

JRS Biodiversity Foundation

About JRS

The JRS Biodiversity Foundation is an independent grantmaking foundation based in Seattle, Washington (USA) with assets of US\$ 46 million. JRS awards grants to increase the access to and use of biodiversity information in sub-Saharan Africa.

We envision a world in which biodiversity knowledge contributes to conserving the Earth's biodiversity for the benefit of society. Our mission is to increase access to and use of information that leads to greater biodiversity conservation and more sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. Our goal is to increase the capacity of the institutions and people who collect and disseminate biodiversity data and information ("biodiversity informatics") and to connect this knowledge to stakeholders who make and influence decisions that are crucial to preserving biodiversity.



Why Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the foundation of life on Earth and includes the diversity of species, populations, and ecosystems. The food we eat and the water we drink, the medicines that improve and lengthen our lives, the beautiful places we enjoy, the air we breathe — all of these depend on biodiversity.

An estimated 50,000 species disappear from our planet every year. Population growth and economic development are



the primary drivers of biodiversity loss. Despite a growing awareness of the problem, we continue to consume resources and degrade habitats and place our livelihoods and very existence at risk. When we lose species forever, we lose their potential for helping us sustain our lives, and we reduce the resilience of nature and society to adapt to future changes in our environment.

What We Fund

The JRS Biodiversity Foundation funds biodiversity informatics projects in three Program Areas: Freshwater Biodiversity, Pollinator Biodiversity, and Capacity Development. Our grants focus on technologies and processes for data enhancement, data mobilization, data visualization, and data sharing with the aims of connecting knowledge to users and building capacity. We also support grants focused solely on developing capacity related to the science and technology of biodiversity information systems. All projects must endeavor to apply data to its use for conservation and development. We do not fund basic research or community development projects. JRS commits about US\$ 2.0 million per year to 8-12 multi-year grants as well as a limited number of grants for conferences and planning.

HOW TO APPLY

When JRS announces a call for proposals via email and social media, we post forms and instructions to apply for funding through our website. Our proposals include narrative descriptions of the problem and proposed solutions, technical plan, timelines with critical indicators and milestones, a detailed budget, and data sharing and risk management plans. Inquiries are welcome.



We Believe

We believe that when decision-makers understand the essential need for biodiversity and the urgent threat it faces, and when they have greater access to high quality and relevant biodiversity data, they fight to preserve biodiversity by making informed decisions about conservation and sustainable development.

Our Approach

We are committed to long-term investments. We invest in creating the skills, knowledge, and tools, and developing the relationships that help our grantees succeed. We learn alongside them. We view our grantees as partners. As challenges and opportunities arise during a project, we work together to adapt to new circumstances. We believe that open access to data and knowledge is essential. As an independent U.S. foundation, we are less subject to external forces that lead to short-term approaches. Our independence allows us to invest in riskier projects which can lead to breakthrough results. We prefer to invest directly in African institutions. Our strategy is to invest in projects where local demand for biodiversity data and knowledge is likely to motivate sustained support of experts and the technology that they use.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sandy Andelman
Wildlife Conservation
Society, Seattle, WA (USA)

Bonnie Cockman
Organization for Tropical
Studies, Cambridge, MA (USA)

Allyson Fish
DuPont Industrial
Biosciences, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania (USA)

Lucy W. Irungu
Machakos University,
Nairobi, Kenya

Leonard Krishtalka
University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas (USA)

Sarah Lynch
World Wildlife Fund,
Washington, DC (USA)

Ellen Martz
Raymond James Investments,
Saginaw, Michigan (USA)

Ruth K. Midcalf
The Methodist Church,
Hampshire, United Kingdom

Benjamin Rader
Goldman Sachs Foundation,
New York, New York (USA)

Baldwyn Torto
International Centre of Insect
Physiology and Ecology,
Nairobi, Kenya

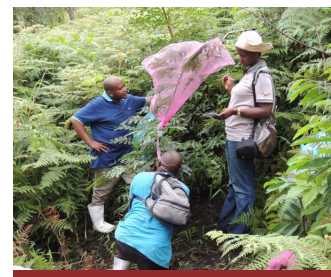
Don S. Doering, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Samantha A. Garvin, M.Sc.
Foundation Program Manager

Sample 2018 Grants



The National Fisheries Resources Research Institute is mapping Uganda's critical freshwater biodiversity sites to identify Key Biodiversity Areas and mobilize fish, invertebrate, and algae data.



The Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute is assessing landscape level impacts of climate change on pollinating birds and butterflies in the Eastern Arc Mountains of Tanzania.



The University of Abomey-Calavi has designed a Master's Program for a new generation of biodiversity informatics professionals in Benin to serve local data needs in the region.



The National Museums of Kenya is developing a freshwater biodiversity information system in partnership with local stakeholders to support the management of the Tana River Basin in Kenya.