



Student Research Scholarships for Global Bat Conservation Priorities

Scholarship Application Guidance

General advice before you start your proposal:

Be very clear about the problem you are addressing. What are the issues and what needs to be done to solve them? Make sure your methods describe what you are proposing to do and explain how your results will be used to help conservation actions. Explain how you plan to communicate the results to communities, conservation organizations, policy makers, governments to enable conservation action.

Make sure your project is realistic and achievable. If you are proposing to carry out work that seems impossible to achieve with the amount of money requested or in the timeframe of the proposed work, you will not be funded.

Have you involved the right people? If you do not have all the skills to achieve your project goal, are you collaborating with someone who can help you?

Remember, the people assessing your application are conservation biologists; you do not need to talk about general issues (e.g., global biodiversity loss). Focus on the specifics of your project.

2. PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project Category: *If your project fits into more than one of the categories, please identify which is the primary category and which is secondary.*

Project Abstract (250 words max): *Provide a brief abstract of your project.*

- Be clear and concise. Indicate the main questions and insights your work will produce.
- Tip: Sometimes it helps to write this after you've filled out the rest of the application

Project Description (500 words max): *Provide a brief explanation of your project's significance to bat conservation and justification of how it relates to global bat conservation priorities (Categories 1 – 3 above)*

Questions this section should address:

- What is important about this species/habitat you are working on?
- What are the threats? Locally/Globally?
- What specific aspect of this problem are you intending to study?
- How will the information/data you collect help protect this species?
- Is your project building on previous work? If so, how does this expand on that?
- Explain how the funding sought here fits into your larger project.
- How does your project relate to the Priority Categories?

Activities & Methods (1,000 words max): Provide a comprehensive but concise explanation of the methods that you will employ toward achieving your project's goals and objectives.

- What are you going to do and how?
- Make sure the activities and methods relate to the project goals described in the previous section (do not just copy and paste from a larger project description).
- You need to convince the reader that you have properly thought this out and you can meet the objectives set out.
- If sampling bats – how many do you need to sample to ensure the results are a true biological representation of what is going on?
- Make it clear how the activities and methods will help you achieve your goals. For example, if your goal is to determine the habitat needs of a species and your methods to do this involves radio-tracking, you should explain your sample sizes and activities that will allow you to have inference to achieve your goal

Preventing the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (250 words max): Outline how you will take precautions in the field, if applicable, to avoid the spread of SARS-CoV-2 between people and lower risk of people exposing bats during research activities. This should include:

- the results of your assessment according to IUCN SSC Bat Specialist Group's [Recommended Strategy for Researchers to Reduce the Risk of Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from Humans to Bats MAP: Minimize, Assess, Protect](#) Guidelines;
- personal protective equipment (PPE) that everyone in the field will use;
- how you will assess if you are safe to adjust these precautions in the future.

Field technicians (max 200 words): If planning to have help in the field, will you be hiring field technicians or recruiting volunteers?

BCI highly encourages including local researchers or students in your fieldwork and providing paid positions. We do not support projects that rely on soliciting unpaid volunteer positions that require volunteers to incur substantial travel or other expenses to gain field experience. What is your plan to recruit field technicians?

- We suggest contacting the nearest university to your field site if you do not already have connections to local students/researchers.
- If you are not planning on using local researchers, please explain why not.

Literature Cited (500 words max): Provide relevant and cited literature.

- Demonstrate that you are familiar and have read the body of work relevant to your project – make sure your project contributes something novel.
- Use a consistent citation format that includes authors, year published, title, journal, issue, and page numbers.
- Only include references that you cite in above sections.

3. AWARDS & SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Women in Science Award

Eligibility: Must identify as a woman from a developing country ([low-income and lower to middle income](#))

Application justification (max 300 words): Explain why you would benefit from this award. This money is not intended to go directly towards your research, rather towards your professional development or your ability to support and promote other women in science.

- Professional development could include many activities, such as attending conferences, workshops, travel to meet with collaborators, online professional development, certifications, etc.
- BCI also seeks to support women who work to promote and support other women in science, through their own outreach, trainings, or mentoring efforts.

Promoting Diversity in Conservation Award

If you will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field of conservation:

Proposed plan to promote diversity (max 200 words): Describe your plan to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field of conservation.

- This can come in many forms, including outreach program, community science opportunities, training or workshops.

Will you need additional support? (max 200 words): Describe if you need additional funds or in-kind support, up to a maximum value of \$500 USD. If no funds are required, enter "N/A".

- List the other agencies you will contact for support.
- In-kind support includes things such as donations of items like books or equipment.

Conservation Evidence Special Recognition

Many actions or interventions are proposed for conserving ecosystems and wildlife, but it is important to provide evidence on their effectiveness so that management and policies can be evidence-based. BCI is a Conservation Evidence Champion, promoting the assessment and dissemination of the effectiveness of conservation actions. We encourage you to research and test the effectiveness of conservation actions/interventions prior to implementation.

If you are testing a conservation intervention or action:

Proposed conservation action or intervention (max 200 words): Describe what conservation action or intervention you will be implementing or testing as part of your research.

- We suggest reviewing the 195 bat conservation actions already included on [Conservation Evidence's website](#).

What evidence suggests that your proposed intervention will be effective (max 300 words): Provide evidence from Conservation Evidence or any other sources that support the effectiveness of your proposed action/intervention. Alternatively, if no evidence exists yet, provide background support for your planned intervention.

- Example: Bats in urban environments

This project aims to understand whether altering the ground vegetation of green spaces in York, by delaying mowing and planting wildflowers, affects bat abundance, species composition or feeding activity. The effects of providing foraging habitat for bats in urban areas have been little studied

(<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/954>). One study in the USA found higher bat activity and changed species composition in restored forest preserves in urban areas compared to an unrestored forest preserve, and a study in the UK found significantly higher bat activity and more bat feeding events over green roofs in urban areas than over conventional un-vegetated roofs. There is therefore clear potential that bat abundance and diversity can be increased in urban areas. However, given that the single study on bats and agri-environment schemes in the UK showed lower insect abundance and lower bat activity on farms where agri-environment schemes such as managing field margins, hedgerows, or grasslands

(<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/962>), it is important not to assume that 'positive' changes to management will benefit bats. This is why we will carefully evaluate the impacts of the new management regime.

4. QUALIFICATIONS AND COLLABORATORS

Applicant Background (500 words max): Give a brief description of your experience and training to date, your career aspirations, and how this award will advance your future.

Other Partners, Collaborators, & Stakeholders (350 words max): List key partners, co-investigators, close collaborators, and important stakeholders for your project, and provide a brief explanation of their role in the project.

- List the other collaborators and partners of your project.
- If you or your lab does not have the experience of an aspect of your project who are you going to work with to make sure it gets done?
- If you want to work in a certain area have you received permission to go there?
- As part of a larger project have you already secured funding from other sources?

5. BUDGET

Amount requested from BCI: Enter the total amount of money requested, up to \$3,000 USD.

Total project cost: Enter the estimated cost of your entire project, not just the portion you are requesting from BCI.

Funds received from other sources: Enter the amount already received to fund the project.

- Describe the source(s) of this funding in the Budget Description.

Budget Description: Provide a detailed description of the expenses for the entire project and, specifically, how you will use the funds received from BCI.

- List the sources of other funding
- Tip: Evaluators will be looking for if the project is feasible within the total budget and if the amount requested from BCI will make a difference in the ability for the student to conduct their research. Usually, more detail is better than less.

Breakdown of Requested Costs: Enter a detailed budget for how you propose to spend the funds requested from BCI (up to \$3000 USD). Include the following budget categories:

- Personnel (salary and benefits)
- Travel (transportation, lodging, mileage, fuel, meals, etc.)
- Supplies
- Other costs (up to applicant discretion if does not fit in the other categories, please describe in the Budget Justification)

6. REFERENCES

References: All applications must receive one letter of recommendation. The name you submit should ideally be from your major professor (thesis advisor) but can be from a professional who is familiar with you and your project and is sufficiently established in the profession to lend credibility to their recommendation.

- Do not leave this until the last minute – letters of recommendation take longer to get than

you might expect.

- You cannot be considered for funding if the letter has not been submitted.
- Your reference will get an automatic email from SmarterSelect.
- You should CONTACT your reference beforehand so they can be on the lookout for the email (it may go to spam).
- Remind your reference to complete and submit your letter by the application due date.
- You will receive an email confirmation when they have uploaded their letter

Have more questions?

Join us on [Slack](#) to ask more questions, get tips and suggestions from previous BCI student scholars, and find support from your bat conservation community while developing your proposal.

- Find the link to join the BCI Scholars Slack space on the first page of the RFP application or email scholarships@batcon.org.

You may email scholarships@batcon.org with questions anytime.