



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus and Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Flexi-Grant User Guide

A guide to support applicants using Flexi-Grant

August 2021

Contact for all applications:

Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus & IWT
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Flexi-Grant application portal:

tsi.flexigrant.com

For all general Darwin application queries e-mail:

darwin-applications@tsi.co.uk

For all general IWT Challenge Fund
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IWT-Fund@tsi.co.uk

For all queries specifically related to the use
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1 Purpose of this document

This guidance provides practical information on how to use the Flexi-Grant application portal to apply for Darwin, Darwin Plus and Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund Projects.

This document is only about how to use Flexi-Grant to apply for your Project. There is separate guidance about the content of your application and how to structure your project which you should read prior to beginning an application.

This guidance covers applications to Darwin Main, Darwin Plus, and the IWT Challenge Fund. This guidance is specifically focused on how to use the Flexi-Grant online application portal. Separate application guidance relating to the content of your application is available for each scheme¹:

- [Darwin Initiative – Guidance Notes for Applicants](#)
- [Darwin Plus – Guidance Notes for Applicants](#)
- [IWT Challenge Fund – Guidance Notes for Applicants](#)

2 What is Flexi-Grant?

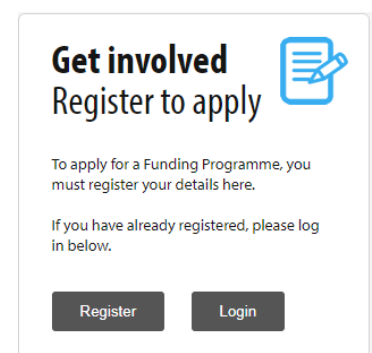
Flexi-Grant[®] is an online application portal used by a range of government and independent grant bodies worldwide. **All applications to Darwin Round 28, Darwin Plus Round 10 and IWT Round 8 must be through the Flexi-Grant portal.**

3 How to register on Flexi-Grant

In order to submit an application via Flexi-Grant, you need to register an account.

To register, go to: <https://ltsi.flexigrant.com>

At the bottom of the page on the left, you will find a button to create an account or login if you already have an account. Be sure to scroll all the way to the bottom of the page until you see this box:



¹ At the time of preparing this Flexi-Grant guidance, not all funds are open to applications. Please monitor the relevant pages for updates on upcoming rounds.

You will need to agree to the Flexi-Grant Terms and Conditions in order to register. Once you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email which you will need to access in order to activate your account.

If you forget your login details, please contact flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk and a member of the NIRAS-LTS team will unlock your account and reset your password.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The account you create to begin your application (the Flexi-Grant account holder) will be the lead applicant (unless you reassign this permission – see section 4.1). The lead applicant will be the only login that can submit your application and will be the **sole point of contact for the duration of the application (i.e. both Stage 1 and Stage 2) unless you notify NIRASLTS of a change**. Therefore, we recommend the lead applicant has regular email access or shares the login details if necessary.

If you experience any issues accessing the online portal, firstly we would suggest using Google Chrome as your browser if possible (there may be reduced functionality with Edge and Internet Explorer in particular). If you continue to experience these difficulties, please contact flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk.

4 How to complete your application

Before beginning an application, we would recommend reading all of the relevant documents including:

- **Guidance for Applicants**
- **Finance Guidance**
- **Terms & Conditions**

For Darwin Initiative, the documents can be found on the Darwin website [here](#).

For Darwin Plus, the documents can be found on the Darwin Plus website [here](#).

For the IWT Challenge Fund, the documents can be found on the IWT Challenge Fund website [here](#).

In order to start an application whilst logged into Flexi-Grant, either use the blue 'Click here to start an application' panel on the main home page or click the 'Application Portal' button in the top left. On the "My applications" tab, scroll down to the 'Start a new application' section where you can click to begin a new application.



Start a new application

Darwin Plus Round 10: Stage 1

Closing Date
20/09/2021 23:59

Start

If your Stage 1 application is successful, you will receive a unique link in your result email which will allow you to begin your Stage 2 application. **You will not be able to start a Stage 2 application through the Flexi-Grant application portal – you must use the link in the email and ensure you login as the original account holder.** If you are the lead applicant on more than one Stage 2 application, please contact flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk if you are unable to access all Stage 2 applications. Once you have followed this link, your Stage 1 application will be marked as complete and your Stage 2 application will appear under ‘My applications’.

We recommend reading each page of the application form to familiarise yourself with the questions before starting. Links to all application documents are included on the “summary” page of the application form (see below) and elsewhere where relevant.

You can also print/download the entire application form in PDF before or after completing it and you can download a blank Word template for drafting purposes from the “summary” page.

Summary

0% complete

[Print form](#)

[View instructions](#)

At any stage in the application process you can save your work and return to it at a later time. The system will automatically save your work when you change pages but we recommend that you also save your work at regular intervals to avoid loss of data. The questions and sections can be completed in any order.

Once you have completed all sections of the application a 'Submit application' button will become available at the top and bottom of this summary page. This button will become available once every page of the application is marked as 'Complete' - however please note that **all collaborators must have marked their inputs as complete or this button will not appear**. If they do not, the Lead Applicant will have to revoke their permission to collaborate before the application can be submitted. You may need to refresh the page after revoking permission for the 'Submit application' button to appear.

When you click the 'Submit application' button you will be asked to confirm that you want to submit your application. Once your application has been submitted, you will be able to view your application and its current status but you will NOT be able to modify it.

Please ensure you have read the [Guidance Notes](#), [Finance for Darwin and IWT Guidance](#), [T&Cs](#) and [Flexi-Grant Guidance](#) before you apply. We recommend reviewing each page of the application form to familiarise yourself with the questions before starting.

You can also download blank templates for the budget (note there are different templates for projects requesting over £100,000 or under £100,000) and [implementation timetable](#) to upload alongside your application.

Questions marked with a red asterisk * are mandatory.

The closing date for all applications is **2359 GMT on Thursday 5th December 2019**.

In order to facilitate collaboration, you can also download a [Word version](#) of the application form. **Please note that applications will only be accepted via the Flexi-Grant portal. Any applications received on the Word form via email will be rejected unless previously agreed with LTS International.**

At any stage in the application process you can save your work and return to it later. The questions and sections can be completed in any order. When you leave a page by clicking any of the following buttons in the Flexi-Grant program, any edits you have made will be saved automatically:

← Previous page

Return to Summary

Save progress

Next page >

However, if you click any of the other buttons in the Flexi-Grant program or the back button in your internet browser without saving, new content and edits will not be saved.

You can paste text from other sources (e.g. a Word document) into the fields on Flexi-Grant. However, word limits are strictly enforced and any words exceeding the limit will automatically be deleted so check all you have copied appears as you expect.

Questions marked with a red asterisk * are mandatory.

4.1 Application contact details

The individual who creates the Flexi-Grant account is referred to as the Flexi-Grant account holder (see section 3 above). This person is the **lead applicant** and main point of contact for the duration of the application (unless reassigned). It is useful if the Flexi-Grant account holder is the individual named as **Project Leader** in the application form.


All emails automatically generated by Flexi-Grant, including notification of application results, will only be sent to the account holder. We would therefore recommend that this individual regularly monitors this email during the application period, and, if necessary, we recommend sharing login details with other members of the team who can login to submit the application on their behalf.

If the Project Leader is **not** the Flexi-Grant account holder, then you should also add their name to the application form at the relevant question. There is no need to add the contact details of the Project Leader or any co-Project Leader you are proposing.

The image shows a form with the following fields and values:

- Title: Please Select... (dropdown menu)
- First name: Enter first name (text input, marked with a red asterisk)
- Last name: Enter last name (text input, marked with a red asterisk)
- Contact type: Please Select... (dropdown menu, marked with a red asterisk)
- Position: Project Leader (text input)
- Related organisation: Please select if appropriate (dropdown menu) with a note below: "You can add this later in the application"
- Lead: (checkbox)

Please note that the “lead” checkbox is used to indicate who the lead applicant is (initially the account holder but can be changed once an application is started). Only the person who is a lead applicant can reassign this permission to another collaborator on the application (see section 5).

However, only the lead applicant (i.e. the contact marked with a black icon  will be contacted regarding the result of an application and they will be the only individual to receive emails automatically generated by the system.

If project staff already have an active Flexi-Grant account, please invite them to your application as a co-applicant. This will avoid duplicate accounts being created.

If the lead applicant changes during the review process (i.e. after you have submitted your application), please contact flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk with new contact details and a member of the NIRAS-LTS team will update these details to ensure application results are sent to the correct person.

In addition, **please be aware that although some of the fields in Questions 1 or 2 may not be relevant to you/your organisation and appear to be optional, all available fields must be completed before page one of the application (Contact Details) is marked as complete.** Where fields do not apply please use “N/A” as your response.

4.2 Eligibility criteria

The application form has been designed, as far as possible, to help ensure applicants meet our eligibility criteria, for example through the inclusion of word limits. Please ensure you are familiar with all the eligibility criteria set out in the relevant guidance document, as your application will be rejected if it fails to comply with these criteria.

4.3 Incomplete questions and error messages

Because you are allowed to progress through the application form in any order, it is possible to leave a page incomplete. However, you will not be able to submit an incomplete application. The “summary” page indicates which parts of the application form have incomplete questions or error messages.

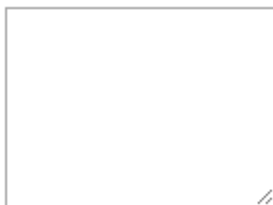
Once you have identified which page is incomplete, click the “edit” button to open the relevant page. If you are unable to identify what information is missing, click “save current page” at the top or bottom of the page. If there is an error, a message will pop up at the top of the page and the relevant question will be marked – for example:

A screenshot of a web form element. It features a label "End date:" in bold black text. Below the label is a text input field containing the date "31/03/2029". To the right of the input field is a calendar icon. A red asterisk error icon is positioned to the right of the calendar icon. The entire input area is enclosed in a light red border with rounded corners. A small red circle with a white exclamation mark is located in the top right corner of the border.

If you are still unclear what the error is, please refer to the guidance for applicants which details restrictions related to project start and end dates, as in the example above, or contact our support team by email: flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk.

4.4 Entering text into boxes

Note that most text boxes are adjustable in size. These boxes are marked by stripes on the bottom right hand corner.



In order to adjust the size and shape of a box, simply click on the striped corner and drag in any direction. Please note that this function may not be available when using Internet Explorer or Microsoft Edge as your web browser. Adjusting the size will not adjust any restricted word count.

4.5 Uploading supporting materials

The limit for any single file uploaded as supporting materials with your application is 5MB. Please ensure documents are saved in PDF form where possible (apart from templates in Excel) in order to minimise size, and are collated as requested e.g. all CVs in one PDF document. Non-essential additional materials **must not exceed 10 pages in total**.

5 Collaboration

It is possible to collaborate with partners on your application. We recommend that you discuss this with any partners you intend to invite, before sending them an invitation to collaborate.

You can send an invite to collaborate and manage invited collaborators from the “Participants” tab on the “summary” page.

The screenshot shows the 'Participants' tab selected. Below the tabs, there is a section titled 'Default instructions for collaboration'. A dropdown menu is open, showing 'Collaboration requests: Active, Pending or Required'. Below this, there is a table with columns for Role, Assigned, and Status.

Role	Assigned	Status
Co-Applicant Invited: 15/05/20	Charles Darwin charles-darwin@beagle.com	Invited
Co-Applicant		Optional

Buttons for 'Remind' and 'Revoke' are visible next to the 'Invited' status, and an 'Invite' button is visible next to the 'Optional' status.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Although it is possible to collaborate on an application, the lead applicant **must** be the person who submits the final application. If the lead applicant expects not to be available when submission is due, we recommend sharing login details with other members of the team who can login to submit the application on their behalf.
- All collaborators need to have marked their inputs as complete prior to submission, otherwise the lead applicant has to revoke permission (see screenshot above) to collaborate before the application can be submitted. **This will not remove the collaborators inputs.**
- All collaborators have equal editing power, and changes are not marked.
- Collaborators can leave comments for each other at the top of each page of the application form. To do so click on the “+” sign next to “Page Comments” to expand the comments field, type your comment into the box and click “Add comment”. These comments will then be visible to all collaborators, reviewers and to Flexi-Grant administrators but won’t be considered during the application review process and should not be used to provide information outside of word limit.
- For those applicants wishing to collaborate offline, a Word version of the application form is available to download from the “summary” page of your application form within Flexi-Grant, or on the relevant fund websites under the ‘apply’ tab (see section 4). The Stage 2 application form can be downloaded from within the Stage 1 application so that you can see what will be expected should you be invited to the next stage.

6 Submission

Once you have completed all sections of the application a 'Submit application' button will become available at the bottom of the “summary” page (note that only the lead applicant can submit the application). This button will become available once every page of the application is marked as 'Complete'. When you click the 'Submit application' button you will be asked to confirm that you want to submit your application. Once your application has been submitted, you will be able to view your application and its current status but you will NOT be able to modify it.

If you find you have made a mistake and need to amend something before the deadline², you can contact us to ask for the application to be returned. If we return it, it will no longer be recognised as ‘submitted’ and you will need to make your edits and resubmit within the application deadline for your application to be considered.

² Specific deadlines are outlined in the relevant guidance notes.

Please ensure you have read the relevant guidance notes before you apply. We recommend reviewing each page of the application form to familiarise yourself with the questions before starting.

7 Other ways to apply

For Round 28 of the Darwin Initiative, Round 10 of Darwin Plus and Round 8 of the IWT Challenge Fund, Flexi-Grant is the only way of applying. Although we don't anticipate any difficulties, we appreciate that this is a relatively new system for the Darwin and IWT community. Please be assured that the previous levels of support are still available from the Darwin and IWT teams.

If anything is unclear after reading this guidance and the relevant "Guidance Notes" document, then please feel free to contact us, and we will provide assistance.

If you continue to have **significant difficulties** completing your application via this online portal, please contact flexigrant@ltsi.co.uk.

8 Frequently Asked Questions

I have completed my application, but I can't see the "submit" button.

If you are not the lead applicant, you will not be able to submit the application. Ensure the lead applicant has access near the submission deadline so that they can submit the application. If you are the lead applicant but still can't see the submit button, please ensure that any collaborators on the application have marked their inputs as complete or else you have revoked their invitation to collaborate. You should then be able to submit.

I am not the lead applicant but would like to be – how do I do this?

The person who started the application or who is currently the lead applicant needs to make you the lead applicant – only the current lead applicant and LTS administrators have the power to change the lead applicant.

I use Flexi-Grant for other grant schemes and they require another stage of sign off – do you have this stage?

No, we have not configured an additional sign off stage for our application forms. We do ask that applicants complete the certification page but we leave it up to you to manage any other necessary sign-off stages internally.

I am struggling to access the Flexi-Grant portal

If you experience any issues accessing the online portal, firstly we would suggest using Google Chrome as your browser if possible (there may be reduced functionality with Edge and Internet Explorer in particular).

How do I sign my application?

You can upload an e-signature on the Certification page of your application as a .jpeg, .jpg, .png or pdf. You may also print out the relevant page of the Word application form to sign and submit as a PDF.

For all of the above, if you continue to have problems, please get in touch.