

NOFO Supplemental Document

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS – International Affairs

Species Conservation Catalyst Fund (SCCF) on Songbirds Trade

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Fiscal Year: 2024

<https://www.fws.gov/service/species-conservation-catalyst-fund>

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Appendix I. SCCF Songbird Priority Species

Table 1. SCCF Songbird Priority Species. These species are commonly traded for singing competitions domestically and, in some cases, internationally and show evidence of species or population declines due to trade (according to Juergens et al. 2021 and FWS consultation with field experts). Although not currently traded for singing competitions, red siskin (*Spinus cucullatus*) is included due to its Endangered Red List status and risk of becoming a substitute species if other species further decline.

Common name	Local name ¹	Scientific name	Status ^{2,3}	International trade protections	Notes
Chestnut-bellied seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blue back (Guyana)• Blue-back fire red (Guyana)• Blaubaka-roti (Surinam)	<i>Sporophila castaneiventris</i>	IUCN: Least concern (stable) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	

Chestnut-bellied seed-finch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towa towa (Guyana, Surinam) • Pikolet (Guyana, Surinam) • Bullfinch (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila angolensis</i> , <i>Oryzoborus angolensis</i>	IUCN: Least concern (increasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Not listed Guyana: Quota approved for commercial export	
Cuban bullfinch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negrito (Cuba) 	<i>Melopyrrha nigra</i> , <i>Pyrrhulagra nigra</i>	IUCN: Near threatened (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Appendix III	Cuban endemic
Great-billed seed-finch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twa twa (Guyana, Surinam) 	<i>Sporophila maximiliani</i> , <i>Oryzoborus maximiliani</i>	IUCN: Endangered (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Not listed	
Grey seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain (Guyana) • Picoplat/pico (Trinidad and Tobago) • Ringneck (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila intermedia</i>	IUCN: Least concern (stable) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	
Large-billed seed-finch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twa twa (Guyana, Surinam) 	<i>Sporophila crassirostris</i> , <i>Oryzoborus crassirostris</i>	IUCN: Least concern (increasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Not listed Guyana: Quota approved for commercial export	
Lined seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouth stash (Guyana) • Krown-mustas (Surinam) • Chat (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila lineola</i>	IUCN: Least concern (stable) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	
Painted bunting		<i>Passerina ciris</i> , <i>Passerina cyanea</i>	IUCN: Least concern (stable) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: Yes SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed United States: Migratory Bird Treaty Act	
Plumbeous seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabana-mustas (Surinam) 	<i>Sphorophila plumbea</i>	IUCN: Least concern (stable) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	

Red siskin		<i>Spinus cucullatus</i>	IUCN: Endangered (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Appendix I EU Wildlife Trade Regulations: Annex A (01/19/2022)	Threatened by caged bird trade. Not currently traded for singing competitions but local experts fear it could be traded as a substitute species if wild populations of other bird species decline.
Rose-breasted grosbeak		<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	IUCN: Least concern (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: Yes SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed United States: Migratory Bird Treaty Act	
Ruddy-breasted seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire red (Guyana) • Roti (Surinam) • Robin (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila minuta</i>	IUCN: Least concern (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Not listed	
Slate-colored seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain canary (Guyana) • Busi-twatwa (Surinam) • Brazo (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila schistacea</i>	IUCN: Least concern (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	
Wing-barred seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ring neck (Guyana) • Dyak (Surinam) • Tobago picoplat (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila americana</i>	IUCN: Least concern (decreasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Yes	CITES: Not listed	
Yellow-bellied seedeater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bergi-mustas (Surinam) • Silver beak (Trinidad and Tobago) • Ringneck (Trinidad and Tobago) 	<i>Sporophila nigricollis</i>	IUCN: Least concern (increasing) FWS Bird of Conservation Concern: No SiTDB Trade as Threat: Plausible	CITES: Not listed	

¹ O'Shea, B (2023), personal observation; FWS, personal observation.

² Status sources: 'IUCN' = IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (www.iucnredlist.org); FWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bird of Conservation Concern (USFWS 2021); 'SiTDB' = Songbirds in Trade Database (Juergens et al. 2021).

³ Note that Red List status may not accurately reflect recent declines due to trade because evidence is not well captured in the scientific literature and/or because local population extinctions may not affect the status of the overall species range.

Appendix II. NOFO Definitions

For the purpose of this NOFO the following terms are defined:

- *Activities*: The actions and services carried out or provided to achieve desired short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes (e.g., data collection, provision of technical assistance, behavior change strategy). Proposed projects will likely involve multiple activities which could be connected either concurrently or consecutively.
- *Adaptive Management*: A structured, iterative process to robust decision-making and project management that deliberately includes ongoing learning and adjustment to reduce uncertainty and risk while working within complex socio-ecological systems. It incorporates both information from external sources and learning from implementation in order to support evidence-based decision-making through multiple steps that include systematic problem assessment, monitoring and evaluation, and adapting as needed to achieve goals and objectives (Figure 1).
- *Biologically sustainable*: The use of components of biological diversity (e.g., a songbird species) in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.
- *Ethical*: Projects follow a clear path for adhering to accepted ethical standards of conduct when activities involve or potentially affect animals and/or people (see Appendix III of the NOFO Supplemental Document, Section 7 on Ethical Standards for details). Projects and personnel adhere to appropriate ethical standards when carrying out project activities, including those involving human communities and wild or captive-bred animals.
- *Evidence-based*: Activities based on detailed and reliable local knowledge and empirical information; evidence is defined as data obtained via systematic methods.
- *Goal*: A desired end result you want to achieve. Typically, it is broad and long-term.
- *Indicator (or metrics)*: The variables that describe the specific data you plan to collect and analyze for each of your objectives¹. Indicators must be measurable units which can demonstrate progress towards achieving project objectives and ultimately the overall project goal. In the case of evaluating activities, an indicator should be calculated as the difference between the values for different reporting periods.
- *Intervention*: A targeted set of actions designed, and tested as appropriate, to induce change, including change in human behavior in a particular context.

¹ Salafsky, N. & Margoluis, R. (2022) Pathways to Success: Taking Conservation to Scale in Complex Systems. Island Press, Washington, DC. p. 193 - 195

- *Legal*: In compliance with applicable laws, including customary, local, national, and international.
- *Measurement technique*: The approach used to measure progress on an indicator.
- *Objective*: Statements describing the specific results you are trying to achieve within the project time frame and with available resources, and the way the results will be achieved. Typically, multiple objectives are needed to address a single goal. When possible, make these SMART objectives: Specific: includes the “who,” “what,” and “where.” Use only one action verb in each objective to ensure you can easily measure success; Measurable: focuses on “how much” change is expected; Achievable: realistic given program resources and planned implementation; Relevant: relates directly to program/activity goals; Time-bound: focuses on “when” the objective will be achieved.
- *Outcomes*: The short, intermediate, and long-term changes in condition or behaviors that result from project activities and ultimately lead to the overall conservation goal. Outcomes are the desired impacts of project activities. The terms *outcomes* and *results* are often used interchangeably.
- *Outputs*: The products of activities (e.g., project report, training tools, proportion of workshop attendees from key constituencies). Outputs are commonly metrics that show what was done and produced, and do not convey the impacts on the conservation issue. Outputs may result from activities but are different from indicators.

Appendix III. Project Narrative

Project Narrative and Structure

Project narratives should be ten or fewer pages and pages should be numbered. Project summary, figures, data tables, maps, curriculum vitae, additional detailed information, partner organization or government letters of endorsement, financial materials, and required standard forms do not count toward the ten-page limit.

Proposed projects are expected to reflect systematic strategic planning, be context-specific, and take an adaptive management approach. Proposals must show relevant best practices for research and implementation methods. The project stages depicted in Figure 1 provide an example of how an adaptive management process can be applied to project development.

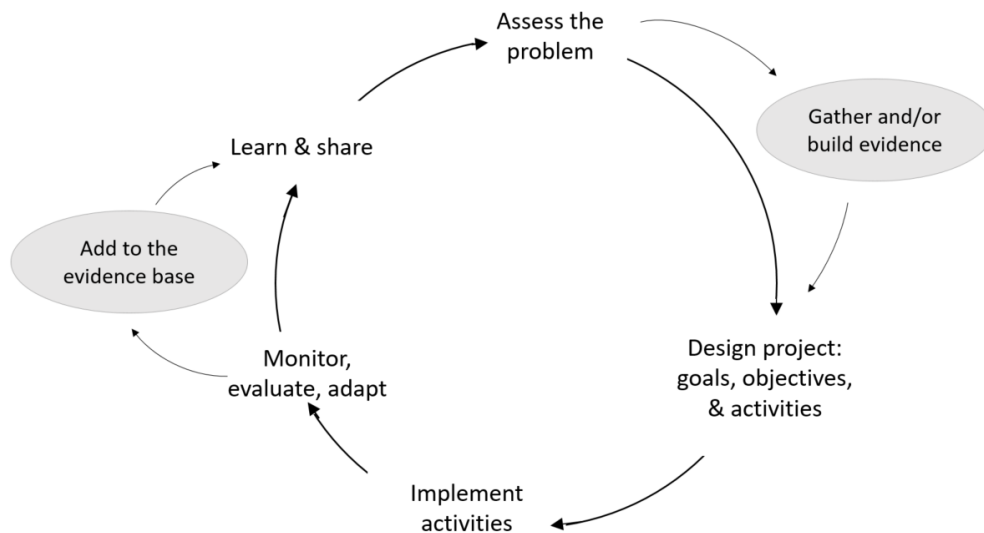


Figure 1. The adaptive management project framework with an evidence-based feedback loop².

The following sections must be included in your Project Narrative:

1. Project Title
2. Statement of Need
3. Project Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Methods
4. Relevant Party Engagement and Capacity Development
5. Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation
6. Project Learning and Sharing
7. Ethics Standards
8. Project Timetable
9. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project
10. Sustainability

Include as an addendum (not included in 10-page limit):

11. Literature Cited
12. Project Location
13. Partner Organization or Government Letter of Endorsement

Detailed information about each required section is provided below.

Project Narrative Sections:

² Adapted from Gillson L, Biggs H, Smit IPJ, Virah-Sawmy M, Rogers K. (2019) Finding Common Ground between Adaptive Management and Evidence-Based Approaches to Biodiversity Conservation. *Trends Ecol Evol.* 34(1):31-44. doi: 110.1016/j.tree.2018.10.003. Epub 2018 Nov 15. PMID: 30447939.

1. Project Title: Provide a basic description of the project, including the location and country, in the title. Please note that this title will be the reference archived and communicated in all future documents. *Example: Countering Elephant Ivory Trafficking in the Okavango Delta, Botswana*

2. Statement of Need

Adaptive Management Stage: Assess the problem

This section should describe the conservation problem and answer why this proposed project is necessary to address the unsustainable and/or illegal trade of the priority species. This section should demonstrate a systematic understanding of the conservation context, which can be based on a review of existing evidence from previous research, expertise, literature reviews, and other sources of information. The proposed project should be described within this greater context. Please summarize previous or on-going efforts that are relevant to the proposed work, including how this proposal differs from or builds on past work, and how you plan to expand upon the successes, failures, and lessons learned from past efforts.

It is important for applicants to show that conservation project proposals are based on the best available evidence. Applicants are encouraged to describe and cite the evidence base for the most important conservation activities within a proposal. For example, applicants should describe the existing evidence that suggests proposed activities will be effective, with a focus on activities that may have substantial or sensitive consequences or activities that are considered high risk by the project. To identify evidence for conservation activities, applicants are encouraged to search and cite the Conservation Evidence database (<https://www.conservationevidence.com/>). The evidence base may also include published or grey literature, previous personal experience, Indigenous and/or traditional knowledge, evidence review and synthesis libraries (e.g., CEEDER, Evidence for Nature and People Data Portal), or species assessments published under the Endangered Species Act and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. If a proposed activity is considered sensitive or high risk but has little to no existing evidence base among these information sources, applicants are encouraged to discuss where new evidence is needed to understand effectiveness. Further guidance and examples are available in Parks et al. (2022) Funding Evidence-Based Conservation and its supplementary materials.

If you have previously received funding from the Service for this specific project work or site, please provide a summary of the funding, associated activities, products, outcomes, and associated measurable conservation results. A table may be the most efficient way to convey this information; see Table 1 for an example. Projects with current or potential funding from any other U.S. Government source should describe the activities already supported and the added value of Service support. Former recipients of Service support should note that every proposal is expected to be a stand-alone document. Not all proposal reviewers may be familiar with past grants, thus a summary of activities and accomplishments helps reviewers better understand the proposal in context.

Table 1: Summary of prior Service funding.

Funding Source	Reference #	Funding amount (\$)	Years of activity	Major activities	Outputs	Outcomes

3. Project Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Methods

Adaptive Management Stages: Design project, Implement activities

This section should describe the overall project goal and how it aligns with the desired outcome(s) identified in the Funding Opportunities detailed in section *A. Program Description*. It should explain what will be achieved and how activities will be carried out. Activities may include, but are not limited to, advancing policy, strengthening local monitoring and protection, bolstering law enforcement and judiciary systems, and/or developing activities designed to address the drivers of human behavior along the trade chain. Where relevant, we will seek to support projects that demonstrate a systematic understanding of the human dimensions of wildlife trade and which apply sound social science methods, theory, and evidence to address the drivers of human behaviors along the trade chain. New partnerships and collaborations are encouraged to catalyze conservation work that otherwise would not occur, and which cultivate learning that can be applied to other initiatives.

Project proposals are expected to reflect a thoughtful and strategic conservation approach. If needed, the Service Program Officer can help connect applicants with professional facilitators to carry out a robust strategic planning process and these anticipated costs should be included in the project’s budget (the applicant is encouraged to contact the Program Officer before submitting an application to include this activity in the Project Narrative). Upon the awarding of funding, the Service may also connect grant recipients working on the same species and/or types of activities to align strategic planning, further strengthen collaborations and potential synergies, and prevent duplication of effort.

Applicants should demonstrate that project goals, objectives, and activities are based on a systematic understanding of the social-ecological context. We encourage applicants to articulate a clear theory of change (e.g., a results chain or logic model) describing the short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes that you expect will need to be in place to achieve the project goal. This can be presented in either a narrative or in a diagram. Along with your theory of change, identify your objective(s), and the activities you will carry out to achieve each objective (note: proposals do not need an objective for each outcome identified, and are not expected to address all outcomes or sub-outcomes in section *A. Program Description*). The resources below may be useful for developing theories of change for conservation projects:

- [Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation V. 4 \(2020\) - Section 2 “Plan”](https://conservationstandards.org/download-cs/) (for other languages see <https://conservationstandards.org/download-cs/>)

- For an overview of additional planning frameworks see: [Decision support frameworks and tools for conservation](#)

When relevant, proposed activities should ideally be implemented with approaches that develop and/or build on (rather than duplicate) government partners' capacities to plan, implement, manage, and monitor the activity.

For projects that aim to build an initial body of evidence, please detail the key questions you are asking, include the theoretical/conceptual framework and methods for data collection and analysis, and a justification for why this specific approach was selected. Also, describe context-specific considerations and potential sources of error in your methodology (e.g., cultural sensitivity, social desirability bias, self-reporting bias) and how those will be addressed. If sensitive behaviors/topics are being assessed, identify appropriate social science research methods and justify why these are optimal for the proposed project context.

Please detail whether the proposed activities are based on approaches with evidence of success, as well as how the activities will be designed to specifically achieve the conservation goal and improve on previous work. It may be pertinent to consider ways in which a chosen approach may be piloted/pre-tested. If relevant, please describe which levels (e.g., policy, industry, community, individual) may potentially be important and feasible to intervene upon in the project context. Please also share whether there are specific channels (e.g., marketplaces), actors (e.g., church leaders), or platforms (e.g., social media), that may be relevant when assessing potential project designs.

Additionally, identify potential challenges, assumptions, or uncertainties in implementing the project as a whole and for each of the activities (e.g., political will, accessibility, infrastructure) and how these will be addressed. Crucially, detail how each activity will be implemented so that monitoring and evaluation will be possible. For instance, assess whether an experimental design (i.e., one with control and treatment groups) or a quasi-experimental design (i.e., one using comparisons other than control/treatment) may be implemented.

We recommend using the format below to describe the project's objectives and activities. Please include sufficient detail for each activity so that reviewers will have confidence in the team's expertise and ability to complete the activity. Between one and three paragraphs per activity is commonly adequate.

Project Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Methods:

Goal: [Describe the overall project goal]

Objective 1:

[Describe the specific outcomes you're trying to achieve using SMART criteria]

Activity 1.1:

[Describe the actions that will be carried out to achieve the desired short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Include a description of your methods, challenges, and assumptions]

Activity 1.2:

Objective 2:

Activity 2.1:

Activity 2.2:

4. Relevant Party Engagement and Capacity Development:

4.1 Relevant Party Engagement

This section should detail who may be impacted by this project and how they will be involved in the project. As applicable, describe how you/your organization has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations, local community groups, or individuals in planning the project, and detail if/how they will be involved in conducting project activities, disseminating project results, and/or incorporating your results/products into their activities. Please describe any previous work with these relevant parties and how working with them relates to the specific threats and target audiences. Where multiple groups are working in the same site or are listed as relevant parties in the proposal, **letters of endorsement specifically referring to this proposal and to the proposed collaboration from each partner organization will strengthen your proposal and may be requested by reviewers.**

4.2 In-country Capacity Development

Please detail the way(s) in which the project advances conservation capacity within the community or country where work is proposed. Designing and implementing collaborative projects with in-country partners will strengthen your proposal and the sustainability of project impacts more than offering trainings alone. Please clearly state how this capacity will extend beyond the period of performance of the project. If student support is proposed for the project, make a clear case for

why this approach is an optimal form of capacity building in the given conservation/country context. Some examples of capacity development include:

- Strengthening in-country regulatory capacity by workshopping real-world policy needs with government wildlife authorities; or
- Enhancing local project management capacity by pairing formal training with mentoring and hiring into project positions; or
- Building in-country scientific capacity by collaborating in a manner that will enable wildlife authorities and universities to independently conduct data collection and research activities.

5. Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation

Adaptive Management stage: Monitor, evaluate, adapt

Applicants should budget sufficient time and money for monitoring, evaluating, and adapting project activities. The monitoring and evaluation stage of an adaptive management approach involves incrementally applying lessons learned to adapt project activities and decision making to achieve desired outcomes. Ultimately, lessons learned at the project level can benefit future conservation efforts.

Please detail the specific indicators and methods that will be used to monitor the implementation of the proposed activities and evaluate progress towards achieving the desired outcomes as described in A. Program Description.

In addition to activity specific evaluation, please answer how you will evaluate whether you met each objective and thus the overall goal of the project. If the ultimate goal of the project (e.g., species recovery) will occur after the period of performance of the project, describe which proxy indicators (in the form of outputs and short- and intermediate-term outcomes listed in Table 2) will show preliminary evidence of success. Please include this information in a similar format to Table 2 (which includes example indicators). A narrative can also be included to provide additional information.

The Service values projects that report both the successes and challenges of efforts as a means by which the applicant can improve their future performance and the Service can also more effectively conserve wildlife going forward. Please describe how the activity or theory of change will be adapted should the objective(s) not be met. Please articulate any areas of risk or uncertainty in the intervention and how your team plans to address these information needs.

Table 2. Example project evaluation table. See definitions for indicators, outputs, and outcomes provided on pages 2-3 of this document. Note that the text in this table is meant to be illustrative.

Goal: Reduce poaching of local populations of African savanna elephants in the Okavango Delta, thereby reducing trafficking in ivory and derivatives from the region			
Indicator(s)	Measurement technique(s)	Output(s)	Outcome(s)

Objective 1: Strengthen the anti-poaching and investigative expertise of wildlife law enforcement officers that will result in a 50% overall increase in measured knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA).			
Change in KSA assessment score	Pre and post assessment tests (assessment given before, upon completion, and 3 months and 1 year after training)	Training and assessment materials produced Report on assessment results	<p>Short-term outcome: Immediate improved knowledge, skill, and abilities of wildlife law enforcement officers</p> <p>Intermediate outcome: Wildlife law enforcement officers retain and demonstrate improved KSAs 1 year after training</p> <p>Long-term outcome: Wildlife law enforcement officers effectively reduce elephant poaching and ivory trafficking</p>
Objective 2: To increase the number of active sniffer dogs and trained handlers resulting in a 25% increase in detection success rate.			
Change in number of trained active sniffer dogs Change in number of trained handlers Handler test scores Ivory detection success rate	Pre/post comparison Change in pre/post test scores	X# increase in trained sniffer dogs deployed X# increase in trained dog handlers deployed Summary of test results and project reporting	<p>Short-term outcome: increase in detection success rate in controlled setting</p> <p>Intermediate outcome: 25% increase in field detection rates by sniffer dog units</p> <p>Long-term outcome: Wildlife law enforcement officers effectively reduce elephant poaching and ivory trafficking</p>

6. Project Learning and Sharing

Adaptive Management stage: Learn and share

As part of the project, applicants should disseminate findings and lessons learned from their work. We encourage applicants to consider producing a written document (e.g., publication in a peer-reviewed journal, a report, white paper) or other media (e.g., story map, online app), depending on the intended audience, that is open access (freely available to the public). The project should

include time and resources for development of these materials as well as outreach to appropriate audiences, including local communities as relevant. Additionally, we require that all data collected using funds received via this NOFO be made publicly available in a timely manner following the completion of the proposed project (see *note below for details on protecting sensitive data). Please state how the work may be disseminated among the intended audience (1) within the country/community where the project is proposed, and (2) throughout the conservation community conducting related work. Please consider your dissemination plan when determining a timeline and budget.

We encourage applicants to consider how their work could be submitted for open-access publication in a peer-reviewed journal; we will support award recipients in this process where possible. The open-access publication process involves external review of the work thereby improving future efforts, increasing the visibility and perceived quality of the work, as well as providing an accessible location for data to be shared. For non-peer-reviewed published projects, award recipients should deposit all data in a relevant publicly accessible repository.

* Please note: We will require that all non-sensitive research data collected using funds received via this NOFO be made available to the conservation research community in a timely manner following the completion of the project. Such data can be invaluable to conservation practitioners to inform future strategies for species management and research. Sensitive and ethically protected data should be anonymized (thus making it non-sensitive and available for sharing) to protect the privacy of project participants, following the guidelines of the ethics approval committee. In the event data cannot be modified enough to protect the anonymity of individuals, exceptions for public sharing should be made in prior agreement with the Service.

7. Ethics Standards

Proposals must include a clear path for understanding and adhering to accepted ethics standards for projects involving animals and humans.

Social science research ethics: All projects proposing social or behavioral research should address: (1) potential risks to research participants, (2) adequacy of protection against these risks, (3) potential benefits to the participants and others, and (4) the importance of the knowledge to be gained. The U.S. Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, known as the Common Rule ([45 CFR 46](#)), describes types of research involving people, defines key terms, outlines requirements for how a study is classified for formal review (exempt or non-exempt), outlines criteria for approval of research by an Institutional Review Board, lists general requirements for informed consent, and requires a written assurance or certification of compliance. Applicants proposing activities involving information collection from/about people are encouraged to review the definitions and requirements outlined in the Common Rule and consult an Institutional Review Board (IRB), Research Ethics Committee (REC), or similar authority/body in the country the research is being conducted (see [International Compilation of Human Research Standards](#)) for guidance on how to adequately address ethical considerations and requirements according to the Common Rule and the policy of the country in which the activities are to be conducted. Applicants

must detail social science ethics considerations specific to their project and provide written assurance that adequate protections will be implemented, describing the specific measures that will be taken. We strongly encourage applicants to identify a review institution or body from which an approval has been or will be obtained for all projects collecting information from/about people for which Service funds are requested. Additionally, for projects involving Indigenous peoples, researchers have a responsibility to uphold Indigenous rights as reflected in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (Ignace et al. 2023).

Animal welfare: Proposed projects involving interactions with either free-living or captive wild animals must be consistent with international animal welfare standards. This includes maintaining a healthy physical and mental state in the animal (see [World Organization for Animal Health](#) standards). Projects should 1) incorporate best practices for meeting nutritional, physical, and behavioral needs as well as preventing pain or distress, 2) provide access to necessary veterinary care, and 3) adhere to [relevant protocols](#) for reducing disease transmission. See also the [Animal Welfare Act](#) and the [U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#). If the proposed project will involve interactions with animals, applicants must state how adherence to animal welfare standards will be ensured.

8. Project Timetable: This section should provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets, or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (i.e., do not include them as separate attachments). The timetable should not propose specific dates but instead group activities by month for single year projects, and by quarter for multi-year projects.

9. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project: Detail who will carry out the project and what their specific qualifications are for doing so. Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide a brief (under 1-page) curriculum vitae or biography for each key personnel with the technical/scientific expertise relevant to the activities and methods of the proposed project.

This should include evidence of robust, ethical, and on-the-ground applications of this knowledge. For example, proposals that seek to build evidence using intercept surveys should have personnel with experience in implementing best practice survey methodologies, including how to mitigate survey and response biases. Those working with human behaviors that are considered sensitive in the proposed study context should have personnel experienced in knowing when and how to use appropriate indirect questioning techniques. Citations for relevant publications should also be included. **‘Capacity to implement’ is a primary criterion that will be used to evaluate proposals.** Please refer to Section *E1. Criteria* of the NOFO to review the detailed criteria.

10. Sustainability: Conservation is a long-game, and measurable conservation impacts (e.g., cessation in trafficking activities or reduced demand for illegally obtained wildlife species, or an increase in the population numbers of a particular species) can rarely be achieved through short-term funding. For this NOFO, all proposed activities should be designed with sustainability in

mind, beyond the timeframe and funding made available through this opportunity. As applicable, proposals should describe how the design of the activities enables long-term sustainability (e.g., inclusion of and capacity development for range country personnel and institutions, sustained partnerships and coordination, an increase in attention to the plight of the species to attract additional donors). Given that this NOFO encourages new initiatives and efforts, the proposals should also use this section to articulate what it would take to sustain these conservation activities beyond the proposed project period. This should include details on who will continue the work or act on the results achieved, and how and at what level you anticipate these future activities will need to be funded.

Additional Project-Specific Information

This information should be included as an addendum and will not count towards the 10-page limit.

11. Literature Cited: Include any key references as evidence to support the ideas in the proposal. Citations may be formatted in any style.

12. Project Location: Please describe any important details and supporting documentation on the project location. If applicable, please also include a map that clearly delineates the project area and its location in relation to other significant geography. Be sure that the map is large enough to be legible and label any sites referenced in the project narrative.

If relevant, please also include information to support environmental compliance review requirements. Note: for projects on the high seas, the narrative should provide enough detail so that reviewers are able to determine project compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Please clearly identify if projects outside the United States will take place on any property on the UNESCO World Heritage List or the in-country equivalent of the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, and be sure that the above Project Narrative provides enough detail so reviewers can determine project compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

13. Partner Organization or Government Letter(s) of Endorsement: For projects implemented outside of the United States, non-governmental applicants must include a recent letter of support (no older than two years) from the appropriate local, regional, and/or national government wildlife or conservation authority. A current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the applicant and the government authority may be accepted as long as the MOU references the proposed work. Where appropriate, letters of support from partner organizations, local communities, or project beneficiaries should be provided. Endorsement letters should be in English and make specific reference to the Service and the proposed work. If a support or endorsement letter is not in English, applicants must also provide an English translation of the letter.

Literature Cited in Appendices

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