

Stage 2 Webinar



FAQs & Common Issues: the 'easy wins'



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Welcome!



Welcome to Darwin Initiative and Darwin Plus Stage 2 applicants webinar!



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Agenda



- Administrative eligibility
- Meeting objectives
- Finance
- Project team expertise and letters of support

Questions

- Avoiding common issues in Flexi-Grant
- Gender & safeguarding

Questions

- Communications

Questions

Administrative Eligibility



- Word counts are strictly enforced in Flexi-Grant
- Supporting docs including:
 - **Cover letter** outlining how you have responded to feedback from St1
 - **Letters of support** *including applicant organisation* – in one pdf document (partners, govt, stakeholders...)
 - Last 2 sets of **signed/audited accounts** *in English and currency clear*
 - **Budget table** (matches request and certification in application)
 - **CVs** for key personnel: *partners and project teams* – in one pdf document
- Past experience and awards (if new as a lead) including contacts for references (all in application – no uploads)

Meeting Darwin/D+ objectives



- Outlined in full in guidance
- Which convention priority & why
 - Link your application to the relevant Convention and national priorities – flag links to relevant targets – including SDGs, UKOT National Plans and priorities
 - Don't just list relevant agreements – sign-post **how** your project is contributing towards these
 - only tick *relevant* fund objectives eg CITES is *only* relevant for specific trade projects and not just because you are working on a CITES listed species
 - Can you demonstrate communication with the Convention focal point – perhaps by letter?

Finances - Budget



- PL normally at least 10% of their time, if not clearly explain why
- ‘Consultancy costs’ and ‘Other’ – provide adequate detail
- Make sure you only include audit costs for the lead organisation and only in the last FY – up to £2,000
- Capital costs normally <10% otherwise clearly justify in text
- Allow for exchange rates to fluctuation – but no ‘contingency’



Matched Funding – in Flexi-Grant



Example for Darwin application form

Q6. Budget summary

| Year: | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | Total request |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Amount: | <input type="text"/> | * <input type="text"/> | * <input type="text"/> | * <input type="text"/> | * £0.00 |

Q6a. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

No

What matched funding arrangements are proposed?

You have entered 0 words (100 words max)

Q6b. Proposed (confirmed and unconfirmed) matched funding as % of total project cost (total cost is the Darwin request plus other funding required to run the project).

*

- Ensure dates are eligible for this round
- Budget figures should match spreadsheet and certification
- * • For matched funding, the % should be of the **total** project cost (not compared to the Darwin request) i.e. if the Darwin % of total project cost is 70% then matched funding is 30%
- Large % matched funding unsecured is risky but perhaps reflection of the times

Finances – general



- It is good to see a significant % of funds going directly to host country partners/costs – but no specified amount
- Consider budget spread across FYs – don't front load
- T&S - include testing/quarantine costs if needed. You cannot increase the budget later.
- % of funds on M&E (between 5% and 10%)
- Refer to Finance for Darwin&IWT document



Attention to Risk - Financial



Ensure you fully consider the financial risks and threats to your project including

- Fraud
- Bribery
- Misappropriation of funds e.g. ineligible allowances, arithmetical errors, lack of reconciliation of funds
- Exchange rate fluctuations
- Recruitment delays leading to shift in timescales and funds being approved for the wrong financial year
- Effects of Covid e.g. travel, partner income etc

These are different to the Assumptions in the logframe which may also include

- Staff retention and reliance on key people
- Natural disasters e.g. weather, disease, physical
- Change of government/partner personnel

Project team expertise



- Include CVs or ToRs of team members *critical* to delivery
- Ensure skills presented match all the work proposed
- Tailor CVs to ensure *skills* are clear and avoid long lists of publications
- Relate CVs presented to budget table i.e. roles and names
- Avoid submitting teams with too many 'TBC' posts



Project team – in Flexi-Grant



Example from Darwin application

Q12. Project staff

Please identify the core staff on this project, their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project. Further information on who should be classified as core staff can be found in the guidance.

Please provide 1 page CVs for these staff, or a 1 page job description or Terms of Reference for roles yet to be filled. These should match the names and roles in the budget spreadsheet.

If your team is larger than 12 people please review if they are core staff, or whether you can merge roles (e.g. 'admin and finance support') below, but provide a full table based on this template in the pdf of CVs you provide.

| Name (First name, Surname) | Role | % time on project | 1 page CV or job description attached? |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <input type="text"/> * | Project Leader | <input type="text"/> * | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="text"/> * | <input type="text"/> * | <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Do you require more fields?

- Yes
 No

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

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

or drag and drop files here to upload

| File name | Date uploaded | Action |
|-----------|---------------|--------|
|-----------|---------------|--------|

Make sure that staff names here match the names and roles in the budget

This is for project staff key for delivery – no need to list **all** staff (up to 12 slots). If more than 12 needed, provide a full table with CV pdf

For anyone named here:

- 1 page CV must be provided
- If funded, permission needed to change

Project partners



- Clear evidence of buy-in from partners is needed at Stage 2 through provision of Letters of Support
- LoS not required at Stage 1, but it often wasn't clear that partners were engaged or actually committed the matched funding proposed. We know some organisations were quoted as partners but had not been consulted.
- Important that listed partners actually reflect true partnerships – are they critical to project delivery and involved in project management/decision making? (vs stakeholders who may well be involved but not actually delivering activities)

Letters of Support



Avoid 'template' letters of support. Strong letters of support are expected to include the following elements:

- the extent to which partners have been involved in the development of the proposal
- an outline of how the proposed work aligns with organisational priorities **and** the priorities of the OT/country
- information on the capacity of partners to support the project
- specify actual level of support e.g. any matched funding your organisation is proposing, either financially or in kind



Any questions?

Avoiding common issues on Flexi-Grant



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Flexi-Grant FAQs



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

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

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

For all of the above, if you continue to have problems, please get in touch – if you can't submit at the deadline, please send us an email and we will get in touch the following morning.

Additional materials



Q14. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and Impact. Provide information on:

- How you have analysed historical and existing initiatives and are building on or taking work already done into account in project design. Please cite evidence where appropriate.
- The rationale for carrying out this work and a justification of your proposed methodology.
- How you will undertake the work (materials and methods).
- How you will manage the work (roles and responsibilities, project management tools, etc.).

Please make sure you read the [Guidance Notes](#), particularly Section 3, before answering this question.

(This may be a repeat from Stage 1, but you may update or refine as necessary)

*

You have entered 0 words (750 words max)

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

Choose your file(s) *or drag and drop files here to upload*

File name

Date uploaded

Action

Methodology should be clear and link to logframe

Additional links/maps/ToC (for example) can be included as **one pdf** – but be reasonable!

They must not be used as a means of providing additional information or avoiding word limits!

Other common issues



- SMART logframes – separate session focused on M&E
- Partnerships take time – new partnerships vs old and time taken to establish working relationships
- Don't underestimate how long it may take at project start up to finalise agreements, visas, staff recruitment etc.
- Attribution vs contribution and measuring change
 - “high level of matched funding means attribution of achievements to DI funding will be challenging”
- Consider how project results will be taken up (policy and research projects common offenders!). Communication strategies should be clear and consider who the audience is, how they will use the results, when they will be engaged etc.

Poll



How is the pace of this webinar?

- Far too slow
- A bit slow
- About right
- A bit fast
- Far too fast

Gender and safeguarding



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What is gender?



Gender is a social construct referring to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being men and women

- When considering “gender” it is also important to consider broader aspects of social inclusion:
 - Men and women are not homogenous groups
 - Consider other vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, or people with disabilities

Do no harm



- Consider not only the benefits but the potential **costs** of project activities
- Are there any project components that could potentially make life harder – for men or women?
- If so, how will this risk be mitigated?



Gender in your applications



- We need to see that you have considered gender in your applications. From the Guidance:

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender.

- Avoid only including generic statements, such as that your organisation is an equal opportunities employer – we are interested in this **project specifically**, not your broader work
- Your project might not be able to engage significantly – but at least show us you have analysed and understood the context e.g. if you are working in a patriarchal context

Exploring gender dimensions



- Speak with people living in communities where project implemented
- Focus groups and interviews
- If you aren't working directly with communities – who are your stakeholders? Who will be benefiting from the project? Will proposed policy impact men and women differently?



Gender in your projects



4 steps to integrate gender into your projects:

1. Understand and examine gender dimensions of the project and setting
2. Develop project elements and activities
3. Develop project indicators for monitoring gender integration
4. Develop broader institutional process to further gender integration

Source: Conservation International's "Guidelines for integrating gender into conservation programming"

Ask questions on these themes:

Practices and participation *e.g. what work do men and women do?*

Access to resources *e.g. what natural resources (relevant to the project) do men and women have access to? What other resources (e.g. credit or information) are available for men and women, and who uses these resources?*

Knowledge, beliefs and perceptions *e.g. how do men and women receive and share information in a community? Do women tend to voice their opinions during community decision making? Why or why not?*

Legal rights and status *e.g. who can own land or other property? Do formal codes differ from customary codes? Policies may affect men and women differently and understanding how this might happen is important.*

Power *e.g. who has the power to make decisions at the household and community level? Who controls how money is spent within a household?*

Impact *e.g. how might the project affect the daily lives of men and women? What benefits does the community receive from the project, or what costs (e.g. time and labour)? How are these benefits/costs shared between men and women?*

Gender in your applications



Focus on the specific gender context of your proposed work:

*“The use of intercroops as a method of increasing incomes and supporting pollinator diversity is intended to benefit women in particular by **promoting use of crops (e.g. legumes) that are harvested and sold by women.**”*

*“**Impact on women will be evaluated** to ensure that women are benefiting equally from the activities, as **women make up around 60% of subsistence farmers in these regions.**”*

*“**Forest products chosen for value chain development are informed by i) availability, ii) engagement of women and iii) potential value.** Honey production is dominated by men. **Cardamom is collected by women and men;** chillies are collected by women for household use with some also sold in local markets.”*

Gender in your applications



- And, if possible, directly link your gender analysis with how your proposed work will address it:

*“The **project’s target crops are important sources of produce for women and provide opportunities for them to generate income independently from men and address many underlying drivers of gender inequality.** To ensure that our action addresses these drivers ethnozoology surveys will be carried out both before and after outreach and knowledge-sharing activities, **managed by our team’s socioeconomist.**”*

*“Beekeeping equipment (e.g. suits) provided to be available in sizes to fit various body types and the hives and **techniques promoted will focus on those enabling beekeeping at ground level rather than in trees (suspended hives often exclude women).**”*

What is “Safeguarding”?



Safeguarding in its broad sense means protecting people from unintended harm, and ensuring measures have been put in place to protect the health, welfare and human rights of individuals.

UK Government supported projects must ensure that they fully protect vulnerable people at all times, wherever the project is located.

Who should be safeguarded?



All projects are expected to provide a **safe and trusted environment** which safeguards anyone who the organisation has contact with.

This includes:

- Beneficiaries
- Project staff
- Volunteers



This includes where **downstream partners** are involved in project delivery.

Key safeguarding principles

- Everybody has responsibility for safeguarding
- Do no harm
- Be transparent and accountable



Safeguarding Requirements



In order **to receive funding** the lead organisation must:

- Have a safeguarding policy in place (and include with application)
- Keep a detailed register of raised safeguarding issues
- Have clear investigation and disciplinary procedures
- Share your safeguarding with project partners
- Have a whistle-blowing policy
- Have a Code of Conduct in place for staff and volunteers that sets out clear expectations of behaviours

You need to also clearly outline how you will put your policies into practice through your proposed project

Additional resources



- Conservation International has a number of resources on how gender interacts with conservation, including [guidelines for integrating gender into conservation programming](#) . Further resources can be found on their [website](#)
- Fauna and Flora International implements conservation programmes with integrated gender components. Their [website](#) includes information on their overall approach, lessons learned and key questions to consider
- Resources on minimum operating standards can be found [here](#) as well as resources on [core humanitarian standard](#) on quality and accountability
- Further safeguarding information and [policy templates](#) from Bond can be accessed via their [website](#)



Any questions?

Communicating about projects



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The importance of communication



What stages of the project cycle do you think communication is relevant to?

- Design/application stage?
- Starting up your project?
- During implementation?
- As your project nears its end?
- Project reporting?

All stages of the project...!



| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Design/application stage | ✓ |
| Starting up your project | ✓ |
| During implementation | ✓ |
| As your project nears its end | ✓ |
| Project reporting | ✓ |

Newsletters



Newsletter

December 2020

Members from Our Sea Our Life bivalve aquaculture groups testing preservation methods in Mecufi, Credit: Jeremy Huet



Newsletter

September 2020

Gorilla in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda, Credit: Ryouma Ostuka



The Darwin Initiative supports developing countries to conserve biodiversity and reduce poverty. Funded by the UK Government, the Darwin Initiative provides grants for projects working in developing countries and UK Overseas Territories (IOTs).

Projects support:

- the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)
- the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
- the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

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Get in touch with the newsletter team at darwin-newsletter@ltsi.co.uk

What can communication help you with?



| | |
|---|---|
| Design/ application stage | To EXPLAIN your proposed project and articulate your intended approach and its value |
| During implementation - from start to end | To ENGAGE stakeholders in your project, create a positive attitude towards it, and demand for its results |
| | To manage people's EXPECTATIONS about what you can and will achieve |
| | To INFLUENCE people, and change their behaviour to support or take up your results |
| Project reporting | To DEMONSTRATE how well you are delivering your project and what you are learning |

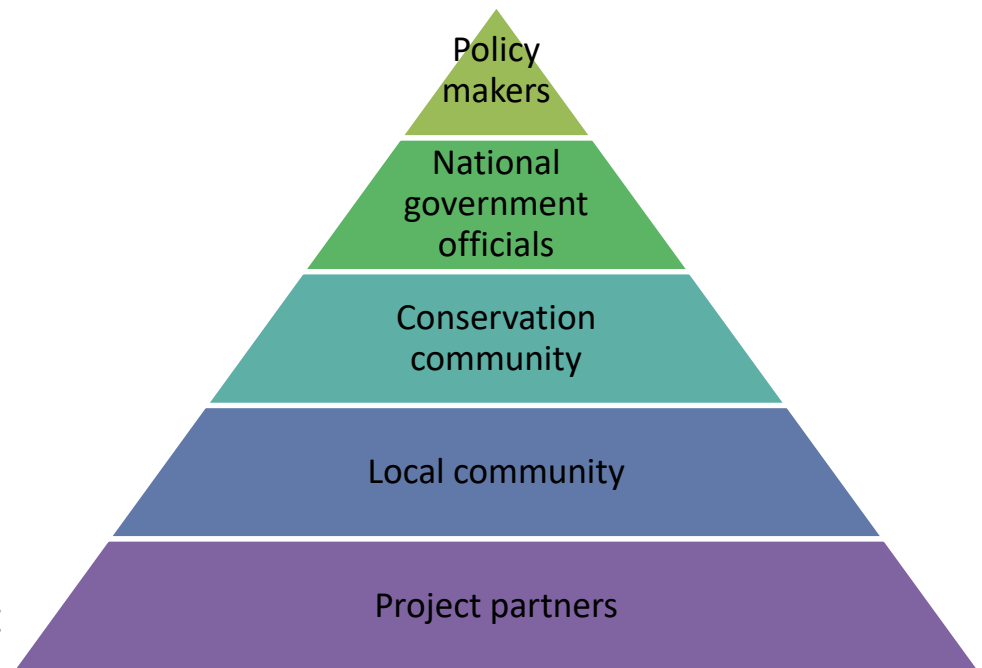
A tailored approach



Communication with key stakeholders is important as they can often impact the overall success of a project. Effective communication can ensure buy-in and project support.

When communicating with stakeholders it is important to remember that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be the most effective.

Different stakeholder groups have different levels of understanding and interest and therefore this should be considered.



The challenging of communicating complexity



- Darwin and Darwin Plus projects are inherently complex
- At Stage 2 you have a limited number of words to outline the problem your project will attempt to address
- Need to identify the core, central problem, this informs the logframe



Consider perceptions



- How might other people perceive what you say about your project?
- The world is not full of conservationists
- Don't assume people make the same mental links to global good
- A catchy title to get your project noticed? By who?
- Short & snappy, but err on side of caution



Thanks for listening!



Final questions?