Applicant: Simpson, Tiffany Organisation: Ascension Island Conservation and Fisheries Directorate

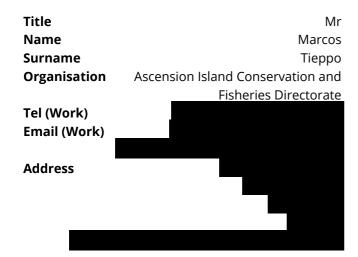
Funding Sought: £47,337.00

DPLR5\1081

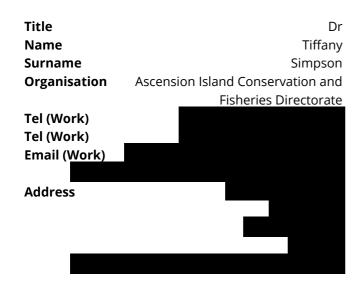
Increasing capacity and efficacy in local rodent control on Ascension

Rodents pose significant threats to Ascension's biodiversity, infrastructure and welfare of residents. Eradication is currently unfeasible; however, more effective control efforts and improved technologies may more successfully suppress rodent populations. Building on recommendations from DPL00037, this project will implement new strategies and trial innovative methods in collaboration with other contractors responsible for rodent management at the RAF and USAF bases. Consultants will train staff to apply best practice standards to reduce the impact of rodents to the maximum extent possible.

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS



CONTACT DETAILS



DPLR5\1081

Increasing capacity and efficacy in local rodent control on Ascension

Section 1 - Project Title & Contact Details

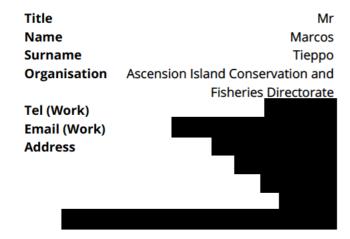
Q1. Project Title

Increasing capacity and efficacy in local rodent control on Ascension

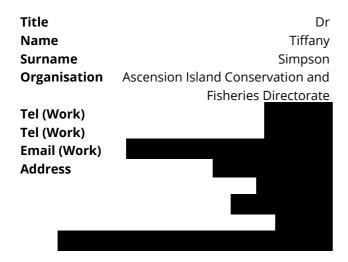
Q2. Please select whether you are applying as an organisation or as an individual (Guidance section 3 and Guidance Glossary)

Organisation

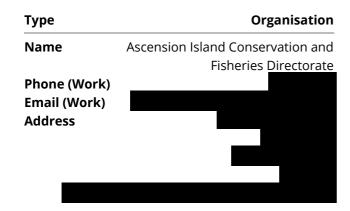
PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS



CONTACT DETAILS



GMS ORGANISATION



Section 2 - Overseas Territory(ies)

Q3. Please state whether the same (or a similar) project proposal has previously been submitted (or you are planning to submit it) to the UK Government for funding. This includes through Darwin Plus Local, Defra's other Darwin Plus grant schemes or other UK Government funding mechanisms. Failure to share this information may result in the application being ineligible (see Guidance section 2.1.1).

No

Q4. Overseas Territory (Guidance section 1.3):

Which UK Overseas Territory(ies) will your project be working in?

☑ St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha*

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

Ascension Island

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

Q5. Project partners (Guidance section 3.2)

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

Project Leader name: (Guidance section 3.1)	Tiffany Simpson
Lead Organisation name: (if applying as an organisation; Guidance section 3.1)	Ascension Island Conservation and Fisheries Directorate
Lead Organisation Website (if applicable):	No Response
Is the Lead Organisation based in a UKOT where the project is working? (Guidance section 3.1)	⊙ Yes
List other partners involved and where are they based:	Wildlife Management International Ltd. (WMIL), New Zealand
	AIGCFD Overall project management including budgeting and reporting Facilitate WMIL visit to Ascension Organise and attend training sessions with the consultant
Summary of roles and responsibilities of each partner in the project:	WMIL Preparation of training materials Provide 3 online training sessions for AIGCFD staff Provide 15 working days of on-island fieldwork, training and mentoring for AIGCFD staff Provide trip report summarizing all aspects on island work Assist in the development of a comprehensive rodent control strategy
I confirm that all listed partners are aware of this application and have indicated support:	Checked

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

- Cover Letter DPL R5 Increasing capacity and eff icacy in local rodent control on Ascension Island
- (0) 00:21:30
- pdf 153.01 KB

Section 4 - Project Summary & Description

Q6. 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.

Rodents pose significant threats to Ascension's biodiversity, infrastructure and welfare of residents. Eradication is currently unfeasible; however, more effective control efforts and improved technologies may more successfully suppress rodent populations. Building on recommendations from DPL00037, this project will implement new strategies and trial innovative methods in collaboration with other contractors responsible for rodent management at the RAF and USAF bases. Consultants will train staff to apply best practice standards to reduce the impact of rodents to the maximum extent possible.

Q7a. Description (Guidance section 2.1 and 6)

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?

Overall Objective: This project will address the issue of rodent populations on Ascension using best practice, feasible and sustainable methods. The outcome will be development of a comprehensive rodent control strategy agreed and implemented by all island partners to ensure a long-term coordinated approach to controlling rodents.

Current Situation and Problem: Introduced non-native species, including rats and mice, are identified as a major threat to the biodiversity of Ascension Island (seven endemic plant species (six Critically Endangered, one Vulnerable), Green turtle (Endangered), Sooty tern (Least Concern), and at least 7 endemic invertebrates).

In addition, rats and mice diminish people's recreational enjoyment of wild places on the island. They also have the potential to create risks to public health and critical infrastructure when occurring in large numbers through settlement areas and places of employment. The effects are significantly felt by the community, with the issue being frequently raised in call out requests and enquiries to Council to manage the situation.

Current rodent control efforts on Ascension are limited to mechanical traps and rodenticide bait stations deployed around key sites. The result of this control is moderate and localised suppression of populations. However, rodents are still present year-round and periodic booms occur following heavy rain. These periods of rainfall and increased habitat for rats and mice are becoming more frequent due to climate change.

Control efforts are also not well coordinated on Ascension. Rats and mice are baited within Travellers Hill by UK

Ministry of Defence (MOD) contractors Mitie and at the Air Base by USAF contractors Yang. AIG Environmental Health (EH) team are responsible for the rest of the island including Georgetown and Two Boats settlement areas, the Nature Reserves, Encompass properties, the main roads and the dump.

To begin to address this issue, AIGCFD contracted world experts WMIL to visit Ascension through the Darwin Local project DPL00037. WMIL was able to assess the problem of non-native predators and conduct a feasibility study for the possibility of eradicating one or more of these species. It was determined to be unfeasible to fully eradicate rodents at this time, as the costs will be significant (£33 million for rats, £45 million for mice) and there is currently insufficient capacity to support the requirements for such a task.

What Success Will Look Like and How It Will Be Measured: Although eradication is not currently feasible, it was determined that increased control of rodent populations would be possible through the implementation of key recommendations outlined in the Invasive Species Eradication Feasibility Assessment produced by WMIL. In this current project, we seek to build on the outcomes of DPL00037 and bring these recommendations into action to ensure that control efforts are as efficient and effective as possible within the available capacity. This includes training and refinement of protocols for EH team members, trials of new methods and technologies, and better coordination of on island partners. Ultimately, this project seeks to produce a One Island Vision strategy for rodent control that can be agreed by all parties.

Measurable outcomes:

- EH staff (3 people) undertake bespoke rodent control training covering best practice methodology, rodenticide handling, rodent monitoring and data collection and analysis.
- A grided bait station design is deployed and Bait Station Servicing and Data Collection protocol is implemented.
- Self-resetting traps are tested at key sites.
- Immunocontraceptive options are trialled at key sites.
- A detailed construction and project plan is developed for a predator-exclusion to protect sooty terns at Mars Bay.
- Coordination is agreed between all parties on Ascension to use the same toxin
- An intensive rodent control strategy is developed.

Q7b. Long-term sustainability (Guidance section 2.1 and 6)

Please describe the long-term benefits of the project and the change it will bring about. How will the outcomes of the project be sustained after the funding is finished?

This project will result in an improved comprehensive strategy for rodent control on Ascension. This will develop capacity within the AIG EH team through training, mentoring and remote support from world leading experts. It will also build cooperation between other on island partners responsible for rodent control to approach rodent control with a more coordinated one island strategy. Implementing this strategy will increase the efficiency and efficacy of rodent control, leading to better long-term outcomes for biodiversity as well as the local community. The traps and bait boxes purchased with this funding will continue to be used beyond the duration of this project. Funding for associated consumables including rodenticides and baits will be provided through the annual budgets of AIG and partners. These costs are ongoing and have been continually prioritised in AIG budgets to ensure sustainability of rodent control. Following this project there will be increased confidence that the control regime is working to the greatest extent possible and that the team will have knowledge to implement adaptive management where necessary.

(Optional) Please upload any additional and supporting materials or files (such as maps of project sites, etc) below. Maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF:

- excerpts Bell et al 2024 (Invasive Species Eradic ation Feasbility Assessment Ascension Island) - L S TS
- © 23:34:51
- pdf 1.22 MB

Section 5 - Project Outcome(s)

Q8. Project Outcome(s) (Guidance section 1.2)

Successful Darwin Plus Local projects must demonstrate measurable outcomes in <u>at least one of the</u> <u>themes of Darwin Plus with a clear focus on biodiversity and the natural environment</u>, either by the end of the project or soon after through a credible plan.

Please note: Any proposals including research or monitoring are required to demonstrate a clear link to tangible outcomes for conservation of biodiversity and the natural environment. Please explain how any new research will be applied to drive environmental outcomes on the ground.

Please confirm that your project has a clear focus on biodiversity and the natural environment.

Checked Checked Biodiversity: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;

Please tick which additional theme(s) of Darwin Plus your project contributes to (if relevant):

Unchecked	Climate change: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities;
Checked	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. Please use quantitative information where possible here.

Ascension is home to a variety of native and endemic plants, seabirds and nesting turtles. Non-native rodents pose a significant threat to the unique species of Ascension Island by spreading non-native plants, preying on hatchling turtles and birds and potentially spreading disease. By reducing the presence and impact of rodents, this project aims to reduce Biodiversity loss and improve Environmental quality. Training and mentoring by world leaders in predator control will also build Capability and Capacity within the AIGCFD and EH Team and initiate improved collaboration efforts with all island partners.

Section 6 - Workplan

Q9. Workplan (Guidance section 2.2)

<u>Please provide anticipated dates for the start and end of your planned project here</u>. Please use the <u>Darwin Plus Local Project Workplan</u> (available at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/how-to-apply/local-applications/) 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 must start after 1 April 2025 and be completed by 31 March 2026.

Start date: End date: Duration (e.g. 3 mon		Duration (e.g. 3 months):
01 April 2025	31 March 2026	12 months

Please upload the completed Darwin Plus Local Project Workplan with your proposed project activities here

- r5-dplus-local-implementation-timetable-Increas ing capacity and efficacy in local rodent control o n Ascension Island
- **ii** 24/11/2024
- © 23:37:59
- docx 37.01 KB
 doc

Section 7 - Costs

Q10. Costs (Guidance section 2.2 and please read the Finance Guidance)

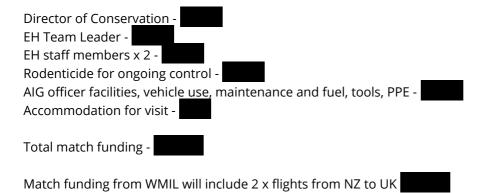
Please provide a breakdown of costs to be funded through Darwin Plus Local (in GBP).

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?

Match funding will be provided by AIG in the form of staff support, overheads and consumables.



Budget line	Explanation	Cost in GBP
Staff costs:	NA	
Consultancy costs:	WMIL consultancy costs – inclusive of remote and on-site training and support	
Overhead costs:	NA	
Travel & subsistence costs:	WMIL travel costs for Ascension visit Includes return flight NZ to Ascension for 1 person, accommodation in the UK, return flights from UK to Ascension, subsistence, car hire, internet and visas for 3 people	
Operating costs:	shipping, immunocontraceptives, rodenticides, consumables	
Capital equipment:	Bait boxes, Goodnature traps, Rugged tablet	
Other Costs	NA	
Total:		

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)

No Response

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

No Response

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

Travel costs for 3 WMIL staff to Ascension

- 1 return flight from NZ to UK, other 2 flights provided in kind by WMIL
- 3 return flights UK to Ascension
- Accommodation in the UK, subsistence, internet and vehicle hire costs for 21 days on island

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

Purchase of required immunocontraceptives and additional rodenticides required for trials of new sites and methods

Consumables for Goodnature traps

Shipping of all items procured in the UK and SA

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

Purchase of Goodnature traps to trial

Bait boxes to set recommended grid bait stations in settlement areas

Rugged tablet for more efficient recording on data while in the field

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

Quoted costs for support from WMIL, approx. 35 working days for 3 people at

- Inclusive of preparation of training materials, online and in person training, 15 days of on-site fieldwork and trip report
- · Exclusive of travel costs

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

NA

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 (Guidance section 2.1.1 and section 1.8.4 of the Finance Guidance).

In-territory spend is defined in Darwin Plus Local as including funding spent on:

- · Equipment purchased in-territory;
- Equipment that cannot be acquired in-territory and is therefore purchased abroad, but will remain and be used in-territory beyond the life of the proposed Darwin Plus Local project;
- Training or skills that cannot be acquired in-territory and are therefore purchased abroad, but will be used
 in-territory beyond the life of the proposed Darwin Plus Local project;
- Time for consultants or staff based in-territory.

In-territory spend does not include:

- Time for consultants or staff who are based abroad, even if they travel to the OT to undertake the work;
- Shipping and import costs for equipment purchased abroad;
- Travel and subsistence costs where they incur spend outside the OT.

What % of the total will be spent in-territory?

32

If less than 80% of the total project spend is to be spent in-territory, please explain why.

This project is largely reliant on the knowledge and expertise of international consultants WMIL. This team has already been to Ascension and assisted in past control efforts and provided the Invasive Species Eradication Feasibility Assessment for Ascension as part of the DPL00037 project. Their oversight in implementing the recommendations from the report will be a key component of success in this project. Their services will be provided remotely and on island, resulting in the support required for the local EH team to effectively implement and trial new technologies under supervision of experienced professionals. They will also be instrumental in delivering bespoke training and assisting in the development of a coordinated strategy with other island contractors responsible for rodent control across the island.

Section 8 - Local and National Priorities

Q11. 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.

This project supports local and international priorities.

The Ascension Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) cites rodents and non-native predators as major threats to biodiversity and identifies control action as a priority for all of the following habitats or species:

- Turtle nesting beaches
- Seabird nesting sites
- Green Mountain National Park
- Endemic plants
- Land crabs
- Endemic invertebrates

The Biosecurity section of the BSAP includes a priority action to explore new and innovative methods to control non-native species.

The Ascension Biosecurity Strategy states that eradication of non-native species is the ultimate aim and should be pursued wherever feasible.

It is a priority of the Ascension Island Government (AIG) to promote welfare of residents. The AIG draft Strategic Business Plan 2025 lists one of the strategic outputs to incorporate feasible recommendations by the WMIL into the AIGCFD annual workplan. Working with other on island employers to develop a collaborative approach to rodent control is also encouraged through the development of the One Island Vision strategy.

This project also aligns with Target 6 of the CBD Global Framework which is to "Eliminate, minimise, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services...".

Will the project...

Take place on Government owned land or water?

Yes

Involve biocontrol, invasive alien species control or eradication?

Yes

Require permit(s) from Government departments for completion of activities?

No

If you have answered yes to any of the questions above, please attach evidence that you have Government support for this project i.e. a Letter of Support. Applications which indicate that they do not take place on Government land or water, but which propose work that appears to the reviewers would be difficult/impossible to carry out without working on government land or waters may be ineligible if no Letter of Support is provided.

- 20241125 AIG Letter of support Darwin Local R 5 - Increasing capacity and efficacy in local roden t control on Ascension Island
- ① 16:55:02
- pdf 144.28 KB

Section 9 - Project Risks

Q12. Project Risks

Please demonstrate your consideration of any risks involved in this project and how you intend to manage them. Please note the importance of health and safety and environmental risk assessment in the design of your project. If there is any possibility that your project may have negative impacts on the environment or human health, it is important that you provide a comprehensive analysis of potential environmental and human health risks, and the prevention measures you will take to ensure the work does not cause harm.

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.

For example, you should consider the ratio of vulnerable people or children to adults, ensuring there are appropriate background checks of all staff, and informing vulnerable groups and children of their right to safety and protection.

NA:4:--4:--

RISK	Mitigation
Injury or harm to AIGCFD or WMIL staff when undertaking surveys or deploying control methods.	Risk assessments will be prepared and followed before any survey or control work takes place. These will draw on the local knowledge of AIG and the expertise of WMIL.
Control methods harm humans or non-target species.	The control methods used would be recommended by WMIL considering safety and non-target impacts. All safety requirements and guidance would be followed at all times.
Delays in procurement resulting in insufficient time to trial new products.	Suppliers have already been identified and all purchases will be made as early as possible to account for potential shipping delays.

Do you require more fields?

Yes

Dial.

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of agreement or commitment from other island stakeholders	Consultation has already begun through DPL00037 and all parties are committed to improving rodent control by developing a more coordinated approach.

No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response

Section 10 - Terms & Conditions

Q13. 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://darwinplus.org.uk/how-to-apply/local-applications/ 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

Supporting documents list (please have these ready to attach with application)

- Cover Letter of no more than two A4 pages. (Guidance section: 4.2 has information on what this cover letter should include).
- If the project takes place on public land or water, is addressing invasive alien species or includes activities requiring a permit, a Letter of support from OT Government.
- Project Workplan in the template provided for Darwin Plus Local (available at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/how-to-apply/local-applications/).
- Map and additional information (optional) maximum five additional pages.

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:	Tiffany Simpson
Position in the organisation: (if applicable)	Director of Conservation and Fisheries
Signature (please upload e- signature)	 ♣ Tiffany Simpson signature ★ 24/11/2024 ◆ 23:51:54 ♠ pdf 12.62 KB
Date:	24 November 2024

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 or is addressing alien invasive species, 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 (found at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/) for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for my project that fit this Round.	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 workplan using the specific template provided (available at: https://darwinplus.org.uk/apply/local-applications/).	Checked
I have uploaded all supplementary documents if I have any.	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 <u>Forms and Guidance Portal</u>.

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).