



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments and
Members of the Scientific Committee
IWC.ALL.390

Call for Applications to the IWC Small Cetacean Research and Conservation Fund

Thanks to voluntary contributions from several countries and NGOs, I am pleased to announce that there are sufficient funds (£50,000) in the IWC Small Cetacean Research and Conservation Fund to support a call for applications. Please forward this Call for Applications to any relevant national/regional networks and organisations.

Final reports from previous projects can be found here on the IWC website. The closing date for applications is 00.01 on 19 March -11 GMT. The application form can be found [here](#) (PDF) or [here](#) (Word version). Completed applications should be sent to secretariat@iwc.int.

The IWC Small Cetacean Research and Conservation Fund supports high priority research that improves conservation outcomes for populations of small cetaceans, particularly those that are threatened or especially vulnerable to human activities. Preference will be given to projects in-line with the previously established priority topics and recommendations of the sub-committee on small cetaceans (SM) of the Scientific Committee (SC) of International Whaling Commission (IWC).

The proposals will be reviewed by the Small Cetacean Research Fund Review Panel. For 2021-22 this panel comprises the Chair and the Vice Chair of the SC, the IWC Lead for Science, the convenor and co convenor of SM and five other members of the SC with appropriate expertise and broad geographical representation. The Panel will review project proposals according to agreed scoring criteria that incorporate the objectives of the research fund. The Review Panel will rank the proposals and make recommendations for funding to the SM and endorsement by the full SC. The Review Panel may suggest improvements to proposals where appropriate.

There are two funding tiers: small grants of up to £5,000 and larger grants to a maximum of £20,000. In addition, donors to this fund have earmarked £2,000 for projects that focus on Latin American¹ species and/or issues, and £750 for projects that contribute to the [Small Cetacean Task Team](#) work.

¹ Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Puerto Rico, Saint-Barthélemy, Saint-Martin

These restricted funds can be either from part of a larger funding request or the total sum requested. Applications can be by individuals or institutions.

Grants must be submitted on the appropriate form available [here](#). Additional information on this fund, including previously successful proposals, can be found [here](#).

2021-22 Objectives of the Research Fund

Preference for funding will be based on a determination of need, the quality of the proposed research and the demonstration of links between the research and conservation outcomes. Proposals that demonstrate a capacity building legacy will be viewed favourably. All proposals that address previous priorities and recommendations of the SM will be considered but the Review Panel is keen to receive proposals on recent recommendations that relate to issues of greatest concern (see Table 1 attached). As guidance, applicants should review the ongoing work of the SM on freshwater and coastal species, including the genera;

Inia

Platanista

Sotalia

Neophocaena

Orcaella

Sousa

Lagenorhynchus

Cephalorhynchus

Tursiops (particularly Lahille's dolphin, *T. t. gephyreus*)

Phocoena (particularly Burmeister's porpoise, *P. spinipinnis*)

Stenella (particularly the spinner dolphin, *S. longirostris* in Madagascar)

Globicephala (particularly the short-finned pilot whale, *G. macrorhynchus* in St. Vincent and the Grenadines)

Orcinus (particularly in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Okhotsk Sea, Russia)

Scoring Process

The Review Panel will be provided with a list of applicant names and their institutions so that conflicts of interest can be identified prior to proposal review. Every Review Panel member shall score each application, except those members with a conflict of interest with a particular application. In such an instance, an external reviewer will be requested to provide an additional score. The Review Panel may solicit the assistance of other researchers in the review process, if necessary.

The proposals will be scored between 0 (not demonstrated/lowest score) and 5 (excellent/highest score) for each of the following criteria:

1. Scientific value
2. Scientific outcomes address the 2021 research fund objectives
3. Methodology is effective, efficient, and addresses the research questions
4. Participation and engagement of regional scientists
5. Feasibility, organization and timeline of proposed research
6. Qualifications (e.g., ability to successfully complete the project and publication record) of principal investigator and research team

Timeline

1. The deadline for proposal submission is **00.01** on 19 March -11 GMT.
2. The Small Cetacean Research Review Committee will complete their assessment and recommendations for funding prior to or during the 2021 IWC SC meeting and these will be presented at the SC meeting. The funding recommendations will form part of the SC report.
3. The final decisions on the proposals will be made at the September 2021 Commission meeting. Recipients will be notified immediately following that meeting and they must confirm their acceptance, including any suggested improvements made by the Review Panel, within one month of notification. *(If project applicants know they will be out of email contact in September and October 2021, they must inform the Secretariat and propose someone to formally accept on their behalf).*
4. Following acceptance, a contract between the recipient and IWC will be drafted and can be expected to be finalised between November and December 2021.
5. Payment of the first instalment may be made between December 2021 and January 2022. As such, projects should propose to commence **NO EARLIER than January 2022**
6. Final payment will not be made until the project final report is accepted. IWC reserves the right to request the return of funds if the project is not completed or funds are not spent.
7. Project extensions may be requested, in writing, prior to the date of project completion as stated in the contract made between IWC and the applicant.

The IWC Small Cetaceans sub-committee wish to thank all the donors who have made contributions to Small Cetacean Voluntary Research Fund. With your generosity, the SM has been able to support the participation of researchers from developing countries in SC meetings, fund 19 priority research projects and a series of workshops on the issue of aquatic wild meat. A list of donors can be found [here](#).

Sincerely,



Dr Rebecca Lent
Executive Secretary

Attachment: Frequently Asked Questions, Table of Recommendations and Priority topics of the Scientific Committee Sub-committee on Small cetaceans (1979-2020) and its main recommendations (2002-2020)

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC