



SOSF Small Grant

Application Guidelines 2023 Funding Cycle

The Save Our Seas Foundation invites applications for small projects up to US\$10,000 (with grants averaging US\$5,000) for the period March 2024 to February 2025.

This grant is designed for short (12 to 18 months) and small projects dedicated to early career scientists (applicants must be within five years of a degree being awarded). Aimed at original and innovative start-up projects, the grant presents early career scientists, conservationists or educators with an opportunity to prove themselves. It targets local projects conducted by local project leaders. Whether or not the project is part of a larger endeavour, SOSF Small Grants are for specific and finite projects. Only projects concerned with marine chondrichthyan species (sharks, rays, skates, sawfishes and chimaeras) will be considered.

Please read the online funding guidelines carefully, to increase your chances of success.

Dates should all be in the format **dd/mm/yyyy** and the currency used in this application is **US\$**.

Deadline: Grant applications must be submitted through the SOSF website no later than:

Stage I: 16th June 2023, at 18:00 CET (Central European Time).

Stage II: 31st August 2023 at 18:00 CET (Central European Time).

Please note that it won't be possible to alter the applications after submission.

A. Format for documents

For the naming of annex documents please use the following structure for the file name: [first four letters of project leader surname]_[first four letters of project subject]_smallgrant2024_[document type].[document extension]

For example, the budget document for a project on *Chimaera conservation* submitted by *Dr Jones* would be titled: *jone_chim_smallgrant2024_budget.doc*. All files submitted with the online application form should be identified in the same way (e.g. *jone_chim_smallgrant2024_cv.pdf*; *jone_chim_smallgrant2024_coverletter.jpg*; etc.).

B. Completing the form – Stage I

Project applicant and organisation Information

We will consider only one grant application from each project leader. If your application has more than one leader, please name the individuals who will execute the project. Their organisation and/or institute (if any) may not be the organisation most closely involved in the project, and projects do not have to be run through an institute.

Project overview

Project topic or title (maximum 15 words): This title will be used by SOSF when describing or referring to your project. It must be informative and clearly convey the subject and aim of the project.

SOSF primary focus: Please check the primary focus under which your project most closely falls. You can tick more than one checkbox.

Species concerned Common name (Latin name): If the project focuses on multiple species, please list no more than 3 focal species.

Species status IUCN Red list status: Please also indicate if the species is listed in any international conventions (e.g: CITES, CMS, etc) as well as any local, regional or national protection legislations.

Project location: Define the geographical location – including country, region, site, sea, ocean, etc – where project activities will take place. The project leader may be based elsewhere.

Keywords: Define 5 keywords describing your project.

Project summary (maximum 150 words): This should be a brief abstract, clearly understandable by the non-specialist, summarising the more detailed information in the next few sections.

General aim and objectives (maximum 50 words): State clearly the broad aim or general purpose of the project.

Methodology summary? (maximum 150 words): Describe briefly the methods you intend to use, and/or the precise activities that will be involved, in order to achieve these goals. Make sure you indicate sample/population size (n) when relevant.

Duration of the project: Define how many months your project will take.

Project budget: Please indicate the total budget (to the closest US\$100) for the coming funding cycle and provide more details using the SOSF spreadsheet. The amount stated here must match the total at the bottom of your detailed excel sheet, to the closest US\$100. (Please refer to the 'upload' section to find more information on how to fill in the budget sheet)

Is the project leader an early career researcher? We define this as *within five years of the award of a degree*. If a recent postgraduate, graduate or undergraduate student is applying for funds, or if the applicant cannot demonstrate significant experience in the subject area and/or region, a supervisor or advisor must be included in the project team (*see below*).

Are you the project leader: in case the PL is not applying themselves, it helps us understand the context.

Uploads

Budget (PDF format) Please use the SOSF Excel spreadsheet and submit it as a PDF file.

Please give a reasonable breakdown of the project budget, organised under standard headings such as: travel, field costs, capital equipment (list all items costing more than US\$100), consumables, administrative costs (insurance, telephones, permits, etc.), and specialist services (e.g. film editing, laboratory testing, library facilities). If you seek SOSF funding for specific parts of a project that is supported by more than one source, please indicate clearly which activities or materials will be supported by the SOSF. 'Amount other sources' may include support from the internal resources of the applicant's own organisation or support from external sources (please list). Joint funding or fund matching is not essential.

Successful grant applications are able to receive up to US\$10,000, with an average of about US\$5,000, from the Foundation. Requests for grants exceeding US\$15,000 will

be rejected without review. The SOSF does not pay unspecified overheads to host organisations (e.g. universities or non-governmental organisations). Individuals can apply. SOSF Small Grants are designed to fund project leaders and projects, not institutions or organisations. Funds for candidates who have applied successfully can be transferred into private accounts.

The project leader's curriculum vitae (PDF format).

Letter from the project supervisor/advisor: Scan of letter from the project supervisor/advisor and/or, if required/relevant, from their employer's authorising officer (the latter should be printed on the organisation's headed notepaper).

--- End of Stage I questionnaire ---

B. Completing the form – Stage II (by invitation only)

Project details

This project is unique because... (maximum 150 words): SOSF aims to support applicants working on projects focused on exceptional species, habitats and/or locations, and is particularly committed to supporting activities that have the capacity to make a real difference to the health of the oceans and to the survival of threatened aquatic species and habitats. Please explain briefly how your project meets these criteria.

Background (maximum 300 words, including citations): For scientific or conservation projects, please summarise the key scientific and/or technical knowledge of the species, habitat, environmental threat or other issue that is the focus of your project, with an emphasis on the most relevant information. You might include a description of the conservation and management challenges or the gaps in scientific knowledge that the project aims to address. For public awareness and/or environmental education projects, please explain how similar projects have been effective in achieving their objectives. We value new and innovative ideas, approaches and projects, so do not hesitate to submit unreferenced project concepts and explain why yours is original. Refer to key scientific or other publications as appropriate, but ideally there should be no more than 10 citations.

Aim and objectives (maximum 50 words per objective): List the more specific objectives (*at least one, no more than five*) of the work that you intend to undertake. If the planned work will be part of a larger project, you may list these broader aims and objectives, but please highlight (e.g. with an asterisk) the objectives you hope to achieve with funding from the SOSF.

How will these objectives be achieved? (maximum 150

words per methods): For each objective listed for this SOSF project, describe briefly the methods you intend to use, and/or the precise activities that will be involved, in order to achieve these goals. Make sure you indicate sample/population size (n) when relevant.

Indicators? (maximum 150 words): Explain how you plan to measure the results and impact of your project. These indicators are a measurement index of the results, allowing both the project leader and the SOSF to evaluate whether the project is moving in the right direction guided by the aim and objectives, and whether it yields expected results. The indicators will provide evidence about whether a designed result occurred, and it will measure the changes in the activities of the project. The selection of indicators is key, and as well as being clear, precise and feasible, and they should best reflect the outputs and outcomes of the project results in terms of research, conservation and/or education.

New project or continuing project? We need to know whether this project is already under way. The SOSF is particularly interested in funding new and innovative projects but will support existing work if a need can be demonstrated.

How will you communicate your results? (maximum 100 words) Most scientific projects funded by the SOSF are expected to contribute significantly to research knowledge and/or be applicable to improving the conservation and management of the species or habitats studied. These outcomes are usually only possible if results are first published in the peer-reviewed scientific literature and appear in unpublished SOSF reports. Please describe the paper(s) that you will produce and the journal(s) to which they will be submitted.

Please describe if and how you will approach the media and use social networks to disseminate your project work and findings (maximum 100 words).

Problems and contingency planning (maximum 150 words) List the main foreseeable administrative, logistical or technical problems that might arise during this project and explain how you will address them.

Project leader's experience and qualifications (maximum 100 words) Applicants are expected to provide details of their track record in the subject area and/or practical relevant experience in the region where the proposed project is to take place, thus demonstrating that they will be able to undertake this work successfully.

Why are you the best person to lead this project? (maximum 100 words) You might use this space to explain what drives you and why the goals of this project are important to you.

Who will execute the project? Please name the person(s) who will be in the field gathering the data, as well as the affiliation and contact details.

Project supervisor or advisor: If a recent postgraduate or graduate or undergraduate student is applying for funds, or if the applicant cannot demonstrate significant experience in the subject area and/or region, provide name(s), respective affiliation and contact details of a supervisor or advisor and describe their experience in the subject area and/or the region where the proposed project is to take place. A letter from these individuals, outlining their experience and confirming their participation as supervisor/advisor, must also be provided with your application. Where students are applying, only one application will be accepted from each supervisor.

Other referees: Please provide the name and contact details of two senior referees (three if no supervisor) who will support your application and whom we can, if necessary, approach to ask for their opinion of your project (don't add names of people you have not previously informed).

Previous SOSF applications: List brief details of project application(s), successful and unsuccessful, year(s) and outputs of projects that may have received a SOSF grant in the past.

Collaboration and association: List and describe present and future collaborative efforts and associations with governmental institutions, NPOs and/or NGOs locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Dates and figures

Project schedule: Please indicate when you envisage your project will take place. This call for new grant applications targets small projects that aim to be undertaken during the 12/18-months period from **March 2024 to February 2025**. If you anticipate that the project will need to continue for longer in order to achieve its principal aims, please also explain here what those longer-term aims are, how the project will be funded in future years, and how the SOSF's funding for this initial year will fit into and further the aims of the longer programme. The SOSF will consider small grant applications that, among other things, aim to undertake the preliminary investigations necessary before a larger, longer-term project can be developed. Successful applicants for small project grants, including scoping projects, will not be invited to submit a continuation grant application next year, but are not excluded from making new grant applications.

Other funding and/or support: Please list any other organisations that are expected to co-fund the work or to provide practical support and describe in your budget sheet what they will fund.

Tickbox: please ensure that you (and your institution) understand and agree that the agreement will be under Swiss Law and that this can't be modified. This is usually specific to the US universities.

Address on agreement: Please check which address should appear on your agreement and provide it here.

Website profile

The details provided in this section will be used to create the project and personal profiles on our website for successful applications. These sections should be written for a general audience, please refer to existing profiles for reference on style:

Who I am (*Maximum 300 words*): A brief description of yourself – essentially a mini biography for the website.

Where I work (*Maximum 300 words*): A description of your project location to provide context to the reader.

What I do (*Maximum 300 words*): Describe the typical work your project involves e.g. a daily routine, field experiences etc.

Key Objective: Please describe the primary objective of your project in no more than one or two sentences.

Why is this important (*Maximum 75 words*): This can be a variant of your ‘conservation challenge’ part of the application adapted for a general audience – highlight the conservation issue and how this project will address it.

Background (*Maximum 300 words*): Please provide the context for the project. This can be adapted from your ‘background’ section above for a general audience (e.g. it will not include citations). Aims & objectives This can be a simplified version of the main aims and objectives from your application.

Uploads

Cover letter: Scan of signed and dated covering letter, signed by the project leader (the individual named on the first page of the application form). The SOSF review team will expect this letter to convey the project leader’s enthusiasm for the project proposed and explain why they are a suitable leader for this work and have chosen to submit the application to the SOSF.

Please don’t upload other files (CV, Budget sheet) unless if they have significantly changed since your Stage 1 application.

Final note:

Thank you for your application. Please note that SOSF staff may not contact applicants if further explanation or information is required. Stage I Applications will be reviewed during July 2023. Successful applicants will be invited, the last week of July or first week of August, to submit a stage II application (deadline August 31st, 2023). Stage II Applications will be reviewed during the last quarter of 2023, and recommendations forwarded to the next Foundation Board meeting. The final decision on successful applications will be communicated during the first quarter of 2024.

Save Our Seas Foundation - April 2023.