



Submit by 27 October 2014

APPLICATION FOR DARWIN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME ROUND 21

Information to be extracted to the database is highlighted blue.

1. **Name and address of UK Host organisation** (NB: Notification of results will be by email and addressed to the main UK Expert listed in Section 5)

UK Organisation & Address:	Centre for Middle East Plants (CMEP) Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 20a Inverleith Row, Edinburgh EH3 5LR, Scotland, UK
Project Leader Name:	Anthony George Miller
E-mail:	
Phone:	

2. **Name and official address of proposed Darwin Fellow** (include email and telephone details where available)

Name:	Ahmad Jamshed Khoshbeen
Address:	Taimani, Kabul, Afghanistan
E-mail:	
Phone:	

3. **Project dates, duration and total Darwin Initiative Grant requested**

Proposed start date: 01 July 2015			
Duration of project: 15 Months (with 3 month break)			
End date: 30 September 2016			
Darwin funding requested	2015/16 £ 15,300	2016/17 £ 5,400	Total £ 20,700

4. **Summary of proposed Fellowship** i.e. Outcome and expected outputs and impact

(Max 100 words)

Increased knowledge and ability to deliver high impact environmental advice to local, provincial and national actors, impacting positively on policy development, biodiversity conservation assessment and restoration of ecosystems in support of international conventions.

The fellow will develop a database of the Afghan flora, with a focal data set gathered for Bamyan, and be trained in its' management, analysis and application. Products developed will be tested in field programs in Bamyan.

The fellow will gain skills in the development and delivery of environmental education, capacity development and advocacy across all sectors of society, and develop a strategy for applying these post-fellowship.

5. Principals in the Project. Please give the details of the individuals from the UK host organisation (and other institutions if relevant) who would be directly involved in supervising/working with the Darwin Fellow. Please provide a one page CV for each of these named individuals. You may copy and paste this table if you need to provide details of more than one project partner.

Details	Project Leader	Other expert	Other expert
Surname	Miller	Forrest	Scanlon
Forename(s)	Anthony George	Alan David	Andrew James
Post held	Director, CMEP	Postdoctoral Researcher	Country Representative
Institution (if different to UK Host)			United Nations Environment Programme
Department	CMEP	CMEP	Country Office
Telephone/Skype			
Email			

6. Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of the UK Host organisation. (Large institutions please note this should describe your unit or department)

(max 150 words)

The mission statement of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is “to explore and explain the world of plants for a better future”. It has an international reputation as a centre for excellence in plant taxonomy, molecular systematic and biodiversity science based on its rich herbarium, living collections, library and archives, and expert staff. Successful Darwin Projects have been completed in Bhutan, Chile, Congo, Laos, Nepal, Peru, Turkey and Vietnam.

A copy of the annual report and accounts can be found at the following website:

<http://www.rbge.org.uk/about-us/corporate-information/annual-report-and-accounts>

The Centre for Middle Eastern Plants (CMEP) aims to enhance the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh’s scope of work across Arabia and SW Asia in biodiversity conservation, building upon a long history of research in the region, including significant collections and recent engagement in Afghanistan. Previous and current Darwin Projects include those on Socotra (Yemen) and in Iraqi Kurdistan.

7. Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of the proposed Darwin Fellow’s employing organisation. (Large institutions please note this should describe your unit or department)

(max 150 words)

Mr. Khoshbeen is currently employed with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN agency established in 1972 in order to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment through inspiring, informing and enabling nations in order to improve their quality of life and preserving for future generations.

UNEP has been engaged in Afghanistan since 2002, having conducted the initial post-conflict environmental assessment. Afterwards, UNEP was involved in supporting the Government of Afghanistan in establishing the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA). Currently, UNEP is engaged with NEPA on LDCF’s climate change project, NBSAP project for UNCBD, Multilateral Environment Agreements project. Moreover, UNEP is engaged in ecosystem disaster risk reduction project funded by UNEP Geneva.

UNEP's achievements include the first post-conflict environmental assessment, establishing NEPA, Natural Resources management and peace building report, and supporting NEPA on preparing the national adaptation plan of action.

8. Describe briefly the proposed Fellow's current role within their organisation and their link to a Darwin project (if applicable), including the project reference number, his/her role in that project and any ongoing involvement.

(max 200 words)

Mr. Khoshbeen is currently employed in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as coordination expert in the "Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan" and the "National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)" projects. These projects are working with the Government of Afghanistan to ensure that it meets its objectives under the United Nations Framework for Climate Change Convention and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. He makes sure that there is strong coordination and synergy among all governmental agencies and relevant NGOs.

Part of his job is to develop and deliver trainings on national and provincial levels for the governmental partners in order to build their capacities in assessments, monitoring and forecasting the climate change risks as well as biodiversity conservation.

9. Provide a concept note on the Darwin Fellowship. This should include:

9a. A clear outline of the aim and objectives of the Fellowship

(Max 300 words)

Human well-being is threatened by two important challenges: (a) climate change and (b) biodiversity loss. In order to mitigate these threats, a coordinated and collaborated action is needed which can address both issues at the same time because:

- a. Climate change mitigation and adaption actions need supply of ecosystem services that can be slowed due to biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.
- b. The adaptation and mitigation actions potentially have impacts on biodiversity so such impacts need to be assessed.

The fellowship is aimed at supporting the proposed fellow, Mr. Khoshbeen, to better understand the above mentioned risks and interconnections between plant biodiversity conservation and climate change. This fellowship will give him knowledge on how to apply biodiversity criteria and safeguards to climate change intervention that can maximize the benefits and minimize the risks for biodiversity, without reducing the mitigation or adaptation measures' effectiveness.

A field project in Bamyán province in the Central Highlands of Afghanistan will form an important component of the Fellowship. It will analyse botanical and climate change opportunities for watershed restoration using native Afghan plant species. It will engage CMEP experts to guide the fellow on gathering information, from Bamyán and other international botanical repositories, putting together a picture of what healthy and functioning ecosystems would have looked like, and how these can be restored. Restoration planning will include vegetation types, options for assessing and protecting rare, endemic and useful species, in terms of CBD.

The fellowship will help Afghanistan by ensuring that policies for biodiversity and climate change are both in line to international agreements, and that both contribute to enhancing capacities of government, NGOs, private sector and NGOs through trainings provided; publications distributed; and policies developed and integrated by Mr. Khoshbeen.

9b. The role of the UK Host organisation, and others where relevant (including contacts)

(Max 300 words)

CMEP will deliver specific objectives while the fellow is in Edinburgh. These will include:

- (a) Preparation of a taxonomically accurate database to hold information about the flora of Afghanistan, with available data held in Edinburgh and Kabul and other key institutes used as an exemplar for study and constructed by the proposed fellow (including training in geo-referencing techniques)
- (b) Training in the acquisition, handling and use of plant distribution data for conservation and restoration purposes, including local and national analyses
- (c) Acquisition of knowledge about the plant communities of Central Afghanistan, how these have been affected, and how they might be restored
- (d) Design of monitoring tools to enable communities and provincial partners to identify indicators, to be trialled in field operations in Bamyan
- (e) Understanding of the basic links between plant diversity, climate change, watershed management and poverty alleviation
- (f) Training in the design, implementation and delivery of knowledge products at the community, provincial and national level
- (g) Training in writing funding proposals to a range of international agencies focusing in sound scientific principles

Outside the fellowship, and in addition to it, UNEP will provide flexibility in the fellow's working schedule that will allow him to take time to build his personal and professional tools and skills in environmental and climate management with a botanical focus.

9c. Where appropriate, how the Fellowship will contribute towards biodiversity conservation and, where relevant, poverty alleviation i.e. what the expected outcome of the Fellowship will be, with regard to the higher goals of the Darwin Initiative.

(Max 300 words)

The National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (NBSAP) for Afghanistan is being prepared by NEPA with support from UNEP, in order to provide a policy document for biodiversity conservation and management. The NBSAP framework for 2014-2017 has identified the following first steps: (a) making policies and procedures to address the biodiversity issues; (b) conducting a national education and awareness programme on biodiversity; (c) developing environmental education curriculum and teacher training. The proposed fellow will develop a program based on botanical expertise to address policies to conserve threatened taxa, important taxa, ecosystems and the services they provide, and the relevance of biodiversity in climate change amelioration, watershed management and natural disaster alleviation, all of which will contribute directly to poverty alleviation and the increased well-being of rural Afghan citizens. He will also receive training in Edinburgh on the preparation and delivery of a range of educational materials and formats based upon national requirements, enhancing community and future capability for environmental resilience.

The National Priority Plan for Afghanistan recognises the links between biodiversity and poverty alleviation, and that addressing both issues simultaneously is critical. The fellowship will undertake fundamental data gathering and conservation assessment training, and develop policies and guidelines that will enable community level improvements in biodiversity status, including but not limited to status assessments of threatened or important plants, ecologically appropriate restoration guidelines, recommendations for watershed management and climate change amelioration.

Knowledge products, including reports, articles and databases, will be made available to expand these programs beyond the four project areas to enable national conservation assessments and restoration programs.

10. Legacy. Provide information on how the Darwin Fellow will utilise, promote and disseminate the benefits of the Fellowship on return to his/her home country. Will a strategy be developed during the Fellowship to ensure this is achieved?

(max 200 words)

The work of UNEP in Afghanistan has concentrated on an 'Afghan first' approach that has established NEPA and sought to identify and develop environmental experts. One of the key components of this process has been the ability of these experts to be able to deliver training, capacity development and awareness increasing strategies in country. As such, in keeping with full Darwin Projects, a formal strategic document will be developed in the first stage of this fellowship, in order to ensure that objectives, outputs and targets are met. This strategic document will detail how knowledge gained will be transmitted in Afghanistan to key stakeholders.

As Mr. Khoshbeen is leading a project which is involved in capacity building projects of the Government of Afghanistan, UNEP, NGOs and universities, he will be expected to deliver training and workshops on biodiversity, climate change and the linkages between them in a more effective way for all of the above mentioned sectors. He will also develop policies using knowledge gained from the fellowship; these policies will persist after the project closure.

Through involvement in field projects in four provinces, Mr Khoshbeen will deliver trainings on the inter-relation of climate change and biodiversity to the communities.

- 11.** How will the Fellowship assist the Fellow's organisation and/or local communities and/or home country in working towards the objectives (or implementation) of the CBD/CITES/CMS? Please refer to specific Articles or cross cutting themes as appropriate.

(max 200 words)

The fellowship can assist the climate change and biodiversity platform in Afghanistan, led by UNEP and NEPA in conducting the national awareness raising campaign identified as important step in NBSAP and the target 1 in AICHI targets. Similarly, with fellow's involvement in CMEP's conservation activities, the target 4 in AICHI targets or the natural resources management and sustainable use can be addressed.

After the fellowship, the fellow would be able to develop climate change policies that are in line with biodiversity conservation and integrate the policies into national, ministerial and provincial policies and strategies, which contributes to target 17 of AICHI CBD targets. Moreover, for addressing target 19, an awareness raising campaign using knowledge sharing material is conducted and the lessons learned and best experiences are not only shared nationally but also regionally and internationally.

With knowledge gained from this fellowship, the fellow would be able to build capacity of governmental, NGO, academic and public sector staff in order to understand, implement and report on these targets in order for Afghanistan to meet their objectives under these conventions.

- 12.** What collaboration has there been with the Darwin Fellow to date in developing the proposal, and what collaboration is planned for the duration of the Fellowship? Where relevant, describe any consultation or collaboration by the proposed Fellow within his or her own country.

(max 200 words)

A team from CMEP have been involved in extensive discussions in Afghanistan and in the UK in the past 4 years, starting with IUCN Red Listing actions in 2009 in which the proposed fellow participated, and followed by engagement with students at Kabul University through in country and online courses in biodiversity and conservation. A Darwin Scoping Mission in Afghanistan in spring 2014 further cemented links between UNEP, national agencies, environmental NGOs and CMEP/RBGE.

Plans for collaboration during the Fellowship involve both CMEP and UNEP assisting the fellow and his colleagues in carrying out dedicated efforts to integrate fellowship study objectives directly into the work on the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and the National Climate Change Strategy. Afghanistan will be developing its new 5 Year Development Plan in Spring 2015 onwards. Continued collaboration in these national processes, and engaging CMEP experts in the processes, directly by supporting the fellow is planned.

The main objectives of this proposal have been designed and presented by the proposed candidate, with discussion directly with CMEP regarding the specific skills and objectives to be attained. UNEP experts have provided strategic support, helping to frame the proposed actions in a national context.

13. Where will the Darwin Fellow be based? Please be specific with organisational details and dates (where more than one location).

(max 200 words)

The fellowship will be based in Edinburgh, in the CMEP offices of RBGE. The fellowship will start on 1 July 2015 with project planning. This will be followed by data gathering and training, and the analysis and application of the data as applicable to the project goals and field studies.

During the fellowship, there will be at least one return trip to Afghanistan for additional information gathering and field work in Bamyan province. This trip will be covered financially by the fellow and UNEP. In Afghanistan the fellowship will be based at the national project office for the NBSAP and Climate Change project.

In Edinburgh the fellowship will prepare a basic database and checklist of Bamyan plants together. Support from staff in Edinburgh will be given to get checklist and distributions online. A focus on Afghan and Bamyan endemic plants and if they have importance, a focus on Bamyan vegetation that will specifically ameliorate climate change and watershed information.

A language course will be arranged in Edinburgh during the first month of the fellowship specifically to address technical language skills for scientific and policy level documentation.

14. Provide a programme of work, including key milestones, through the duration of the Fellowship

Activity	Duration	2015/16									2016/2017					
		J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Time spent at RBGE, UK		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				■	■	■
Time spent at UNEP/in the field, Afghanistan											■	■	■			
Inception Plan for Fellow showing learning milestones	1 Month	■														
Development of baseline assessment model for linking climate and biodiversity targets for Afghanistan, together with UK and UNEP experts			■	■												
Set up a Bamyán, Central Highlands, Field Project in Afghanistan: Vegetation restoration Survey what was there, what could be restored, etc. Highlights Koh-e Baba Watershed				■	■											
Afghan flora database development, and acquisition of Bamyán data				■	■	■	■	■								
Visit international herbarium holding significant Afghan and Bamyán collections									■							
Putting together a good picture of what healthy and functioning ecosystems would have looked like, and could they do so again								■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Field survey and local training											■	■	■			
Final project report, and recommendations.															■	■

15. Costs. Using UK Government Financial Years ie April 2015 – March 2016 etc), please set out your budget for the Fellowship

	Unit cost	No of months		Total	
		2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17
Fellow's Subsistence contribution					
Arrival allowance	£300	NA	NA	300	na
London based	£1,200 pcm				
UK (outside London)	£1,000 pcm	9	3	9000	3000
Overseas	£tbc*				
Host organisation's costs					
UK	£300 pcm	9	3	2700	900
Overseas	£tbc*				
Total Fellow and Host costs					
Travel costs to Fellowship location (up to £2,000)					
Return airfare	Details:			1200	
Travel to/from airports	Details:			100	
Visas, insurance, medical cover etc	Details:			500	
Additional travel costs (up to £500 local travel OR £1,500 for international travel)					
Purpose of additional travel	Details: Travel to Conference				
Airfares/train fares	Details:				800
Travel to/from airports/stations	Details:				100
Subsistence costs (inc number of days and rates)*	Details:				400
Visas etc	Details:				200
Total travel costs					
Fees and training costs					
Academic fees	Details:				
English language training costs**	Details:			1500	
Total fees					
TOTAL REQUEST FROM DARWIN £				15300	5400

*for advice on rates please call the Darwin Application Unit 0131 440 5181

**these costs are ringfenced and should be surrendered if not used.

16. Other sources of funding: provide details and amounts

Candidate will contribute USD 500/month (= USD 12,000) from his own personal costs during the Fellowship as necessary.
 UNEP will match candidate investment, at USD 12,000 over the Fellowship as necessary.
 RBGE will provide in kind institutional support during the Fellowship

FCO NOTIFICATION

Please check the box if you think that there are sensitivities that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will need to be aware of should they want to publicise details of the Darwin Fellowship and the resultant work in the UK or the Darwin Fellow's home country.



CERTIFICATION

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

I enclose CVs for project principals and letters of support as requested in the Guidance Notes. Our most recent audited accounts and annual report are also enclosed/can be found at (*delete as appropriate*):

Name (block capitals)	ANTHONY GEORGE MILLER
Position in the organisation	DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN PLANTS

Signed



Date:

27 OCTOBER 2014

Fellowship Application - Checklist for submission

	Check
Have you provided actual start and end dates for the Fellowship?	Yes
Have you provided your budget based on UK government financial years ie 1 April – 31 March?	Yes
Have you checked that your budget is complete, correctly adds up and that you have included the correct final total on the top page of the application?	Yes
Has your application been signed by a suitably authorised individual? (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable. Please do not type your name)	Yes
Have you included a 1 page CV for the proposed Fellow and the experts listed in Section 5?	Yes
Have you provided the relevant letters of support?	Yes
Have you included a copy of your most recent annual report and accounts? An electronic link to a website is acceptable.	Yes
Have you read the Guidance Notes?	Yes
Have you checked the Darwin website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates?	Yes

Once you have answered Yes to the questions above, please submit the application, not later than 2359h GMT at the end of **27 October 2014** to Darwin-Applications@LTSI.co.uk using the name of the proposed Fellow as the subject of your email. If you are e-mailing supporting documentation separately please include in the subject line an indication of the number of e-mails you are sending (eg whether the e-mail is 1 of 2, 2 of 3 etc).

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998: Applicants for grant funding must agree to any disclosure or exchange of information supplied on the application form (including the content of a declaration or undertaking) which the Department considers necessary for the administration, evaluation, monitoring and publicising of the Darwin Initiative. Application form data will also be held by contractors dealing with Darwin Initiative monitoring and evaluation. It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure that personal data can be supplied to the Department for the uses described in this paragraph. A completed application form will be taken as an agreement by the applicant and the grant/award recipient also to the following:- putting certain details (ie name, contact details and location of project work) on the Darwin Initiative and Defra websites (details relating to financial awards will not be put on the websites if requested in writing by the grant/award recipient); using personal data for the Darwin Initiative postal circulation list; and sending data to Foreign and Commonwealth Office posts outside the United Kingdom, including posts outside the European Economic Area. Confidential information relating to the project or its results and any personal data may be released on request, including under the Environmental Information Regulations, the code of Practice on Access to Government Information and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.