

Young Conservation Leaders Awards - Eligibility criteria & Guidelines

About the awards

The Young Conservation Leaders Awards aim to build the skills and capacity of the next generation of conservation leaders. Awards in 2020 will be granted to teams of young conservationists to support conservation projects at Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas and aimed at bird species. Projects can last up to one year. Teams will receive £10,000 of grant funding, along with training and support throughout their projects. In 2020, awards will be granted in Cambodia.

Projects should improve local knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning conservation, and reduce threats to biodiversity. The results from the projects should inform national action plans and international conservation priorities. Teams should consist of at **least three early-career conservationists** (with **less than 5 years' experience**) that demonstrate a strong link to the BirdLife Partner in Cambodia.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to make contact with the National BirdLife Partner in their country. It is a requirement of projects to demonstrate strong links to the BirdLife Partnership at national or local levels.

If you have questions, have a look at the FAQ section on the website, or contact ycl@birdlife.org

Instructions for applicants

1. Applications must be submitted by the **12th March 2020**
2. Thoroughly read the Eligibility Criteria below prior to filling out the application form.
3. Applicants must meet each of the criteria outlined below.
4. The application form must be **completed fully by the team** and must be in **English**.
5. Decisions will be based on the information provided, so **answer all questions**.
6. If you have any questions or problems, contact ycl@birdlife.org

Eligibility

Criteria for project teams

- BirdLife Young Conservation Leaders Awards are for team-based conservation projects – each team must have **at least three people**.
- All team members must be **nationals of the country** where the project is taking place.
- All team members must be **early-career conservationists** with no more than 5 years of paid work experience in the conservation sector. 'Paid work experience' does not include research for a university degree. Individuals who have more than 5 years of paid work experience in the conservation sector are not eligible for BirdLife YCL support and should not apply.
- Teams should be able to **demonstrate strong links to the BirdLife Network at the National or local level**. These links may include to BirdLife Partners, Local Conservation Groups/Site Support Groups or Species Guardians.
- Teams are **encouraged to discuss their project ideas with the BirdLife Partner** in country and link to the conservation priorities identified within the national IBA network.

- Teams should be able to **demonstrate how** the project will **develop the skills, knowledge and capacity of each team member**.

Criteria for projects

- 2020 Projects should take place in Cambodia
- The project must be **no less than three months and no more than one year in length**.
- The total funding request from YCL must **not exceed £10,000 and YCL funding must cover at least 50% of the total project budget**.
- The project must focus on **conservation work at an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA)**.
- The project should meet an identified and urgent conservation need. For example, the project could **focus on a species classified as threatened on the IUCN red list** (Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable). The project could also focus on **an identified threat to the focal IBA**.
- If the project takes place at an IBA in Danger, it should address one of the principal threats identified for that site.
- The project should be **new work** rather than the continuation of an on-going, established project. If building on a previous project, the proposal must show how the project is completing, or different from the previous work.
- Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed project goes **beyond academic research** being carried out for any team member's degree.
- The proposal must be written by the applicants themselves.

Considerations for Successful Proposals

- Applicants must clearly communicate their ideas in **English** on the application form. We encourage teams to seek out a native English speaker to review the proposal prior to submission.
- The proposal must make clear how team members will develop their capacity through the project. This includes, for example, how team members' knowledge, skills and experience as conservation practitioners will improve.
- The project must have realistic objectives with appropriate methods, activities and budget to achieve the stated objectives.
- Project should have a good balance of conservation research and action e.g. engage local stakeholders and should describe how project outcomes will contribute to local, regional and/or national conservation priorities.
- Applicants should provide training to local stakeholders (in particular to Local Conservation Groups, if they exist) in aspects of International Training Course that are appropriate to the local situation.
- Applicants should demonstrate how the project results will be applied to conservation after the project ends.
- Payment for services of rangers/guides or training costs for project team must be justified.
- Contingency budget lines must not exceed 5% of the overall budget and must be justified.

Judging Criteria

Your project will be evaluated in three areas: 1.) Team capacity development; 2.) Contribution to Conservation; and 3.) Project Feasibility.

Team Capacity Development:

- The application clearly demonstrates how the project will build the knowledge, skills and experience of each team member.
- The team members show a commitment to conservation and potential for leadership as good ambassadors for the work they are doing.
- The team has the support of experienced advisers.

Contribution to Conservation:

- The project demonstrates strong conservation outcomes at the focal IBA.
- The project relates to established conservation priorities and plans (e.g., National Biodiversity Action Plans). If possible, projects should feed into national IBA strategies.
- The project demonstrates long-term benefits with outcomes that contribute to ongoing local conservation priorities.
- The project offers measurable benefits to local stakeholders.
- The project will positively influence stakeholders' environmental knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

Project Feasibility:

- The project is realistic in its aims, with the ability and experience of participants suited to the methods, objectives, budget and time frame.
- The project is cost-effective and shows good value for the money.
- The project will clearly deliver appropriate outputs – a research report, journal articles, education materials, contribution to a critical conservation need, etc.
- The project demonstrates wide collaborative support from local communities, local or national institutions, such as NGOs or academic institutions, and relevant governmental organisations.

Application Guidelines

Section 1: General information

Please complete the General Information section with project title, project summary, start and end dates and total funding requested from BirdLife. In addition, we ask that you clarify the link with a national BirdLife Partner.

Species:

Projects that target specific species at an IBA should justify the conservation need. What are the key threats? One way of demonstrating whether a species is a priority for conservation action is to use the IUCN red list criteria. For instance, we consider a species to be 'at risk' if it is designated as globally threatened (CR, EN, VU or DD) by the global IUCN Red List OR if there is information suggesting that urgent conservation action is needed. For those projects focusing on multiple species and/or taxonomic groups, at least one species in each taxonomic group being studied must be at risk.

Site:

The project must focus on conservation work at an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA). Where is your IBA? How large is it in km²? What type of habitat is it? Is it a protected area or being considered for protection? You MUST provide a hyperlink to published factsheets for the sites proposed.

Section 2: Project details

Conservation challenge

What is the conservation challenge your project seeks to resolve? In other words, what are the threats to your target species and how would you address them? Give a summary of previous research and known information on the species and/or habitat, as well as a summary of the threats, the need for the project, and the conservation issues that will be addressed by the project. Provide clear justification of the need for this project by referencing relevant priority-setting publications. Ideally, describe the problems to be addressed and the factors contributing to these problems. Summarise previous work and information. Projects should explain how the outcomes and impacts will benefit the broader ecosystem.

Overall Goal

Describe briefly how your project will influence conservation in the long term if successful in achieving all your objectives. The overall goal will not be entirely achieved by this project. However, the project will contribute towards the achievement of the long-term goal. It is an identification of the wider impact the project will have.

Project Purpose

Describe the desired conservation situation and immediate outcomes or change that will result if all the project objectives are achieved. There should only be one project purpose, which contributes to the overall goal. It is the impact you expect the project to have and its contribution towards the achievement of the long-term goal.

Project Objectives

List three to four objectives you will fulfil in order to achieve the project purpose. These are the direct changes that you expect to see at the end of the project, which will contribute to achieving the project purpose. Projects should focus on no more than four objectives.

Wherever possible objectives should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

SMART criteria

- SPECIFIC - Objectives should clearly state what you are expected to achieve, using action verbs to describe what has to be done.
- MEASURABLE - Objectives should include a quality and/or quantity reference so that you can measure whether or not you have achieved them.
- ACHIEVABLE – Objectives should be realistic. For example, it might be an achievable objective to restore five hectares of habitat but it would be unrealistic to plan to restore five hectares in one week. Objectives should also take account of the skills, knowledge and resources needed to achieve them. You may need to consider whether the team needs any training or development in order to achieve each objective.
- RELEVANT - Each objective should be relevant to addressing the conservation problem and should represent a necessary step to achieving the project's conservation goal.

- **TIMEBOUND** - Objectives should include a time reference, such as a specific deadline.

Example of a SMART objective – “Ensure that at least 75% of local community members are aware of the threats facing giant anteater within six months of the start of the project.”

Objectives typically fall into six major classes:

- 1) Improving the status of your target site or species
- 2) Creating new knowledge
- 3) Changing awareness and attitudes
- 4) Changing resource use practices of local people
- 5) Changing land and resource use policies
- 6) Reducing threats

Project Indicators

How will you measure the success of each objective? An indicator is a measure whereby you collect information to assess progress towards achieving an explicitly stated desired conservation objective. Future conservationist projects are expected to address priority biodiversity conservation problems and develop knowledge and leadership capacity of team members. Your indicators are the quantitative and qualitative measures you will use to assess whether or not you are meeting each of the stated objectives. As with your objectives, indicators should be SMART with each including a reference relating to quantity, quality and time.

Example indicator – “Questionnaire surveys confirm that after six months of the project at least 75% of local community members are able to identify four of the five main threats facing giant anteater in the project area.”

Project Activities:

For each objective list the two to four (as appropriate) priority conservation activities/actions you will need to undertake to achieve your objectives. Each activity should not be longer than 15 words. Include the month in which each activity will take place and the duration. Be sure to include specific fieldwork, education, awareness-raising activities and any community involvement, as well as post-fieldwork activities such as report write-up and dissemination, presentations to stakeholders, etc. Include the month in which each activity will take place and the duration (add extra rows where necessary). Activities should be short, simple phrases like:

- conduct a survey of Nassau grouper
- complete analysis of the predicted economic returns to establish a community-based ecotourism enterprise
- develop co-management agreements between communities and the national resource management agency
- count number of pairs of birds nesting at the site
- conduct a targeted social marketing campaign within the community to reduce hunting of endangered seals.

Methods:

For each activity, detail the methods you will use. For example, if the activity is to conduct a survey on amphibian abundance and distribution describe the survey methods you will use and provide appropriate citations that show that this method is a best practice in conservation. An example statement is 'A total of four localities will be surveyed. In each locality we will work in two habitat types: disturbed cloud forests and pristine cloud forests. At each habitat type we will survey potential sites to rediscover the missing species in addition to three (100m-long x 2m-wide) transects looking for adult frogs through the visual-encounters survey technique (Heyer et al.1994).'

If the activity is about engaging local communities in conserving your target species or changing their behaviour, please provide details of how you will do this and provide a citation to show that others have used similar methods successfully. Make clear the sampling effort (e.g. number of days, size of area and number of times surveys will be conducted). If you plan to collect specimens, you must clearly state the reason for collecting and provide the name of the institution where the specimens will be stored. All necessary research permits and licences must be obtained in advance of any fieldwork.

Project Stakeholders

Describe the work with local stakeholders in this section. Stakeholders are people or groups that are important to a project because they are influenced by or have overlapping interests with the issues involved. They are often important to the success of long-term conservation initiatives. Local stakeholder groups may include local government, schools, local villagers, hunters, fishermen, etc. You must decide how to define your stakeholder groups and then how you will interact with them. Also explain the main benefits they may expect from successfully implementing the project.

Outputs

What will be the material outputs (e.g. research report, journal articles, education materials, etc.)? Consider how the team's efforts will contribute to long-term conservation action after the project has ended. Explain if and how project data and recommendations will be linked into national priorities, reporting systems, management and specific action plans. Whilst we encourage applicants to think about publishing their data in peer-reviewed journals, this is not a requirement for eligibility. It is encouraged to think of the most immediate and effective way these data can be used to positively support species/site conservation.

Section 3: Budget

Itemised Expenses & Budget Justification:

Fill in the form, ensuring you keep in mind that the judges will look for cost-effectiveness for each budget item and for a significant percentage of the budget to be spent directly on conservation activities. For each expense, you MUST detail the unit cost and number of units/days/people. Contingency budget lines to cover unexpected but necessary project cost must not exceed 5% of the overall budget and must be justified. If judges deem your budget estimates to be too high for certain areas, we may reduce the amount of your award based on their recommendations. Please be realistic and detailed

First calculate the costs in local currency when developing the budget before converting to GB Pounds. Budgets that demonstrate clear logical calculation and reasonable costs linked to the project activities will be viewed more favourably than those that make rough estimates in order to coincide with the upper limits of CLP awards.

Equipment:

With the exception of camera traps, photographic equipment (cameras and lenses) MUST NOT EXCEED GBP 500. Provide explanation on how purchased equipment will be used after the project concludes.

Outreach Materials:

Outreach materials for stakeholders, such as t-shirts, posters or brochures, need to be explained in the project methods – outline how these materials will help you meet your project objectives. Projects that request these items without clear demonstration of their use and impact will not be looked at favourably by the selection judges.

Unit costs over GBP 1,000

Provide justification for any single item that costs GBP 1,000 and over under the 'Budget Justification section'. Explain why the item is necessary and how it will be used. This section can also be used to clarify any of the other costs in greater detail. Highly priced items are questioned by the judges and therefore equipment should be reasonably priced.

Salaries and consultancies:

Awards do not cover salaries for team members or consultancies. Reasonable costs for rangers and local guides working with the team at site are accepted. Funds from the project budget may be used to cover training for the team if this is required to implement the project. Where this is the case, you must provide information on the purpose of the training, who the trainers will be and where the training will take place.

Match Funding

From where else are you seeking funding? Clearly explain if the proposed project has secured funding from other donors. Include the source/donor, the amount requested, and whether the funds are pending or have been granted. Also include in-kind contributions e.g. office space, vehicles. If the CLP award will not cover 100% of the total budget, explain how the project will be implemented if other funding sources do not come through.

Section 4: Team and advisors

You must fill out this section for each member of your project team. Team members should be at an early stage in a conservation career with no more than five years of paid work experience in the conservation sector. Judges will use the information provided to assess how significantly projects will contribute to 'Team Capacity Development' – i.e. the skills, knowledge and experience of team members for a prospective career in the conservation sector.

Interdisciplinary teams displaying a variety of skills and experience will be looked upon favourably. Please provide the full legal name for each team member and the email address most commonly used. If short-listed for an award, your entire team will be screened as part of a routine process. Should the name of one of your team members raise concern during the screening, we will follow up with that team member to request additional personal information.

Team Role:

Explain each team member's responsibility within the context of the overall project. For example, team responsibilities could include: project leader, conservation education expert, first aid officer, species surveyor, etc. It should be clear that each team member has the ability and experience to accomplish the tasks for which they are responsible and contribute to the overall success of the project.

Relevant skills and experience you bring to the project:

List the unique skill sets each team member has have that will be beneficial to implementation of the project.

Describe the skills and knowledge you will gain through this project:

List the key conservation skills that each individual team member will gain through the experience of implementing the project.

Highest level of education: Complete with the highest level of education achieved. There is no minimum education required to participate as a team member.

All work experience starting with current job/occupation title, employer and number of years worked:

List clearly all positions of professional employment held, employers and number of years worked for each employer, starting with your most recent.

For example: Fresh Water/Terrestrial Biologist, Institute for Development and Environment (2013 to 2011), Research Assistant, National Museums (2011-2008) .

If a team member is a student, state the degree, thesis/dissertation title and how this differs from the proposed project. Does this project go beyond your studies? If yes, how?

Projects cannot be identical to a university thesis. If anyone on the project team is a student and data collected from this project will be used in their university thesis or dissertation, you MUST clarify the difference between the BirdLife-funded project and the thesis. While data collected on a project may be incorporated into a university thesis, the team must demonstrate how the project is different and how it will go beyond the work of any academic studies benefiting from the data collected during the implementation of the project. While the projects may be complementary, failure to clearly distinguish between the focus of a student thesis and the project will result in disqualification of the proposal.

External Advisers and Collaborators:

Teams should seek to develop collaborative links with local and international institutions, such as local or national NGOs, universities and/or relevant governmental organisations that can provide further expertise. **Projects must demonstrate links to the BirdLife Partner.** If you would like us to introduce you to the BirdLife Partner in your country, please get in touch.

Note: Project advisers should not also serve as referees to the project.

Section 5: References

Please provide contact details for two people who know the team and are NOT relatives to any team member who will be willing to provide a professional reference for your project. These individuals should be from a national university, a local or international NGO or local government. Referees should be different people from the External Advisors and Collaborators listed above. If your project is shortlisted, we will be contacting your references. Please let them know that we may be in contact.

Section 6: International Training Course participant information

A representative from each award winning team will be invited to attend an international training course, which will be held for two weeks in June and July 2017. Please identify one individual who can represent the team at this training course and provide his/her contact details below. The training will be conducted in English. It is strongly recommended that you choose someone who has a high level of English. The topics that will likely be covered in this course will be; leadership development, project planning, media, behaviour change through education and outreach, fundraising, climate change, gender and conservation and best practices of training. Be sure that the chosen representative will benefit from these topics. The person selected to come to the training will be representing your entire team. As a condition of attending the training, the participant is expected to return to their team and hold a training of their own for the entire team and to complete several post-course homework assignments together. The selected participant must have a passport that is valid beyond February 2018. If he/she does not yet have a passport, then he/she must apply for one immediately after notification of being awarded. Please be sure all information below is 100% correct. It will be used to prepare letters of invitation that can be used for visa applications. Incorrect information will lead to delays and possibly failure of participant to attend the training. We will send the invitation letters to the name and address listed below. If there is a change in the participant after you submit your application, please notify us immediately at ycl@birdlife.org with all of the requested information for the new participant.