

Darwin Initiative Main - R31



Stage 2 Webinar: Frequently Asked Questions



Welcome!



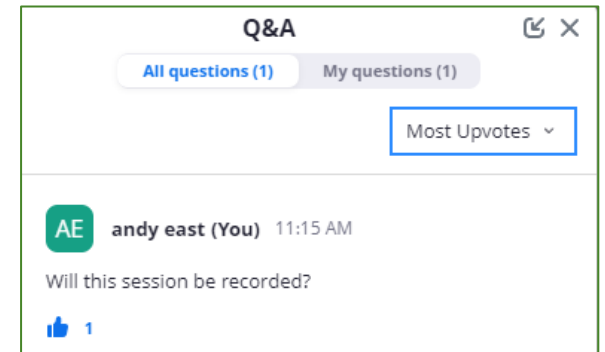
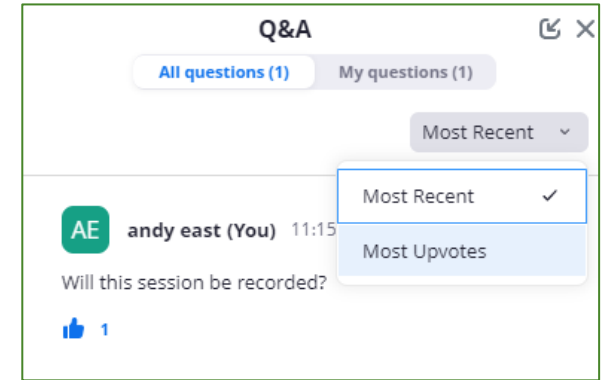
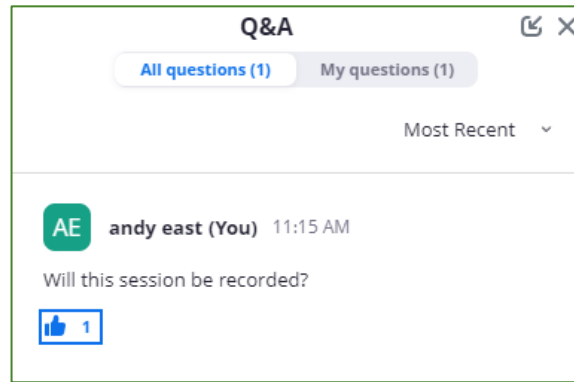
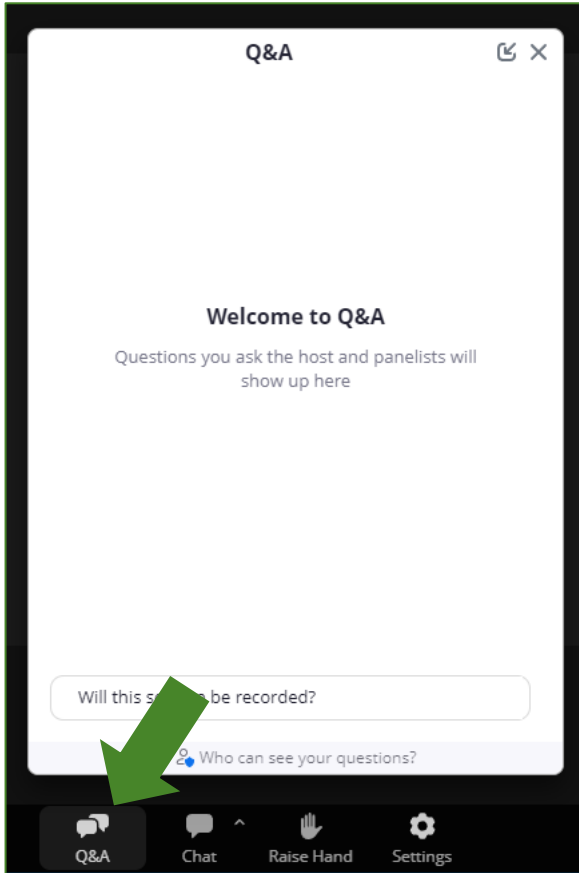
	<p>Andy East BCFs Communications & Workshops Lead - NIRAS</p>	<p>BCF-Comms@niras.com</p>
	<p>Eilidh Young BCFs Lead Administrator – NIRAS Darwin Initiative Focal Point</p>	<p>BCF-Darwin@niras.com</p>
	<p>Victoria Reilly-Pinion BCFs Programme Manager - NIRAS</p>	
	<p>Abida Peters BCFs Safeguarding Manager - NIRAS</p>	
	<p>Ben Yexley Darwin Initiative Lead - Defra</p>	

Agenda



- Welcome from Defra
- Administrative eligibility
- Finance
- Project team expertise and letters of support
- Flexi-Grant and other FAQs
 - *Questions*
- Gender & safeguarding
- Communications
 - *Questions*

Housekeeping - Q&A



Welcome from Defra!



Darwin Initiative is one of three competitive funds in Defra's Biodiversity Challenge Funds Programme.

Under the **Darwin Initiative**, projects must clearly contribute towards the aim of the Initiative:

*Local communities and other stakeholders have sustained improvement in policy and practice that results in **gains for biodiversity** and associated **reductions in multidimensional poverty**.*

Welcome from Defra!



In particular, we are looking for projects that can demonstrate:

- **Scalability** – which approaches and lessons learnt can be scaled to deliver a greater impact beyond the proposed project, e.g. at a landscape scale; replicable in another geography; capacity scaling; changing systems
- **Engagement** – how is the need identified? Who exactly will benefit? How are they engaged in the project? What is the role of in-country partners in the design, delivery and legacy of the project? How are you building in-country capability?
- **Evidence** - be clear what the approach is based on; are there gaps in the evidence and how is this being addressed; how are you going to strengthen the evidence base?

Meeting Objectives



- Outlined in full in guidance
- Which policy priority & why
 - Link your application to the relevant national priorities, NBSAPs for example, while also flagging links to relevant targets of international agreements.
 - Don't just list policies or agreements – sign-post **how exactly** your project will contribute towards these
 - Can you demonstrate early engagement with the national Convention focal points – perhaps by letter?

Key Information



- 'How to apply' page for guidance docs:

<https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/how-to-apply/>

- All key documents, including guidance and templates, including:

- Guidance for applicants
- Finance guidance
- Flexi-Grant guidance
- MEL and Standard Indicator guidance
- Terms & Conditions
- Draft Word form – but submit via

Flexi-Grant! <https://bcfs.flexigrant.com/>

- Follow link in email to start application
- Deadline 23:59 GMT 2 December 2024

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- > How to Apply
- > Extra Applications
- > Main Applications
- > Innovation Applications
- > Capability & Capacity Applications

Main Applications

Introduction

Darwin Initiative Main invites applications for projects between £100,000 and £800,000 that deliver strong results for biodiversity conservation and multidimensional poverty reduction. Projects should be based on good evidence and strongly demonstrate the potential to scale further. Projects should last between 1 to 5 years maximum.

Applications to Round 31 of Darwin Initiative Main are **now closed**.

The latest application Round opened on Wednesday 22nd May 2024.

Applications to Darwin Initiative Main are by a dual-stage process.

- Stage 1 deadline for applications: **Monday 8th July 2024**
- Stage 2 deadline for applications (by invite only): **Monday 2nd December 2024**

Results are expected by end of February 2025 at the earliest.

Expected start date for successful projects is from 1st April 2025.


Guidance


Before applying, you should first read the Guidance documents found under [How to Apply](#).

Application Process

Once you have read the general guidance, complete the Darwin Initiative Main Round 31 application form on the [Flexi-Grant application portal](#). For drafting purposes, you may find the Word version of the Darwin Initiative Main Round 31 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 Darwin Initiative Round 31 Stage 2 application form below useful.

[Darwin Initiative Main Round 31 - Stage 1 application form - Word template](#) 

[Darwin Initiative Main Round 31 - Stage 2 application form - Word template](#) 

The budget spreadsheet for Darwin Initiative Main projects can be found below.

Please note that the Stage 2 £100k+ budget is locked so cannot be amended to ensure that all figures link through to the Summary correctly. However, if you would like a copy of the unlocked version, please contact [BCF](mailto:BCF@darwininitiative.org). BCF@darwininitiative.org directly. It will be your responsibility to ensure that the budget is correctly presented. We cannot increase a budget request after a project is awarded. The Summary page will remain locked to ensure all budgets are reviewed on the same basis.

Key Application Requirements - 1



- Eligible dates (start after 1st April 2025)
- Word counts and page limits are strictly enforced by eligibility checks
- In-country partner
- 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) <i>not</i> in your cover letter
Logframe	Logframe required using the template provided for Stage 2
Budget Table	Required on our template. (check matches request and certification in application)
Workplan	Required on our template

Key Application Requirements - 2



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

CVs and JDs	Required for key personnel: partners and project teams – each CV should be one page and all CVs and JDs should be combined into one PDF document. Do not submit pen portraits.
Letters of Support	Required - including applicant organisation – in one PDF document for applicant, partners, government; stakeholders useful but not mandatory
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



- Project Leader 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 to fluctuation – but no 'contingency'



Finances – Audit Costs



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

For Stage 2 all projects are between £100,000 and £799,999, so you can claim up to £3,000 **in last FY** of project

Always include audit costs, even if funded from other sources.



Matched Funding in Flexi-Grant



Example from the application form

* Q10. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

Yes

No

Please ensure you clearly outline your matched funding arrangement in the budget.

Q11. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you will deliver the project if you don't manage to secure this?

Empty text box for Q11 response.

You have entered 0 words (100 words max)

- 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 Initiative request) i.e. if the Darwin Initiative % 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 host country partners/costs – but no specified amount
- Consider budget spread across FYs
- T&S - include testing/quarantine costs if needed, but assumed less likely now. You cannot increase the budget later.
- % 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
- Ongoing effects of Covid e.g. travel, partner income etc

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

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



Poll

Project Team Expertise



- Include CVs or Job Descriptions 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.

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?
* <input type="text"/>	Project Leader	* <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.

or drag and drop files here to upload

File name	Date uploaded	Action
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* Have you attached all project staff CVs?
 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

Project Partners



- Partners vs stakeholders – partners have explicit project governance role
- Clear evidence of buy-in from partners is needed at Stage 2 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 eligible country government is particularly critical
- At least one of the project partners must be locally based

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 country
- 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)

Additional Materials



Example from the application form

*Q14. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- how you have reflected on and incorporated evidence and lessons learnt from past and present similar activities and projects in the design of this project.
- the specific approach you are using, supported by evidence that it will be effective, and justifying why you expect it will be successful in this context.
- how you will undertake the work (activities, materials and methods)
- what will be the main activities and where will these take place.
- how you will manage the work (governance, roles and responsibilities, project management tools, risks etc.).

Please make sure you read the guidance documents before answering this question.
(This may be a repeat from Stage 1, but please update or refine as necessary)

You have entered 0 words (750 words max)

Methodology should be clear and link to logframe

Additional references / map / 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!

Other Common Issues / Questions



- SMART logframes – separate session focused on M&E
- Changes between Stage 1 and Stage 2
- Upper Middle-Income Countries – address additional criteria
- 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.

Standard Indicators



Q25b. Standard Indicators

In addition to your Project Indicators in your logframe, please outline which Standard Indicators you can report on. Darwin Initiative 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
Please S... ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Please S... ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Please S... ▼	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

If you cannot identify three Standard Indicators you can report against, please justify this here.

- New version of Standard Indicators guidance launched – version 2.1
- 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



Any questions?



Gender Equality and Social Inclusion



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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 gender 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 gender-based constraints into account?
- Do project partners have specific policies and capacities to ensure gender sensitive implementation?

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

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



Safeguarding



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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



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



Q21. Risk Management

Please outline the 7 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, two Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Projects should also draft their initial risk register using the Risk Assessment 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](#)

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation Header	Residual Risk
<p>★ Fiduciary (financial): funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated).</p> <input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (2 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>
<p>★ Safeguarding: risk of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment (SEAH), or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff.</p> <input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (2 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>
<p>★ Safeguarding: risks to health, safety and security (HSS) of beneficiaries, the public. Implementing partners, and staff.</p> <input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (2 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>
<p>★ Delivery Chain: the overall risk associated with your delivery model</p> <input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (2 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (50 words max)</p>	<input type="text"/> <p>You have entered 0 words (1 words max)</p>

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



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Poll

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



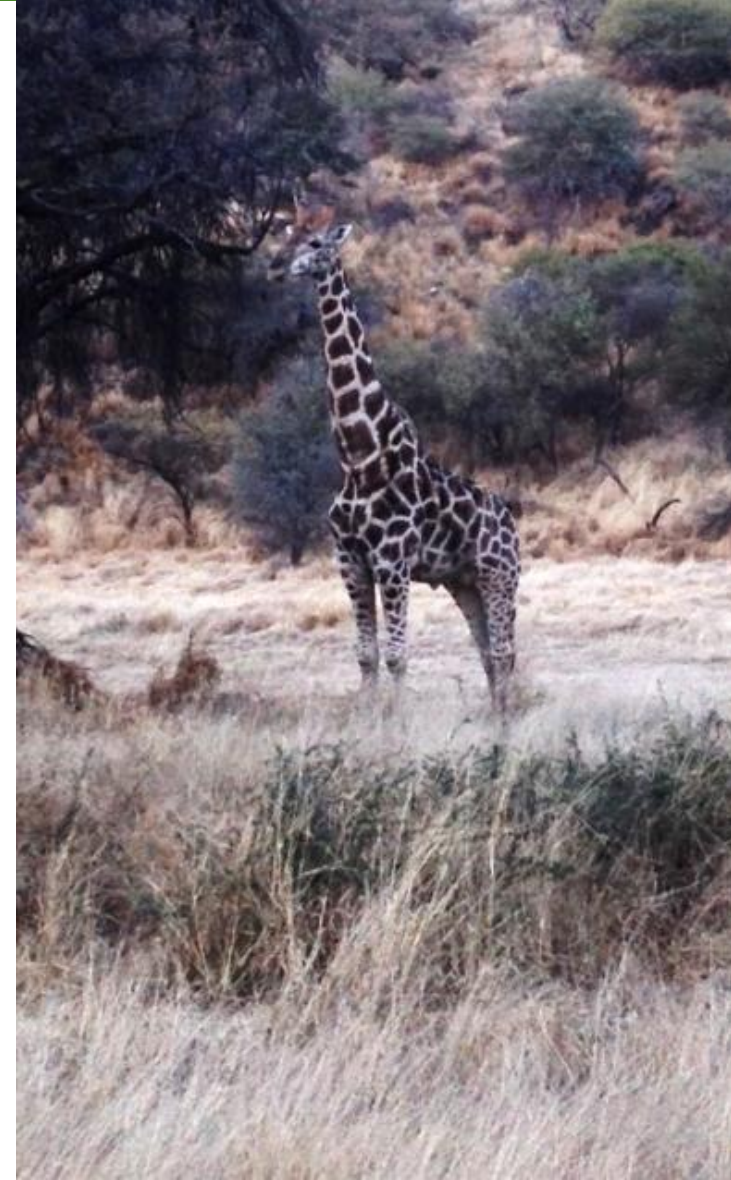
- Darwin Initiative projects are inherently complex
- At Stage 2 you have a limited number of words to outline the problem your project will attempt to address
- Need to identify the core, central problem, this informs the logframe



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](https://www.linkedin.com/company/biodiversity-challenge-funds)



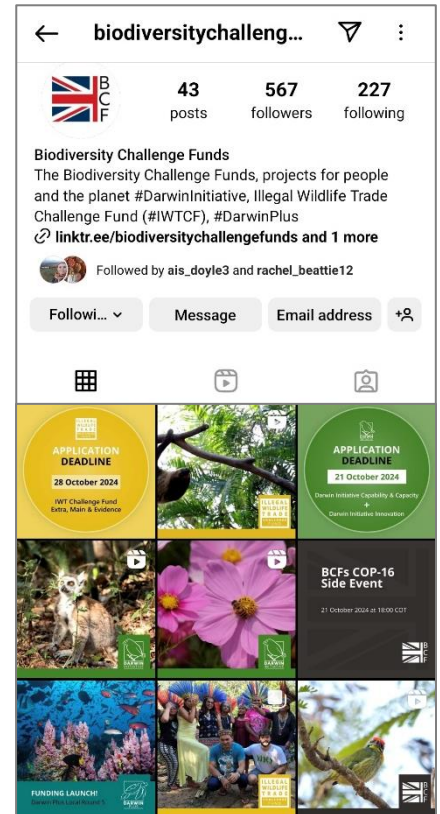
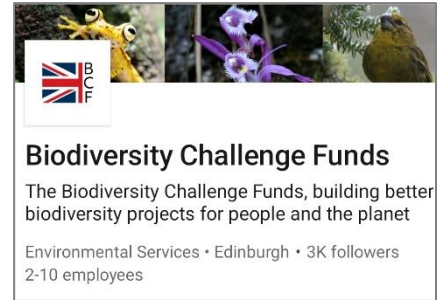
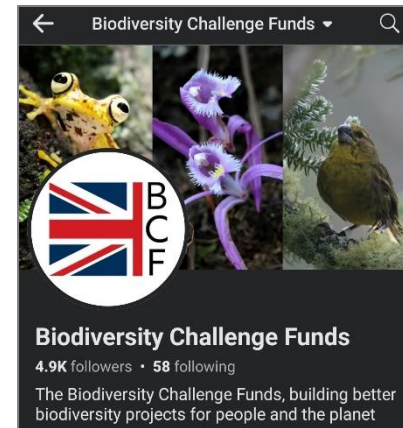
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Thanks for listening!

