



# Darwin Initiative - Round 32

## Funding Update Webinar



# Welcome!



**Kevin Seely – UK Government**  
Head of the Darwin Initiative



**Ben Yexley – UK Government**  
Darwin Initiative Lead



**Serene Hargreaves – UK Government**  
Biodiversity Challenge Funds (BCFs)  
Lead



**Victoria Reilly-Pinion - NIRAS**  
BCFs Programme Manager



**Andy East - NIRAS**  
BCFs Communications and  
Capability & Capacity Lead

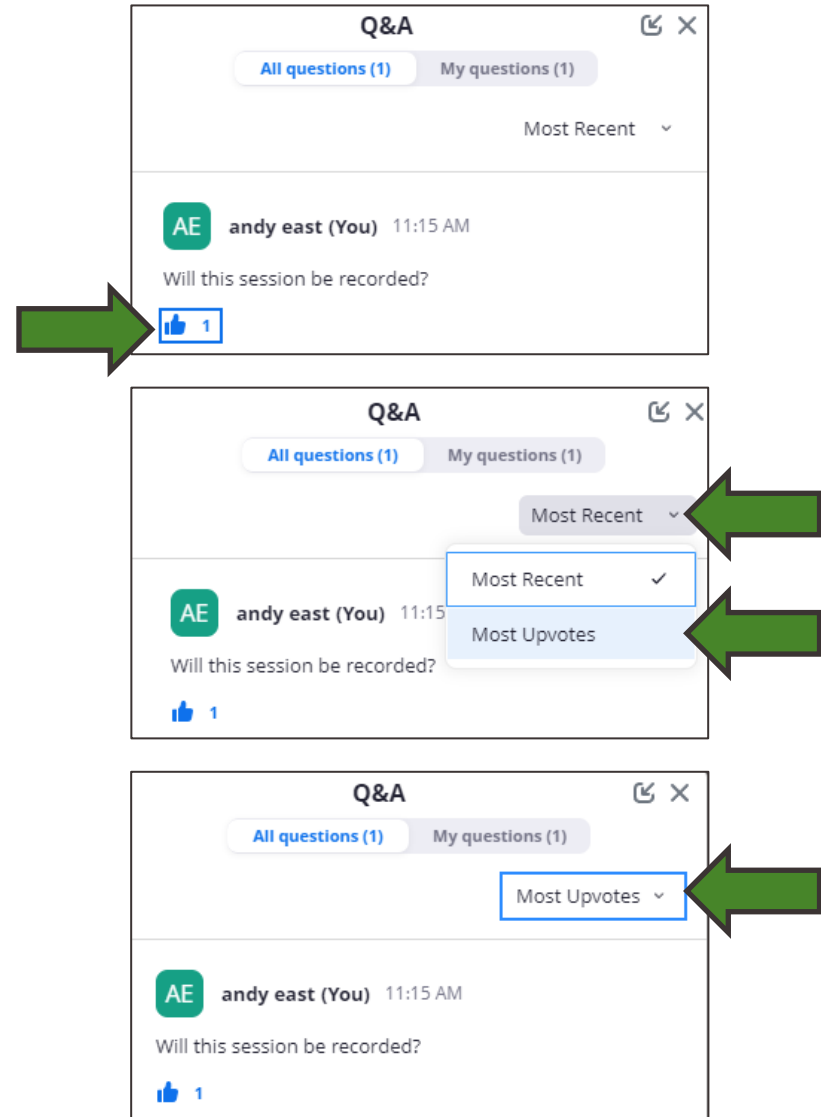
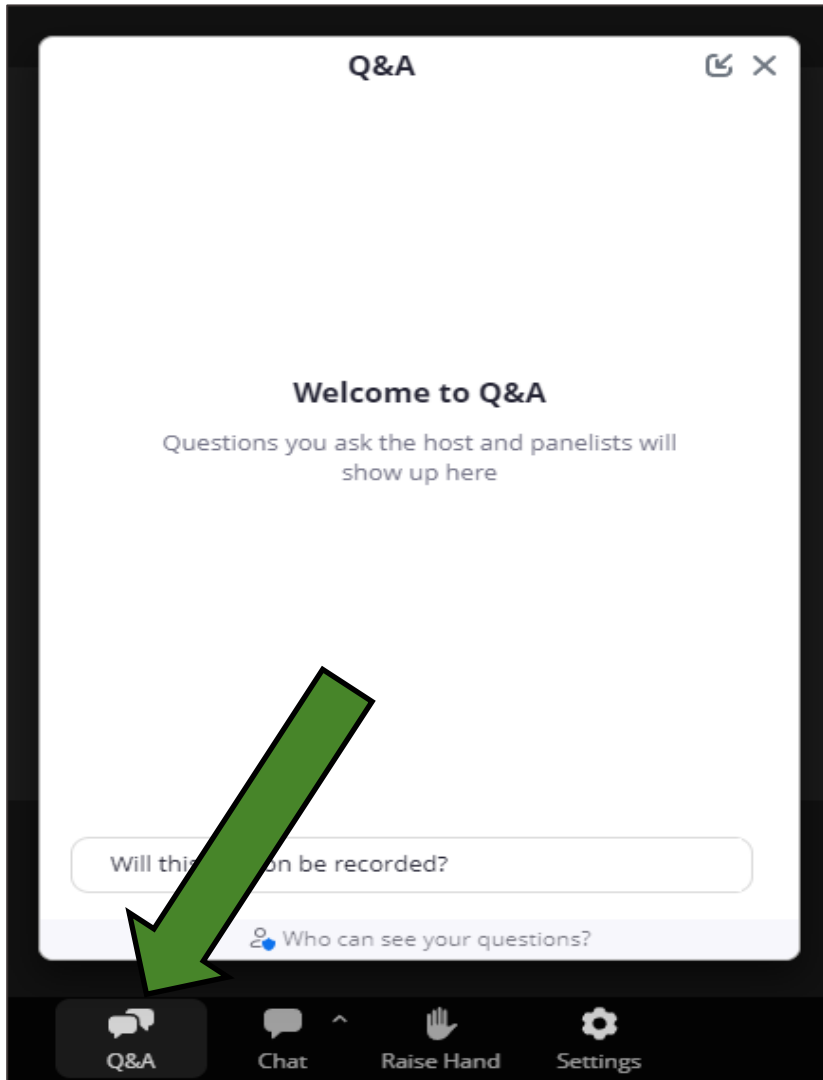


**Esme Hedley - NIRAS**  
BCFs Communications and  
Capability & Capacity Assistant



**Eilidh Young - NIRAS**  
BCFs Lead Administrator  
**Focal point for Darwin Initiative**

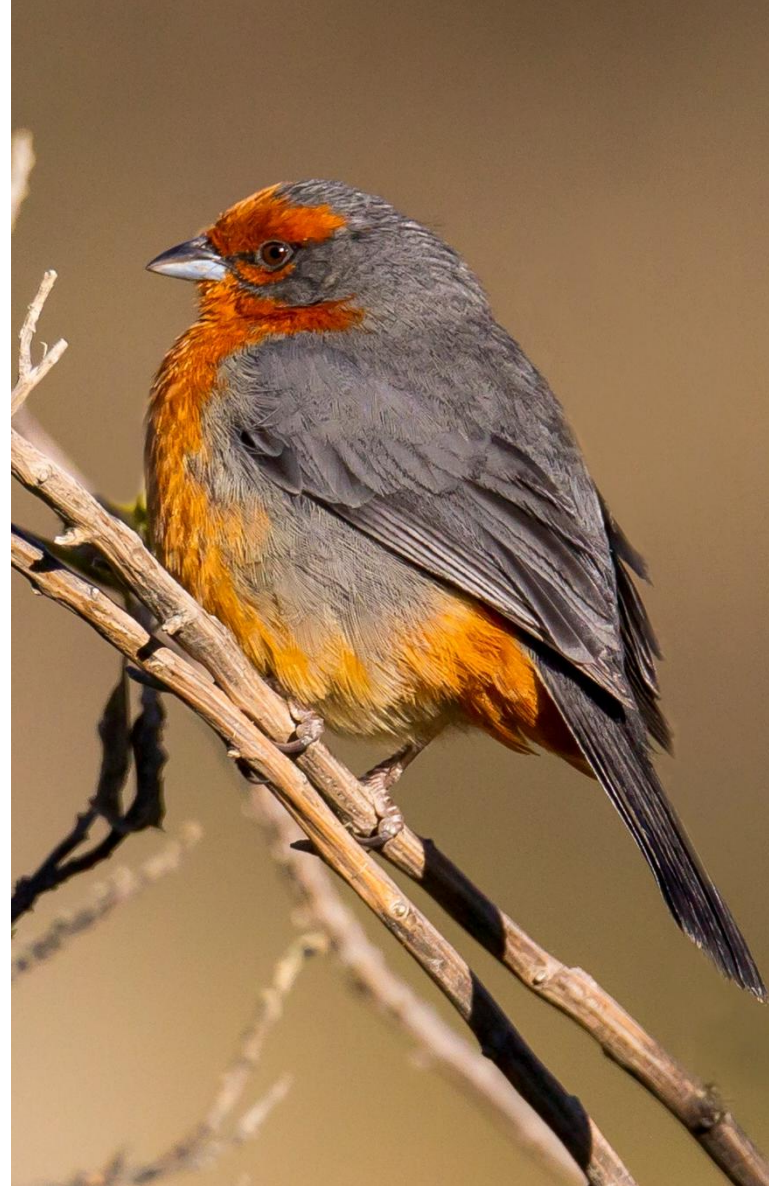
# Housekeeping - Q&A



# Agenda



- Welcome & Introductions
- Introduction to the Darwin Initiative
- Darwin Initiative's Impact
- Key Updates to Round 32
  - Eligibility updates
  - Application updates
- How to apply
- Questions



# Darwin Initiative Introduction



The Darwin Initiative supports communities to find just, scalable, and sustainable ways to conserve and restore nature, while growing their economies and reducing poverty.

Projects enable or influence lasting changes in policy or practice that benefit biodiversity and reduce poverty.

Projects are fully funded by UK aid (Official Development Assistance).

# Darwin Initiative's Impact



Since 1993, the Darwin Initiative grants have:

- Empowered communities to more sustainably manage millions of hectares of precious natural habitats and protect countless species.
- Enabled poor and marginalised communities to protect nature while building better, more sustainable lives, where biodiversity is most at risk.
- Assisted more than 100,000 people to improve their resilience to natural disasters and climate change.

# Darwin Initiative's Impact



- In West Papua, Indonesia, deforestation and overfishing threatens critical biodiversity, fishers' and forest communities' ways of life.
- With Darwin support, communities and provincial authorities better manage 1.3m ha of fisheries and forests
- 12.6m ha UNESCO reserve boosts profile
- On track to measure large-scale benefits to ecosystems, endangered species and communities by project end.



# Key Updates for Round 32



We are focused on maximising the impact of available funding.

To achieve this, Round 32 of the Darwin Initiative sees changes to:

- Where projects operate
- Which schemes are open to new applications
- The size of Main grants and length of Capability and Capacity grants
- How many applications organisations can lead per scheme, per round
- How easily you can complete a Stage 1 application

# Where projects can work (i)



To maximise the Darwin Initiative's impact, one of the key changes to Round 32 is geographic prioritisation.

In Round 32 eligible projects will focus on:

- One or more of 13 global biodiversity hotspots
- 35 countries within those hotspots.

# Where projects can work (ii)



We're prioritising 13 global biodiversity hotspots based on where the Darwin Initiative is likely to deliver the **greatest biodiversity gains per £ invested**. Collectively, these hotspots offer:

- Among the highest concentrations of threatened, irreplaceable species;
- Long-term ODA eligibility and potential to reduce extreme poverty;
- Enabling conditions for lasting, transformative change;
- In some cases, criticality in regulating climate and global food systems that the UK and others rely on.

# Where projects can work (iii)



The UK Government continues to fund existing Darwin projects until the end of their agreed project duration, regardless of whether they're in an eligible or ineligible country under Round 32.



# Strengthened UMIC justification



To prioritise funding where it is most needed and where grants alone can unlock the most change, **projects targeting Upper Middle-Income Countries** (UMICs) must:

- Avoid funding activities host governments should finance themselves
- Demonstrate why grant funding is needed and sustainable finance cannot be secured
- Strengthen the host country's long-term commitment to conservation and poverty reduction.

# Schemes open to new applications



- **Capability & Capacity: £75,000 - £250,000**
  - Aim: develop the capability and capacity of national and local organisations to conserve and restore nature while growing economies and reducing poverty.
  - Length: **1-3 years.**
- **Main: £200,000 - £1m**
  - Aim: enable local systems to better conserve or restore nature by tackling the most important drivers of biodiversity loss, while reducing poverty. Facilitate significant, measurable benefits to biodiversity and communities in project lifetime.
  - Length: **2-5 years.**
- **Extra: £1 million - £5million**
  - Aim: scale changes further, building on strong evidence from earlier Biodiversity Challenge Funds projects. Unlock large-scale, lasting impact in the project lifetime.
  - Length: **2-5 years.**

# Not open to new applications



## **Innovation scheme will no longer accept new applications**

UK Government will fund future research and development grants through the [Global Centre on Biodiversity for Climate \(GCBC\)](#), to avoid duplication.

Darwin continues to fund existing Innovation projects to completion.



# Easier, equitable applications



## **Extra and Main Stage 1 will now be a shorter concept note**

Proposals with the highest potential impact will be invited to apply for Stage 2.

## **Organisations are limited to lead on one application per scheme**

- Helps to localise leadership by encouraging local affiliates of international networks to lead projects
- Ensures a fair and balanced application process – improves chances of success
- Organisations may appear on an unlimited number of applications as partners.



# How to apply



All applications should be submitted via the [Flexi-Grant](#) portal.

Closing dates for Darwin Initiative Round 32 applications:

## **Darwin Initiative Main**

- Stage 1 Deadline: **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026**

## **Darwin Initiative Extra**

- Stage 1 Deadline: **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026**

## **Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity**

- Single Stage Deadline: **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026**

# Other changes



*There are several key changes for Round 32 of the Darwin Initiative.*

- *Eligible countries* have been substantively revised from previous rounds, including a new requirement to work in **biodiversity hotspots**. This focuses Darwin Initiative funding where it can have the most impact. See 1.3 and 1.2.
- *Organisations* will now be limited to **lead one application per scheme, per round**. See 2.1.
- *Darwin Initiative Main* – Stage 1 application form is a shorter ‘concept note’, and grant size limits and minimum project length have changed. See 3.1.
- *Darwin Initiative Extra* – Application process is now a two-stage application process (retaining interview stage), and grant size limits have changed. See 3.2.
- *Darwin Initiative Capability & Capacity* – grant size limits and maximum project length have changed. See 3.3.
- No new call for applications for *Darwin Initiative Innovation*.
- *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion and Safeguarding* requirements have been clarified. See 2.3 and 2.6.
- *Assessment criteria* have been clarified for all schemes. See 6.
- Guidance provided on expectation regarding **budgeting for and facilitating engagement between British embassies and high commissions and projects**. See 2.8.
- An **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy** has been developed which sets expectations for how applicants may use AI when preparing BCFs applications. There is no requirement or expectation that AI is used, but where it is used it is critical that best practice is followed to maintain ethical and quality standards. See 2.13.

*This list is not exhaustive, and it is important you read and understand all guidance in full to ensure you meet the key fund requirements, including the eligibility requirements, and to strengthen your application.*

Other key changes this round are highlighted on Page 8 of the Guidance for Applicants



Any questions?

# Follow for updates



If you have any questions, please contact us on the below:

- Darwin Initiative: [BCF-Darwin@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Darwin@niras.com)
- For Flexi-Grant specific queries: [BCF-Flexigrant@niras.com](mailto:BCF-Flexigrant@niras.com)

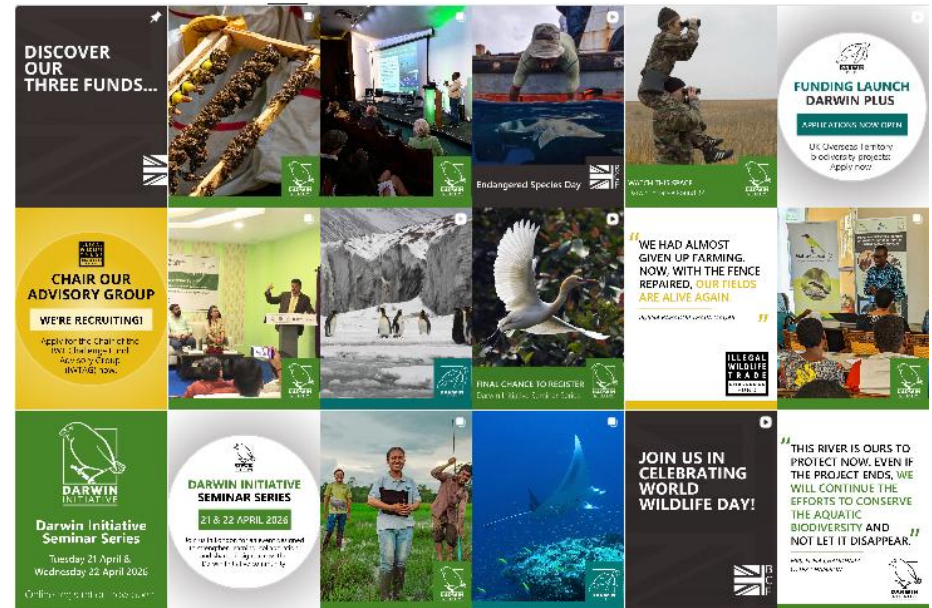
Make sure to follow for updates:

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Thank you and good luck!