Request for Proposals for Biodiversity Informatics Policy Research

July 25, 2014

Dear Prospective Grant Applicant:

This notice is to inform you that the JRS Biodiversity Foundation is issuing a request for grant proposals and invites you to consider application or forwarding this notice to qualified individuals. The foundation is seeking 12-18 month projects that review the existing literature regarding policies that influence the creation, use and value of biodiversity information.

JRS Mission: The mission of the foundation is to enhance knowledge and promote the understanding of biological diversity for the benefit and sustainability of life on earth. Since 2007, the foundation has invested over $12M in biodiversity informatics projects that focus on: (1) collecting data, (2) aggregating and publishing data, and making it more widely available to potential end users, and (3) gaining insights from data to inform policy and conservation of biodiversity.

Biodiversity informatics is the application of information technology tools and approaches to biodiversity information. Biodiversity Informatics covers information generated by the fields of systematics, evolutionary biology, population biology, and ecology, as well as more applied fields such as conservation biology and ecological management. *This call for proposals is for literature reviews of what policies support biodiversity information and would enhance the impact and sustainability of biodiversity informatics projects such as those in the past and current JRS grant portfolio.*

Scope: The foundation seeks to support up-to-date reviews of policy research findings relating to policies that determine the quantity, quality and use of biodiversity data and knowledge.

We are specifically seeking to fund reviews of the existing formal and informal literature studies of institutions and policies in either (1) Africa or in (2) Latin America and South America that influence the generation, maintenance, and access to biodiversity information. Within this scope might be a review of the state of knowledge of the following subjects and the identification of potential knowledge gaps within studies of:

- Policies that promote or require the utilization of biodiversity information for conservation decisions;
- Policies that specifically increase human and institutional capacity in biodiversity informatics;
- Policies that create incentives for biodiversity data sharing, regional cooperation, and data publication;
- Case studies of success and failure in institutionalizing data use and linking biodiversity data to policy formation and implementation;
- Whether, how, and in what contexts biodiversity data informs policy;
- How data supports regional biodiversity governance and national commitments to biodiversity conservation and monitoring;
- Policies that foster biodiversity data creation that is responsive to user needs; and
- Methods to assess the utilization, social value, economic value and conservation value of biodiversity data and knowledge.

Excluded from the scope of the two regional research reviews are:

- General reviews of how access to information or access to environmental information relates to good governance, civil society action, and democracy;
- General studies of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education policies; and
- Studies of policies outside of Africa or Latin and South America.

In addition, U.S. law governing foundations requires that projects seeking to influence legislation through advocacy or lobbying or public campaigns will not be considered.

Qualifications: JRS plans to fund four literature reviews, two covering sub-Saharan Africa and two covering Latin and South America and estimates awarding $25,000 - $50,000 for each review. Project teams must be primarily based within the region of study. The foundation is likely to prioritize proposals that reflect some or all of these characteristics:

- Are led by a principal investigator and grantee organization with proven success in performing high impact policy research;
- Are based in a strong analytic and conceptual framework;
- Include plans for publication and dissemination of findings;
- Include communications strategies to specific audiences; and
- Document specific methodologies, milestones and approaches to evaluate progress and success.

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 (www.jrsbiodiversity.org) will be considered. You may begin the application process immediately. No proposals will be accepted after September 8, 2014. Please address questions to RFP2014@jrsbiodiversity.org.

Online Application Portal: http://jrsbiodiversity.org/our-approach/how-to-apply/jrspolicygrantapp/

Timetable:

- July 25, 2014: Announcement of call for proposals.
- September 8, 2014: Deadline for completion of proposals
- October 9, 2014: Invitation to semi-finalists to revise final proposals
- October 21, 2014: Deadline for submission of final proposals
- November 12, 2014: Final funding decision announcement by Foundation
- December 17, 2014: Distribution of first payment to approved grantees

Thank you in advance for your interest.

Don S. Doering
Executive Director
JRS Biodiversity Foundation
www.jrsbiodiversity.org