

GUIDELINE FOR NEF RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMME

NEF Research Grant Programme financially supports academic and scientific research that will deepen knowledge of the nature conservation in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. With the aim of strengthening research capability of young researchers in that region, grants are available only for individual researchers, but not for groups/organisations, to upgrade their skills, knowledge, and experience through their own research work.

1. GRANT SIZE AND DURATION

The maximum grant size in this programme is 500,000 Japanese yen per project for a maximum duration of two years.

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to receive a grant, applicants and their proposed research project must meet ALL the requirements listed below.

2.1 Eligible applicants

An applicant must:

- be a national of developing country in the Asia-Pacific region (see 3. *TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS* below);
- work full-time or be enrolled in a doctoral course, conducting research at a research institution or relevant organisation in one of the countries listed on 3. *TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS* below (Students in master's and bachelor's courses are ineligible);
- be a young researcher/scientist, whose age is under 40;
- have sufficient experience and skills in conducting and managing the proposed research;
- be able to communicate in English;
- not have another application to the NEF;
- not have another on-going NEF-funded project at the time of application submission; AND
- not have another NEF-funded project for the past two years.

2.2 Eligible research projects

A proposed research project must:

- be scientific research contributing to the NATURE CONSERVATION of the country where the applicant currently works or studies;
- put its main focus on LIVING ORGANISMS;
- be carried out in the country where the applicant currently works or studies;
- involve fieldwork for collecting data;
- be the applicant's own research work (team project is ineligible.);
- achieve its objective(s) and submit interim and/or final reports within a scheduled project period of not less than one (1) year and not more than two (2) years; AND
- be exclusively funded by the NEF Research Grant Programme, or co-funded with the applicant's institution.

Examples of the research fields SUPPORTED in the past:

- ecology, taxonomy, distribution, and current status of wildlife;
- biodiversity (e.g., species diversity, genetic diversity, ecosystem diversity);
- wild flora and fauna;
- gathering information on threatened species and for recovery of ecosystem;
- relationships between nature and humans (e.g., mutual interference, sustainable use of natural resources);
- economic valuation of natural environment; etc.

Examples of the projects DECLINED in the past:

- project lacking the viewpoint of nature conservation;
- project aiming to develop agricultural, forestry, and/or fisheries industries;
- project focusing on pollution problems;
- project focusing on conducting public awareness activities;
- project to be discussed and concluded only from interview results and/or reference;
- project unable to be handled by a researcher but by a large group of researchers; etc.

A list of awarded projects is available at <http://nagaofoundation.or.jp/e/research/awarded/index.html> in an excel file. Please check the list for understanding NEF's interest before preparing your application.

3. TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

The target countries in the Asia-Pacific region include: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Vietnam.

4. ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

4.1 Eligible expenses

- expendables necessary for field survey and analysis (e.g., sampling gear, reagent);
- local travel expenses for field trip (e.g., accommodation, food, transportation);
- reference materials (e.g., article, book);
- labour costs necessary for proposed research; and
- other expenses only when the NEF Secretariat approves.

4.2 Ineligible expenses

- salaries and tuition paid to the applicant, his/her assistants, and others involved in the research;
- renovation and installation of institution's facilities;
- equipment available through the applicant's institution and with high versatility (e.g., personal computer, computer software/accessory, analytical equipment, microscope, projector, printer, GPS, digital camera, vehicle, motorbike, etc.). Exception might be made only when the NEF Secretariat approves the importance of purchase of brand-new equipment;
- honoraria, consultation fees, and travel expenses paid to advisors and experts;

- participation fees to attend national and international workshops, conferences, and trainings;
- international travel expenses;
- expenses necessary for disseminating research results/findings;
- manuscript preparation and publication;
- expenses for the past activities already done;
- general administrative expenses and overheads; etc.

5. OBLIGATIONS OF GRANT RECIPIENTS

If granted, recipients should:

- conduct the approved research project in accordance with ethical standards as a responsible scientist;
- submit a detailed progress report, with photographs taken and a financial report, within one year after implementation of the approved research project; and
- submit a detailed final report, with photographs taken and a financial report, upon completion of the approved research project.

6. HOW TO APPLY

6.1 Know NEF Research Grant Programme

Please read this guideline “*Guideline for NEF Research Grant Programme*” to understand the programme. When filling out in application form, please follow the instruction inside the form. Both guideline and application form are available at our website (<http://nagaofoundation.or.jp/e/research/forms.html>).

6.2 What to submit

Applicants are required to submit the four (4) items below:

- one (1) completed **Application form** BOTH in MS WORD (for our screening purpose mentioned in 8. *SCREENING FOR PLAGIARISM* below) and PDF (for confirming signatures);
- a filled **Budget and timetable** in Excel;
- a filled **Applicant’s background**; and
- one (1) **Recommendation letter**.

If you wish, the following items are acceptable as supplementary materials: electronical map image(s) with its caption less than 700 KB in file size; and one (1) scientific paper, which has been published on peer-reviewed journal and is listed on ‘Selected publications’ in Section 3 CURRICULUM VITAE of application form. Other items will be discarded.

6.3 Where to submit

Required four (4) documents mentioned in 6.2 should be submitted to the NEF Secretariat by e-mail (secretariat@nagaofoundation.or.jp).

6.4 Application deadlines

Application deadlines for the year of 2023 are twice: **17 April 2023** for those research projects starting from August 2023; and **16 October 2023** for those research projects starting from February 2024. All the required documents mentioned in 6.2 must reach the NEF Secretariat before/on the

deadlines. Neither incomplete application documents nor delayed submission will be accepted.

7. EVALUATION/SELECTION

The NEF Secretariat will check applications whether all the requirements mentioned above are fulfilled. Only those qualified applications will be examined by the NEF Selection Committee considering the criteria below:

- relevance and importance to nature conservation;
- clearness of objectives and research questions/hypotheses;
- originality and quality of the proposed research;
- appropriateness and concreteness of methodology to achieve objectives and answer research questions/hypotheses;
- feasibility of the research design and schedule;
- reasonableness of the budget;
- applicant's past achievements/experience in related research; and
- recommender's statement on the applicant and application.

8. SCREENING FOR PLAGIARISM

Please note that applications will be screened for plagiarism using iThenticate plagiarism detection system during the selection process. The NEF Secretariat will reject applications leading to plagiarism or self-plagiarism.

9. RESULT ANNOUNCEMENT AND REMITTANCE

Result announcement will be made on our website by three (3) months after each deadline. Successful applicants will receive a letter of approval, report instructions, and account information form by e-mail. Fund remittance will be made as soon as receiving account information form.

Due to the high volume of applications received, the Secretariat will only contact the successful applicants and those ones who receive the Selection Committee's feedback. Thank you for your understanding.

*** Again, this is a grant opportunity for young researchers to enrich themselves as a scientist through their research projects. NEF, thus, expects all our applicants/recipients to understand and follow ethical standards in science as a professional scientist. Any improper attitudes, e.g., improper grant spending, fraudulent grant acquisition, research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, plagiarism), etc. are not acceptable and subject to penalty.

If you have any questions or concerns about our programmes, please feel free to contact the NEF Secretariat by e-mail (secretariat@nagaofoundation.or.jp).