

DPLR1\1039

South Caicos Reef Restoration Vessel

Coral reefs are one of the most biologically diverse and ecologically productive ecosystems on the planet, making them a conservation priority. Despite their importance, they are threatened by a climate change, anthropogenic inputs, fishing pressure, and invasive species. In 2006 and 2007, white plague disease and black band disease affected nearly all the reefs near South Caicos, Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). This was followed by devastating hurricanes in 2008. More recently, as much as 60% of live coral cover was further lost to stony coral tissue loss disease (2019).

Local Acropora reefs, critical in protecting coastal systems, were devastated by hurricanes and disease. In January 2023, The School for Field Studies (SFS), TC Reef Fund (Providenciales, TCI), and the Reef Institute (Florida USA) partnered with East Bay Resort (South Caicos) to address climate impacts on shallow reef systems. Managed in situ structures (nurseries) have been used to promote coral recovery around the Caribbean. We are currently establishing four sites for Acropora nurseries near South Caicos. These nurseries are designed as a pilot project to determine which method is most successful in our environment. As part of this project, SFS will monitor structure type and out-planting to determine impact on the reef recovery.

In addition, community members will be engaged in both formal and informal settings to be made aware of the project and the importance of reef ecosystems. Sea Day for elementary school children will improve understanding of the importance of coastal ecosystems. The first Sea Day is scheduled for March 29, 2023. High school children involved in the SFS Marine Snorkel Club will be involved in maintaining the nurseries. Community presentations will also increase awareness of the project. These outreach and education opportunities will build capacity and buy-in for conservation as well as raise awareness among local people and divers community groups (fisher, educators, government employee, and tourists)

The objective of the South Caicos Coral Reef Conservation Vessel project is to purchase a vessel that allows access to this reef project by SFS students and South Caicos community members of all ages. Establishing a maintenance and community engagement program for the coral restoration program is proving difficult to schedule around an already busy academic field program. This addition to the SFS program allows for greater capacity building, training, and peer-to-peer learning among South Caicos stakeholders. The vessel must be snorkeler and diver accessible as well as have a platform to deploy and maintain nurseries. This vessel will remain available for the on-going work, expanding quickly through stakeholder support. By the end of this grant cycle, SFS will have a dedicated operational vessel. In Fall 2023, we will take community groups to the nurseries. Weekly trip and educational activities will begin as well (Saturdays). Activities include learning about coral reefs and their value, climate change impact on coastal ecosystems, and stakeholder driven sustainable projects. Maintenance, insurance, and operational costs will be covered by SFS.

CONTACT DETAILS

Title Dr
Name Heidi
Surname Hertler

Website (Work) [REDACTED]

Tel (Work) [REDACTED]

Email (Work) [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DPLR1\1039

South Caicos Reef Restoration Vessel

Section 1 - Project Title & Contact Details

Q1. Project Title

South Caicos Reef Restoration Vessel

Q2. Please select whether you are applying as an organisation or as an individual (Guidance section 3 and Guidance Glossary)

Organisation

CONTACT DETAILS

Title	Dr
Name	Heidi
Surname	Hertler
Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
Tel (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]

GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	The School for Field Studies
Phone (Work)	[REDACTED]
Email (Work)	[REDACTED]
Website (Work)	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]

Section 2 - Overseas Territory(ies)

Q3. Overseas Territory (Guidance section 1.3):

Which UK Overseas Territory(ies) will your project be working in? Please note that in case of a non-permanent resident population you need to demonstrate a clear, meaningful, long-term link to the territory.

Turks & Caicos Islands (TCI)

* if you have indicated a territory group with an asterisk, please give detail on which territories you are working on here:

No Response

In addition to the UKOT(s) you have indicated, will your project directly benefit any other UK OT(s) or country(ies)?

No

Section 3 - Project Partners

Q4. Project partners (Guidance section 3.2)

In this section, please give details of all the partners involved (including the Lead Partner) and provide a summary of their roles.

Project Leader name (Guidance section 3.1): No Partners

Lead Partner name (if applying as an organisation; Guidance section 3.1): *No Response*

Lead Partner Website (if applicable): *No Response*





Is the Lead Partner based in a UKOT where the project is working (Guidance section 3.1)? Yes

List other partners involved and where are they based (Guidance section 3.2): There are no partners in the purchase of this vessel. SFS is partnering with TCR Reef Fund (Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Island) and the Reef Institute (Florida, USA) as part of the South Caicos reef restoration project which include other components. SFS is the lead in the restoration project.

Summary of roles and responsibilities of each partner in the project: There are no partners.

I confirm that all listed partners are aware of this application and have indicated support: Unchecked

Attach a Cover Letter for your application (Guidance section 4.2).

 [SFS Turks & Caicos Cover Letter](#)
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Section 4 - Project Summary & Description

Q5. Project Summary (Guidance section 3.8)

Please provide a brief summary of your project. This may be used in communication activities and/or published online, if your application is successful.

In January 2023, SFS partnered with local stakeholders to improve South Caicos reef health. Darwin funds will support the purchase of a dedicated vessel to access local coral nurseries established as part of this consortium for maintenance and community engagement. Operating around an already burdened SFS academic vessel schedule has proven difficult. A dedicated boat will allow greater flexibility and access to the nurseries as this program grows by both SFS students and community members.

Q6. Description (Guidance section 2.1)

Please provide a description of your project, including:

- the overall objective
- the current situation and the problem the project is trying to address
- what success will look like and how you will measure it

Please be as specific as possible when describing the project, using quantified data and evidence where available. You may wish to consider: what are the specific threats to the environment that the project will attempt to address, and what should we know about these threats? What does your successful project look like? And how will you demonstrate whether and how your project has been successful?

Coral reefs are one of the most biologically diverse and ecologically productive ecosystems on the planet, making them a conservation priority. Despite their importance, they are threatened by a climate change, anthropogenic inputs, fishing pressure, and invasive species. In 2006 and 2007, white plague disease and black band disease affected nearly all the reefs near South Caicos, Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). This was followed by devastating hurricanes in 2008. More recently, as much as 60% of live coral cover was further lost to stony coral tissue loss disease (2019).

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(Optional) Please upload any additional and supporting materials or files (such as maps of project sites, etc) below. Maximum of 5 pages:

No Response

Section 5 - Project Outcome(s)

Q7. Project Outcome(s) (Guidance section 1.2)

Successful Darwin Plus Local projects must demonstrate measurable outcomes in at least one of the themes of Darwin Plus, either by the end of the project or soon after through a credible plan.

Please tick which theme(s) of Darwin Plus your project underpins:

Unchecked	Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
Checked	Climate change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;

Unchecked **Environmental quality: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment**

Checked **Capability and capacity building: enhancing the capacity within OTs, including through community engagement and awareness, to support the environment in the short- and long-term.**

Please justify your selection.

Climate Change – Supporting reef health improves sustainability in the face of climate pressures. Coral nurseries can promote reef diversity and resilience. Accesses these nurseries for maintenance and education promotes their success in the field and within the local community.

Capability and Capacity Building – Adding a vessel enables SFS to take community members to these nurseries. Educating a community depended on reefs for their lively hood about these environments increased the likelihood of the project success. Though community engagement and awareness focusing on reef sustainability, we support the environment short- and long-term.





Section 6 - Project Timeline

Q8. Project timeline (Guidance section 2.2)

Please provide anticipated dates for the start and end of your planned project here. Please use the Darwin Plus Local Project Implementation Timetable Template (which can be downloaded below) to provide a list of the individual activities you have planned for this project, a brief description of what each activity entails, and the months in which the activities will be carried out. If the project involves only one activity (e.g. a purchase), please still provide project start and end dates (noting estimated times for procurement). Please note that your project will need to be completed by 31 March 2024.

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 3 months):
01 April 2023	31 March 2024	12 months

Please upload the completed Darwin Plus Local Project Implementation Timetable template with your proposed project activities below.

-  [R1 DPlus Local Implementation Timetable Template SFS](#)
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-  docx 35.35 KB

Section 7 - Costs

Q9. Costs (Guidance section 2.2 and please read the Finance Guidance)

Please provide a breakdown of costs to be funded through Darwin Plus Local (in GBP).

Are you seeking any matched funding for this project? (Please note that this is optional and there is no requirement to seek matched funding for Darwin Plus Local projects).

Yes

How much matched funding are you seeking and where from?

We have received funds to support the development of an in-situ nursery, including professional support. These funds will also support community activities (land based) focused on conservation and sustainability. We have received \$ [REDACTED] USD for the first year. SFS is matching with time and effort for the Center Director and Waterfront Assistant (\$1 [REDACTED] USD) dedicated to the reef restoration project.

Budget line	Explanation	Cost in GBP
Staff costs:	NA	[REDACTED]
Overhead costs:	NA	[REDACTED]
Travel & subsistence costs:	Travel from South Caicos to Providenciales to identify a vessel and work with local vendors to prepare the vessel for our needs.	[REDACTED]
Operating costs:	NA	[REDACTED]
Capital equipment:	Vessel purchase and outfit in Turks and Caicos Island	[REDACTED]
Consultancy costs:	NA	[REDACTED]
Total:		[REDACTED]

This section provides more information on the budget to help evaluators understand how you will use the funds you are requesting. You do not need to list all costs, but please list and detail costs of more than £1,000 per item below, under the appropriate budget line.

Details of staff costs over £1,000 (if relevant)

NA

Details of overhead costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

NA

Details of travel and subsistence costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

SFS is located on South Caicos, a small fishing community with developing tourism industry. There are no available boats that will suit our needs on our island. Funds are requested to travel to Providenciales and identify a vessel. Additional trips will be necessary to ensure vessel is prepared for our needs.

Details of operating costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

NA

Details of capital equipment costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

Purchase vessel and preparations of vessel to be used for research and outreach. Preparations include easy access to the water by divers and snorkelers (appropriate ladders) and shaded work area (preferred). Vessel will be insured and maintained by SFS. Vessel will remain in country after the project and available to community and stakeholders to support the reef restoration project, including maintenance and educational engagement.

Details of consultancy costs over £1,000 (if relevant):

No Response

Details of other costs over £1,000 (if relevant)

No Response

If your project budget was prepared in another currency and converted to GBP, please provide the exchange rate, its source, and the date it was accessed:

Other currency:	Exchange rate:	Source of this exchange rate:	Date exchange rate accessed:
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

Darwin Plus Local has been created to build capacity and contribute to local economies in-territory.

What % of the total will be spent in the OTs?

If less than 80% of the total project spend is to be spent within the OT(s), please explain why.

No Response

Section 8 - Local and National Priorities

Q10. Local and national priorities

Please explain how this project aligns with local and national priorities? You may wish to consider the project in the context of national environmental laws, objectives, strategies, territory specific agreements, action plans or policies.

TCI environmental priorities include the sustainable use of natural resources and protecting and promoting biodiversity and economic prosperity through supportable use. Tourism, attracted to the sandy beaches and well-developed reefs, drives the TCI economy. South Caicos is new to this industry, historically a fishing community, but still dependent on the local reefs. The reefs that protect our coast and support our fisheries are increasingly impacted by storms and disease. Recovery has been slow; nurseries and out-planting have the potential to support this recovery. Increased awareness and involvement in the local community supports future reefs and educators.


Will the project take place on Government owned land or water?


Yes


Please attach evidence that you have Government support i.e. Letter of Support.

 [DarwinLocalR10S2_SFS_Vessel_SupportLetter1](#)

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Section 9 - Project Risks

Q11. Project Risks

Please demonstrate your consideration of any risks involved in this project and how you intend to manage them. Depending on your project, you may wish to consider:

- Biosecurity risks – particularly for projects involving external equipment.
- Safeguarding risks – particularly for projects involving vulnerable groups such as children, older people or people with disabilities.

Risk	Mitigation
Biosecurity Risk - Coral and other disease transport from island to island on the vessel	Vessels travel from Providenciales to South Caicos daily. The purchased vessel will be cleaned, bottom and bilge (if it has one), prior to departing Providenciales.
Safeguarding participants	All in water activities are supervised by SFS staff with divemaster certifications or higher. Boat drives hold US Coast Guard OUPV certificates. All staff are CPR and First Aid certified for adults and children.
<i>No Response</i>	<i>No Response</i>

Do you require more fields?

No

Section 10 - Terms & Conditions

Q12. Terms and conditions (Guidance section 3.10)

By applying for Darwin Plus Local you are adhering in full to the grant Terms and Conditions in full (available at: <https://dplus.darwininitiative.org.uk/apply> and as referenced in the Guidance at section 3.10). For information, the Terms and Conditions include requirements for all applicants to (amongst other requirements as per the full Terms and Conditions):

- Uphold a zero tolerance for inaction approach to tackling sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- Where appropriate, make all reasonable and adequate efforts to address gender inequality and other power imbalances.
- Notify all cases of fraud and theft (whether proven or suspected) relating to the project to the Grant Administrator as soon as they identified.

Please indicate you have read, and understood, and will adhere to the Terms and Conditions.

Checked

If your application is successful: If your project application is successful, the Fund Administrator (NIRAS) will ask you to provide some financial evidence for due diligence checks before you receive your project grant. (Please see section 3.3 of the Darwin Plus Local Finance Guidance). Please be ready to provide this evidence promptly.

Financial evidence for organisations: Year-end financial statements, the latest management accounts or audited accounts (if you have these).

Financial evidence for individuals: Proof of identity such as a passport, ID card or driving licence and solvency (such as bank statements) and a police check.

Section 11 - Certification

Certification

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the statements made in this application are true and the information provided is correct.

Checked

I have the authority to submit an application on behalf of my organisation.

Checked

Name: Heidi Hertler

**Position in the organisation:
(if applicable)** Center Director

Signature (please upload e-signature)

 [signature0001](#)
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Date: 09 February 2023

Section 12 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance documents, including the “Darwin Plus Local Guidance” and the “Darwin Plus Local Finance Guidance”.	Checked
If my proposed project takes place on public lands or water, I have uploaded a Letter of Support from Government.	Checked
I have uploaded a cover letter that details the information requested in the guidance (Guidance section 4.2 has information on what this cover letter should include).	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked
I have provided my summary budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP in the application form.	Checked
I have uploaded my project implementation timetable using the specific template provided.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
The application has been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Plus website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Plus website.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under Darwin Plus. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share project news. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising Darwin Plus including project details (usually title,

lead partner, project leader, location, and total grant value).

Project Title:

Darwin Plus Local

Provide a **Project Implementation Timetable** that shows the key milestones in project activities. Complete the following table as appropriate to describe the intended workplan for your project. Projects are based on UK Financial Years (**1 April – 31 March** - therefore starts April 2023).

Please add/remove columns to reflect the length of your project. For each activity (add/remove rows as appropriate) indicate the number of months it will last, and shade only the months in which an activity will be carried out. The workplan can span multiple pages if necessary.

Activity #	Description (max 25 words)	No. of months	UK Financial Year 2023/24											
			Calendar Year 2023									Calendar Year 2024		
			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
1	Identify < 30 ft vessel													
2	Prepare vessel for research activities													
3	Vessel in service – nursery maintenance and community engagement													