Applicant: Butler, Ed

Organisation: Turks and Caicos Fly Fishing Association (TCFFA)

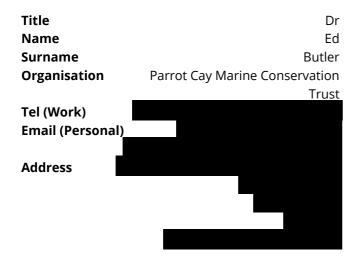
Funding Sought: £73,881.00

DPR13PS\1054

Sustainable Fly Fishing: Building Expertise, Conservation Skills, and Eco-Entrepreneurship

The Turks & Caicos Islands (TCI) have experienced intense tourism growth, yet have seldom balanced this with environmental conservation. To address this, the project aims to build capacity within the TCI Fly Fishing Association (TCFFA) by enabling a comprehensive guide certification, angler-led tagging research, and enhancing flats-fishing communications and marketing. Thus, the project will incentivize & enable conservation within the tourism sector, creating sustainable economic opportunities for locals and helping to position the TCI as a premier, eco-conscious flats-fishing destination.

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS

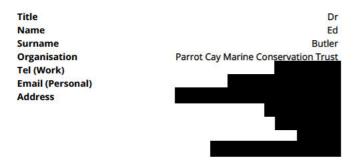


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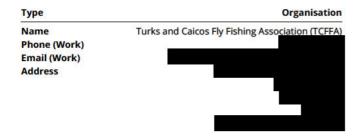
Sustainable Fly Fishing: Building Expertise, Conservation Skills, and Eco-Entrepreneurship

Section 1 - Contact Details

PRIMARY APPLICANT DETAILS



GMS ORGANISATION



Section 2 - Title, Dates & Budget Summary

Q3. Title

Sustainable Fly Fishing: Building Expertise, Conservation Skills, and Eco-Entrepreneurship

Please attach a cover letter as a PDF document.

- <u>★ TCFFA-Cover Letter 240923 174559</u>
- © 22:47:01
- pdf 141.04 KB

Q4a. Is this a resubmission of a previously unsuccessful application to Darwin Plus Fellowships, as this scheme was previously called?

No
 No

Q5. Project beneficiary/group of beneficiaries

O Group

Provide a description of the proposed Darwin Plus beneficiaries and their names (if known)

Description of who the beneficiaries are Beneficiaries have been divided into two categories. The first includes five highly experienced local flats-fishing guides, members of the newly formed Turks & Caicos Flats Fishing Association (TCFFA), who will receive certification as qualified trainers. Additional beneficiaries include anglers and guides (minimum 10) who will directly benefit from subsequent trainings.

Category 1: Flats Guide Instructors Course Participants and members of TCFFA

DEAN, Arthure Company: Silver Deep Position: Captain/Owner Island: Providenciales Website: https://silverdeepfishing.com

BROOKS, Edison Company: Generation Tours Position: Captain/Owner Island: Email: Edison_brookssr@hotmail.com Website: [No website]

MISSICK, Edmin Company: Catch the Wave Charters Position: Owner Island: Website: https://www.catchthewavecharters.com

TALBOT, Levardo Company: Talbot's Adventures Fish & Wildlife Experience Position: Captain/Owner Island: https://talbotsadventures.com/flats-fishing/

LOCKHART, Charles Company: Silver Shallows Position: Captain/Owner, Website: [No website, Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/silver.shallows/]

Category 2: Flats Guide Certification Workshop Provisional Attendees

Names of individuals in the group (if known)

DEAN JR., Arthure, Providenciales

MOXEY, Creighton, Providenciales

HANDFIELD, Daniel Island, North Caicos Phone

COX, Dwyane Island, South Caicos

SEYMOUR, France, South Caicos

GREY, John Island, North Caicos

HALL, Kaden, South Caicos

CRAIG, Lincoln, South Caicos

TALBOT, Roshaun, Providenciales

HAMILTON, Timothy Island, South Caicos

Have CVs been provided?

Yes

Q6. Summary of proposed project

The Turks & Caicos Islands (TCI) have experienced intense tourism growth, yet have seldom balanced this with environmental conservation. To address this, the project aims to build capacity within the TCI Fly Fishing Association (TCFFA) by enabling a comprehensive guide certification, angler-led tagging research, and enhancing flats-fishing communications and marketing. Thus, the project will incentivize & enable conservation within the tourism sector, creating sustainable economic opportunities for locals and helping to position the TCI as a premier, eco-conscious flats-fishing destination.

Q7. UKOT involved

Q7a. Please state which UKOT(s) will be involved with the project?

☑ 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

Q7b. Have you included a letter of support from the relevant OT Government(s) and/or OT-based civil society organisation?

Yes

Please provide a combined PDF of all letters of support

- & SupportLettersCombied-TCFFA
- © 22:47:52
- pdf 672.27 KB

Q8. Project dates

End date:

Duration (e.g. 1 year, 2 months):

01 April 2025

31 March 2026

1 year

Q9. Budget summary

	2025/2026	2026/27	2027/2028	Total
Darwin Plus funding request (1 Apr - 31 Mar)	73,881.00	0	0.00	£ 73,881.00

Please complete the template below which provides the Budget for this application.

- & v1 budget
- **±** 24/09/2024
- © 00:16:16
- xlsx 35.8 KB

Section 3 - Principals

Q10. Principals in the project

Please give the details of the individuals from the Lead Organisation (and other organisations if relevant) who would be directly involved in supervising/ working with the beneficiary/ies.

Details	Project Leader	Other Expert	Other Expert	Other Expert
Surname	Butler	Talbot	Arrocet	Simon
Forename(s)	Edward	Levardo	Estefania	Bussuttil
Post held	Scientific Lead	President	Communications Executive	Advisor
Organisation	TCFFA	TCFFA	TCFFA	The Royal Scoiety for the Protection of Birds

Email

Do you require more fields?

Yes

Details	Other Expert	Other Expert	Other Expert
Surname	Prescott	Moxey	Albury
Forename(s)	Smith	Joel	Ann
Post held	President	Flats Fishing Consultant	Executive Secretary
Organisation	Bahamas Fly Fishing Association	Bahamas Ministry of Tourism	Bahamas Fly Fishing Industry Association
Email			

Please provide a combined 1-page CV for each of these named individuals and remember to include the beneficiary/ies CVs as part of the PDF.

- **ii** 23/09/2024
- © 23:59:34
- pdf 1.61 MB

Section 4 - Aims, Activities & Achivements

Q11. Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of the employing organisation(s) of the proposed beneficiary/ies.

The Turks & Caicos Flats Fishing Association (TCFFA) is a newly established organization which has successfully united most of the flats fishing operators in TCI.

Its primary aims include:

Developing a comprehensive curriculum and certification program with help from the Bahamas Flats Fishing Industry Association, focusing on sustainable practices, catch-and-release data collection and conservation.

Organizing workshops to certify existing guides as trainers and to certify new guides.

Implementing an angler-led data collection/fish tagging program to support conservation efforts and the management of the fishery.

Establishing best practices for catch-and-release fishing.

Supporting the diversification of livelihoods on the sister islands and promoting an alternative sustainable resource-use, to the consumptive harvest (netting) of bonefish.

Collaborating with government to develop legislation promoting responsible industry growth and habitat protection. Endorse our certification officially.

Promoting TCI as a premier, eco-conscious flats-fishing destination and fostering eco-entrepreneurship through strategic communications.

Q12. Describe briefly the current role/s of the proposed beneficiary/ies within their organisation(s) and what relevance this has to one or more of the main themes of Darwin Plus.

Biodiversity: Fishing guides contribute to biodiversity conservation through their immense ecological knowledge base, allowing them to detect changes in the environment and foresee threats to fish populations and habitat health. The success of the recreational catch-and-release sector within guides operate, is a powerful driver for conserving both target species and their associated ecosystems, with knock-on effects for many species. A productive, sustainable fishery creates direct incentives for ecosystem preservation and raises community awareness about the value of these environments.

Environmental quality: Guides are key to implementing and promoting sustainable fishing practices, crucial for maintaining the health of TCI's marine environment.

Climate change: Through daily interactions with the marine environment, guides can observe and report on climate change impacts, contributing to adaptive management strategies. Their observations can provide valuable data on changes in fish behavior, migration patterns, and habitat conditions.

Capability and capacity building: Guides are foremost teachers, exposed to numerous different people every day. This positions them as great influencers who are capable of sharing their knowledge with diverse groups of people, helping to create environmental champions.

Section 5 - Outcomes & Objectives

Q13. Provide a concept note for the project. This should include:

Q13a. A clear outline of the aim and objectives of the project.

The primary aim of this project is to establish the Turks and Caicos Flats Fishing Association (TCFFA), its membership and associated guides, as a cornerstone for sustainable eco-tourism, conservation, and capacity building in the islands. To do so, we will:

Strengthen the TCFFA by developing a comprehensive curriculum and certification program for flats fishing guides, through skill sharing and knowledge transfers with the Bahamas Fly Fishing Industry Association, including: Flats fishing techniques, Local ecosystems and habitats, Catch-and-release best practices, Fish tagging and data collection, Environmental storytelling and sustainable marketing skills

With partners, conduct an 8-day workshop to train and certify 5 TCFFA guides, including a 3-day train-the-trainer component.

Deliver an additional 5-day workshop to train and certify at least 10 local fishermen as professional flats guides, gathering photo and video content of the workshop activities.

Engage the newly trained guides in flats fishing opportunities through placements with existing operators and entrepreneurial support, providing alternatives to low-skilled tourism jobs and involvement in the small-scale fishery.

Implement an angler-driven tagging program to enhance local fish population understanding, promoting active participation in conservation efforts and fostering an ethos of science and environmental stewardship in the angling community.

Provide database training to ensure capacity for secure data entry, curation and analysis to support future management efforts.

Collaborate with government agencies to:

Endorse our certification through an official educational body (e.g., Community College) and explore integrating fly fishing education into the national curriculum to foster long-term interest.

 $\label{thm:catch-and-release} \ \ \text{Explore catch-and-release fly fishing by certified anglers as an authorised sustainable activity in national parks.}$

Explore entry fees for fly fishing, with funds for industry development.

Through ongoing industry support, develop guides's communication and marketing capabilities through training and collaboration, covering storytelling, digital media, sustainable strategies, and eco-tourism

Q13b. The role of the Project Leader, Lead Organisation and the beneficiary/ies, and others where relevant.

Project Leader: Ed Butler, responsible for overall project management and oversight and liaison with Darwin Plus/NIRAS..

The Turks & Caicos Fly Fishing Association (TCFFA) will implement the project with its core team:

Levardo Talbot (TCFFA Founder/President): Responsible for curriculum development and liaising with beneficiaries, Bahamian counterparts, and government.

Dr Ed Butler, Scientific Lead: Overseeing project management and developing fish tagging and catch-and-release data collection systems and associated training materials.

Estefania Arrocet, Communications executive: Leads TCFFA's communication strategy, developing training programs and centralized messaging protocols. Manages digital marketing, eco-tourism branding, and online platforms to boost visibility and engagement, enhancing TCFFA's market presence and sustainability focus.

Secretary: To be hired.

Randell Deveaux, Accountant.

Consultants & Trainers:

Prescott Smith, President, Bahamas Fly Fishing Industry Association: Workshop Course Director. Joel Moxey, Bahamas Tourist Board: Flats Fishing Consultant and Workshop Course Director.

Ann Albury, Executive Secretary, Bahamas Fly Fishing Industry Association: Consultant on the development of the curriculum.

Simon Busuttil, RSPB Advisor: Meeting quarterly with the core team to provide guidance and expertise.

Beneficiaries will promote industry interests, provide mentorship to new guides, and implement coordinated communications protocols to enhance the profile of TCI fly fishing. They will also act as citizen scientists, recording catch and release data and tagging fish for monitoring. Collaboration will be encouraged through regular industry meetings and an online resource-sharing platform.

Key partners include:

Bahamas Fly Fishing Industry Association: Offering educational resources and training support.

Department of Fisheries and Marine Resource Management: Providing government support and extending project benefits.

National Fishing Association: Ensuring industry representation and training opportunities.

TCI Finance: Supporting entrepreneurship for new guides.

Experience TCI: Enhancing communication efforts for TCFFA and its members.

Q13c. Where appropriate, how the project will contribute towards one or more of the four themes of Darwin Plus in the OTs i.e. what the expected outcome of the project will be

This project will contribute significantly to three of the four themes of Darwin Plus in the Turks and Caicos Islands:

Biodiversity: The fish tagging program will generate valuable data on local fish populations, migration patterns, and habitat use, which will contribute directly to biodiversity conservation efforts by informing evidence-based management decisions. Additionally, the promotion of catch-and-release best practices will ensure minimal harmful impacts to fish populations. By promoting a valuable and sustainable fishery, we create direct tangible motives for conservation and protection. This approach gives value to the environments where fishing takes place, extending beyond just the target species to encompass the entire ecosystem the fishery relies upon and operates within. The result is a powerful incentive for preserving not only the fish populations but also the vast and interconnected marine habitats that support them.

Environmental quality: The sensible development of the Fly-Fishing industry will reduce the likelihood of physical damage to habitats, decrease fish mortalities through consumptive fishing, and increased awareness of environmental issues among guides, tourists and local communities.

Capability and capacity building: The comprehensive training and certification program forms the core of this project's capacity-building efforts. By educating both experienced and new guides in sustainable practices, conservation, and scientific data collection, the project will significantly enhance local capacity to support the environment in both the short- and long-term. The "train the trainer" component ensures sustainability of capacity-building efforts.

Expected outcomes:

A cadre of certified, conservation-minded flats fishing guides $% \left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{ 1\right\} =\left\{$

 $Improved\ capacity\ for\ understanding,\ and\ management,\ of\ local\ fish\ populations\ through\ the\ tagging\ program$

Established best practices for sustainable flats fishing in TCI

Increased awareness and implementation of conservation practices in the flats fishing industry

Enhanced local capacity for environmental monitoring and sustainable tourism

A model for sustainable eco-tourism that balances economic growth with conservation

Section 6 - Legacy & Collaboration

Q14. Legacy

Provide information on how the beneficiary/ies will utilise, promote and disseminate the benefits of the project. Will a strategy be developed during the project to ensure this is achieved?

The TCFFA will develop a strategy to ensure project benefits are utilized, promoted and disseminated effectively:

Knowledge Application: Certified guides will implement sustainable practices, best fish handling methods, and conduct angler-led fish tagging and catch-and-release data collection during flats fishing excursions. Guides will share expertise with flats fishing tourists and locals, raising conservation awareness.

The TCFFA will liaise with government to recognize and officially incorporate the certification into official educational bodies.

Career Development: Newly certified guides will have work placement opportunities with TCFFA members' businesses. Support for launching their own operations will be provided through a partnership with "TCI Invest" government entity.

Continued Education: Skills transfer will be maintained through close relations with Bahamian counterparts and the worldwide flats fishing community. Newly trained guides will educate the National Fishing Association.

A foundational data collection system and database will grow with time to support the responsible development and management of the industry.

Members will be supported in creating media content showcasing their new skills, sustainable practices, conservation efforts, and fish tagging program updates. This will highlight the enhanced capabilities and environmental stewardship of TCI's fly fishing sector.

This comprehensive strategy ensures long-term project benefits, creating a sustainable legacy.

Q15. Priorities

How will the project assist the OT's environmental priorities? Please refer to international or national environmental conventions, treaties, agreements, strategies and/or action plans relevant to the OT as appropriate.

This project aligns with and supports several key environmental priorities of the Turks and Caicos Islands:

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

Supports TCI's commitment to conserve biodiversity and promote sustainable use of natural resources.

RAMSAR Convention:

Enhances protection of wetlands and coastal areas, crucial for flats fishing species.

TCI National Tourism Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan:

Promotes sustainable tourism development and diversification of tourism products.

TCI Development Strategy 2013-2017 (and any subsequent updates):

Supports economic diversification and sustainable development goals.

Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI):

Contributes to the goal of protecting 20% of the marine and coastal environment by 2020.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

TCI Environmental Strategy:

Aligns with objectives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use.

UKOT Biodiversity Strategy:

Supports the UK government's commitment to environmental protection in its Overseas Territories.

Q16. Collaboration

What collaboration has there been with the proposed beneficiary/ies to date in developing the proposal, and what collaboration is planned for the duration of the project? Where relevant, describe any consultation or collaboration by the proposed beneficiary/ies within their own territory.

Collaboration in developing the proposal: Levardo Talbot, TCFFA president, provided crucial insights and recently attended the Bahamas Conclave on Flats Fishing, strengthening international connections. The TCFFA, comprising five experienced operators, actively shaped the project. Estefania Arrocet from Caicos Media was engaged for communications expertise, while Ed Butler was approached for data management and scientific input. Productive conversations with Simon from RSPB leveraged existing connections through the East Caicos project. The National Fishing Association was consulted, and 12 interested local fishermen were identified for skill acquisition. Discussions with the Bahamas Flats Fishing Industry Association informed best practices adaptation.

Planned collaboration during the project: Ongoing engagement with local fishermen through workshops and mentoring sessions. Quarterly meetings with key government departments to ensure alignment with national priorities. Strategic partnerships with local resorts and tourism operators to promote flats fishing and the fish tagging programme. Integration with related Darwin Plus projects (DPLUS181 and DPLUS153) to maximize conservation impact. Creation of a local stakeholder advisory group for ongoing input. Collaboration with local schools and the community college to develop educational modules on sustainable fishing practices and marine conservation.

Q17. Where will the beneficiary/ies be based?

Please be specific with organisational details and dates (where more than one location).

Providenciales: As the main hub, Providenciales hosts the Turks & Caicos Fly Fishing Association (TCFFA) headquarters and guide certification workshop. Most of the experienced guides are based here due to its well-established tourism infrastructure.

North Caicos: Known for its extensive flats, North Caicos will be crucial for practical training sessions and fish tagging activities. Some beneficiaries are currently based here and are in most need of upskilling.

Middle Caicos: Connected to North Caicos, Middle Caicos offers additional flats fishing grounds. Beneficiaries here will collaborate closely with those on North Caicos

South Caicos: With its rich fishing heritage and developing tourism sector, South Caicos will be another key location for project beneficiaries, many of the aspiring guides are located here and there is need for this skill with a new resort opening there.

East Caicos: is crucial to the project, aligning with the Darwin Plus funded "East Caicos Wilderness to Protected Area" project (DPLUS181). Its pristine, extensive flats make it vital for conservation, research, and specialized guided trips. Guides from nearby islands will conduct day trips to East Caicos, contributing to its protection and sustainable use.

Section 7 - Workplan

Q18. Safeguarding

All projects funded under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds must ensure proactive action is taken to promote the welfare and protect all individuals involved in the project (staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries) from harm. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have specific procedures and policies in operation.

Please upload the following mandatory policies:

- <u>Safeguarding and/or PSEAH Policy</u>: including a statement of commitment to safeguarding and a zero tolerance to inaction statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse. Policy should include a commitment to either Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), IASC minimum operating standards for PSEA MOS-PSEA) or CAPSEAH minimum standards.
- Whistleblowing Policy: which details a clear process for dealing with concerns raised and protects whistle blowers from reprisals.
- <u>Code of Conduct</u>: which sets out clear expectations of behaviours inside and outside the workplace for staff and volunteers involved in the project and makes clear what will happen in the event of non-compliance or breach of these standards, up to and including dismissal.
- Safety and Security Policy or Security Plan: that outlines a plan on how to mitigate and respond to potential health, safety and security threats.

If any of these policies are integrated into a broader policy document or handbook, please upload just the relevant or equivalent sub-sections to the above policies, with (unofficial) English translations where needed.

Please outline how your project will ensure:

- 1. beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff are made aware of your safeguarding commitment and how they can confidentially raise a concern,
- 2. safeguarding issues are investigated, recorded and what disciplinary procedures are in place when allegations and complaints are upheld,
- 3. you will ensure project partners also meet these standards and policies.

Indicate which minimum standard protocol your project follows and how you meet those minimum standards, i.e. CAPSEAH, CHS, IASC MOS-PSEA. If your approach is currently limited or in the early stages of development, please clearly set out your plans address this.

As a new association, we recognize the critical importance of safeguarding and commit to having comprehensive policies and procedures in place before the project's official start date of April 1st. Our accelerated plan includes:

Immediate Policy Development (By February 15th):

Draft Safeguarding/PSEAH, Whistleblowing, Code of Conduct, and Safety/Security policies

Consult with safeguarding experts and local partners for rapid review and feedback

Align policies with IASC Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA

Board Approval and Adoption (By March 1st):

Present policies to board for review and formal adoption

Make any necessary revisions based on board feedback

Training and Awareness (March 1st-15th):

Conduct intensive safeguarding training for all current staff and partners

Develop materials to inform future beneficiaries and the public about our safeguarding commitment

Reporting Mechanisms (By March 15th):

Establish confidential reporting channels (e.g., dedicated email, phone hotline)

Create a response team and clear procedures for addressing allegations

Partner Compliance (By March 25th):

Include safeguarding requirements in all partner agreements

Ensure partners understand and can meet our safeguarding standards

Pre-Launch Review (March 25th-31st):

Conduct a final review of all safeguarding measures

Make any last-minute adjustments to ensure full compliance by April 1st

We are committed to having these crucial safeguarding measures fully operational before the project commences, ensuring the protection and wellbeing of all stakeholders from day one. We will continue to monitor, review, and improve these policies throughout the project lifecycle.

Q19. Workplan

Provide a project workplan that shows the key milestones in project activities.

- **ii** 23/09/2024
- © 23:37:44
- docx 36.68 KB

Section 8 - Certification

Certification

On behalf of the

Company

of

Turks and Caicos Fly Fishing Association

I apply for a grant of

£73,881.00

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.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

• I enclose one page CVs for the beneficiary/ies, project principals, cover letter, budget, workplan, letter(s) of support, financial evidence (see guidance), and Safeguarding and associated policies as requested in the Guidance Notes.

Checked

Name	Edward Butler	
Position in Organisation	Scientific Lead	
Signed	& signed	
Dated	23 September 2024	

Please attach the requested signed Financial Evidence.

No Response

Please upload the Lead Organisation's Safeguarding and associated policies as a PDF

No Response

Section 9 - Submission Checklist

I have read the Guidance documents, including the "Guidance Notes for Applicants" and "Finance Guidance".	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 a budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
The application has been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have provided the relevant letters of support, cover letter, workplan, and CVs with this application.	Checked
I have attached a copy of the Lead Organisation's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Code of Conduct and Safety and Security Policy or Security Plan (Question 18).	Checked
The additional supporting evidence is in line with the requested evidence, amounts to a maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form	Unchecked
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 the Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus and our sister grant scheme, the IWT Challenge Fund. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our quarterly project newsletter. 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).