Bats for the Future Fund 2017

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Updated: 5/16/17

This FAQ list will be periodically updated as new questions arise and will be posted on the NFWF Bats for the Future Fund website at nfwf.org/bats.

For Applicants please note most recent answers are provided first followed by earlier iterations of the FAQ.

Proposal Narrative Supplementary Information

1) **Q: Since the supplementary narrative will not be a part of the review process, how much level of information is needed?** *A: You will only need to provide up to 1-2 paragraphs per each question.*

Proposal Match

1) **Q: If successful, would the project funds be awarded through a collection agreement? Can the overhead rate on incoming funds be used as match if documented?** *A: NFWF will send out a "grant agreement" for awarded projects. If you are not requesting a percentage of your overhead (e.g., indirect) this "foregone" indirect can be used as match.*

2) **Q: Can a proposal be back-dated and current salary applied as match?** *A: Please be advised that Category 1 has a three year period of performance (start and end date). Category 2 has a two year period of performance. You can back-date your proposal to capture match but it must meet the match requirements below.*

   - *Match does not have to be in hand at the time of application but if you receive a grant you will be required to report on the match amount from the proposal by the end date of the BFF project grant.*
   - *Match may be federal or nonfederal; and/or cash or in-kind*
   - *All match must be:*
     o *Raised and dedicated specifically for the project*
     o *Spent between project start & end dates designated in the grant application*
     o *Voluntary in nature (mitigation, restitution, or other permit, court-ordered settlements are ineligible)*
     o *Applied only to the NFWF BFF grant and not to any other federal matching programs*

3) **Q: May existing small item equipment (<$5,000) and expected volunteer hours cound towards the project match?** *A: See match requirements above.*

Agency Letter of Permission

1) **Q: An applicant reached out to a public agency for the letter of permission to use the project site for the purposes of their project. The applicant was informed by the agency that multiple PIs are seeking permission to use the site. As a result the agency said it would not be able to grant permission until final funding decisions are made and agency managers had a clear sense of the suite of proposed uses of the site in order to make final decisions about site use. How should an applicant request a letter of permission from an agency under such circumstances?** *A: One solution to this problem is to obtain a general letter of support from the agency that indicates interest and awareness in the proposed project activities and states a willingness to work with project PIs if their particular project is funded.*

Grant Awards

1) **Q: The rfp and tip sheet says "Grant requests should be between $50,000 and $500,000." Will projects that are requesting less than $50,000 also be considered?** *A: In RFP "Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds" as follows. "Proposals requesting funds below the minimum and above the maximum allowable grant award amount." Please do not request funds below $50,000 or above $500,000.*

2) **Q: The FAQ indicated that work can be back-dated as far as May 19, 2017, but the award announcement will likely not come out until September, 2017. We have no back-up funding for our projects, how do you suggest that we address the risk of spending a large amount of money without knowing about the funding award?** *A: We appreciate and understand the challenge and as noted in the webinar, NFWF cannot guarantee projects will receive a grant award. Additionally, if you were to receive an award no funds will be released until the grant agreement contract is active and the project is in compliance with Federal, state or local regulatory requirements.*

Listed Species or Not-Listed

1) **Q: Is the focus of the BFF on listed species or species not listed?** *A: The focus of a project may be on either listed or not listed species affected by WNS. Identification of tools and techniques which prevent further listing by addressing the disease is definitely of great value in BFF. It is important to understand that work with listed species (Federal, State, and Provincial) requires researchers to secure all necessary permits for such work. Required permits and approvals must also be secured for work non-listed species, when appropriate, e.g. for access to non-listed species that inhabit the same sites as listed species.*

"Matchmaking" Project Sites and Partners

1) **Q: Will BFF assist with access to affected WNS caves for projects?** *A: Applicants looking for assistance should send an email to Candace Leong at candace.leong@nfwf.org and provide information on project parameters such as preferred location, nature of work (type of field testing), size, bat species, community composition, and other related information needed for field testing to allow the BFF team to assist applicants with potential "matchmaking." US FWS is currently working with state agencies and private landowners willing to allow projects, and US*

FS has a list of affected and unaffected caves and could potentially help facilitate access for selected projects.

2) Q: Will you be able to help lab (basic) researchers connect with field researchers in order to bring experimental tools into the field? *A: Applicants looking for assistance should send an email to Candace Leong at candace.leong@nfwf.org and provide a short description of project scope of work and type of partner needed to assist with project development and delivery. The BFF can try to assist applicants with potential matchmaking.*

Scaling up Basic Science to Field Testing

1) Q: Our project is aiming to move from basic science to the field. What needs to be discussed in a proposal to provide a fit to BFF priorities? *A: We recommend when discussing*

scaling up experimental products from lab to field, you address the overall approach to doing so including partners, regulation, environmental issues etc. One key element of such a project will be to find a key collaborator with the background to develop a proposal. The BFF goal is to get proposals that are mostly complete and now seeking locations. If the question is you are looking for collaborators to develop an idea to get to a BFF proposal, look through existing literature to identify people who are already working on topics. FWS could also help identify people who are already working on that issue.

Project Ideas fit to BFF RFP?

1) Q: Should a Category 2 be submitted if there exists little or no preliminary data? Could a BFF Category 2 proposal seek seed money develop the data to foster development of a tool or technique? *A: Category 2 is focused on supporting development of new tools and treatments so that would be the correct category to submit such a proposal. Projects with more established data should consider applying for Category 1. A proof of concept proposal would be acceptable within Category 2. BFF funds could be used to help initiate proof of concept ideas for tools that present novel approaches to combatting WNS .*

2) Q: What is the fit of a proposal to BFF which a**ims to test the effectiveness of a mitigation measure (i.e., fungicides, other mechanisms) to prevent human-induced propagation of *Pd* in touristic hibernacula?** *A: Category 1 allows for the submission of proposals that "prevent or limit the exposure of bat populations to the disease," which may include the kind of project described. As long as the work being proposed can honestly and effectively be tied to all or part of the priorities identified under Category 1 or Category 2, it can meet that requirement.*

3) Q: What is the fit of a proposal to BFF which looks at non-traditional wintering sites (i.e., rock cavities)? *A: These non-traditional hibernacula questions are really important. This type of research is better suited for the White Nose Syndrome Research program (WNS Research Program RFP). Go to Request for Proposals* https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=292912. *The BFF aims to get management tools into action. The WNS Research Program RFP will focus on mechanisms of resistance and persistence. You are welcome to submit an application to BFF and the topic may not be as competitive based on the priorities in the BFF RFP.*

4) Q: A proposal to BFF to develop artificial hibernacula for bats where they can find sanctuary from WNS

A: All proposals should be presented with sufficient evidence to describe how this management tool improves survival of bats affected by WNS. If the proposal relies on theoretical justification or previous work by others, it should demonstrate full knowledge of past attempts, a comprehensive discussion of the challenges and lessons learned from past efforts, including the steps to be taken to address them, and a convincing argument on the way(s) in which this approach can be implemented at a scale that can satisfy the objectives of Categories 1 and/or 2.

5) Q: A proposal to BFF to test the effectiveness of a mitigation measure (with fongicide) to prevent human-induced propagation of *Pd* in touristic hibernacula? *A: See above*

6) Q: Should we apply to BFF or the USFWS White Nose Syndrome Research program? Project has two components: 1) A detailed epidemiology of *Pd* in multiple locations to address the nature of spread of Pd.; and 2) using viruses to biocontrol disease. *A: Applicants should read carefully the priorities of individual funding opportunities to determine the best fit for the proposed actions. Although grant review personnel may be aware of applications to both programs, the decisions will be made independently for proposals that best meet the stated priorities for each program.*

Joint Applications to Other Funding Programs, Joint Review and Joint Funding?

Question Background: Our organization is considering applying to the White Nose Syndrome Research program for one study and to the BFF for a second study associated with the project.

1) Q: May a similar project be proposed to both entities? *A: Each referenced program has a separate administrative process, Request for Proposals and associated priorities as well as evaluation criteria and review team. We cannot comment on whether a grant proposal is eligible for submission under another grant program.*

2) Q: Do we need to put in place the caveat that one award would be declined if both grants were received? *A: You would need to notify BFF if you decide to decline the BFF grant at the time that decision is made. We cannot comment on what action to take associated with declining an award from another grant program.*

3) Q: If one study gets funded but not the other, it would limit scope of work, budget and outputs. If both are funded, we would require fewer funds from BFF (and the other grant program). *A: We would need to look at changes to what was proposed to BFF and evaluated by the review team in terms of scope of work, budget, timing, and project outputs before arriving at a decision with regard to any changes to an approved project grant.*

4) Q: Could we be funded for both? *A: BFF has no direct input into or role in the decisions made under another grant program.*

5) Q: Will there be communication between the two review teams? *A: Each program has different evaluation criteria, and a separate review process, and team.*

6) Q: What kind of coordination will there be (if any) between Bats for the Future Fund and the White Nose Syndrome Research program? *A: None. Each program has different evaluation criteria, and a separate review process, and team.*

7) Q: Will you share BFF evaluations with the White Nose Syndrome Research program and recommend consideration for funding if it is not a fit to BFF? *A: Each program has different evaluation criteria, and a separate review process, and team.*

8) Q: Will BFF know who has applied for White Nose Syndrome Research program funds? Will White Nose Syndrome Research program know who has applied for BFF funds? *A: Each program has different evaluation criteria, and a separate review process, and team.*

9) Q: In past years it was possible to submit the same proposal to two federal agencies (e.g., NIH and NSF). This was disallowed. *A: You may submit a proposal to BFF for consideration in the form required by BFF through the NFWF online application system*

(easygrants.nfwf.org). The proposal will be evaluated based upon the provisions of the BFF RFP including the evaluation criteria (nfwf.org/bats). We cannot comment about whether a grant proposal is eligible for submission under another grant program.

Match

1) Q: Can salary be used as a matching contribution on the Bats for the Future Fund proposal application? The position is funded by donations. *A: Yes as long as it fits within the provisions for matching contributions…*
- *Match does not have to be in hand at the time of application but if you receive a grant you will be required to report on the match amount from the proposal by the end date of the BFF project grant.*
- *Match may be federal or nonfederal; and/or cash or in-kind*
- *All match must be:*
  - *Raised and dedicated specifically for the project*
  - *Spent between project start & end dates designated in the grant application*
  - *Voluntary in nature (mitigation, restitution, or other permit, court-ordered settlements are ineligible)*
  - *Applied only to the NFWF BFF grant and not to any other federal matching programs*

2) Q: Can faculty effort be used for match? *A: See response in #1.*

Project Performance Period

Question Background: **The RFP says…"Grant Period: The start date for Category 1 and 2 projects can be back-dated to May 19, 2017 in order to seek reimbursement for costs already incurred or to capture matching contributions… Category 2 projects must start within six months and be completed within two years after notification of grant award. Notification of award is projected to be September 2017."**

1. Q: Could a Category 2 project be from May 19, 2017 to September of 2019? *A: Category 2 project must be completed w/in two years. A Category 2 project with a start date of May 19, 2017 must be completed by May 19, 2019.*

Required Documents and Narrative

1) Q: In the BFF tip sheet, in the Required Financial Documentation table at the top of page 4, the financial documents needed from applicant organizations are listed. Do you need documents from only to the lead organization or from subawardee (partner) organizations as well? *A: Only the lead organization submitting the proposal and who would be the grant recipient of record must submit the documents.*

2) Q: What is expected in a project narrative, other than that it must be 12 pages maximum. Are there any other rules or guidelines about what must be included, or about formatting, etc.? *A:*
- *The full proposal narrative template may be downloaded from Easygrants at any time into the c drive on a computer. When completed, it must then be uploaded back into your Easygrants online application before an application may be submitted.*

- *As noted the narrative may not exceed twelve (12) pages in total length. The questions in the narrative align with the evaluation criteria published in the BFF Request for Proposals.*
- *Please also review the Tips sheet @ nfwf.org/bats. The document also describes other documents which may need to be uploaded as part of your proposal such as" Landowner Permission Letter," Letters of Support," etc.*

Question Background: Narrative says "describe: <u>how</u> (e.g., nature and form of the communication i.e., meetings, presentations, newsletter articles etc.) you plan to scope project activities and communicate information about the need for and the purposes, goals and objectives of the project to different audiences (describe audiences including public, government, professional) during the period of project development."

3) Q: What do you mean by scope project activities? *A: Generally describe how you will define your scope of work (activities, geography) and then communicate that information to different potentially interested audiences for feedback about the project purposes, goals and objectives. Please note this information is not a factor in evaluation of your grant. Keeping it simple and short is fine.*

4) Q: Would you be able to provide some advice about the content of the Problem/Solution section? *A: This is the introduction including framing of the problem and then the solution. The use of published literature to bolster problem and solution is a solid approach to that section of the narrative.*

5) Q: For a category 2 proposal what would be an appropriate way to address Transferability/Communication with a new and novel approach it is more difficult to know the costs and effort needed to implement such a "strategy" on a population level. *A: Describe potential current audiences who may be engaged in the development of the project or future audiences you may engage in its further development, to peer review its methods, or who might be engaged in implementation and how you might engage them (publication? Poster sessions at scientific meetings? etc.)*

<u>Budget</u>

1) Will the BFF support graduate student stipend or tuition? *A: Stipends may be requested for student work on the project. Tuition reimbursement is not an acceptable budget item.*

2) Q: Will the BFF partially fund projects? *A: BFF aims to fully fund rather than partially fund grants because providing partial funding may affect scope of work and deliverables evaluated by the review team.*

3) Q: Will a grant cover indirect costs? *A: Yes. Review the online application "Budget" section. You will see there is a line item for indirect. You should also look at National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Indirect Cost Policy for applicants at: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/indirect-policy.aspx*

4) Q: If a budget is deemed too high will BFF reach out to applicant to discuss a budget reduction or will the project be declined for funding? *A: Projects will be reviewed based upon the BFF Evaluation Criteria which includes as follows: "Budget – Costs are allowable,*

and reasonable…" The applicant is responsible for establishing the estimated budget. BFF will not be renegotiating budgets if they are not evaluated as reasonable.

Applicant Eligibility

1) Q: Are international entities eligible?
A: Applicant and grantee may be from outside US. The source of funds for BFF is from US Federal conservation agencies and their partners. Projects and activities:

- *Must have a clear tie to and benefit US population(s) of bat species*
- *Must establish benefit of work back to the US*
- *Must help with US effort to address WNS in North America*
- *On the ground project sites must located in North America (Canada, Mexico, US).*
- *In the case of laboratory work - labs may be outside North America (e.g., in locations other than US Canada, Mexico). Lab work must provide management benefits to US bats*

2) Q: When working in Easygrants who should register and submit the application the Office of Sponsored Research or the Principal Investigator? *A: The applicant of record must be a person authorized to submit the request for funding on behalf of an organization. This may be a Principal Investigator or another individual based upon organizational policies.*

Application Period for BFF

1) Q: Is it possible to extend the BFF application period beyond May 18, 2017? *A: The application period must end May 18, 2017. Our goal is to make award announcements in September/October 2017 to allow where possible project deployment before the winter hibernation season. If your project is not ready in time for BFF 2017, we encourage you to apply in 2018.*

Letters of Support/Letters of Permission

1) Q: Because the deadline is short, how should the letters of support and letters of permission If the project is on federal or private land? *A:*

- *Letters of support should be sought from partners providing concrete support to develop and deliver the project. For example, volunteer monitors, use of facilities would all be feasibility factors in whether a project could or could not be developed or delivered. A letter of support documenting that contribution would be important in terms of assessing the feasibility of project delivery. A letter of support can be a simple email affirming a commitment to the nature and form of the contributed service or activity.*
- *Letters of landowner permission are required. If you own or have management authority over a site upload on letterhead confirmation of that fact. Please go to the tips document on the BFF webpage nfwf.org/bats. It provides instructions on preparing letters of landowner permission.*

Proposal Evaluation and Feedback

1) Q: How will the review work in terms of rubric, scoring. Will information be provided about the composition of the review team? *A: The Evaluation Criteria can be found in the BFF Request for Proposals nfwf.org/bats. Reviewers will be subject matter experts with no direct or material role in development or delivery of any proposed project If your proposal is*

not selected for funding, you may request feedback from BFF. We will provide a synthesis of reviewer feedback based upon the evaluation criteria.

2) Q: Do early career faculty get different treatment in the review process? *A: The review will be based on the evaluation criteria listed in the RFP.*

Joint Application for Category 1 & 2 Proposals

1) Q: Is it possible to submit a Category 1 and 2 proposal together? Can different phases of a project cover both categories? *A: We highly recommend that you create separate proposals i.e., one proposal that addresses Category 1 and a second proposal that addresses Category 2. Combining both categories into one proposal is generally more difficult for reviewers to understand and review. If a project has two phases that are occurring at the same time, but are distinct in all other aspects, we recommend you apply with two separate proposals.*

Request for Proposal Questions

1) Q: In the metrics table for the BFF RPA, BMP is mentioned several times please define?
A: Best Management Practice is methods or techniques found to be the most effective and practical means in achieving an objective (such as preventing or minimizing pollution) while making the optimum use of resources.

Regulatory Compliance

1) Q: US EPA regulation requires that antimicrobial pesticides must be registered before they can be used in field studies. US EPA registration process can be lengthy. Does BFF have an exemption from the referenced regulations? *A: Applicants must follow EPA's [Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)](#) which includes EPA's FIFRA registration process. As mentioned in the RFP, proposals must show planning for, knowledge about and secure compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Feasibility regarding regulatory compliance, including permits, is a part of the review process. We encourage you to review the draft article [A Decision Support Tool for Determining Federal Regulatory Authority over Products for Vertebrate Animals](#) as it may provide additional information about the federal regulatory context for your project.*

Intellectual Property

1) Q: What are the intellectual property provisions for a research breakthrough or patent resulting from the funded project grant? *A: Information on this topic may be found in the Uniform Guidance regulation §200.315 and 37 CFR Part 401. Additionally, the Eligibility Quiz in the Easygrants online system asks applicants to agree that reports and deliverables associated with any potential Foundation award for your project be published on the Foundation website. NFWF also has the right to publish, share, etc. data but only after it is published by the grantee or used by a Federal agency to inform a Federal action.*