully protect vulnerable people all of the time, wherever they work. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.**

**Please confirm the Lead Partner has the following policies in place and that these can be available on request:**

**Please upload the lead partner's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF on the certification page.**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| <b>We have a safeguarding policy, which includes a statement of our commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse</b>  | Checked |
| <b>We have attached a copy of our safeguarding policy to this application (file upload on certification page)</b>  | Checked |
| <b>We keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and how they were dealt with</b>  | Checked |
| <b>We have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures to use when allegations and complaints are made, and have clear processes in place for when a disclosure is made</b>  | Checked |
| <b>We share our safeguarding policy with downstream partners</b>   | Checked |
| <b>We have a whistle-blowing policy which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised</b>  | Checked |
| <b>We have a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours - inside and outside the work place - and make clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards</b> | Checked |

**Please outline how you will implement your safeguarding policies in practice and ensure that downstream partners apply the same standards as the Lead Partner.**

**If your project involves data collection and/or analysis which identifies individuals (e.g. biometric data, intelligence data), please explain the measures which are in place and/or will be taken to ensure the proper control and use of the data. Please explain the experience of the organisations involved in managing this information in your project**

This project will support and encourage effective enforcement of Laos' wildlife laws. All investigation however will be carried out by the Department of Forestry Inspection (DOFI) under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. As such, any intelligence and investigative data will be handled and stored accordingly by DOFI.

Free the Bears will only collect data during the household surveys. Ethical approval will be obtained for the survey methodology and the data will be anonymous, confidential and stored securely on a password-protected server. Free the Bears Safeguarding Policy will be shared with project partners, Luang Prabang Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office. In recruiting part-time and full-time labour for this project, and subsequently, steps will be taken to ensure that any new recruits have the ability to arrange care for their dependent children and other family members. Whenever possible, part-time work will be arranged when the children of staff are in school or during times when alternative safe adult supervision can be arranged. During community workshops, for example training in handicraft production, dependent children of participants will be welcomed to join supervised educational activities at the sanctuary.

### **Q31. Ethics**

**Outline your approach to meeting the key ethical principles, as outlined in the guidance.**

This project will directly employ the services and purchase goods from the local community members. In doing so, we will

ensure that we are in compliance with national labour laws at all times, and we will work with community leaders to ensure that the agreed goods and services are fairly distributed and that the workload is not undue.

Household surveys will be conducted in the participating communities in the first and final year of this project in order to assess the livelihood impact of sanctuary development in comparison to 2017 baseline data and publicly available statistics from national censuses. Free the Bears is experienced in conducting ethical social science research (See; Davis et al., 2016; 2019). The household surveys will receive prior ethical approval, will be confidential, will not collect any personal identifying information and will follow the principles of Free Prior Informed Consent.

## Section 13 - FCDO Notifications

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### Q32. FCDO Notifications

**Please state whether there are sensitivities that the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office will need to be aware of should they want to publicise the project's success in the Darwin Initiative in any country.**

Yes

**Please outline and provide reasoning for any sensitivities that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office need to be aware of.**

Commercial wildlife farming, particularly of tigers, is a sensitive issue in Laos. Laos' performance in enforcing laws related to wildlife farming comes under international scrutiny during CITES Standing Committee meetings and the government of Laos may not welcome negative publicity on this topic. Success of this project can be publicised in a positive light, further encouraging closure of illegal tiger farms in Laos.

**Please indicate whether you have contacted FCDO Embassy or High Commission to discuss the project and attach details of any advice you have received from them.**

No

**If no, why not?**

The British Embassy in Laos is aware of this application. We have not specifically discussed the proposal but the Ambassador and other delegates have visited the project site and are familiar with our work. We are in regular contact through the 15.7 Working Group on illegal wildlife trade in Laos.

## Section 14 - Project Staff

---

### Q33. Project staff

**Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.**

**Please provide 1-page CVs or job description, further information on who is considered core staff can be found in the [Finance Guidance](#).**


| Name (First name, Surname) | Role                                  | % time on project | 1 page CV or job description attached? |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Brian CRUDGE               | Project Leader                        | 50                | Checked                                |
| Sengaloun VONGSAY          | Project Management/Government Liaison | 50                | Checked                                |
| Fatong YANG                | Animal manager and rescue             | 60                | Checked                                |


**Do you require more fields?** Yes


| Name (First name, Surname) | Role                               | % time on project | 1 page CV or job description attached? |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Mengxiong WANGNENGXIONG    | Veterinary care and rescue         | 60                | Checked                                |
| Marta FAUS CORTES          | Senior Veterinarian                | 60                | Checked                                |
| Seeyang CHAYANG            | Accounting and finance             | 40                | Checked                                |
| Matt HUNT                  | Chief Executive, Project oversight | 10                | Checked                                |
| <i>No Response</i>         | <i>No Response</i>                 | 0                 | Unchecked                              |
| <i>No Response</i>         | <i>No Response</i>                 | 0                 | Unchecked                              |
| <i>No Response</i>         | <i>No Response</i>                 | 0                 | Unchecked                              |
| <i>No Response</i>         | <i>No Response</i>                 | 0                 | Unchecked                              |

**Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.**

**Ensure the file is named clearly, consistent with the named individual and role above.**

 [IWTR8S2 1006 CVs](#)

 21/03/2022

 08:13:57

 pdf 3.03 MB

**Have you attached all project staff CVs?**

 Yes

## Section 15 - Project Partners

### Q34. Project partners

**Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Partner), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far and planned.**

**This section should demonstrate the capability and capacity of the Project Partners to successfully deliver the project. Please provide Letters of Support for all project partners or explain why this has not been included.**

**Lead partner name:**

Free the Bears

**Website address:** <https://freethebears.org>

---

**Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**

Free the Bears will be responsible for management and implementation of all components of this project, including M&E. Free the Bears has a proven track record of implementing projects such as that being proposed here, and has been active in the project location, Laos, for almost 20 years. The proposed project will increase capacity to house confiscated wildlife at the only government-owned sanctuary in Laos, thereby facilitating law enforcement throughout the country. In addition to developing sanctuaries we have delivered on-the-job training and workshops in wildlife handling techniques to >100 government officers across all 17 provinces, conducted pioneering research into social drivers of bear product consumption (Davis et al., 2016), and developed strategies to better protect wild bear populations (Crudge et al., 2019). To date Free the Bears has helped government agencies confiscate over 350 bears in Southeast Asia, including more than 100 bears in Laos. We have also supported the world's largest seizure of illegally trafficked red pandas, and have dedicated and secure facilities for the placement of confiscated pangolins and other globally-threatened species.

---

**Allocated budget (proportion or value):**



**Represented on the Project Board**  Yes

---

**Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?**  Yes

---

**Have you provided a cover letter to address your Stage 1 feedback?**  Yes

---

**Do you have partners involved in the Project?**

Yes

**1. Partner Name:** Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO)

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**Website address:** <https://www.maf.gov.la/>

---

**Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):**

Luang Prabang PAFO is Free the Bears' main project partner in Laos. Under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, PAFO is mandated to manage, protect and conserve the country's natural resources, including wildlife, within Luang Prabang Province for the present and future generations. The Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary, which is the focus of the proposed project, is owned by PAFO and receives financial and technical support from Free the Bears. For the proposed project, PAFO will be responsible for ensuring the legal transfer of confiscated wildlife from the point of interdiction to the sanctuary and, for certain suitable individuals following rehabilitation, release back to suitable protected habitat in Laos. The Department of Forest Inspection, within MAF, is the agency responsible for investigating cases of illegal trade in protected wildlife and carrying out sting operations and confiscations. The Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary is an important flagship project for both PAFO and MAF, being Laos' first and only government-owned multi-species wildlife rescue facility and frequently hosts capacity building workshops and visits from high-ranking officials.

---

Allocated budget: ██████

---

Represented on the Project Board  Yes

---

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?  Yes

---

---

2. Partner Name: *No Response*

---

Website address: *No Response*

---

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity): *No Response*

---

Allocated budget: £0.00

---

Represented on the Project Board  Yes  
 No

---

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?  Yes  
 No

---

---

3. Partner Name: *No Response*

---

Website address: *No Response*

---

Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity): *No Response*

---

Allocated budget: £0.00

---

Represented on the Project Board  Yes  
 No

---

Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?  Yes  
 No

---

---

**4. Partner Name:** *No Response*

---

**Website address:** *No Response*

---

**Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):** *No Response*

---

**Allocated budget:** £0.00

---

**Represented on the Project Board**  Yes  
 No

---

**Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?**  Yes  
 No

---

---

**5. Partner Name:** *No Response*

---

**Website address:** *No Response*

---

**Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):** *No Response*

---

**Allocated budget:** £0.00

---

**Represented on the Project Board**  Yes  
 No

---

**Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?**  Yes  
 No

---

---

**6. Partner Name:** *No Response*

---

**Website address:** *No Response*

---

**Details (including roles and responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):** *No Response*

---

**Allocated budget:** £0.00

---

**Represented on the Project Board**  Yes  
 No

---

**Have you included a Letter of Support from this organisation?**  Yes  
 No

---


If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

*No Response*

Please provide a cover letter responding to feedback received at Stage 1 if applicable and a combined PDF of all letters of support.

---

 [IWTR8S2 1006 Cover Letter, Letters of support](#)

 21/03/2022

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 pdf 2.68 MB

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## Section 16 - Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

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Q35. Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

**Has your organisation been awarded IWT Challenge Fund funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?**

No

If no, please provide the below information on the lead partner.

**What year was your organisation established/ incorporated/ registered?** 01 January 1995

---

**What is the legal status of your organisation?**  NGO

---

**How is your organisation currently funded?** The ongoing running costs for our affiliated sanctuaries – provision of species-appropriate diets, veterinary care, husbandry staff salaries and construction costs – amount to approximately \$ [REDACTED] per month across Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. These costs are supported through donations provided to Free the Bears by a wide network of international supporters with additional revenue being generated in-country through programmes such as volunteering, Bear Care Tours and merchandise sales. Although Covid-related travel restrictions have impacted in-country revenue streams, we have been able to adapt quickly to increase online fundraising and ensure that our sanctuaries and staff have not been negatively impacted.

---

**Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. Large organisations please note that this should describe your unit or department.**

**Aims** The mission of Free the Bears is to protect, preserve and enrich the lives of bears throughout the world. This is achieved through our strategic activities, below.

---

**Activities**

- Create and support world-class bear sanctuaries; government owned, and striving towards long-term sustainability;
- Develop alternative sustainable livelihoods for communities to prevent impoverished families from exploiting bears;
- Strengthen wildlife law enforcement efforts through advocacy and training;
- Protect wild bear populations through community-led efforts and increased understanding of wild bear populations.

---

**Achievements**

- Helped rescue over 950 bears across Asia.
- Co-founded the Wild Animal Rescue Network.
- Established and support the only government-owned wildlife sanctuary in Laos.
- Supported the establishment of Lao Wildlife Enforcement Network.
- Helped end the dancing bear trade in India by supporting alternative livelihoods for >500 bear handlers and their families.

---

**Provide details of 3 contracts/projects held by the lead partner that demonstrate your credibility as an organisation and provide track record relevant to the project proposed.**

**These contracts/awards should have been held in the last 5 years and be of a similar size to the grant requested in your Darwin application.**



|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Contract/Project 1 Title</b>  | Wildlife Reserves Singapore // Ending the practice of bear bile farming in Lao PDR   |
| <b>Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)</b>                  | ██████████   |
| <b>Duration (e.g. 2 years 3 months)</b>                                  | 2 years  |
| <b>Role of organisation in project</b>                                   | Free the Bears is lead organisation on this project, responsible for all aspects of implementation, accounting and reporting. Although we work in collaboration with local government agencies in Laos, Free the Bears is responsible for securing additional co-funding for implementation of the project, estimated at US\$ ██████████ over three years.   |
| <b>Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project</b> | Free the Bears has been working in close cooperation with the Government of Laos for over 17 years already, creating two world-class wildlife rescue facilities for more than 80 rescued bears. The goal of this project is to collaborate with the government of Laos to end the practice of bear bile farming and ultimately reduce poaching of wild bears, by: (i) providing facilities for government agencies to enforce local wildlife protection laws and reduce trafficking of bears; (ii) develop veterinary capacity within Laos to assist with seizure of trafficked wildlife; and (iii) demonstrate Laos' commitment to ending illegal wildlife trade.   |
| <b>Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)</b>       | Dr Sonja Luz, Wildlife Reserves Singapore.<br>██████████   |
| <b>Contract/Project 2 Title</b>  | Welttierschutzgesellschaft (WTG) // Sanctuary development, Vietnam   |
| <b>Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)</b>                  | ██████████   |
| <b>Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)</b>                                 | 2 years  |
| <b>Role of organisation in project</b>                                   | Free the Bears is lead organisation on this project, responsible for all aspects of implementation, accounting and reporting. Free the Bears implements this project in collaboration with Cat Tien National Park authorities in southern Vietnam. Free the Bears provides an additional annual budget of approximately ██████████ EUR to this project.  |
| <b>Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project</b> | <p>The aim of this project is to continue to develop the Cat Tien Bear Sanctuary, thereby creating additional space for bears to be rescued from the dwindling bile trade in Vietnam. Simultaneously, we aim to build on previous work improving the welfare of captive bears while improving understanding of conservation issues of both species of bear in Vietnam among the general public.</p> <p>To-date, creation of additional facilities and enclosures has enabled us to rescue &gt;50 bears, including the last remaining bile farm bears in several provinces, bringing Vietnam closer to realization of its commitment to ending bear bile farming.</p> |
| <b>Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)</b>       | Daniela Schrudde, Welttierschutzgesellschaft. ██████████   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Contract/Project 3 Title</b>  | Private Donor, Hong Kong // Facilitating the end of bear bile farming in Southeast Asia and developing options beyond lifelong care in sanctuaries for rescued bears  |
| <b>Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)</b>                  | [REDACTED]  |
| <b>Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)</b>                                 | 3 years   |
| <b>Role of organisation in project</b>                                   | Free the Bears is the lead organisation on this project, responsible for all aspects of implementation, accounting and reporting. Free the Bears will implement this project in collaboration with government partners in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to develop a gold-standard process for the release of confiscated or captive-bred bears.   |
| <b>Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project</b> | The project is designed to move beyond life-long care of rescued bears towards developing a release programme that would contribute towards restoring wild bear populations in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. The overall objectives of this project are to: (i) create specialist facilities for initial isolation and subsequent "re-wilding" of rescued bears in three countries, allowing for suitable candidates to be placed into a rehabilitation programme with the ultimate goal of release to the wild; (ii) secure bear release sites through a combination of community consultation and engagement activities, strengthened forest protection and human-wildlife conflict mitigation techniques. |
| <b>Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)</b>       | Karthi Martelli, [REDACTED]   |

**Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts?**

**If yes, please upload these on the certification page. Note that this is not required from Government Agencies.**

Yes

## Section 17 - Certification

### Q36. Certification

**On behalf of the**

Trustees

**of**

Free the Bears Ltd.

**I apply for a grant of**

[REDACTED]

**I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.**

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for project key project personnel, letters of support, budget, logframe, safeguarding policy and project implementation timetable (uploaded at appropriate points in application).
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report (or other financial evidence – see [Financial Guidance](#)) are also enclosed.

Checked

**Name** Brian Crudge

**Position in the organisation** Regional Director

**Signature (please upload e-signature)**

📎 [Signature](#)  
 📅 21/03/2022  
 ⌚ 09:52:03  
 📎 png 9.33 KB

**Date** 21 March 2022

**Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.**

📎 [Financial Statements 30 June 2021 - Free the Bear signed](#)  
 📅 21/03/2022  
 ⌚ 09:17:22  
 📎 pdf 1.87 MB

📎 [Financial Statements 30 June 2020 - Free the Bears Signed](#)  
 📅 21/03/2022  
 ⌚ 09:16:44  
 📎 pdf 572.2 KB

**Please upload the Lead Partner's Safeguarding Policy as a PDF**

📎 [FTB POLICY - Safeguarding](#)  
 📅 21/03/2022  
 ⌚ 09:18:33  
 📎 pdf 4.09 MB

## Section 18 - Submission Checklist

### Checklist for submission

|  | <b>Check</b> |
|--|--------------|
| <b>I have read the Guidance, including the "IWT Challenge Fund Guidance", "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance", "Risk Guidance" and "Financial Guidance".</b> | Checked      |
| <b>I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.</b>  | Checked      |
| <b>I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.</b>   | Checked      |
| <b>I have provided my budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.</b>  | Checked      |
| <b>I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.</b>                      | Checked      |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).  | Checked |
| I have attached my completed logframe as a PDF using the template provided  | Checked |
| (If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.  | Checked |
| I have included a 1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff identified at Question 33, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not.                                      | Checked |
| I have included a letter of support from the Lead Partner and partner(s) identified at Question 34, or an explanation of why not.   | Checked |
| I have included a cover letter from the Lead Partner, outlining how any feedback received at Stage 1 has been addressed where relevant.   | Checked |
| I have included a copy of the Lead Partner's safeguarding policy, which covers the criteria listed in Question 30.  | Checked |
| I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.  | Checked |
| I have included a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts for the Lead Partner, or other evidence of financial capacity as set out in the Financial Guidance, or provided an explanation if not. | Checked |
| I have checked the IWT Challenge Fund website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.  | Checked |
| I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the IWT Challenge Fund website.  | Checked |

**We would like to keep in touch!**

**Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Darwin Initiative and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.**

Checked

#### **Data protection and use of personal data**

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).