



# Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

Guidance Notes for Applicants: Round 10

2023 - 2024



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



These guidance notes provide information on:

- what can be funded
- how to apply
- the process used to select projects for funding

Applicants should also read the Finance Guidance, which explains:

- what budgetary information you need in your application
- how the payments will be made if your application is successful, and how you should manage your budget
- when reporting is due and how it is linked to payments

Applications are made through the online application portal **Flexi-Grant** at [itsi.flexigrant.com](https://itsi.flexigrant.com)  
All guidance is available via the Flexi-Grant portal, and replicated on the Challenge Fund website below.

Applications are administered independently by NIRAS.

Please read all the available guidance including the separate Finance Guidance before requesting additional assistance, as these provide answers to most queries.

**Further resources and templates** to support your application are available on the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#), including:

Application Forms (for drafting purposes)	Change Request Forms
Application Templates	Terms and Conditions
Flexi-Grant User Guide	Reporting Forms
Claim Forms	Project Database

If you can't find the answer, please contact the IWT Challenge Fund Administration Team:

## Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

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This publication is available at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [IllegalWildlifeTrade@Defra.gov.uk](mailto:IllegalWildlifeTrade@Defra.gov.uk)

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## Glossary

Biodiversity	"Biological diversity" means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.
Biodiversity Challenge Funds	Collective name for Defra's Darwin Initiative, Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Plus.
Capability & Capacity	Capability refers to the types of ability (skills and knowledge) required for a task; Capacity refers to the amount of ability at a point in time to deliver a task.
Country	Normally refers (unless otherwise stated) to any country on the list of countries eligible for funding under the IWT Challenge Fund (see Annex A), and not countries such as the UK.
Defra	The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK Government.
Demand Reduction	Interventions aimed at reducing the public desire to consume illegal wildlife trade products.
Ethics	The values, such as fairness, honesty, openness, integrity, that shape how an individual or an organisation operates and interacts with others.
Evidence	Information that demonstrates project actions, outputs, outcome and impact. It varies in format, quality and relevance and can include, documented and undocumented experiences, data, studies, policies, best practices, from a range of perspectives. However evidence is particularly valued when it is quality assured, accessible and applicable.
International organisations	Organisations that may have a presence in an eligible country, but a head office located in a country not listed as an eligible country (Annex A).
Innovation	New and creative ideas and their application to meet new requirements, unarticulated needs, or existing market demand. Innovations are sometimes existing solutions that are introduced or that are adapted to fit into a new context. An innovation is not the same as an invention. Rather, it refers to the practical implementation of a solution to have a meaningful Impact in a society and for the environment.
Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT)	All unlawful activities associated with the commercial exploitation and trade of wildlife, including live organisms, their parts or derivatives. Wildlife includes all wild fauna, flora, and fungi. Activities can be in contravention of national or international laws and regulations governing wildlife trade, for example, but not limited to, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
In-country organisations	Organisations of an eligible country (Annex A), with either a national or local remit, always formally registered within that country, and typically led by a national of the country.
IWT Challenge Fund Advisory Group (IWTAG)	IWTAG is a group of independent experts in IWT and poverty reduction that provide strategic advice, assess proposals and makes recommendations to Defra on funding decisions.
Lead Applicant	The individual who leads on the submission of the application and supporting materials, and will be the project contact point during the application process.

Lead Partner	The partner who will administer the grant and coordinate the delivery, accepting the Terms and Conditions of the Grant on behalf of the project.
Logframe	Logframes are a monitoring tool to measure progress against a Results Chain, comparing planned and actual results along a causal pathway, and including indicators, baselines, targets, as well as risks and assumptions.
Matched Funding	Additional finance that is secured to help meet the total cost of the project, including public and private sources, as well as quantified in-kind contributions.
NIRAS	IWT Challenge Fund Administrator; first point of contact for projects and applicants.
ODA	Official development assistance – commonly known as overseas aid – is when support, expertise or finance is supplied by one government to help the people of another country via activities that promote economic development and welfare as a main objective.
Partner(s)	Have a formal governance role in the project, and a formal relationship with the project that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities.
Poverty	Poverty is multi-dimensional and not solely about a lack of money; encompassing a range of issues to fulfil basic needs and better one’s life with dignity. Poverty is a pronounced deprivation in a person’s capability to live a life that they have reason to value. It can take many forms, including as a lack of income, land or other means of access to the basic material goods and services needed to survive with dignity. It can also be expressed as a deficiency in healthcare, security, education or necessary social relations.
Project Leader	The individual with the necessary authority, capability and capacity, and a full understanding of their role and associated obligations, who takes responsibility for delivering value for money, managing risk and financial controls whilst fulfilling the terms and conditions of the grant.
Safeguarding	Broadly means preventing harm to people and the environment. In practice, efforts often focus on taking all reasonable steps to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) from occurring, and to respond appropriately when it does.
Scale/scalability	The ability to deliver greater impact of a proven approach, either through expanding the scope of activities within a given geography or focal issue, taking the approach into a new geography or focal issue, or through uptake by stakeholders that promotes systemic change.
Stakeholder	Are consulted, engaged and/or participate in project activities as they have an interest or concern in the project and its Impact. They can also be partners, but if not, they would not have a budget management, or a formal governance role, within the project.
Theory of Change	Explains the process of change by outlining causal linkages taking activities through to a desired Outcome, being explicit about the assumptions underlying the expected causal pathways, and including an analysis of barriers and enablers as well as indicators of success. Often set out in a diagram and narrative form.
Value for Money	Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcome.

# Contents

<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1. What kind of projects can be supported by the IWT Challenge Fund?</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.1 The Aim of the IWT Challenge Fund.....	7
1.2 Innovation .....	9
1.3 Scalable Approaches.....	9
1.4 Poverty reduction .....	10
1.5 Capability and capacity.....	11
1.6 Evidence and refined best practices .....	11
<b>2. Project Requirements</b> .....	<b>12</b>
2.1 Lead Partner and Project Leader .....	12
2.2 Partners.....	12
2.3 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) .....	13
2.4 Value for Money.....	14
2.5 Ethics .....	15
2.6 Safeguarding.....	15
2.7 Working with British embassies and high commissions.....	17
2.8 Communications.....	18
2.9 Monitoring and evaluation.....	19
2.10 Terms and Conditions.....	19
<b>3. Funding Schemes</b> .....	<b>20</b>
3.1 IWT Challenge Fund Extra .....	20
3.2 IWT Challenge Fund Main.....	21
3.3 IWT Challenge Fund Evidence.....	21
<b>4. How to apply</b> .....	<b>22</b>
4.1 IWT Challenge Fund Round 10 application timetable .....	22
4.2 Completing the application form.....	22
<b>5. Assessment process</b> .....	<b>25</b>
5.1 Results of applications.....	25

5.2	Feedback .....	26
5.3	Resubmission of applications .....	26
5.4	Assessment criteria .....	27
<i>Annex A.</i>	<i>Eligible Countries</i> .....	<i>30</i>
<i>Annex B.</i>	<i>Safeguarding</i> .....	<i>32</i>
<i>Annex C.</i>	<i>Project Team CV</i> .....	<i>33</i>
<i>Annex D.</i>	<i>Awarded Grants</i> .....	<i>34</i>

## Introduction

**The illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is a widespread and lucrative criminal activity causing major environmental and social harm globally.** The IWT has been estimated to be worth up to £17 billion a year<sup>1</sup>. Nearly 6,000 different species of fauna and flora are impacted, with almost every country in the world playing a role in the illicit trade<sup>2</sup>. As well as the devastating consequences for biodiversity and ecosystems, IWT damages local communities, undermines national economies and therefore the development in some of the world's poorest countries.

**The UK is a long-standing and committed global leader in efforts to eradicate the IWT.** This was cemented at the ground-breaking IWT Conference Series in London in 2018, which secured ambitious commitments from 65 governments across the globe to take urgent, coordinated action. The 2030 Strategic Framework for International Climate and Nature Action<sup>3</sup> sets out the UK Government's continued commitment sets out the UK Government's continued commitment to addressing the issue and providing targeted financial help through this fund.

**The IWT Challenge Fund is co-funded with the FCDO, and underpins UK commitment.** The fund was launched in 2014 and delivers on the UK's IWT Conference Series commitments by supporting projects that tackle IWT in developing countries. It has had significant reach: committing over £51m to 157 projects; working with local communities in over 60 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe; protecting a broad range of endangered species, including pangolins, jaguar and orchids, and addresses some of the most pressing IWT issues.

**The IWT Challenge Fund provides flexible funding to innovative and scalable solutions to drive transformational change.** The IWT is a complex, fast changing and varied problem where traditional approaches that focus on the supply and anti-poaching interventions alone, have so far largely failed to solve. The IWT Challenge Fund sets out to stimulate the development of innovative and unconventional solutions to IWT that are responsive and relevant to local contexts. To really deliver on the impacts we want, successful interventions need to be scalable, facilitating a pipeline of proven projects for other public and private investment to support and deliver global change.

## 1. What kind of projects can be supported by the IWT Challenge Fund?

The IWT Challenge Fund is one of Defra's Biodiversity Challenge Funds, along with the Darwin Initiative and Darwin Plus. It competitively awards grants that seek to provide innovative and scalable solutions to reduce pressure on wildlife from illegal trade and, in doing so, reduce poverty in developing countries.

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<sup>1</sup> [UNEP - INTERPOL \(2016\)](#). This estimate refers to the predicted value of the illegal trade in CITES listed species (\$7-23bn). If you include the value of the illegal fishing (value of catch) and illegal timber trade, the estimate climbs to c.\$170-200bn. Furthermore, if you include the ecosystem service values associated with these activities, the illegal logging, fishing, and wildlife trade has an estimated full global economic value of about \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion per year ([World Bank, 2019](#)).

<sup>2</sup> [UNODC \(2020\)](#). Nearly 6000 different species of fauna and flora were seized between 1999 and 2018, as recorded by The World WISE Database. Suspected traffickers of some 150 citizenships have been identified.

<sup>3</sup> [2030 Strategic Framework for International Climate and Nature Action](#).

## 1.1 The Aim of the IWT Challenge Fund

The intended impact of the IWT Challenge Fund is:

to provide innovative and scalable solutions to reduce pressure on wildlife from illegal trade and, in doing so, reduce poverty in developing countries.

Applications should propose ideas that test, or scale approaches aligned to one or more of the project themes. Applications should be able to make a clear case:

- How the proposed interventions are innovative, needed and likely to be effective,
- How they develop evidence of impact (or potential impact if scaled) and contribute to best practice for supporting successful IWT interventions,
- How they respond to beneficiaries' priorities and enhance the capability and capacity to create sustained impact of key stakeholders, and
- How they will deliver simultaneous gains in tackling IWT and poverty reduction.

These aspects of an IWT Challenge Fund application are discussed in further detail below – and the full assessment criteria are included in Section 5.4.

### 1.1.1 Thematic focus

Applications must align to one or more of the four project themes – listed below – which align with the pillars of action agreed and reconfirmed by global leaders at the IWT Conference Series. Figure 1 suggests areas under each theme where the IWT Challenge Fund can advance global efforts and drive innovation.

1. Reducing demand for IWT products.
2. Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents.
3. Strengthening law enforcement.
4. Developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT.

All applications will be assessed against the IWT Impact, Technical Merit and Poverty Reduction criteria when identifying projects selected for funding (see Section 5.4 for further detail).

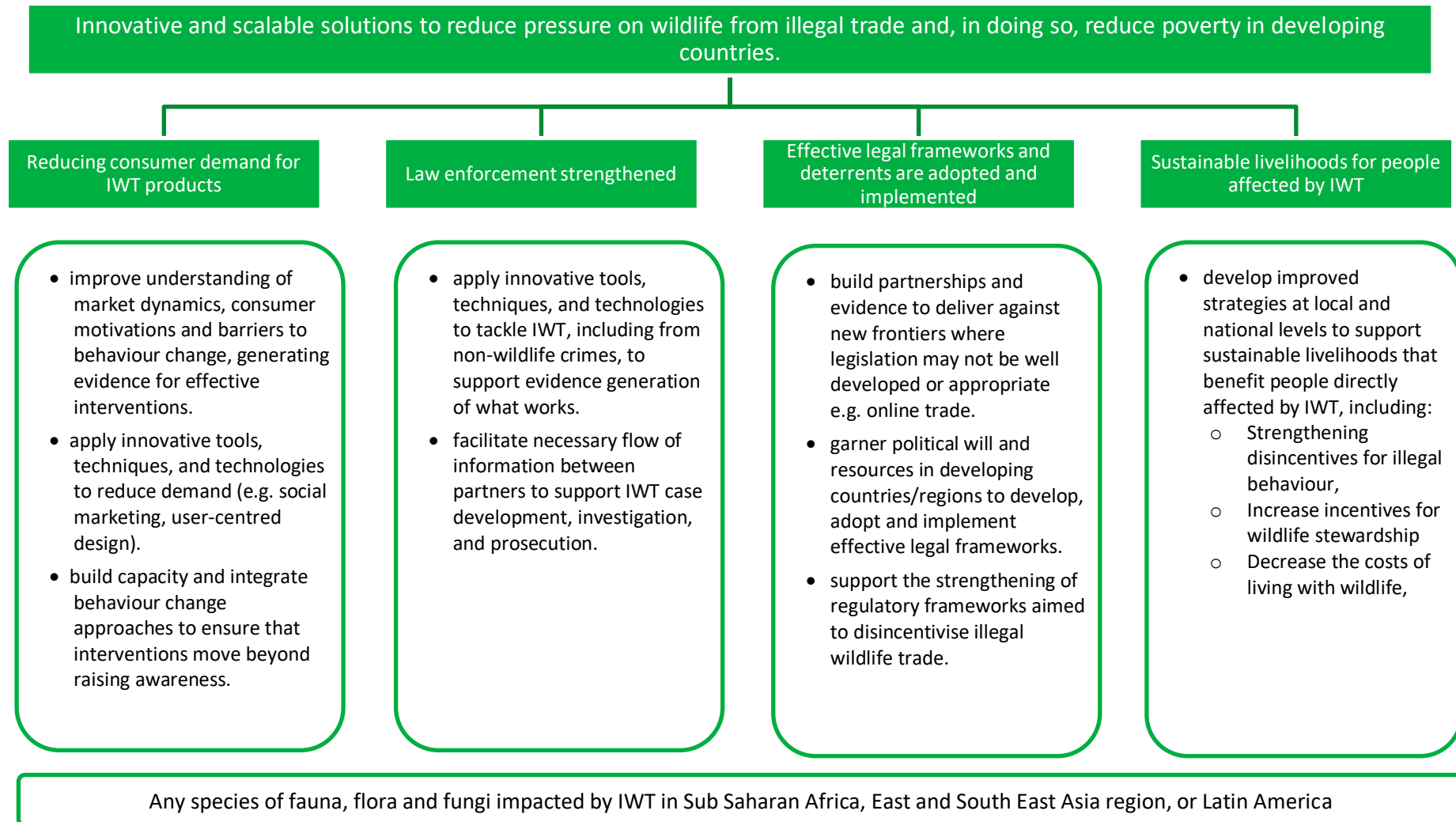
In your application form you will be asked to select which theme(s) your project is aligned with. Applications supporting more than one will not achieve a higher score, and ticking themes that your proposal does not directly address may negatively affect your score.

### 1.1.2 Species focus

IWT Challenge Fund support is available to projects that relate to **any species of fauna, flora and fungi impacted by IWT**. In the application forms you will be requested to name specific focal species using both their **common and scientific names**. For example, if a project relates to the Sunda Pangolin, we require “Sunda Pangolin, *Manis javanica*”. If the project relates to all Asian Pangolins then “Pangolin, *Manis* sp.” is accepted.



Figure 1: Thematic, species and geographic focus areas for IWT Challenge Fund projects.



### 1.1.3 Geographical focus

Applications are particularly encouraged from **sub-Saharan Africa, East and South East Asia and Latin America** and must meet ODA eligibility requirements listed in Annex A.

## 1.2 Innovation

The IWT Challenge Fund is particularly interested in funding innovative projects. Innovation, whilst widely understood, can be challenging to define given its dynamic nature. Within the Biodiversity Challenge Funds we understand innovation to be:

The implementation of a novel or significantly improved approach (product, ways of working, and/or process) that differs from previous approaches.

There are broadly three types of innovation:

1. **Novel to the area**, the diffusion, replication or application of proven approaches in another geography or to a different issue or stakeholder group.
2. **Novel to the sector**, an approach proven in a different sector is adapted to deliver results and impact in tackling the IWT sector.
3. **Novel to the world**, an innovation unproven in any sector, is applied to tackling the IWT sector.

Where there is evidence from historical and existing initiatives, including in geographies where there are other projects working on similar or related needs, it is important that the project is able to clearly articulate how its activities and impacts add value. Applications could consider incorporating experimental elements within projects to **test and compare approaches** are welcomed. Examples under the IWT Challenge Fund have been applying illicit financial flow techniques to illegal wildlife trade or developing forensic techniques to enable traceability and transparency in trade.

## 1.3 Scalable Approaches

To deliver against the significant challenge, successful interventions need to be scalable, facilitating a pipeline of proven projects for other public and private investment to support and deliver global change. As a result, IWT Challenge Fund is particularly interested in:

approaches and evidence that if proven, have the potential to be scaled to deliver greater impact.

The application will ask applicants to set out their ambition and vision to scale their work in any of the following ways:

- **Landscape scaling:** test an approach and then apply it more broadly at the landscape/seascape level.
- **Replication scaling:** test an approach and apply it in another geography, or to another issue or stakeholder group.
- **Systems change scaling:** support system changes (e.g. legislation) that have impacts beyond their original scale.
- **Capacitation scaling:** leaving a legacy of higher capacity to achieve change, e.g. through improving the capacity of organisations, key individuals, or regionally (e.g. geographic clusters of projects, combining to build capacity and momentum).

Successful approach could be scaled through new finance or through uptake by stakeholders, markets or other mechanisms.

## 1.4 Poverty reduction

The IWT exacerbates poverty and undermines sustainable development in some of the world's poorest countries. All IWT Challenge Fund projects must support poverty reduction in developing countries. Applicants should look systematically at the relationship between poverty and IWT. Project designs should explicitly consider how activities relate to poverty or to the efforts of people and/or states to alleviate poverty.

Poverty is multi-dimensional and not solely about a lack of money. It encompasses a range of diverse issues that are required to fulfil basic needs and better one's life with dignity. There are many different ways in which a project can support poverty reduction, and approaches will differ from project to project. Examples of ways in which IWT Challenge Fund projects can contribute to poverty reduction are given below:

- **Directly** e.g. through activities that help secure increased income for local communities, and therefore reduce the need to generate income through poaching, or through providing access to important assets for local communities whilst helping them to tackle IWT.
- **Indirectly** e.g. through safeguarding traditional rights and cultural values, increasing the voice of marginalised communities, increasing equality within communities, improved governance, security through capacity building of local enforcement agencies.
- **Through practice orientated research** e.g. activities that expand the knowledge base on IWT and poverty.

A recent information note for the Darwin Initiative (one of the Biodiversity Challenge Funds) – [Poverty and the Darwin Initiative](#) - might help you understand the multiple dimensions of poverty and how biodiversity projects can meaningfully contribute to economic development and welfare of people in developing countries. Taking a demand reduction project as an example, projects should clearly demonstrate all links to poverty reduction, including indirect, for example, showing how reducing demand can protect species at source thereby retaining local communities' ability to benefit from sustainable use where appropriate and reducing resource pressure on source governments from enforcement activities. A bespoke information note is being developed for the IWT Challenge Fund.

**Applications should state how a project’s activities will support poverty reduction, including clearly identified beneficiaries.** The anticipated impact on poverty should be reflected in the logframe, see the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guidance for further details.

## 1.5 Capability and capacity

A significant limiting factor in tackling IWT is often gaps in capability and capacity. Human and technical capacity, poor infrastructure, limited collaboration, and a lack of suitable equipment can all hinder efforts to tackle IWT across the illegal supply chain, especially in developing countries where resources may be scarce. Enhancing the capability and capacity of in-country stakeholders, including local communities, national organisations, and the private sector, should be able to deliver a task more efficiently and effectively and is key to creating sustained impact after projects are complete.

All grants should include activities and/or structures that will enhance and strengthen the capability and capacity of identified local and national partners, and stakeholders during its lifetime and in the future.

Projects can enhance the capability and capacity of stakeholders through structured training, work placements, mentoring, improved infrastructure, technology and equipment and partnership working. Project can and should include activities to enhance the underpinning capabilities such as financial, communication, monitoring and evaluation, safeguarding and risk management.

Capacity and capabilities can be built through partnerships to share knowledge and experience and develop effective and sustainable solutions to IWT. This includes working with local communities, the private sector (whose infrastructure and processes are used to facilitate illegal trade, such as the transport, technology and financial sectors), NGOs, academia and government.

## 1.6 Evidence and refined best practices

Due to the clandestine and complex nature of IWT, significant evidence gaps exist around the scale, impact, and appropriate responses. Improving the development and use of evidence and best practice is essential to support more effective design and implementation of interventions and global strategies to combat IWT, while also making better use of limited resources.

All projects should use evidence to support project design, and implementation, including demonstrating the need and ask from beneficiaries, understanding the context, made fair assumptions, identifying the risks.

Projects should also generate evidence through project delivery to secure its legacy and contribute to best practices.

Evidence ranges greatly in format, quality and relevance and includes documented and undocumented experiences, data, studies, experiments, observations, peer-reviewed papers, policies, best practices. Consideration should be given to opportunities to **strengthen the value of evidence** produced by projects, by improving its accessibility, comprehensibility, usability, and quality.

**All IWT Challenge Fund projects should demonstrate that they are based on the best available evidence and scientific theory;** have a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to demonstrate impact and value for money; be able to demonstrate how they are going to promote learning and

support best practice, including through the open access of project outputs. For further guidance on open access and data sharing, see Section 2.8.1.

A project should provide evidence of how it responds to demand from key beneficiaries. Where projects are proposed in geographic/thematic areas with existing related activities, **demonstrating an understanding** of these, how the proposed project **aligns**, and how the project **adds value** will help support the case for the project. Conversely, a lack of awareness or understanding of related activities can undermine confidence in the proposal.

## 2. Project Requirements

### 2.1 Lead Partner and Project Leader

**Applications must be made by the Lead Partner** (an organisation), not an individual, agreeing to the Terms and Conditions (see Section 2.10) including managing the grant, its finances, reporting and governance.

*Lead Partners can be based anywhere, but we strongly encourage projects to have in-country Lead Partners.*

The **maximum annual value of funds** requested should not exceed 25% of the Lead Partner's average annual turnover/ income for the previous 3 years.

There is no limit on the number of applications a Lead Partner may submit, but we would encourage internal co-ordination to ensure all submissions are competitive; Defra may consider the number of applications from a partner as part of their decision-making process.

The **Project Leader** is an individual, representing the Lead Partner, with the necessary **authority, capability and capacity**, and a full understanding of their role and associated obligations to take **responsibility** for delivering value for money, managing risk and financial controls whilst fulfilling the Terms and Conditions of the grant. Where the Project Leader is not employed by the Lead Partner, the reasoning behind should be made clear in the application, including their capability to control and be held accountable for the proposed project. Please see the Finance Guidance for more information on the requirements for a Lead Partner.

Given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, **the Biodiversity Challenge Funds has taken the decision to suspend all bilateral engagement with Russia, including sending any funds to any Russian organisation.** Russian organisations are ineligible to be a Lead Partner or Partner or involved on any Biodiversity Challenge Funds grant. If you are unclear whether these restrictions apply in your specific case, please contact us.

### 2.2 Partners

Partnerships can help maximise impact. Organisations with a common vision, combining their can combine their complementary resources, experiences and competencies and sharing risk, so they can maximise impact in terms of scale, quality, sustainability and benefits.

All projects are strongly expected to seek and work with in-country partners, with meaningful and early engagement of in-country stakeholders.

Differing from Stakeholders, Partners have a **formal governance role in the project**, and a **formal relationship with the project** that may involve staff costs and/or budget management responsibilities. Applications should be co-developed with partners.

In contrast, **Stakeholders** would not have a budget management, or a formal governance role, within the project but are consulted, engaged and participate in project activities.

**All IWT Challenge Fund projects are expected to work with in-country partners and build in meaningful and early engagement with in-country stakeholders.**

## 2.3 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Evidence from the *Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation* ([www.espa.ac.uk](http://www.espa.ac.uk)) programme demonstrates that individuals access resources differently depending on their gender and social background. For example, due to gender differences in roles and responsibilities, women in rural communities are often the main collectors of wild plant food and firewood, with men focusing on timber, wild meat, and control access rights and tenure due to patriarchal structures. As a result, women and men develop knowledge about different species, their uses and their management.

***Gender Equality** is about addressing inequalities and transforming the distribution of opportunities, choices and resources available to girls, women and non-binary individuals so that they have equal power to shape their lives and participate in the process thereby increasing equality between people of all genders.*

In addition to the strong evidential basis, regard for and a prioritisation of gender equality and social inclusion is clearly set out in amongst others: the International Development Strategy (Gender Equality) Act 2014, UK's International Development Strategy (2022) and UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It should be noted that stakeholders are not homogenous groups, and have additional layers of diversity and social identity including gender, ethnicity, caste, age, religion, sexuality, disability status, and income that need to be considered within the design and delivery of projects.

***Social Inclusion** refers to the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society, and the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged and historically excluded from decision making and spheres of influence on the basis of their identity to take part in society.*

The approach taken to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social backgrounds and ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes will be assessed at the proposal stage. To shape and inform all biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction actions, it is **vital to understand** gender and social characteristics in differentiating biodiversity practices, knowledge acquisition and usage, as well as inequalities in control over resources.

As no action is neutral, by not giving due consideration to GESI, projects could unintentionally exacerbate inequalities, reinforce barriers or cause harm to already disadvantaged groups.

Projects that have successfully considered or even mainstreamed GESI appropriately into their design at an early stage, including assessing the implications for everyone, are considered to result in more equitable outcomes because they understand and reflect their community needs. Projects that are

able to demonstrate the **integration of GESI considerations in their design and delivery plans**, are likely to **score more highly** than those that cannot.

All projects must consider how they will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics with activities expected to deliver equitable net benefits for all.

All projects are expected to report **indicators disaggregated by gender where applicable**.

Some questions to consider early on:

- What are the prevailing gender and social norms in the host country in relation to division of labour, access and control of resources, and ability to participate in decision making?
- How do these prevailing norms affect the project, in terms of what it can achieve, how will it engage with stakeholders and how it needs to be designed?
- How will the project impact (positively and negatively) girls, boys, women and men in their domestic, economic and community roles and responsibilities and in term of access to and control over assets?
- How will the project ensure equitable opportunities for girls, boys, women and men to influence and participate in decision making?
- Does the intervention address underlying barriers that exclude certain groups from accessing opportunities created?
- How will risks and unintended negative consequences be identified, avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?

Further resources include:

- [IIED – Gender and Biodiversity](#)
- [Nature – Gender in conservation and climate policy](#)
- [UN Environment Programme – Why gender is important for biodiversity conservation](#)
- [WWF – Gender and Conservation](#)
- [WWF – Gender and Illegal Wildlife Trade Report](#)
- [UNDP – Gender Equality and Social Inclusion](#)

## 2.4 Value for Money

**Projects must demonstrate good Value for Money.** A value for money case can be supported through matched funding (including quantified in-kind contributions). For further guidance on Value for Money and matched funding, see Finance Guidance.

**Funded Projects should not significantly cut across or duplicate work the work of others.** Applicants should acknowledge the work of others (past and present), and demonstrate an understanding of current projects within their area to clearly establish **how they will add value**.

## 2.5 Ethics

Projects are expected to meet the **key principles of good ethical practice** and demonstrate this in the application. All projects must:

- meet **all legal and ethical obligations** of all countries involved in the project, including relevant access and benefit sharing legislation pertaining to the utilisation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.
- follow **access and benefit sharing best practice** where legislation is incomplete or absent.
- include strong **leadership and participation from developing countries** and the communities involved to enhance the incorporation of their perspectives, interests and knowledge, in addressing the wellbeing of those directly impacted by the project.
- recognise the value and importance of **traditional knowledge**, alongside international scientific approaches, and methods.
- respect the **rights, privacy, and safety of people** who are impacted directly and indirectly by project activities.
- use **Prior Informed Consent (PIC)** principles with communities.
- appropriate procedures related to the collection, storage and use of personal data.
- protect the **health and safety** of all project staff.
- uphold the **credibility of evidence**, research and other findings.
- follow an **institutional ethics review** process.

Staff involved in the design or conduct of research should maintain the independence and integrity of the process, including intellectual detachment from personal convictions relating to the topic.

**Funding may be frozen or withdrawn in the event that these principles are not met.**

## 2.6 Safeguarding

### 2.6.1 Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

Defra believes that everyone regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or other protected characteristic<sup>4</sup> has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

*Defra has a **zero tolerance for inaction to tackling abuse and/or exploitation of any person** (staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries) by staff or associated personnel involved in grants*

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<sup>4</sup> IWT Challenge Fund is a UK government fund, and it is against UK law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic, these are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation ([www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics)).



Safeguarding is an iterative process; partners must be prepared to discuss and strengthen their safeguarding capability and capacity to **prevent, listen, respond and learn**.

**Lead Partners must:**

- have appropriate and proportionate **safeguarding policies and procedures** in place, tailored to the project and reflecting GESI factors, to protect staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries.
- take **all reasonable and adequate steps to prevent** sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) of any person (**staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries**) linked to the delivery of the grant. An **acceptance and adherence** to the [IASC 6 Core Principles](#), as required by the terms and conditions of the grant (see Annex B).
- ensure that **all partners** understand and meet the safeguarding standards.
- swiftly and appropriately **action any suspicions or complaints of SEAH** to stop harm occurring, investigate and report to relevant authorities (for criminal matters) when safe to do so and after considering the wishes of the survivor.
- **promptly report to Defra** ([ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ODA.Safeguarding@defra.gov.uk)) **any and all credible allegations** that warrant investigation relating directly to the grant or related indirectly to the grant but could impact the relationship with Defra.

**Requirements for funding:** The lead partner must be capable of demonstrating that they have:

1. a **safeguarding policy**, which includes a statement of commitment to safeguarding and a zero-tolerance statement on inaction to tackling bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse;
2. a detailed and up to date **register of safeguarding issues** raised and how they were dealt with;
3. **clear investigation and disciplinary procedures** for allegations and complaints, as well as a clear processes for disclosure;
4. **proactively shared** safeguarding policies with **all partners**, ensuring that they understand and meet the required standards, offering support where required;
5. an **accessible and clearly communicated whistle-blowing mechanism** which protects whistle blowers from reprisals and includes clear processes for dealing with concerns raised;
6. **identified, assessed and monitor safeguarding risks** in the project risk framework;
7. have in place a **Code of Conduct** signed by all staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours - inside and outside the workplace - and what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards;

In addition, we strongly encourage:

8. a **recruitment approach** that includes appropriate background checks of new recruits and consultants;
9. **all staff trained** in safeguarding.

Raising a safeguarding concern with Defra does not necessarily mean funding will be paused if the concern is investigated, and robust action is taken when allegations are upheld.

However, **failure to report to Defra any credible allegation that warrants investigation, even in the case where it's determined to be unfounded, may result in the funding being stopped**. The reporting to Defra is in addition to, not a replacement of any mandatory reporting required by others.

Failure to be able to demonstrate any of the above does not automatically exclude you from applying, rather it can help you identify priority areas for strengthening; if you feel that this applies to you, please contact us prior to applying.

The Safeguarding Resource & Support Hub ([safeguardingsupporthub.org](https://safeguardingsupporthub.org)) also provides a valuable resource to support the development and delivery of safeguarding objectives.

### 2.6.2 Human rights

All UK supported projects must uphold our values and be consistent with our domestic and international human rights obligations. Human rights and International Humanitarian Law risks must be considered by projects prior to funding to ensure projects identify and mitigate risks for example of unlawful arrest or detention or unfair trial. This information will be used to assess the potential impact of any proposed assistance on these risks, as well as on reputational or political risk, prior to the provision of any funding.

Applications must consider what measures may be taken in order to mitigate any risk that might directly contribute to a violation of human rights and/or International Humanitarian Law.

Further information on the assessment of projects operating in the security and justice sector can be found in [Overseas Security and Justice Assistance \(OSJA\) guidance](#).

Further information about the UK Government's approach to Human Rights can be found on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/human-rights-internationally>.

### 2.6.3 Intelligence focused IWT activities:

Intelligence-led or focused law enforcement activities carry significant physical, legal, psychological, ethical and organisational risks. These activities include (but are not limited to) the use of human sources (commonly known as 'informants'), and covert investigative activities of any type which involve the purposeful use of covert tactics (i.e. covert surveillance of any type) or assets (i.e. covert agents or officers). These risks are likely to extend beyond the direct control of organisations who support investigative law enforcement agencies. This is a very specialised area of law enforcement which should be stringently evaluated for achievability and impact. There are many overseas jurisdictions where legal frameworks enabling the protection of sources, methodology, and tactics is not undertaken, and many aspects of this type of work may have to be disclosed. This includes pure intelligence gathering (as opposed to evidence gathering). This extends to being unable to prevent the disclosure of the identity of sources of information or sensitive methodology.

Defra therefore discourages the use of covert investigative tools and methods unless grantees have strong, relevant expertise within the project team, which will need to include verifiable or certificated experience in a law enforcement context. Applications should also demonstrate how you will ensure safe implementation of such tactics, security of sources and methodologies, and any sensitive criminal intelligence or data collected. There should be an explicit reference acknowledging and identifying the relevant risks involved, along with achievable mitigation. Any activity of this type must be confirmed by the grantee to be lawful within their project country.

## 2.7 Working with British embassies and high commissions

**All applicants are required to make contact with British embassies and high commissions in the project country/ies;** a list of these can be found on GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/world/embassies>.

Applicants will not be penalised if they are unable to submit comments from the embassy or high commission alongside their application, provided they have **made an attempt** to contact them in sufficient time to allow engagement.

The purpose of this is to provide an opportunity for the British embassies or high commissions are aware of proposed work and potential advise on any security or political sensitivities, although we recognise that their capacity to support or engage projects is varied.

All applications may be shared with other UK Government Departments including the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO); and their views will be taken into account in the assessment process.

If your application is successful, the relevant British embassies or high commissions will be informed and may seek to publicise the award, or be involved in any formal launch, and may wish to develop a relationship with the project during delivery (depending on their resource levels).

A number of countries eligible for the IWT Challenge Fund may present potential security or political challenges. UK-based applicants should consult UK Government's travel advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>. If the organisation leading the project is not based in-country you should consult your Foreign Affairs Ministry for advice before applying.

If you need advice on any security or political sensitivities, or if the British embassy or high commission needs to be aware of sensitivities before making any announcement, please tick the relevant box on the application form.

## 2.8 Communications

Projects are funded from UK ODA. It is important to be able to clearly communicate how ODA funding is being utilised.

Each applicant is asked to provide a very short, plain English summary of their projects and its expected results, which if successful will be used in communication activities. This summary should be written for a non-technical audience with little or no prior knowledge of the issue, and clearly describe the project plan and intended Outcome. During delivery, successful projects will be engaged to support wider communications and awareness raising activities to promote the IWT Challenge Fund and its projects.

### 2.8.1 Open access policy and data sharing

The UK Government is committed to “push for a global transparency revolution” in the availability and use of data to improve accountability, decision making, and to help deliver sustainable development Outcomes to people living in poverty.

Projects are likely to generate significant Outputs including datasets, best practices, peer-reviewed journal articles and technical reports which will be of value to other countries and stakeholders.

All Outputs must be made freely available and accessible to all users, unless there are particular sensitivities involved.

This includes all derived and raw data on species, land cover and land use, through appropriate national, regional and global databases. For help in identifying databases, please refer to: [Compendium of guidance on key global databases related to biodiversity-related conventions](#)<sup>5</sup>.

In your application, please consider the project Outputs you expect to produce and how this information can be shared widely and freely. You may include appropriate costs in your budget to support open access publishing but be realistic about when articles will be published. It is likely that dates will fall outside the formal project, so it is worth considering matched funding for these costs.

Further information on open and enhanced access can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

### 2.8.2 Transparency

In order to support understanding of ODA spend, and in line with the aim of the IWT Challenge Fund, successful project **applications**, along with subsequent **reporting, will be published** on the IWT Challenge Fund website and elsewhere.

If there are **any sensitivities** within a project, for example detailed species location data that would increase threats, please bring this to our attention and these can be considered for **redaction prior to publication**.

## 2.9 Monitoring and evaluation

A robust monitoring framework supports both the efficient delivery of the project as well the capability to demonstrate the direct or potential impact and Value for Money achieved.

Further guidance is given in the “Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guidance” and “Standard Indicator Guidance”, available online.

## 2.10 Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants will be issued a grant award letter with **the Terms and Conditions that will apply to the grant**, including the grant purpose, value, period, and reporting and financial arrangements.

Copies of the Terms and Conditions are available (see Page 1), and you should **understand these fully before making an application to ensure compliance will not be an issue**. If applicants, such as public bodies or UN organisations, are subject to established approaches for example with insurance, liability or the Information Act, then please raise this with us as soon as possible. Defra retains the right to amend these conditions at any time.

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<sup>5</sup> UNEP-WCMC. (2018). Compendium of guidance on key global databases related to biodiversity-related conventions. Cambridge (UK): UNEP-WCMC. <https://doi.org/10.34892/9XC8-0D10>

## 3. Funding Schemes

Table 1: Summary of Project Grants

Grant	Duration	Application Stages	Estimated Annual Number of Awards	Type of Project	Grant amount
<b>Extra</b>	2-4 years	2	1-2	Demonstrating a clear scaling pathway, building on good evidence from smaller projects to scale further	£600,000 - £1,500,000
<b>Main</b>	1-3 years	2	8-15	Providing good evidence, expected to deliver strong results, and demonstrate the potential to scale	£75,000 - £600,000
<b>Evidence</b>	Up to 2 years	2	<10	Focussed on evidence gathering to design IWT interventions	£20,000 - £100,000

**Projects must present a realistic budget and timeframe, and not be overly ambitious in what they hope to achieve.**

A project's value for money in terms of its expected impact relative to cost (see Finance Guidance), is a more important consideration than its absolute size and length.

All projects will have to meet financial and reporting requirements, therefore the costs of meeting these should be factored into proposals. For example, an evidence project that lasts longer than two years is unlikely to represent good value for money because of the high transactional costs involved with its delivery relative to the IWT Challenge Fund grant size.

### 3.1 IWT Challenge Fund Extra

IWT Challenge Fund Extra grants, ranging from £600,000 to £1,500,000, are for projects aimed at expanding activities that have already demonstrated success and impact at a smaller scale. This can be through landscape or replication scaling, or through delivering systems change which will have sustained impact beyond the project's original scale. Applications should provide evidence of the interventions success at a smaller scale, its potential impact at a larger scale and the political and

operational feasibility to scale. Competition for Extra grants is expected to be strong, and we anticipate making only a limited number of grants of this size.

Active IWT Challenge Fund Main projects can apply to IWT Challenge Fund Extra. Applicants will need to make a case for how new support would deliver additional activities and Outputs.

**Duration:** Projects should last between **2 to 4 years** maximum. Projects are required to **complete by 31 March 2028**.

### 3.2 IWT Challenge Fund Main

IWT Challenge Fund Main grants, ranging from £75,000 - £600,000, are expected to deliver strong results to tackle IWT and poverty reduction based on good evidence, and strongly demonstrate the potential to scale. Main grants will be awarded to projects which test new and innovative interventions to provide proof of concept at a smaller scale. Applications should provide evidence for the problem the intervention addresses, the gap it fills in existing approaches, and indicate its potential to be scaled in a real-world setting.

**Duration:** Projects should last between **1 to 3 years** maximum. Projects are required to **complete by 31 March 2027**.

### 3.3 IWT Challenge Fund Evidence

IWT Challenge Fund Evidence grants, ranging from £20,000 and £100,000, are for projects which gather evidence to design an intervention. Applications should describe how the improved evidence base will be used to design an intervention where there is a gap in approaches. Projects may include, for example, market research to design and baseline demand reduction interventions. Applicants are encouraged to develop evidence projects into full interventions as part of follow-on applications to the IWT Challenge Fund.

Applications that contain significant interventions that are not focussed on evidence building should consider applying for an IWT Challenge Fund Main grant, as this maybe more appropriate.

**Duration:** Projects should last up to **2 years maximum**. Projects are required to **complete by 31 March 2026**.

## 4. How to apply

### 4.1 IWT Challenge Fund Round 10 application timetable

The timetable for IWT Challenge Fund Funding Rounds for 2023-24 are as follows:

Extra, Main and Evidence have the same application timetable.

Call for Stage 1 Applications from **early May 2023** to **22:59 GMT** (23:59 BST) on **Monday 19 June 2023**; results expected by **early September 2023**.

Call for Stage 2 is by invitation only (application link to be provided) in **early September 2023**.

Stage 2 Application Deadline – **23:59 GMT** on **Monday 30 October 2023**. Results expected at the start of **February 2024 at the earliest**.

Projects expected to start from **1 May 2024 and before 30 September 2024**.

All applications will be acknowledged **within 5 working days of the funding round close**. If you have not heard after 5 days, please contact the IWT Challenge Fund Administration Team via [BCF-IWTCF@niras.com](mailto:BCF-IWTCF@niras.com).

### 4.2 Completing the application form

All applications must be submitted:

- through Flexi-Grant, using approved templates,
- with all questions and sections completed, referencing evidence where required, word count indicates the level of detail required; if appropriate n/a is acceptable,
- in English, and
- attaching the required supporting evidence, and
- signed, with a PDF signature uploaded as part of the Flexi-Grant application.

**Competition for funding is very strong, applications which:**

- are incorrect or incomplete, including missing evidence/attachments or
- do not match all published criteria, including eligible countries and dates or
- are submitted using the incorrect/unofficial template, or incorrect file format, or
- exceed stated page limits

**will be rejected as ineligible.**

Table 2: Summary of Required and Optional supporting evidence for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

IWT Challenge Fund		
	Stage 1	Stage 2
<b>Cover Letter</b>	<p><b>Required (2 sides of A4 maximum).</b> The cover letter is an opportunity to <b>support your application</b>: it should be focused referring, where needed, to the application for further details rather than duplicating information.</p> <p>For a Stage 1, new application, you should briefly indicate any significant points about your application or organisation, but not repeat information already in the application.</p> <p>For Stage 2 or reapplication, the cover letter must <b>explicitly set out</b> how you have addressed all the <b>comments/feedback</b> in the <b>application form</b>: briefly restating the feedback point, then clearly setting out how you have responded to it in the application.</p>	
<b>Logframe</b>	<p><b>Main and Extra - Required</b> on Stage 1 template</p> <p><b>Evidence only</b> - a simplified logframe is within the application form.</p>	<p><b>Main and Extra - Required</b> on Stage 2 template</p> <p><b>Evidence only</b> - a simplified logframe is within the application form.</p>
<b>Budget and Financial Evidence</b>	Required within application form only.	<p><b>Required</b> on correct Excel template.</p> <p>Two sets of audited or independently examined accounts covering the last three financial years.</p>
<b>Workplan</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<b>Required</b> on Workplan template
<b>Safeguarding Policy</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<b>Required</b> – Lead Partner’s Safeguarding Policy (see Section 2.6) must be submitted as a <b>single PDF file</b> .
<b>CVs and Job Descriptions</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<p><b>Required</b>, 1 side of A4 per CVs (or job descriptions if vacant) of all the key project staff named in the application form <b>merged and submitted as a single PDF file</b>.</p> <p>If you cannot secure a CV from a named Project Staff member, please provide an explanation why, along with a summary of the skills and experience of the team member concerned. CVs are important to demonstrate the skills an individual brings to the team.</p>
<b>Letters of support</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<p><b>Required</b> from all project partners (<b>including from the lead partner</b>) on <b>headed paper</b> and <b>must be in English</b> (or translated – this does not have to be an official translation). If needed, please explain why any partner has not provided a letter of support.</p> <p>Letters of Support from key stakeholders are <b>encouraged but not required</b>.</p> <p>Letters of Support must be <b>merged and submitted</b> as a <b>single PDF file</b>, and provide strong evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support for the need of the project</li> <li>• the role of the partner in the project</li> <li>• support for the application and the importance of the work to your organisation</li> <li>• your relationship with partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• your ability to deliver high quality results and enable productive partnerships any commitment to matched funding</li> </ul>



IWT Challenge Fund		
	Stage 1	Stage 2
<b>Risk register</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<p><b>Evidence</b> - Not required.</p> <p><b>Main</b> - Submitted if awarded, on Risk Framework Template, with Delivery Chain Mapping completed. Issues Log should not be completed.</p> <p><b>Extra projects</b> - Required on Risk Framework template, with Delivery Chain Mapping completed. Issues Log should not be completed.</p>
<b>Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy</b>	<b>Not required</b>	Policy setting out compliance with the anti-bribery and anti-corruption Terms and Conditions <b>may be requested</b> at any point, but should not be submitted with your application.
<b>Ethics Policy</b>	<b>Not required</b>	Policy setting out compliance with the key principles of good ethical practice (see Section 2.5) <b>may be requested</b> at any point, but should not be submitted with your application.
<b>Map, List of references</b>	Optional, maximum of 5 sides of A4.	To further support your application, if desired a map, and/or list of references can be optionally submitted in a <b>single combined PDF</b> ; hyperlinks are not permitted, and must not exceed a <b>maximum of 5 sides of A4</b> in total as additional pages will <b>make your application ineligible</b> .
<b>Theory of Change</b>	<b>Not required</b>	<p><b>Required</b> for Extra, no specific template.</p> <p>Optional for Evidence and Main schemes (but this should be included within your 5 page optional materials).</p>

## 5. Assessment process

All eligible applications that meet the required standard will be assessed by the **Illegal Wildlife Trade Advisory Group** (IWTAG), who are independent experts in IWT and poverty reduction (see, <https://iwt.challengefund.org.uk/about-us/>).

IWTAG follows a strict code of practice: if any member has been involved in or is closely associated with an application, the applicant or a project partner, they **declare their interest** and play no role in its assessment or discussion at the Sift Meeting.

An overview of the process for assessment is:

- 1) **Initial Review:** Applications that are poor quality, incomplete or do not meet the essential eligibility criteria or standard will be rejected. You will be informed of the reasons for rejection.
- 2) **Independent Expert Review:** Applications are scored by at least three members of IWTAG, against the assessment criteria (section 5.4) to inform the discussion at the Moderating Panel.
- 3) **Sift Meeting:** IWTAG discusses comments and agrees the strongest applications to recommend for funding.
- 4) **Funding Decision:** Defra reviews IWTAG's recommendations and awards the grants.

Defra reserves the right to apply more stringent assessment at the Initial Review if the number of applications is high to ensure that the experts can robustly review those with the highest chance of being discussed at the Sift Meeting.

Due diligence, including financial and administrative checks, is conducted on all projects prior to award.

### 5.1 Results of applications

Once the Funding Decision has been made, **all Lead Applicants** (both successful and unsuccessful) **will receive notification** via email from Flexi-Grant.

If you are successful, in the case of a Stage 1 proposal, you will receive an invitation to Stage 2, if successful at Stage 2, an offer of funding.

Defra retains the **right to clarify any issues** raised during the application process or to award funding **subject to required amendments**. If the applicant is subsequently unable to meet the requirements of the award, Defra retains the right to withdraw the offer.

The IWT Challenge Fund receives a significant number of applications, and we are unable to provide detailed feedback to all applicants. Only successful applicants whose applications were competitive will receive detailed feedback to help strengthen future applications.

## 5.2 Feedback

Feedback is a valued method to support the development of capability of potential applicants and strengthen current or future proposals in support of the objectives of the funds.

Table 3. Feedback Table

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**Applicants recommended to Defra** for funding are provided **specific feedback** that form a caveat of funding or a recommendation.

**IWT Challenge Fund** applicants invited to submit a Stage 2 application are provided **specific feedback** on their Stage 1 application; this **must be responded to** in the covering letter of the Stage 2 application.

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**Near-misses:** applications that are considered **competitive but narrowly miss** being invited to Stage 2 or recommended to Defra for funding are provided **specific feedback** on how to strengthen future applications.

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**Non-Competitive applications** that are significantly below the expected standard and would require substantial work to be competitive, are provided **no feedback** .

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This feedback, amongst other sources, is also used when reviewing funding guidance and articles.

## 5.3 Resubmission of applications

If your application is unsuccessful, you may submit a revised application to a future round.

A resubmitted application will **only be accepted once**, unless there is prior agreement owing to exceptional circumstances or the proposed project is significantly different.

Any resubmission should include a **cover letter** with your application, outlining how you have responded to any feedback to strengthen your application.

## 5.4 Assessment criteria

The **evidence** presented in each application is **assessed by members of the Advisory Group against the criteria below**, taking into consideration the type of grant.

Unless noted, all benefits or impacts are in **reference to the host country**.

At least three assessors score each application. Each of the three assessors scores are added into a single application score to inform the Sift Meeting.

The **same scoring criteria is used at Stage 1 and Stage 2**, acknowledging the differences between the two stages:

- At **Stage 1**, Assessors are looking for evidence that projects are responding to a need, are innovative, offer value for money and have the **potential to deliver a competitive proposal** at Stage 2.
- At **Stage 2**, Assessors are looking for **evidence** that projects have the necessary experience, support and have strong probability of **delivering sustainable benefits**, including the **feasibility to scale**.

**Assessor Criteria =**

- IWT Impact (0-6 points)
- Technical Merit (0-6 points)
- Poverty Reduction (Qualitative Assessment)

### **IWT Impact (0-6 points)**

- 1) Demonstrates strong evidence of an identified in-country need for innovation/capability and capacity on the IWT and poverty reduction challenge.
- 2) The project is supporting the development of **innovative solutions and insights that could lead to new effective products, processes or services to deliver more desirable and useful solutions than currently available**.
- 3) The project is scalable and provides evidence of the intervention's success at a smaller scale and its potential impact at a larger scale.
- 4) The project has clear logic of why and how its Outputs will contribute towards one or more of the four themes for IWT (below), including how these will be monitored and evidenced and will make a clear contribution to *tackle IWT in the country/ies*:
  - Reducing demand for IWT products
  - Ensuring effective legal frameworks and deterrents
  - Strengthening law enforcement
  - Developing sustainable livelihoods to benefit people directly affected by IWT
- 5) The project provides **evidence of its potential impact, including the problem it addresses, and the gap it fills in existing approaches**. Evidence projects should describe how the improved evidence base will be used to design an intervention, the problem the intervention will address and the gap it will fill.
- 6) The project does not duplicate other work, has analysed relevant historical and existing initiatives and will either *build on or take work already done into account in project design to maximise lesson learning and synergies*.

- 7) The project is tackling an identified and urgent issue relevant to *species of fauna, flora and fungi impacted by IWT*.

### Technical Merit (0-6 points)

- 1) The evidence-based methodology is robust, clear and appropriate to meet the identified need and achieve the targeted Outcome, with a well-defined exit strategy.
- 2) As appropriate, the project includes work that is innovative and distinctive, with targeted Outputs and Outcomes that are new, additional, and measurable (SMART), aligned to Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance; it will not cut across or duplicate work already being funded or completed.
- 3) Demonstrates good value for money, in terms of the scale and impact, and includes the ability to leverage matched funding.
- 4) Risks are identified, assessed and have robust mitigation actions.
- 5) Demonstrates evidence of a highly collaborative approach, involving early and strong participation of local partners, stakeholders, and communities.
- 6) Demonstrates how it will strengthen the capability and capacity of key stakeholders.

### Additional questions considered at Stage 2

- 1) Safeguarding, security and ethical issues will be managed to a high standard.
- 2) The project has sustainable post project strategy, has demonstrated the potential and feasibility to scale where appropriate, and is designed to leave a legacy, through a real and lasting impact.
- 3) The Project Team has the necessary capability and capacity to support the successful delivery of the project as evidenced by the submitted CVs, and includes identified local partners.
- 4) Provides a clear plan of how it will make evidence (including data, lessons learnt and best practices etc.) widely available and freely accessible.

### 3: Poverty Reduction (Qualitative assessment)

The assessors will also make a qualitative assessment of the degree (high/medium/low/none) to which poverty reduction has been considered in the design of the project, within the context of the themes being addressed and considering the points below, and the extent to which this has been demonstrated by and evidenced by the applicant.

- 1) The project objectives clearly demonstrate how it aims to deliver lasting benefits for poor and/or vulnerable stakeholders.
- 2) Clear logic of why and how its Outputs will contribute towards the Outcome for poverty reduction, including how these will be monitored and evidenced.
- 3) Upper-Middle Income Countries projects demonstrate that they will either:
  - have an impact in Least Developed or Low-Income Countries, or
  - contribute to the global public good, or
  - contribute to a critical issue that could not be made elsewhere.
- 4) In helping to reduce poverty of identified stakeholders, the project also contributes to tackling the illegal wildlife trade (See 1.4).
- 5) Strong understanding of in-country stakeholders through evidence of early engagement, clearly identifying who, how many will benefit, and how they will benefit.

- 6) Gender inequality and Social Inclusion is understood and reflected in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the project; intentional or unintentional increased inequality will be prevented.

#### 5.4.1 Assessment Scoring (for IWT Impact and Technical Merit Scores)

Points	Description
6	<i>Strong Demonstration of Evidence.</i> Substantial evidence presented that it <b>meets all the of assessment criteria, with no concerns raised</b> ; the majority of which are met to a high standard. There may be a few minor issues which if addressed may improve the project, but they are unlikely to be detrimental to the delivery of the project and should not prevent it from being funded without changes being made.
5	<i>Good Demonstration of Evidence.</i> Good evidence presented that it <b>meets most of the assessment criteria, no major concerns identified.</b> The met criteria are mostly to a high standard. There are minor issues that could improve the project, but should not prevent it from being funded. It is likely to significantly contribute to the objectives of the IWT Challenge Fund.
4	<i>Acceptable Demonstration of Evidence.</i> The proposed project <b>meets most of the assessment criteria, no major concerns identified.</b> The criteria it does meet are often to a good standard. There are a few minor issues that would improve this project which they would be advised to consider if funded. It is likely to contribute to the objectives of the IWT Challenge Fund.
<b>Indicative scoring threshold of competitive applications</b>	
3	<i>Moderate Demonstration of Evidence.</i> The project <b>meets many of the assessment criteria, some concerns raised.</b> Those met criteria are largely to an acceptable standard, and the concerns can be addressed. It has the potential to contribute to the objectives of the IWT Challenge Fund, if the issues are addressed to strengthen it.
2	<i>Weak Demonstration of Evidence.</i> The project <b>meets some of the assessment criteria, or has raised concerns.</b> Those criteria it does meet are to a modest standard, but the application requires important changes to address the concerns and assessment criteria in order to make it competitive.
1	<i>Minimal Demonstration of Evidence.</i> The proposed project is unsatisfactory and <b>meets only a few criteria, or raises important concerns.</b> The proposal is likely to require significant revision.
0	<i>No Demonstration of Evidence.</i> The projects <b>fails to meet any of the criteria outlined and raises serious concerns</b> e.g. flawed approach, subject to serious technical difficulties or risks, unclearly written that it cannot be properly assessed, or is duplicative.

## Annex A. Eligible Countries

The IWT Challenge Fund is entirely **Official Development Assistance (ODA) funded**, and therefore projects must promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries as a primary objective, and the eligible countries listed in **Annex A** are all on the current OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) List. Proposals are particularly encouraged from sub-Saharan Africa, East and South East Asia and Latin America. However, projects will in practice be expected to be mostly focused on Low Income and Lower Middle-Income countries.

**Upper Middle-Income countries** (UMICs) are eligible, however, projects applying to work in a UMIC must clearly **demonstrate a stronger case** for support. This includes operating in areas of high importance for biodiversity and a clear poverty reduction need. Such applications must also clearly demonstrate that they will also:

- advance knowledge, evidence and impact in **Least Developed or Low-Income Countries**, or
- contribute to a **global public good**, for example by advancing understanding and/or strengthening the knowledge base related to biodiversity conservation/sustainable use and poverty reduction, or
- contribute to **serious and unique advancements** on a critical issue as a result of specific circumstances of the upper-middle income country that could not be made elsewhere.

Available funding will be ring-fenced to ensure that **at least 70%** is allocated to projects in Low Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries.

Table 4. Eligible countries.

Low Income Countries	Lower Middle-Income Countries	Upper Middle-Income Countries
Afghanistan	Algeria	Argentina
Angola	Belize	Armenia
Bangladesh	Bolivia	Botswana
Benin	Cabo Verde	Brazil
Bhutan	Cameroon	China (People's Republic of)
Burkina Faso	Congo	Colombia
Burundi	Côte d'Ivoire	Costa Rica
Cambodia	Egypt	Cuba
Central African Rep.	El Salvador	Dominica
Chad	Eswatini	Dominican Republic
Comoros	Ghana	Ecuador
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	Honduras	Equatorial Guinea
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	India	Fiji
Djibouti	Indonesia	Gabon
Eritrea	Iran	Georgia
Ethiopia	Kenya	Grenada
Gambia	Kyrgyzstan	Guatemala
Guinea	Micronesia	Guyana
Guinea-Bissau	Mongolia	Iraq
Haiti	Morocco	Jamaica
Kiribati	Nicaragua	Jordan
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	Nigeria	Kazakhstan
Lesotho	Pakistan	Lebanon
Liberia	Papua New Guinea	Libya
Madagascar	Philippines	Malaysia
Malawi	Samoa	Maldives
Mali	Sri Lanka	Marshall Islands
Mauritania	Tajikistan	Mauritius
Mozambique	Tunisia	Mexico
Myanmar	Uzbekistan	Namibia
Nepal	Vanuatu	Niue
Niger	Viet Nam	Panama
Rwanda	West Bank and Gaza Strip	Paraguay
São Tomé and Príncipe	Zimbabwe	Peru
Senegal		Saint Lucia
Sierra Leone		Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Solomon Islands		South Africa
Somalia		Suriname
South Sudan		Thailand
Sudan		Tonga
Syrian Arab Republic		Turkey
Tanzania		Turkmenistan
Timor-Leste		Venezuela
Togo		
Tuvalu		
Uganda		
Yemen		
Zambia		



## Annex B. Safeguarding

Adapted from on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Six Core Principles:

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by anyone associated with a BCF project constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Any sexual relationship between those associated with a BCF project and a person benefitting from the project that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where anyone associated with a BCF Project develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by anyone else associated with a BCF project, whether in the same organisation or not, they must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.
6. Everyone associated with a BCF project are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

Adapted from: [psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/update/iasc-six-core-principles](https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/update/iasc-six-core-principles)

## Annex C. Project Team CV

**All key project staff should be named in the application form and budget.**

Key Project Staff includes those that make up the main project team, are critical to project success, but can be from any of the Project Partners.

You must provide a **one-page CV or job description** (if not yet recruited) for these named project staff, to demonstrate that the project will have the capability and capacity to deliver the Outcome.

The table below provides a guide to relevant and useful CV evidence, and information that is less relevant to demonstrating the capability of the Project Team.

Useful evidence	What it demonstrates	How reviewers will use this
<b>Previous roles/ positions on similar projects</b>	Up to date and relevant expertise	If the roles listed are relevant to the proposed project, it will demonstrate appropriate experience leading or working on a similar type of project.
<b>Skills and knowledge</b>	Technical or Specialist skills and knowledge relevant to the proposed project role	Relevant skills and knowledge tailored to the project; it will provide evidence of the individual's match to the project
<b>Country experience</b>	This individual has recent experience of working in project environment (political, social, legislative etc.).	We do not expect all of the team to have worked in the host country but, we do expect some will have experience working in similar countries. This is especially valued in the senior project roles.
<b>List and scale of project funding received</b>	The individual is good at leading projects, managing the budgets and fulfilling reporting requirements.	Good evidence of an experienced project leader in running projects.
<b>Less useful evidence</b>		
<b>List of courses/ lectures given</b>	The individual is a recognised teacher.	Gives no indication of their ability in a non-academic setting.
<b>List of job titles held</b>	Range of experience.	If this is a list of job titles i.e. lecturer, coordinator, researcher then it is unlikely this list will provide much useful detail.
<b>List of published papers</b>	Academic or scientific achievement but may not be relevant to the project.	A list of all papers ever published is of little interest to reviewers. A tailored list of papers, relevant to the project, will demonstrate expertise in this area.
<b>List of Post Graduate Students</b>	This individual is a recognised research supervisor.	Doesn't show that the individual is capable of undertaking project work, although may be relevant if the project involves significant mentoring of local students.

## Annex D. Awarded Grants

The **award is made to the Lead Partner**, not to an individual. The Project Leader will be the **first point of contact** for all aspects of project management (including financial management), and will be **responsible for the overall management of the project and accountability of the award**, on behalf of the institution they represent.

Contact details will be required for a **nominated individual from the finance section** of the institution to whom the award is made. This person may be identified once the grant has been offered.

### Reporting requirements

Projects must provide **Annual** and **Half Year** progress **reports** that are reviewed each year. These reports must provide robust reporting against intended objectives and include information on Outputs and ethics and environmental impact.

All projects are required to submit a **Final Report** at the end of the award.

To continue receiving funding from the IWT Challenge Fund **reports must be complete and within deadlines**. If you do not meet these requirements your funding can be stopped.

### Project datasets

Data collection, analysis, management and storage **protocols** should be established to ensure the **integrity of research findings and their subsequent use** within the research team, IWT Challenge Fund and eventual wider public domain.

The application should demonstrate that the **publication of results and secure data storage** has been thought through, a plan exists, and appropriate resources are included.

We encourage that where possible and appropriate data is shared directly or indirectly with **Global Biodiversity Information Facility** ([GBIF.org](http://GBIF.org)) for wider accessibility.

### 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 IWT Challenge Fund including project details (usually title, lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).

## Annex E. Action and Threat Typologies

To support analysis, projects should indicate in the application between 1 to 3:

- **Actions** that characterise their approach using the [IUCN – CMP Unified Classifications of Conservation Actions Needed \(Version 2.0\)](#) (see Table 5).
- **Threats** you intend to mitigate as they placing pressure on biodiversity using [IUCN Threats Classification Scheme \(ver. 3.2\)](#) (see Table 6).

Please refer to the original IUCN publications for greater detail.

Table 5: Level 2 Actions under the IUCN – CMP Unified Classifications of Conservation Actions Needed. (v 2.0)

Level 2 Actions	Level 3 Actions
1. Land / Water Management	site/area stewardship, ecosystem & natural process (re)creation
2. Species Management	Spp. stewardship, re-introduction & translocation, ex-situ conservation
3. Awareness Raising	outreach & communications, protests & civil disobedience
4. Law Enforcement & Prosecution	detection & arrest, criminal prosecution & conviction, non-criminal legal action
5. Livelihood, Economic & Moral Incentives	enterprises & alternative livelihoods, better products & management practices, market-based incentives, direct economic incentives, non-monetary values
6. Conservation Designation & Planning	protected area designation &/or acquisition, easements & resource rights, land/water use zoning & designation, conservation planning, site infrastructure
7. Legal & Policy Frameworks	laws, regulations & codes, policies & guidelines
8. Research & Monitoring	research & status monitoring, evaluation, effectiveness measures & learning
9. Education & Training	formal education, training & individual capacity development
10. Institutional Development	internal org. management & admin, external org development & support, alliance & partnership development, financing conservation

Table 6: Level 1 under the IUCN Threats Classification Scheme (ver. 3.2)

Level 1 Threats	
1. Residential & commercial (incl. tourism) development	7. Natural system modifications (fires, dams)
2. Agriculture & aquaculture (incl. plantations)	8. Invasive & other problematic species, genes & diseases
3. Energy production & mining (incl. renewables)	9. Pollution (domestic, commercial, agricultural)
4. Transportation & service corridors	10. Geological events
5. Biological resource use (hunting, gathering, logging, fishing)	11. Climate change & severe weather
6. Human intrusions & disturbance (recreation, war)	12. Other threats