



Darwin Plus Applications Webinar, 5th September 2017

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Webinar Agenda

Agenda Item
Welcome and introduction to the webinar
Objectives of the webinar
Background to the scheme
Key eligibility criteria
Writing a robust application
Using the Flexi-Grant application portal
Guidance and support for applicants
Questions



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Notes on the Darwin Plus applications webinar

A recording of this webinar is available here:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/9045280125639208193>

This was the first time a webinar had been held for applicants to Darwin Plus. A total of 37 people registered, and 18 people were able to attend.

The webinar introduced Darwin Plus to attendees, focusing on the technical eligibility criteria of applications. It then moved on to a section discussing how best to develop a robust application, with particular focus on logical frameworks (logframes) and their different elements. The Flexi-Grant application portal was introduced, and a walkthrough highlighted some of the key features of the system. Finally, attendees were provided with some resources for further support whilst writing their applications.

The webinar gave participants the opportunity to ask questions on what is expected of them in their application, and the new Flexi-Grant applications portal.

Questions and responses are summarised in the following section of this report. Surveys carried out during the webinar indicated that the pace of the webinar was about right. Following the completion of the webinar more detailed feedback was requested from participants. This is also summarised below.

There is an upcoming webinar hosted by JNCC on data reporting needs for awarded Darwin Plus projects (see Clause 28 of the Terms and Conditions for further context on this). Details on the webinar, and how to join, are below.

Overseas Territories Environment & Climate Fund, Darwin Plus: Data Clause

Join us for a webinar on Sep 15, 2017 at 3:00 PM BST.

Register now!

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/319061066735291651>

This webinar provides guidance to Project Leaders to fulfil the Darwin Plus terms and conditions: Darwin Plus Data Clause Article 28 of the 2017 call (Article 36 2015-2016 calls)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



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Webinar Q&A

Financial and admin questions

You will find most information regarding financial management of your projects in the “Financial Information: Applying for Funding and Running your Project” document, which will also be an excellent reference resource throughout the duration of your project if your application is successful.

The “Financial Information: Applying for Funding and Running your Project” document can be found here: <http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/resources-for-projects>. This document covers Darwin Plus, all other Darwin Initiative schemes, and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund.

Q - UK Higher Education Institutions publish their accounts publicly. Is it still necessary to provide these via flexigrant?

Yes, please provide these via Flexigrant. This is to ensure that that we have the most appropriate accounts for your organisation.

Q - Do UK non-departmental government bodies need to supply signed audited accounts?

Government departments and their agencies are not required to submit their accounts. However, they are required to demonstrate capability of managing projects of a similar value to the grant amount you are requesting from Darwin Plus. There is further information available in section 3 of the Finance guidance.

If you do not submit your accounts, please ensure you provide adequate explanation as to why not. See section 3 of the finance guidance for more information on this.

Q - Will an organisation's annual income play any role in the amount of funding given?

Yes – we need to see evidence that you have managed similar sized projects in the past, and this is one of the reasons we require you submit your accounts alongside your application. See section 3 of the finance guidance for more information on this.

Q - Does the restriction on funding built infrastructure also prohibit the purchase of large items, e.g. drones, or other significant pieces of equipment?

Darwin Plus eligibility criteria disallow permanent buildings or infrastructure to be funded through your project. However, capital items (for example, equipment or vehicles) are allowed. The proportion of the budget that can be allocated to capital costs is up to 10%. Additionally, you must



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obtain 3 quotes prior to procurement of any items over £1,000. Further information on the restrictions around infrastructure and capital costs can be found in section 1.7 of the finance guidance.

Q - Can you clarify what 'other' funding could include? For example, is in-kind support such as time or equipment supply/hire allowable through the rules?

Yes, in-kind support such as time, space rental or equipment hire can count towards your co-funding.

Section 1.12 of the Finance guidance includes further information on what qualifies as in-kind or matched/co-funding.

Q - Is it possible to make an application now, but with a deferred start date (e.g. apply now for 2019 start)? This question relates to a team with an existing Darwin Plus grant.

No, the latest that projects under Round 6 can start is 1st November 2018, and the earliest your project can start is 1st April. Please check the Guidance to make sure your dates are eligible for funding in Round 6. The guidance can be found on the Darwin Plus website on GOV.UK - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/darwin-plus-applying-for-projects-in-uk-overseas-territories>

We would recommend that you apply next year, at which stage you can also best feed in the findings under your existing project.

Q - Do you know the overall amount for projects in this round?

There is no discrete pot of money available for funding Darwin Plus in a given year. Applications are viewed on their individual merit, and only high quality applications will be recommended for funding. Please also consider the budget spread across financial years (see section 6.3 of the guidance for more on this).

Technical questions

Q - Does the letter of support from the OT Government need to be on headed paper and is there a level of seniority required?

There are no strict requirements in terms of letters of support – however, they need to be appropriate to the organisation. You should be able to identify who the letter is from, and their position within the organisation they represent. The Darwin Plus Advisory Group consider letters of support closely when making decisions on applications.



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Q - Is it ok to build on previous projects, or should these projects be entirely stand-alone?

Projects should be discrete projects, rather than funding contributing to a broader programme of work, however they can either be new initiatives or build on existing work. In cases where your application builds on existing work or projects (either through Darwin Plus or other schemes) we would recommend clearly describing where these links are and how the new project builds on and complements the existing project.

Flexi-Grant questions

Q – In what format would you like the digital signature on the certification page? Is there a template?

What we require here is a PDF or a JPEG image of a handwritten signature (a scan, for example). There is no template required, as an image of the signature alone will suffice.

Q - Are questions in Flexi-Grants largely the same as in previous D+ rounds so that collaborators could use the Word doc from previous year as a template if they want to?

The application this year is similar to that used in previous years, however we would highly recommend using the updated version on Flexi-Grant. There have been some edits to questions and word counts, for example, and we now require that a logframe is completed for projects of any size (under or over £100,000 request).

Other

Q – What is the Advisory Group?

The Darwin Plus Advisory Group are the panel of experts who review Darwin Plus applications and make recommendations to Ministers for funding. Current membership of the group can be found at the bottom of the Darwin Plus website on GOV.UK - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/darwin-plus-applying-for-projects-in-uk-overseas-territories>

Q - Will we get a copy of the slides?

Yes, the slides from the webinar are available on the Darwin website and can be accessed here: <http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/publications/workshop-proceedings/darwin-plus-applications-webinar-september-2017>

Q - Is there a word version of the application form?



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You can download a full version of the application form in PDF format from within the Flexi-Grant system – there is a button on the top of the “Summary” page.

Following feedback from the webinar, we recognise that a word version of the application form would be useful for applicants, especially if they are working collaboratively. A word version of the application form has been uploaded on the [ORG.UK](https://www.org.uk) website and will soon be made available on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

Unless agreed with a member of the LTS team via email, applications submitted on this word document will not be accepted. The content must be uploaded to the Flexi-Grant portal and submitted prior to the application deadline.

Q - If I am not the lead applicant, can I start the application and submit it anyway? I will be doing most of the writing, so this is the most convenient method.

Our definition of “lead applicant” is the person who begins an application. This is also the person who has to submit the application, although you can invite other people to collaborate. So in this case, we would recommend the person who is writing and submitting the application should start an application. There is a question on the application form which allows you to identify who the Project Leader is. This doesn’t have to be the same person as the lead applicant, but can be.

Selected Webinar Feedback

How useful did you find the webinar?

All webinar attendees that responded to the feedback reported finding the webinar useful.

8 attendees reported finding the webinar very useful, and the remaining 6 respondents reported finding it moderately useful. All survey respondents agreed that the pace of the webinar was spot on.

Do you have any recommendations for how we can improve?

“For the application process, I would suggest that MS Word and Excel documents still be made available, as they are easiest for working in draft form, particularly when a number of team members are weighing in on the application.”

“I thought it was a good idea to spend some time on the logframe as it looks a bit daunting to start with.”

“The connectivity with one of the speakers was not very good in the first hour and detracted from the important session on logframes. Future webinars should ensure that all presenters are connected to Ethernet cable with high speed internet access.”



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“I should have read the through the application form before the webinar - would have got more out of it. Maybe send people the PDF of the form to read through beforehand.”

“Provide outline of talk with approximate timings by email (to make dipping in/out easier)”

Do you have any suggestions for future webinar topics?

“Separate webinar to go through the financial templates”

“Not a webinar suggestion, but a suggestion for FlexiGrant. Please make a downloadable word (not just pdf) document for the submission available. I think most people prefer to complete their answers offline on word and then copy and paste answers into the system. To achieve this I had to manually go through each section cutting and pasting questions and then manually adding in word counts for certain questions, a complete waste of valuable time!”

“It would be useful to know how weighting for funding is carried out. The EU BEST 2.0 programme has very specific information about this, which takes the guesswork out of the application process.”