

## Request for Proposals

### Biodiversity Informatics for African Freshwater and Pollinator Biodiversity

Dear Prospective Grant Applicant:

The JRS Biodiversity Foundation is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for multi-year projects focused upon biodiversity data, knowledge and information services related to freshwater biodiversity and pollinator biodiversity in eastern and southern Africa. The foundation will award about \$800,000 among 4-8 qualifying proposals related to freshwater biodiversity by July 2016 and about \$200,000 among 1-4 proposals relating to pollinator biodiversity by December 2016<sup>1</sup>. Please write to [JRSRFP2016@jrsbiodiversity.org](mailto:JRSRFP2016@jrsbiodiversity.org) with any questions. The latest update of this call for proposals is available at [JRS 2016 Request for Proposals](#) as is an up-to-date list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

#### **JRS BIODIVERSITY FOUNDATION**

Our foundation's vision is a world in which greater access to knowledge substantially contributes to conserving the Earth's biodiversity for the benefit of society. Our mission is to increase the access to and the use of information for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. Since 2007, the foundation has invested more than \$13M in biodiversity informatics projects that focus on: (1) collecting and enhancing data, (2) aggregating, synthesizing, and publishing data, (3) making data more widely available to potential end users, and (4) interpreting and gaining insights from species occurrence and distribution data to inform policy and conservation of biodiversity.

The JRS strategy to advance biodiversity informatics in sub-Saharan Africa is to connect data to knowledge use in critical domains of conservation and sustainable development where the demand for information can sustain investment in knowledge, technology, people, and institutions. Our goal is to expand biodiversity informatics in sub-Saharan Africa as evidenced by increases in access to and use of biodiversity data, investment in biodiversity information resources, and human and institutional capacity to generate and use biodiversity data and information services. This call for proposals supports our grantmaking programs in Freshwater Biodiversity and Resources and in Pollinator Biodiversity and Services. Please see <http://jrsbiodiversity.org> to learn more about our work.

#### **TYPES OF PROPOSALS**

JRS will accept proposals through the online application portal for multi-year technical projects and for planning grants for technical projects. Proposals deemed to need additional time for technical planning and partnership development may be offered the opportunity to apply for a planning grant.

Project ideas outside of the scope of this RFP, requests for conference support on the subject of this RFP, requests for planning grants on the subject of this RFP, policy research projects on the subject of

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<sup>1</sup> These are estimates only and are subject to change based on the pool of qualifying proposals and financial considerations.

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this RFP, or projects for capacity-building in biodiversity informatics should use the foundation's Funding Inquiry Form and upload utility at <http://jrsbiodiversity.org/grantmaking/#inquiries>.

#### **FRESHWATER BIODIVERSITY SCOPE: PROJECT PROPOSALS**

**JRS seeks proposals that increase the access to and use of biodiversity information relating to freshwater biodiversity assessment and the conservation of freshwater ecosystem services in eastern and southern Africa.** Freshwater ecosystems are under threat from expanding agriculture, human settlement, extractive industries, and from climate change. The biodiversity of freshwater ecosystems is critical for the ecosystem services for human wellbeing and livelihoods.

Successful proposals will increase the access to biodiversity data and knowledge about freshwater systems that is valuable and relevant for decision-making for conservation and sustainable development. Technical approaches may include, but are not limited to: mobilizing and enhancing existing data and new or improved information platforms and services, technologies for data collection and enhancement, and data visualization tools and platforms.

Successful proposals will address challenges that face freshwater biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Challenges (focusing on the biodiversity component) may include assessment of species conservation status and ecosystem status, designation of protected areas, regulation of fisheries, siting of water and other infrastructure, mitigating impacts of energy and extractive industry development, protection of watersheds for freshwater supply, implementation of safeguard policies, and trans-boundary management of catchment basins. Approaches to ensuring the value and use of data and information may include, but are not limited to: partnerships that include data providers and users, data use for the development and implementation of national policies or international agreements, and partnerships to mobilize private environmental impact assessment data.

Out of the scope of this call for proposals are projects in marine ecosystems, projects focused upon species that do not have critical life stages that are dependent upon freshwater ecosystems, and projects on biodiversity outside of sub-Saharan Africa.

#### **POLLINATOR BIODIVERSITY SCOPE: PROJECT CONCEPTS**

**JRS seeks *project concepts* that increase the access to and use of biodiversity information relating to pollinator biodiversity assessment and the conservation of pollinator services in sub-Saharan Africa.** Pollination is one of the most important ecosystem services supporting human life and livelihoods as well as natural biodiversity and primary productivity. Challenges facing pollinator conservation in Africa are many and include inadequate expertise, insufficient data on pollinator status, few risk mitigation options, lack of information on pollinator-plant interactions, lack of standard field methods and data standards, and lack of economic evaluations of pollinator services.

Successful projects might employ approaches that include, but are not limited to: mobilizing and enhancing existing data on pollinators, new or improved information platforms and services, technologies for data collection and enhancement, data visualization tools and platforms, and methods for rapid assessments. Successful projects might also address the institutional and capacity challenges for building robust professional networks, data sharing, taxonomic identification, and raising awareness of the value of pollinator biodiversity data.

***Please note that JRS is seeking project concepts relating to pollinator biodiversity as this program of grantmaking is still under development.*** Organizations submitting project concepts at this time might be invited to submit a full proposal in July of 2016. We invite your submissions as an important way to

inform the foundation as we develop the scope and initial partnerships for our grant-making program in Pollinator Biodiversity and Services.

Out of the scope of this call for project concepts are projects that seek to develop new agricultural practices, projects that study the use of and the impact of pesticides, and pollinator biodiversity outside of Africa.

#### **GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Preference will be given to projects that can grow to larger scale or can be transferred across geographic regions or across organizational and institutional contexts. Partnerships and collaborations will be preferred over standalone projects. All projects must conform to the foundation's [Open Data Policy](#).

The total multi-year requested grant may range from about \$50,000 to about \$250,000. The foundation is likely to prioritize those proposals that demonstrate the following criteria:

- Adherence to the scope of this call;
- Prior success of the project director, partnership, or grantee organization;
- Potential to generate transformative change;
- Linkages to specific conservation and sustainable development outcomes;
- Capacity-building within the project and the broader community;
- Leadership by, or strong partnership with, institutions in Africa;
- Specific methodologies, milestones and indicators to evaluate progress and success; and
- Evidence of current or future interest by other funders.

U.S. law governing foundations requires that projects seeking to influence legislation through advocacy or lobbying or public campaigns will not be considered. For additional information please see [JRS Grantmaking](#) on our website.

**Application Process:** All proposals will be evaluated on their own merits and only those that comply with the application guidelines posted on the foundation website (xxx) will be considered. You may begin the application process immediately; all proposals must be submitted using the online system. No proposals will be accepted after February 16, 2016.

#### **2016 Timetable (Freshwater Program)**

- Tuesday, January 5: Announcement of call for proposals.
- Tuesday, February 16: Deadline for submission of proposals
- Thursday, April 14: Invitation to finalists to revise proposals
- Wednesday, May 4: Deadline for submission of revised proposals
- Tuesday, May 31: Final funding decision communicated by the Foundation
- Friday, July 1: Approximate date of first payment to approved grantees

Thank you in advance for your interest. Please write to [JRSRFP2016@jrsmdiversity.org](mailto:JRSRFP2016@jrsmdiversity.org) with any questions regarding this request for proposals.

Don S. Doering  
Executive Director  
JRS Biodiversity Foundation