

## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

FWS - International Conservation

### **African Elephant Conservation Fund Fiscal Year (FY): 2021**

<https://www.fws.gov/international/wildlife-without-borders/african-elephant-conservation-fund.html>

Due Date for Applications: **06/25/2021**

<https://www.fws.gov/international/grants-and-reporting/how-to-apply.html>

**\*\*Last updated 04/22/21\*\***

**\*\*Please refer back as the FAQs will be updated as additional questions are received.\*\***

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

As the FY2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the African Elephant Conservation Fund differs from past opportunities, and because the fund is transitioning from an annual to a biennial funding announcement (the next NOFO is scheduled for release in FY2023), the following FAQs seek to respond to possible queries. Please send any additional questions to: [mscf\\_africanelephant@fws.gov](mailto:mscf_africanelephant@fws.gov).

#### **What are the FY2021 NOFO priorities?**

- The NOFO prioritizes direct conservation actions supporting effective, long-term conservation of African forest and savanna elephants in forest elephant strongholds (populations >1,000 individuals) and savanna elephant strongholds (populations >10,000 individuals) (see NOFO for a full list of eligible elephant strongholds), in addition to ecologically or evolutionarily unique elephant populations, and other conservation interventions that seek to eliminate or reduce immediate threats to African forest and savanna elephants.

#### **What types of proposals are being solicited?**

- This funding opportunity solicits multi-year awards (the standard period of performance for projects is two years).
- Proposals can range from \$50,000 to \$200,000 USD/per year for each project.
- Anticipated support for African forest and savanna elephant strongholds will be approximately \$3.5 million USD, with awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$400,000.
- Anticipated support for other priorities, including ecologically or evolutionarily unique elephant populations, development of innovative technologies that have the potential to improve elephant protection, reducing demand for and trafficking of illegal ivory products, etc., will be approximately \$1.8 million USD, with awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$200,000.

**Who is eligible to apply?**

- Applicants can be individuals; multi-national secretariats; foreign national and local government agencies; non-profit non-governmental organizations; for-profit organizations; public and private institutions of higher education; U.S. territorial governments; and Tribes and Tribal organizations.

**What are the criteria for evaluating the proposal?**

- To be considered eligible for funding, proposals must address the program's funding priorities. Program funding priorities focus on direct conservation actions supporting effective, long-term conservation of African forest and savanna elephants in forest elephant strongholds (populations >1,000 individuals) and savanna elephant strongholds (populations >10,000 individuals) (see NOFO for a full list of eligible elephant strongholds), in addition to ecologically or evolutionarily unique elephant populations, and other conservation interventions that seek to eliminate or reduce immediate threats to African forest and savanna elephants.
- In addition to whether the proposed project addresses the program funding priorities, the following criteria will be considered in review of the project proposals:
  - o importance of the project for site-based conservation actions for African forest or savanna elephants,
  - o identification of immediate threats to African forest or savanna elephant survival and support for direct conservation activities to eliminate or reduce those threats, and biological management of populations,
  - o the applicants past interventions and history at the site (if applicable),
  - o whether the current plan of action is logical and feasible,
  - o activities and methods adequately described and realistic for the situation,
  - o appropriate and well justified budget,
  - o demonstration of financial need (including importance of Service funds relative to other potential project funding),
  - o potential for long-term sustainability,
  - o capacity of the organization and its staff to implement the project, including relevant qualifications and institutional policies of the organization and experience of key personnel,
  - o past performance of the grantee if a previous recipient of Service funds,
  - o evidence of collaboration with or inclusion of key stakeholders, including host country governments and impacted communities, and
  - o potential for measurable and positive impact.

**How much funding does USFWS have available in FY2021 and how many grants and/or cooperative agreements are expected to be awarded?**

- The anticipated funding available is \$5.3 million USD. It is anticipated that approximately 25 multi-year grants and/or cooperative agreements will be awarded.

**Should a similar amount of funding be expected in future NOFOs?**

- No. The amount of funding available in FY2021 is higher than normal because the African Elephant Conservation Fund did not release a NOFO in FY2020. Congressional appropriations for the African Elephant Conservation Fund for the past two fiscal years were

~\$2.7 million USD (FY2019) and ~\$3.3 million USD (FY2020), with ~\$4.0 million USD appropriated in FY2021.

### **Why is the African Elephant Conservation Fund shifting from an annual to a biennial funding announcement?**

- To improve program delivery and conservation impact, the African Elephant Conservation Fund will transition from an annual to a biennial funding announcement, issuing a NOFO every two years instead of every year, with the next NOFO scheduled for release in FY2023. In recent years, the program has sought to improve efficiency, program delivery, and conservation impact by supporting projects beyond single year implementation. In 2019, for example, more than 80% of proposals recommended for award were of a two-year duration. The program is well-positioned to transition to a biennial grants program, with the expected benefit of reducing administrative burden on the public and within the USFWS by soliciting and processing requests for funding every two years instead of every year, with an overall net conservation impact. Full and open competition would take place in year one, and in off-years, without a NOFO, Congressional appropriations will be used to fund the second year of approved awards, with more USFWS staff time available for project support and monitoring, financial oversight, and program evaluation.

### **Confidentiality**

- If specific data on population size and locations is confidential due to security risks to the population, please provide only relevant information in the proposal that can be shared publicly. Sensitive or confidential data, clearly indicated as such, may be provided directly to the USFWS Program Officer separately if relevant or requested. In the proposal, please provide only relevant information that can be shared publicly.

### **Cost Share**

- Cost share is voluntary and not required and does not impact an applicant's eligibility.

### **Can the proposal mention activities that are supported by other donors, but are not allowed by USFWS?**

- No. All activities described in the proposal and indicated in the accompanying budget constitute the Federal award and project. The following items cannot be included in the Federal award either through direct or indirect support:
  - the purchase of firearms or ammunition;
  - gathering information by persons who conceal their true identity (e.g. informants);
  - buying or purchasing of intelligence, evidence or information or paying informants;
  - law enforcement operations that, to arrest suspects, prompt them to carry out illegal activities (entrapment); and
  - any activity that would circumvent sanctions, laws or regulations of either the U.S. or the country of proposed activity.

### **How to receive information on How To Apply for the African Elephant Conservation Fund?**

- <https://www.fws.gov/international/grants-and-reporting/how-to-apply.html>

**How to apply?**

- All applicants should apply through GrantSolutions.gov or if unable, Grants.gov.
- Applicants who are unable to submit applications through GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov may seek a waiver and obtain Service approval to apply via direct email to the program inbox. If you wish to seek a waiver from GrantSolutions.gov and Grants.gov, you must demonstrate that you have attempted to register in SAM and apply via Grants.gov or GrantSolutions.gov and attempted to resolve issues you experienced. This may include computer screen shots, email correspondence or other information obtained at the time of submission, before the stated deadline, that would support a waiver. Individual applicants who have received a waiver can send the application package via email to the following address: [mscf\\_africanelephant@fws.gov](mailto:mscf_africanelephant@fws.gov).