

Call for proposals for the 2020 Capacity Enhancement Support Programme

GBIF, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, supports actions to enhance the capacity of countries and partner organizations that contribute to and benefit from GBIF as an international open data infrastructure for biodiversity, supporting research and promoting evidence-based decisions affecting life on Earth and sustainable human development.

The main goal of the Capacity Enhancement Support Programme (CESP) is to address specific capacity needs identified by GBIF Participants by facilitating collaboration at regional and global levels. The [GBIF Capacity Enhancement Framework](#) provides further information to guide applicants when preparing proposals.

CESP is open to [GBIF voting and associate Participants](#). Concept notes must be submitted through the [GBIF Grants Portal](#) by 02 February 2020.

Scope

This programme provides **cofunding to current** [GBIF Participants \(both voting and associate participants\)](#) for collaborative projects targeting capacity enhancement and exchange to strengthen the GBIF network. Projects must be implemented within a maximum of 12 months in the period between 01 August 2020 and 31 July 2021.

The maximum funding request is fifteen thousand euros (€15,000) per project involving partners located in one or two countries, and twenty-five thousand euros (€25,000) per project involving partners located in three or more countries.

GBIF invites Participants to present project proposals based on **one or more** of the following three types of action eligible for support. Please note that each type of action has an **indicative** funding limit: proposals intending to exceed these limits should include a justification for doing so.

1. **Mentoring activities:** Interactions among two or more Participants where the core objective is the transfer of information, technology, experience and best practices in small groups. *Indicative funding limit:* €15,000 per project.
2. **Support for regional events and training workshops:** Courses and workshops with a regional (multi-national) component to enhance the capacity of individuals or networks to contribute to and benefit from GBIF. *Indicative funding limit:* €15,000 per project.
3. **Documentation:** Production of key learning and promotional resources or their adaptation to the national or regional context (e.g. by translation or including local/regional perspectives). It is important to note that the GBIF Secretariat is actively coordinating a system for the development and update of documentation under the guidance of an editorial panel. The key features of this system include standardized documentation, routine updates, versioning, translations, community input, peer review, and searchable format. *Indicative funding limit:* €5,000 per project.

Suggested thematic focus for 2020

CESP focuses on enhancing the **long-term capacity of Participants** to benefit from and contribute to GBIF's mission to provide free and open access to biodiversity data. This call is designed to align with the [GBIF Capacity Enhancement Framework](#). The primary objective of CESP projects must target specific capacity needs identified by the Participants themselves to strengthen the GBIF network.

GBIF encourages all Participants to complete [capacity self-assessments](#) to help identify capacity strengths and needs. **All partners of projects invited to submit full proposals under the 2020 call for proposals are required to complete [capacity self-assessments](#).**

Applicants are strongly recommended to align their capacity enhancement proposals to one or more of the tasks in the “[GBIF Implementation Plan 2017-2021 and Annual Work Programme 2020](#)” (please refer to the “[Overview of 2020 Work Items](#)”). The degree of alignment to the GBIF work programme and its activities will be taken into account when evaluating the project. Please remember that the main objective of projects submitted to this call must always be enhancing capacity through one or more of the type of actions listed above.

Application process and timeline

Applications for grants from CESP follow a two-stage process:

1. The project lead submits a concept note through the [GBIF Grants Portal](#), which will be screened to ensure that it meets general eligibility criteria (see below) and that it falls within the scope of the programme. If it passes these tests, the concept note is reviewed independently by three assessors and scored against the following selection criteria:

- Relevance, urgency and scale of the targeted capacity needs
- Perceived effectiveness of the proposal to address the declared needs
- Expected value of the project's deliverables
- Likelihood of the project achieving sustainable results
- Cost-effectiveness (including factors such as the number of Participants benefiting from the project, matching funds leveraged, etc.)
- Alignment with the current GBIF Work Programme

A panel convened by GBIF Secretariat, including external experts, then evaluates the concept notes based on scoring and comments provided by the assessors, before recommending which applicants should be invited to submit a full proposal. In addition to the guidance provided by the assessors, this panel may consider the following:

- Geographic and thematic balance, to ensure that invited proposals meet broader objectives of facilitating collaboration at regional and global levels
- Expected benefits to the broader GBIF community
- Potential for concept notes with similar objectives, focus and/or overlapping partners to combine into a single submission at full proposal stage

2. Applicants recommended by the selection panel are invited to submit a full proposal through the [GBIF Grants Portal](#). The invitation may be accompanied by recommendations or specific conditions communicated by the selection panel. These may include feedback from assessors on the detail of the concept note, recommendations regarding the budget or suggestions relating to the possible pairing of the project with another submitted concept note. **The response to this feedback will be an additional criterion used to evaluate the full proposal.**

Full proposals undergo the same process as the concept note, i.e. independent review and scoring by three assessors, and evaluation by the selection panel. As in the first stage, final recommendations for funding may take account of geographic and thematic balance, as well as the balance between experienced and new project teams, to ensure the best overall impact of the annual funding round.

Timeline

- Project leads must submit concept notes by **02 February 2020** through the GBIF Grant Portal.
- Selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals by 19 April 2020.
- Following a final review and selection, funded projects are expected to start in August 2020 with a project implementation period of maximum 12 months (01 August 2020 – 31 July 2021).

General Eligibility Criteria

All activities funded under the CESP programme must comply with the following general eligibility criteria:

- Applicants must be in good standing with GBIF (i.e. all partners submitting the project proposal have no overdue or missing reports and/or deliverables from previous projects funded under a programme led by GBIF).
- Applications must be made by **representatives of current GBIF Participants (both voting and associated partners)**: Applications can be submitted by (1) a GBIF Head of delegation, (2) a GBIF Node manager, or (3) a representative of an institution located in a GBIF participant country **only** if the application includes a letter of endorsement from the GBIF Head of delegation or Node manager.
- Project proposals must be **jointly prepared by all the partners** involved in the project, with **one GBIF Participant acting as the project lead and main contact point**. We expect that the GBIF Participant acting as the main contact point is located in the country where the majority of the activities are scheduled to take place. Should this not be the case, a rationale explaining this decision is required in the concept note.
- All CESP funded activities must be not-for-profit.
- Complete concept notes and full proposals in English must be submitted through the [GBIF Grants Portal](#) by the stated deadlines.
- Applicants must commit cofunding (in-kind or cash) to their projects and provide details of this cofunding in their concept notes and full proposals. Cofunding refers to real costs that are incurred by the applicants while executing the funded project's activities. These could be in-kind contributions that directly contribute to the project activities (like staff salaries, travel costs etc.) or any in-cash contributions to CESP activities from other funding sources. The level of this cofunding will be taken into account when evaluating the proposal's value for money.
- Funding provided under CESP can only be used for expenses relating to GBIF Participants and the three types of action (mentoring activities, support for regional events and training workshops, and documentation). Overheads¹ and expenses related to the purchase of hardware, licences for commercial software, or physical computer networking setup (e.g. internet access) may not be charged to CESP. Ineligible expenses may be included in the projects if they are funded through other sources.

¹ Overheads include costs that cannot be directly attributed to the activities of the project, e.g. bank fees, exchange rate fees, Value Added Tax (VAT) and postal/courier service costs

- All proposed project activities must take place between **01 August 2020 – 31 July 2021**. It is recommended to take the [general calendar of GBIF-related activities](#) into account when planning events.
- If invited to submit a full proposal, all project partners must confirm their participation in writing and include this in the application.
- All project partners will be required to complete a [capacity self-assessment](#) when preparing full proposals and as part of the reporting process.

About the GBIF Grants Portal

Applicants should [create an account in the GBIF Grants Portal](#) as early as possible, as the account verification process can take up to 2 working days. Please send any questions to CESP@gbif.org. You should receive a response within 3 working days.

Important links

[GBIF Grants Portal \(https://gbif.fluxx.io\)](https://gbif.fluxx.io)

[Frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#)