Darwin Plus

Stage 2 Webinar - Round 13:

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGE FUNDS

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

UK International Development

Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

Welcome!

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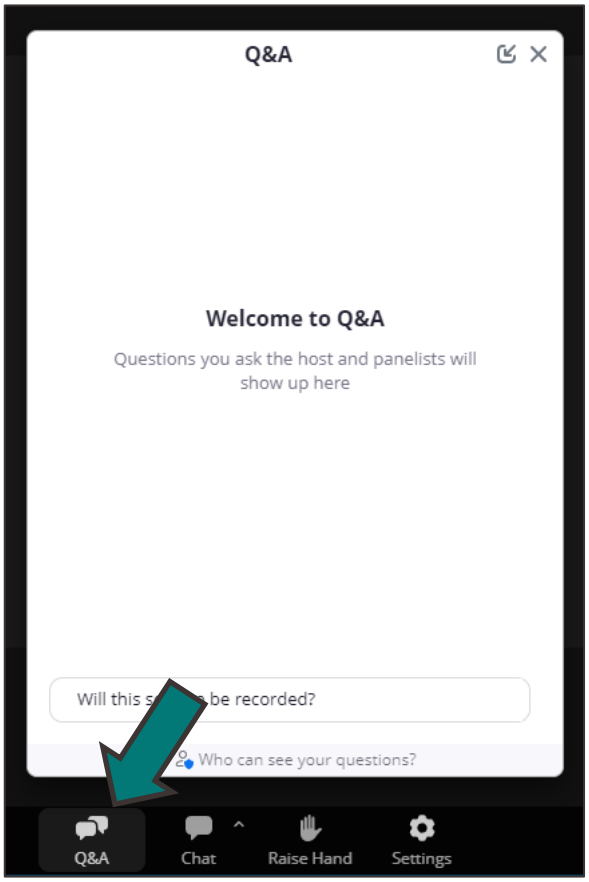
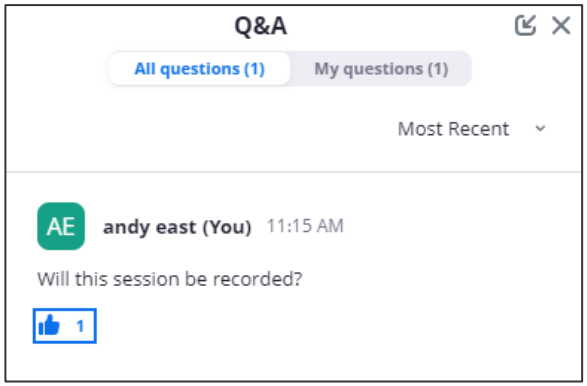
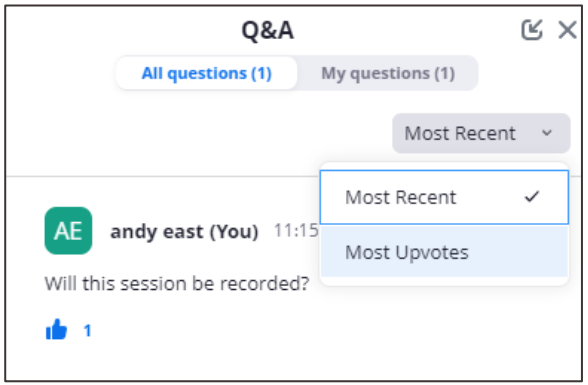
Agenda

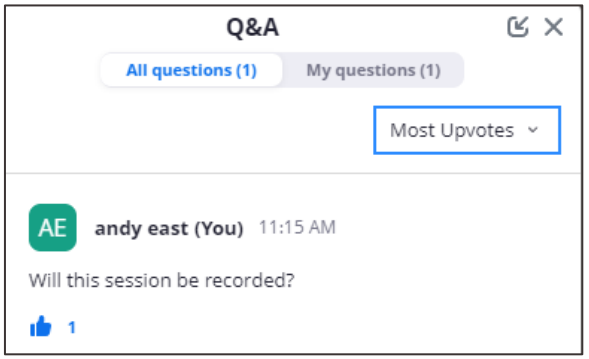
- Welcome
- Administrative eligibility
- Meeting objectives
- Finance
- Project team expertise and letters of support
- Avoiding common issues
    - *Questions*
- Gender & safeguarding
- Communications
    - *Questions*

Housekeeping









Themes of Darwin Plus

The themes for Darwin Plus in Round 13 are:

- **Biodiversity**: improving and conserving biodiversity, and slowing or reversing biodiversity loss and degradation;
- **Climate change**: responding to, mitigating and adapting to climate change and its effects on the natural environment and local communities
- **Environmental quality**: improving the condition and protection of the natural environment;
- **Capability and capacity building**: enhancing the capacity within UKOTs to support the environment in the short- and long-term.

Meeting D+ Broader Objectives

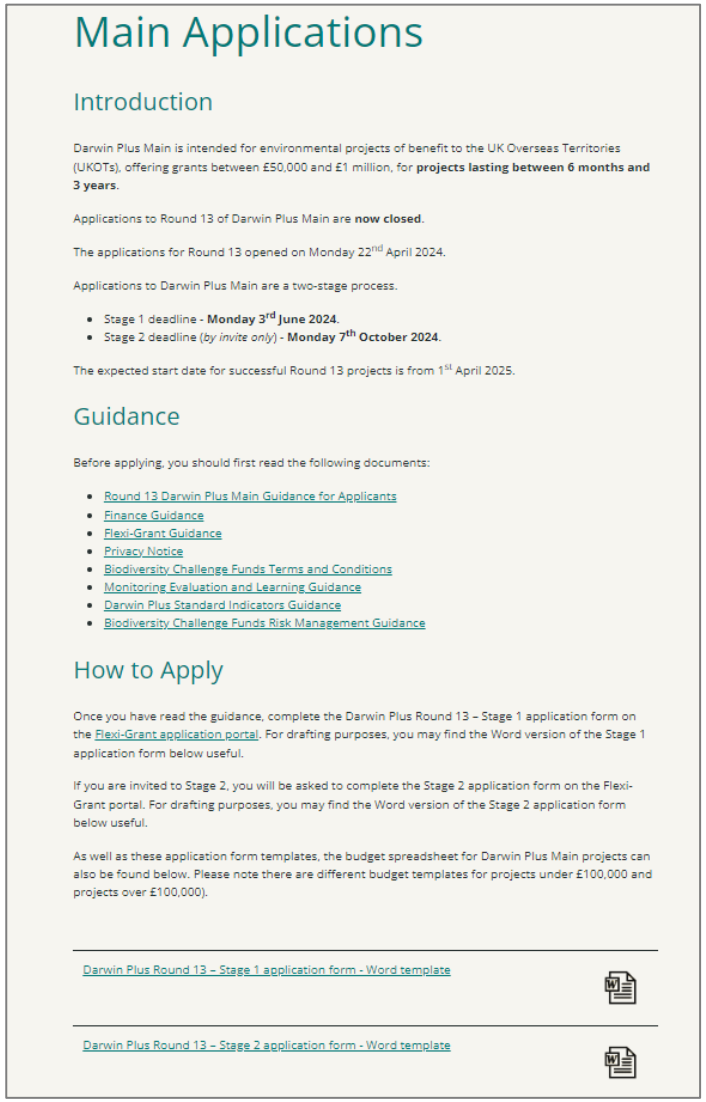
- Outlined in full in guidance
- Which convention priority & why
  - Link your application to the relevant Conventions and national priorities – flag links to relevant targets – including UKOT National Plans and priorities
  - Don't just list relevant agreements – sign-post **how** your project is contributing towards these
  - Can you demonstrate communication with the Convention focal point – perhaps by letter?

Key Information

- Apply page:
  https://darwinplus.org.uk/how-to-apply/

- All key documents, including guidance and templates, there including:
  - Guidance for applicants
  - Finance guidance
  - Flexi-Grant guidance
  - MEL and Standard Indicator guidance
  - Terms & Conditions
  - Draft Word form – but submit via Flexi-Grant!

- **Deadline** – 23:59 BST / GMT+1
  Monday 7th October 2024



Main Applications

Introduction

Darwin Plus Main is intended for environmental projects of benefit to the UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs), offering grants between £50,000 and £1 million, for **projects lasting between 6 months and 3 years**.

Applications to Round 13 of Darwin Plus Main are **now closed**.

The applications for Round 13 opened on Monday 22nd April 2024.

Applications to Darwin Plus Main are a two-stage process.

- Stage 1 deadline - **Monday 3rd June 2024**.
- Stage 2 deadline (*by invite only*) - **Monday 7th October 2024**.

The expected start date for successful Round 13 projects is from 1st April 2025.

Guidance

Before applying, you should first read the following documents:

- Round 13 Darwin Plus Main Guidance for Applicants
- Finance Guidance
- Flexi-Grant Guidance
- Privacy Notice
- Biodiversity Challenge Funds Terms and Conditions
- Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance
- Darwin Plus Standard Indicators Guidance
- Biodiversity Challenge Funds Risk Management Guidance

How to Apply

Once you have read the guidance, complete the Darwin Plus Round 13 – Stage 1 application form on the Flexi-Grant application portal. For drafting purposes, you may find the Word version of the Stage 1 application form below useful.

If you are invited to Stage 2, you will be asked to complete the Stage 2 application form on the Flexi-Grant portal. For drafting purposes, you may find the Word version of the Stage 2 application form below useful.

As well as these application form templates, the budget spreadsheet for Darwin Plus Main projects can also be found below. Please note there are different budget templates for projects under £100,000 and projects over £100,000).

Darwin Plus Round 13 – Stage 1 application form - Word template

Darwin Plus Round 13 – Stage 2 application form - Word template

Key Application Requirements

- Word counts are strictly enforced in Flexi-Grant
- Past experience and awards (if new as a lead) including contacts for references (all in application – no uploads)
- Ensure you **check websites for any updates to templates**
- **Supporting docs including**:

Cover Letter	Required for all – max 2 pages in PDF format ***changed from previous years*** - address feedback in your application and outline how you have addressed it in the question at the start of your application (Q4) *not* in your cover letter
Logframe	Logframe required using the template provided for Stage 2
Budget Table	Required on our template. N.B. different templates for <£100k & >£100k (check matches request and certification in application)
Workplan	Required on our template

Key Application Requirements

Supporting docs continued… **(see Guidance for full list):**

CVs	Required for key personnel: partners and project teams – each CV should be one page and all CVs should be combined into one PDF document
Letters of Support	Required - including applicant organisation – in one PDF document (partners, government, stakeholders…)
Copies of Accounts	Require last 2 sets of **signed/audited accounts (covering 3 years)** in English & currency clear
Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing policy and Code of Conduct	Required - Lead Organisation's Safeguarding and associated policies Documents should include a statement on commitment to safeguarding and zero-tolerance statement on bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse
Additional Material	Optional – up to 5 pages only, could include a map, list of references or Theory of Change. **If you submit more than 5 pages your application will be rejected as ineligible.**

Finances - Budget

- PL normally expected 10% or more on project: if less please clarify
- ‘Consultancy costs’ and ‘Other’ – provide adequate detail
- Capital costs normally <10% otherwise clearly justify in text
- Allow for exchange rates fluctuation – but no ‘contingency’ – build it in

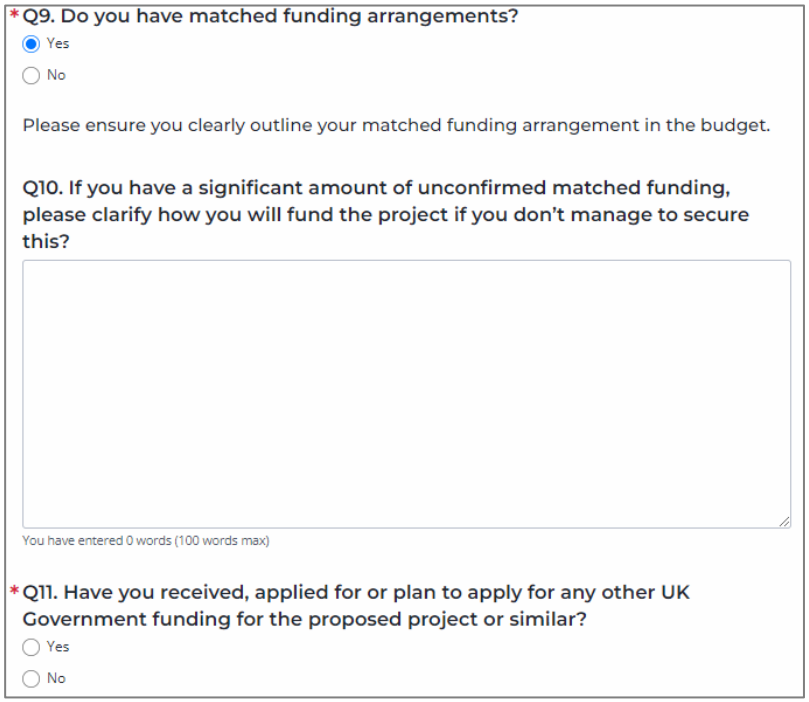
Finances – Audit Costs

Make sure you only include audit costs for the Lead Organisation: check T&Cs for requirements and totals you can claim

- Projects between £50,000 - £100,000 - up to £2,000 in last FY of project
- Projects over £100,000 – up to £3,000 in last FY of project

Matched Funding in Flexi-Grant

Example from the application form


*Q9. Do you have matched funding arrangements?
Yes
No
Please ensure you clearly outline your matched funding arrangement in the budget.
Q10. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you will fund the project if you don't manage to secure this?
You have entered 0 words (100 words max)
*Q11. Have you received, applied for or plan to apply for any other UK Government funding for the proposed project or similar?
Yes
No

- 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 Plus request) i.e. if the Darwin Plus % of total project cost is 70% then matched funding is 30%
- Large % matched funding unsecured is risky - we ask you to outline how you will manage if this is not secured

Finances – General

- It is good to see a significant % of funds going directly to territory costs – but no specified amount
- Consider budget spread across FYs – don't front load
- % of funds on M&E (between 5% and 10%)
- Refer to Finance Guidance

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. You cannot increase the budget later
- Recruitment delays leading to shift in timescales and funds being approved for the wrong financial year

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

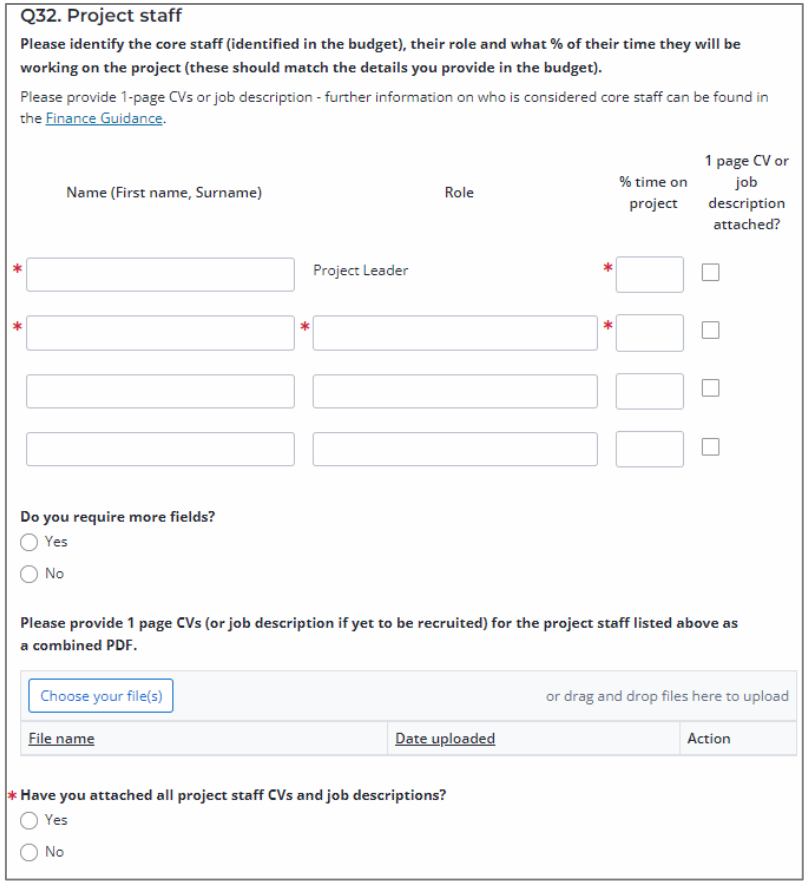
- Staff retention and reliance on key people
- Natural disasters e.g. weather, disease, physical
- Change of government/partner personnel

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 or pen portraits

Project Team – in Flexi-Grant

Example from the application form



Q32. Project staff

Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project (these should match the details you provide in the budget).

Please provide 1-page CVs or job description - further information on who is considered core staff can be found in the Finance Guidance.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
*	Project Leader	*	
*	*	*	

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.

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

File name	Date uploaded	Action

* **Have you attached all project staff CVs and job descriptions?**

Yes

No

- 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:
  - Max. 1 page CV must be provided
  - If funded, permission needed to change person (via Change Request)

Project Partners

- Partners vs stakeholders – partners have explicit project governance role
- Clear evidence of buy-in from partners is needed through provision of Letters of Support
- 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)
- **Evidence of support from the OT government is particularly critical**

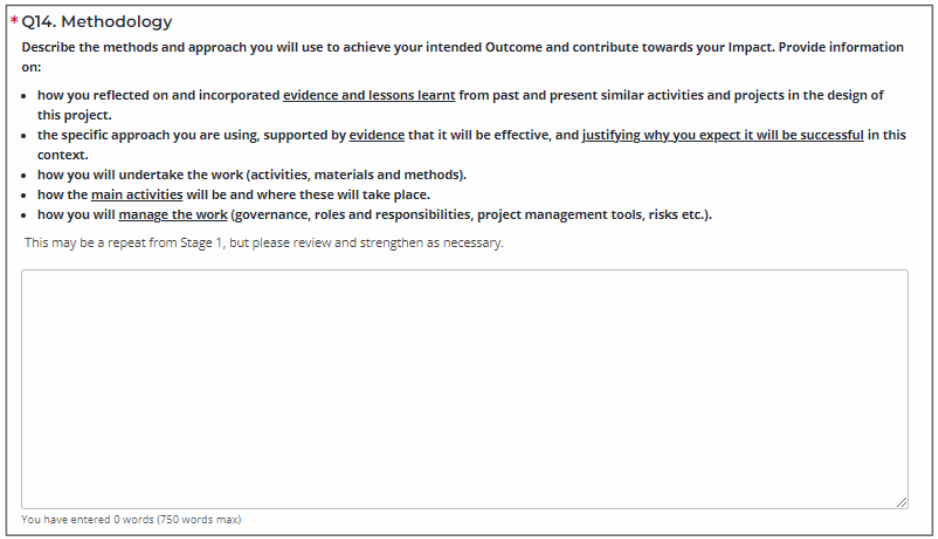
Letters of Support

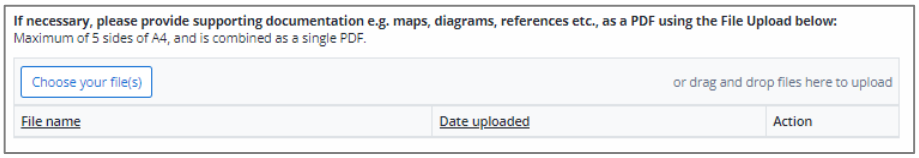
Avoid ‘template’ letters of support. Strong letters of support are expected to include the following elements:

- 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
- 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
- English or translation required (doesn’t need to be certified)

Poll

Additional Materials





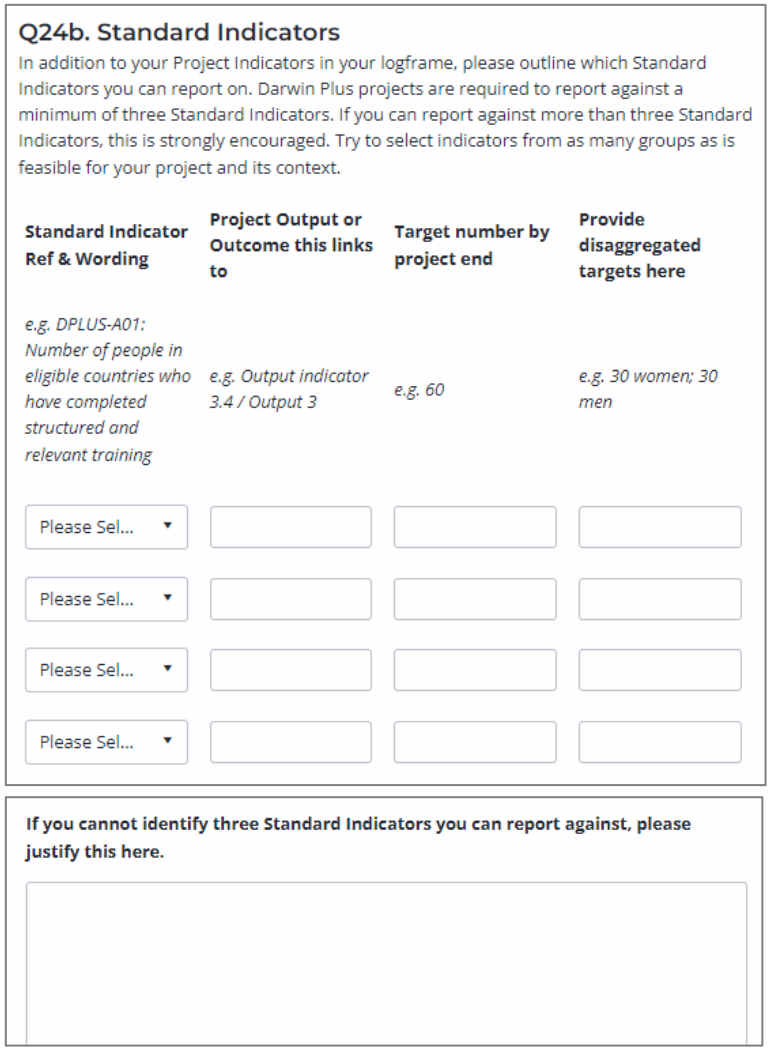
Methodology should be clear and link to logframe

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

5-page limit

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

Standard Indicators



Q24b. Standard Indicators

In addition to your Project Indicators in your logframe, please outline which Standard Indicators you can report on. Darwin Plus projects are required to report against a minimum of three Standard Indicators. If you can report against more than three Standard Indicators, this is strongly encouraged. Try to select indicators from as many groups as is feasible for your project and its context.

Standard Indicator Ref & Wording	Project Output or Outcome this links to	Target number by project end	Provide disaggregated targets here
e.g. DPLUS-A01: Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	*e.g. Output indicator 3.4 / Output 3*	*e.g. 60*	*e.g. 30 women; 30 men*
Please Sel...			
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If you cannot identify three Standard Indicators you can report against, please justify this here.

- New version of Standard Indicators guidance launched – version 2.0
- Key changes will be outlined in more detail in MEL workshop this week
- No longer need to map in your logframe
- Ideally select 3 indicators – explain why not if you can't

Other Common Issues

- SMART logframes – more info in separate MEL session
- 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.
- 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.

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.

Any questions?

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

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What is GESI?

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is comprised of two key terms:

Gender Equality	is about **addressing inequalities and transforming the distribution of opportunities, choices and resources** available to girls, women and non-binary individuals so that they have **equal power to shape their lives and participate** in the process thereby increasing equality between people of all genders.
Social Inclusion	refers to the **process of improving the terms of individuals and groups to take part in society**, and the process of improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of people disadvantaged and historically excluded from decision making and spheres of influence on the basis of their identity.

The Importance of GESI

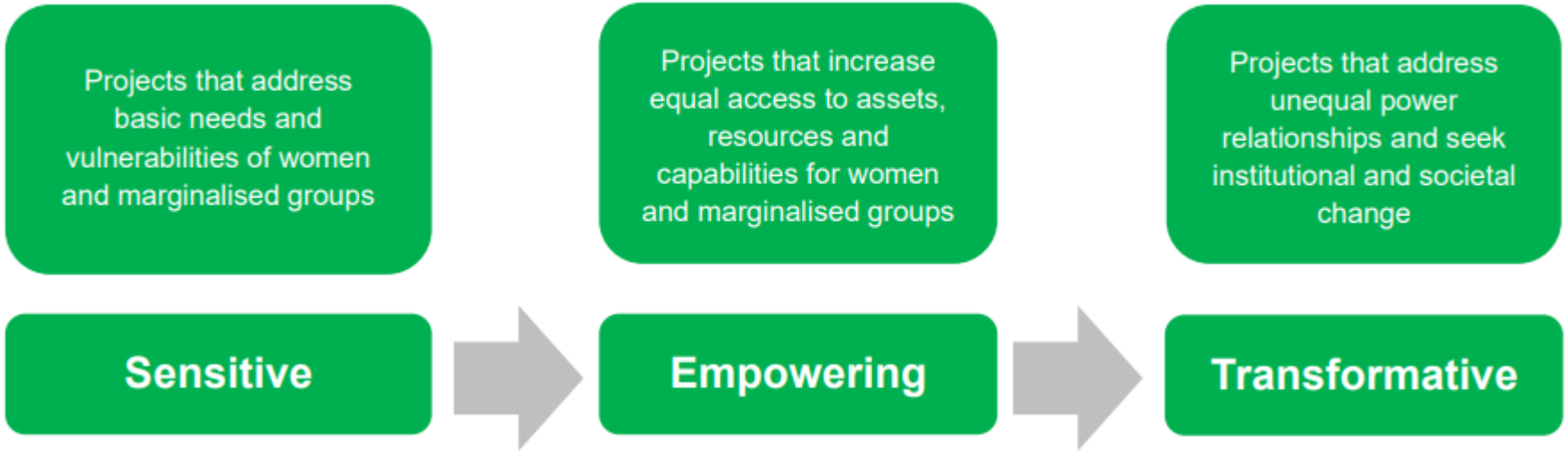
GESI is important to understand:

- Biodiversity practices and engagement with natural resources
- Knowledge acquisition and use of resources
- Inequalities in management and control of resources

An understanding of gender and social characteristics further identifies the ways in which those affected by exclusion and discrimination are unable to access the same economic opportunities.

GESI Sensitive

A **GESI Sensitive approach** is understood to demonstrate programming will "do no harm", not exacerbate inequality and ensure meaningful and context appropriate engagement and participation of those involved in the project.



GESI in Your Applications

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics.

All successful projects should demonstrate they:

- Understand the GESI context in which the project is working within.
- Ensure inclusive and meaningful participation of all those engaging with the project.
- Will not contribute to or create any further inequalities – i.e. “do no harm”

You should avoid including generic statements, such as that your organisation is an equal opportunities employer – we are interested in this **project specifically**, not your broader work

Exploring GESI Dimensions

- Speak with people living in communities where project implemented or other relevant project stakeholders
- 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?

GESI in Your Projects

Pre- Application Consultation

- Context specific GESI analysis
- Safeguarding considerations

Project Design/ Application

- Are opportunities identified to challenge stereotypical gender roles?
- Does the project's Theory of Change consider gender and inclusion?

Implementing/ Reporting

- Has timing and location taken inclusive approaches into account?
- Do project partners have specific policies and capacities to ensure GESI sensitive implementation?

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

- Has GESI been considered within the logframe?
- Are projects considering how GESI related lessons can be shared?

Safeguarding

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGE FUNDS

Safeguarding

- Health, Safety and Security
- Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH)

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
- The public
- Project staff including partners
- Volunteers

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

Commitment to PSEAH

- IASC 6 Principles
- Relevant CHS standards on PSEAH
- CAPSEAH

IASC
Inter-Agency Standing Committee

CHSAlliance

CAPSEAH

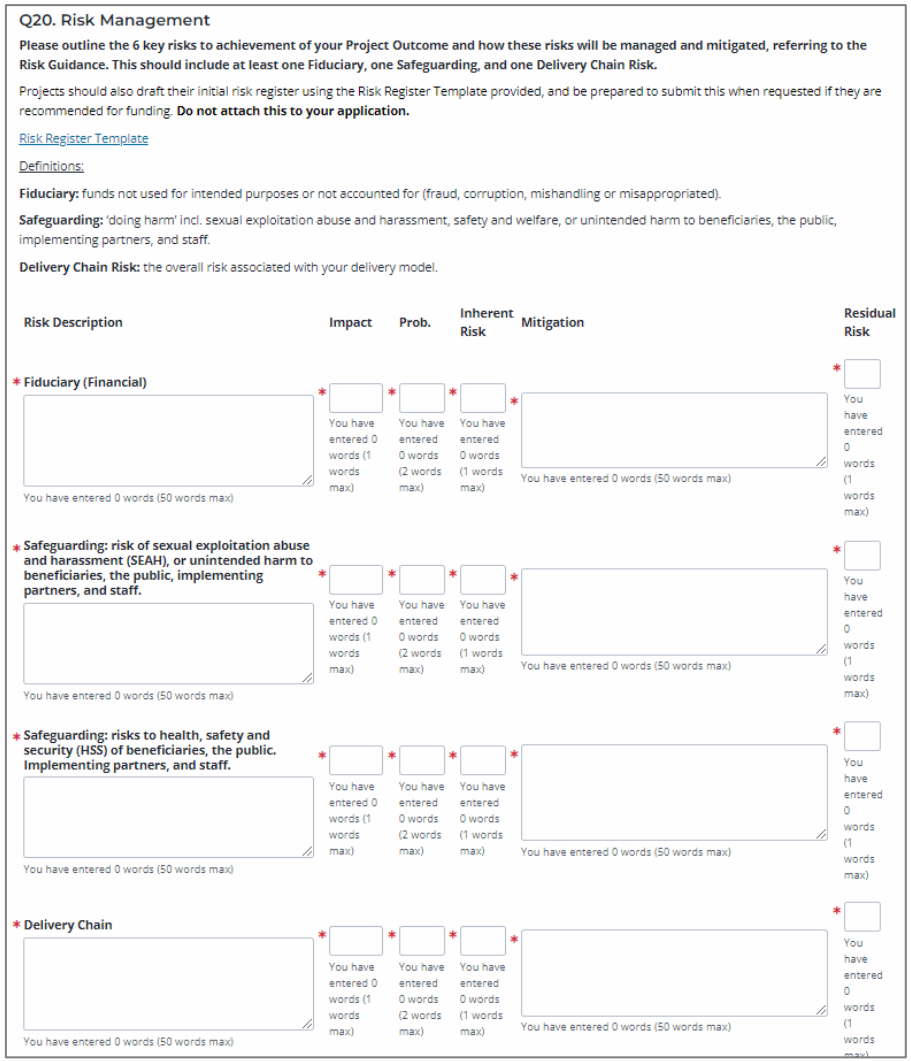
Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

How This is Assessed

In your application….

- You need to upload your safeguarding policies
- We ask you to outline how your project will ensure
    a) beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff are made aware of your safeguarding commitment and how they can confidentially raise a concern,
    b) safeguarding issues are investigated, recorded and what disciplinary procedures are in place when allegations and complaints are upheld,
    c) you will ensure project partners also meet these standards and policies.
- You should also indicate which minimum standard protocol your project will follow (on previous slide)
- If your approach is currently limited or in the early stages of development, please clearly set out your plans address this.
- **Be clear to answer all parts of the question in your response**

Risk Framework



Q20. Risk Management

Please outline the 6 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, one Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register using the Risk Register Template provided, and be prepared to submit this when requested if they are recommended for funding. **Do not attach this to your application.**

Risk Register Template

Definitions:

Fiduciary: funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated).

Safeguarding: 'doing harm' incl. sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, safety and welfare, or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff.

Delivery Chain Risk: the overall risk associated with your delivery model.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Inherent Risk	Mitigation	Residual Risk
* Fiduciary (Financial)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (2 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (50 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)
* Safeguarding: risk of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment (SEAH), or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff.	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (2 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (50 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)
* Safeguarding: risks to health, safety and security (HSS) of beneficiaries, the public. Implementing partners, and staff.	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (2 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (50 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)
* Delivery Chain	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (2 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (50 words max)	* You have entered 0 words (1 words max)

Risk management

- 7 key risks need to be included in the app form table
- 4 mandatory risk categories – fiduciary, safeguarding (sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment), safeguarding (health, safety and security), and delivery chain
- 3 other risks

What We Want To See

- Policies & procedures - Safeguarding, Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing
- Demonstration of commitment - senior leader buy in and designated team member to support PSEAH initiatives
- Strong Complaints and Feedback Response Mechanism - stakeholders are aware of how to give feedback and raise concerns
- Community sensitisation - communities understand the feedback / complaints mechanism and their rights
- Prevention through risk identification and mitigation
- Incident log and improvements based on feedback

Reporting Cases

- What must be reported:
  - Allegation of SEAH where a community member has been harmed by project or partner staff
  - SEAH alleged against any senior staff within a project organisation

- Oda.safeguarding@defra.gov.uk

- Reporting form

- Advice and guidance

Further Support

- D+ Safeguarding Resource Page
- Safeguarding Support Hub –Safeguarding Essentials Pack
- CAPSEAH principles, minimum recommended actions, practical guidance
- Training: Kaya's Safeguarding Essentials
- Training: Safeguarding in the International Aid Sector
- NIRAS Safeguarding Manager

Communicating About Projects

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

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DARWIN PLUS

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	✓

How Communication Can Help

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.

Communicating Complexity

- 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

Any questions?

Follow for Updates

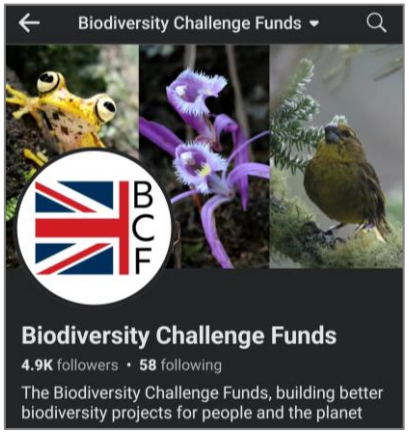
Make sure to follow our BCF socials:

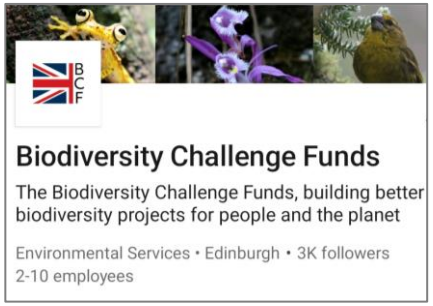
@Biodiversity Challenge Funds

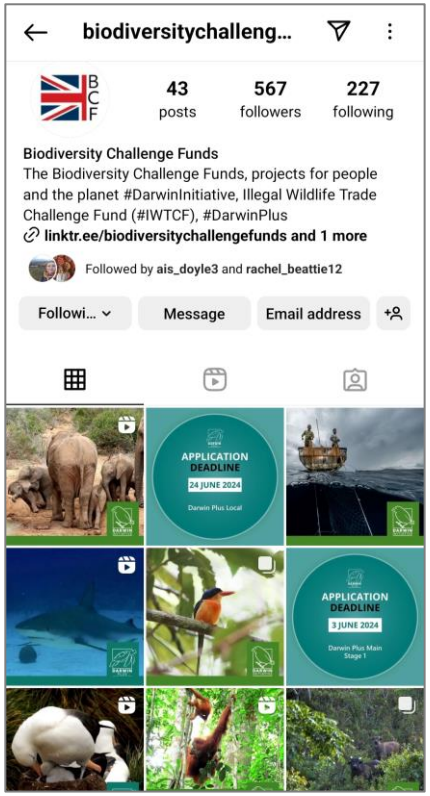
@UKBCFs

@Biodiversity Challenge Funds

@biodiversitychallengefunds







Thanks for listening!