



2018 Bats for the Future Fund Request for Proposals (RFP)

Applicant Webinar [[Register Here](#)]: **Friday, March 23 at 1 PM Eastern Time**
Proposal Due Date: **Thursday, May 3, 2018 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), is soliciting proposals to test or deploy white-nose syndrome (WNS) treatments and management tools that lead to solutions to combat WNS and the fungal pathogen *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (*Pd*), as the causal agent. The program seeks to promote the survival of bats in North America.

The Bats for the Future Fund (BFF) will award up to approximately \$1.5 million in grants. The USFWS, which leads the national response for combatting WNS, is providing seed funding for the BFF. Additional important funding is provided by the USFS and Southern Company. The grant program will also annually match federal funds with other sources of public and private dollars to fight the epizootic disease that is devastating bat populations across the continent.

The goals of the BFF are to:

- Slow or halt the spread of WNS in North America
- Promote survival and recovery of (WNS-affected) bats

The objectives of the BFF are to:

- Advance field treatments and management tools that minimize declines in WNS-affected bat populations by funding actions that provide the greatest potential to improve survival and recovery of affected populations, or prevent exposure of bats to *Pd*.
- Fund innovative research leading to development and deployment of treatments and management tools for WNS that will perpetuate long-term, stable, and viable populations of bats.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL FOCUS

BFF grants will be awarded preferentially for projects that focus on development and deployment of field treatments and management tools for WNS at the leading edge of its march across North America, as well as work in other regions of North America that advance BFF goals and objectives as stated in this RFP.

Applicants should review [Defeating White-Nose Syndrome: A Vision for the Future](#) from the interagency White-nose Syndrome Steering Committee that outlines a strategic vision to defeat the

disease and describes a regional strategy with disease management options varying by geographic location.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The BFF will support research that addresses the priorities stated below. Proposals that focus on treating or managing the host, pathogen, and/or environment to reduce spread and impacts of WNS will be considered. The topics that follow each category listed below do not represent a comprehensive list of what may be funded, rather they are examples of the types of activities for which we see a need. Safety and feasibility at individual through ecosystem scales will be evaluated for all proposed actions. All applications must describe the benefits and risks of the proposed management solutions, including non-target effects to organisms and the environment.

- Biological or chemical controls, which include, but are not limited to antimicrobial or antifungal agents, antagonistic pathogens (mycoviruses, partitiviruses), probiotics, bacteria or fungi that are capable of reducing, inhibiting or preventing the growth and/or establishment of *Pd*.
- Vaccines or other immune-modulating techniques to reduce host susceptibility to WNS.
- Genetic/genomic manipulations, or other molecular technologies, that reduce *Pd*'s ability to proliferate, survive, spread, and/or infect bats.
- Development of scalable delivery systems and implementation, and/or advancement of registration of management solutions to reduce impacts of WNS on bat populations.
- Development of habitat modification or amelioration strategies that result in guidance or direct action to improve survival of WNS-affected bats.
- Testing field efficacy and feasibility across varying environmental and biological settings or using treatment agents and/or management strategies in combination or under varying conditions.
- Innovative proposals that are exploratory in nature in order to produce critical “proof of concept” information about the potential efficacy and application of field treatments and management tools to improve survival of WNS-affected bats or promote recovery of affected populations.

Competitive proposals will aim to develop management solutions for WNS with revolutionary tools and techniques to minimize short and long-term impacts of the disease. Proposed treatments may involve ecological, molecular, synthetic, biochemical, mechanical, and other strategies that reduce the impacts of WNS on bats and/or demonstrate new disinfection products or procedures to minimize reservoirs of *Pd* in hibernacula.

Applicants are encouraged to consider cross-disciplinary and innovative approaches to solving challenges associated with deployment and management. Collaborations (e.g., across disciplines, countries, academic institutions, agencies, etc.) that leverage the best thinking may include modern design systems like makerspaces or hackathons.

Proposals to develop proof of concept within a year for such treatment and management strategies will be considered, and can be part of a staged study design. Laboratory studies to test safety,

efficacy, *and* feasibility of innovative solutions for managing or preventing spread of WNS are also eligible.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the BFF has a list of metrics in the Easygrants online application for applicants to choose from for reporting if successfully awarded funding. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table below). If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided below, please include it in your proposal narrative.

Project Activity	Project Metric	Additional Guidance
BMP development	BFF – BMP development - # BMP recommendations developed	Enter the number of BMP recommendations developed
Monitoring	BFF - Monitoring - # sites being monitored	Enter the number of bat sites being monitored related to hibernacula, maternity colonies, captive colonies, treatment efficacy, or collateral effects, etc.
Research	BFF - Research - # research studies completed	Enter the number of research studies completed
Research	BFF - Research - # studies used to inform management	Enter the number of studies completed whose findings lead to direct management recommendations. In the notes section discuss publication goals
Survivorship	BFF - Survivorship – Mortality rate	Describe the % decrease in mortality rate demonstrated by your study. In the notes please indicate the scale of the impact (e.g., site, county, etc.).
Disease control	BFF - Disease control - # individuals protected	Enter the number of individuals receiving treatment directly and the overall population effect (if applicable). In the notes, break out the number of individuals by species being affected/treated. Consider measurement of disease incidence and prevalence to determine success of disease control studies.
Disease control	BFF – Disease control - # of species benefitting	Enter the number of species that directly benefit from your project. In the notes, provide a list of the species affected.
Disease control	BFF - Disease control - # sites protected	Enter the number of sites being treated. In the notes, elaborate on the number of sites treated relative to overall population effect.

Disease control	BFF – Disease control - # of sites with persistent populations	Enter the number of sites that have persistent bat populations. In the notes, indicate % of these sites out of the total number of sites that received treatment from your project.
Disease control	BFF – Disease control - # of sites that remain uncontaminated	Enter the number of sites that remain uncontaminated by <i>Pd</i> within your study area.
Disease control	BFF – Disease control – fungal load rate	Describe the % decrease in prevalence of <i>Pd</i> demonstrated by your study. In the notes please indicate the scale of the impact (e.g., site, county, etc.).

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, federal government agencies, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, tribal entities, research and educational institutions, and for-profit entities.
- Ineligible applicants include unincorporated individuals.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- The following types of proposals are not eligible for funding under the BFF:
 - Species composition, distribution, movement and habitat-use studies
 - Monitoring studies unrelated to the development of field treatments or management tools for WNS
 - Development of WNS detection methods or tools, unless directly linked to deployment of a treatment
 - Outreach and education programs
- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.
- Proposals requesting funds below the minimum, and above the maximum allowable award amount will be considered ineligible.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

Up to \$1.5 million is expected to be available for projects in 2018. Grants will range from \$50,000 to \$400,000; however, the average grant size is anticipated to be below \$200,000. Awards above \$200,000 will be reserved for treatments that have demonstrated the potential to be eligible for

Federal and state approval for deployment within the grant performance period and where widespread effects are possible within one year after deployment.

Match: Applicants must contribute match valued at a minimum of 50 percent of the total grant amount requested from the BFF (not the total project budget). For example, if you are requesting \$100,000 from the BFF, the required match is \$50,000. Applicants are encouraged to maximize possible matching funds and exceed the minimum 50 percent requirement, as described in the “Evaluation Criteria” section of this RFP.

Matching contributions may include federal and nonfederal cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. Eligible indirect costs (that would not be paid with requested grant funding) may be applied as match. Please review the NFWF [Indirect Cost Policy for Applicants](#) for specific information about using indirect costs as match.

Grant Period: The start date for projects can be back-dated to May 3, 2018 in order to seek reimbursement for costs already incurred or to capture matching contributions. Projects must start within six months of award and be completed within two and no more than three years after notification of grant award. Notification of award is projected to be mid-September 2018.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the criteria below. During the review period, NFWF staff may contact applicants with specific questions regarding the proposed scope of work and/or budget.

Project Goals, Priorities and Objectives – Project contributes to the goals and objectives defined by the BFF and has specific, performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the priorities outlined in the BFF Request for Proposal.

Technical Merit – Project is technically sound and feasible and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline to achieve performance metrics. For awards above \$200,000, treatments have demonstrated potential to be eligible for Federal and state approval for deployment within the grant performance period and where widespread effects are possible within one year after deployment.

Complementarity – Project builds on previous research efforts to positively affect treatment or management strategies and conservation of bats and management of WNS.

Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with OMB Uniform Guidance as applicable ([OMB Uniform Guidance](#)). Budget provides a breakdown of each budget line item and includes a justification of the cost basis for each line item, as well as a brief justification for why the line item is essential to the project. For example, proposal lists personnel

on an individual line item basis and provides a justification of hours or percentage time devoted to the project, and an explanation of how personnel will contribute to the project.

Qualifications –The applicant, organization, and partner experience is relevant to delivery of the project, and/or entity has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation projects with specific measurable results.

Transferability – Project has potential and a plan to transfer project results to real-world bat conservation and/or to be scaled-up (including providing cost estimates associated with scaling up) and integrated into government programs and policies. Project includes a plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

Match – Matching contributions will be evaluated by comparing total funding request from BFF and the dollar value (in-kind or cash) of the funds being provided by the applicant. The ratio of matching funds offered is one criterion considered during the review process, and projects that meet or exceed a 1:1 match ratio will be more competitive.

OTHER

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not necessarily constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF’s financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

Receiving Award Funds – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

Regulatory Compliance Requirements – Projects selected for an award will likely include test materials that are subject to regulation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, pesticides), U.S. Health and Human Services, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, drugs) or the U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Veterinary Biologics (Virus, Serum and Toxin Act, vaccines). Proposals must demonstrate that the Principal Investigator understands the regulation of their test material and a present a plan for meeting regulatory requirements. Some information concerning some regulatory authorities can be found in the publication [*A Decision Support Tool for Determining Federal Regulatory Authority over Products for Vertebrate Animals.*](#)

In addition, proposals **must** demonstrate a knowledge of and a plan for complying with the following Federal Acts: National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and the National Historic Preservation Act. All regulatory requirements must be met prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Follow the link to download the compliance evaluation [templates](#) that must be completed and submitted to FWS if your project is selected to receive a grant. These completed templates will be used by FWS to determine compliance with the above acts.

Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. For most applicants, documentation of regulatory compliance will need to be developed immediately following award notification, and prior to execution of a grant agreement and distribution of any funds. As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state or local requirements.

Permits – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements and permission to work on land managed by public or private landowners or managers. In some cases, if a permit pre-application meeting has not been completed, NFWF may require successful applicants to complete such a meeting prior to grant award. Applicants will be required to provide specific information about study sites, species used, sample sizes, and other criteria needed to comply with regulations. NFWF encourages applicants to contact relevant authority(ies) in advance of completing a proposal to ensure the support of proposed work.

Animal Care - Principal Investigators will be expected to maintain compliance with the Animal Welfare Act and its regulations with satisfactory review and approval of animal activities in research protocols by a USDA-registered and/or PHS-assured Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Use of animal subjects must be appropriate for the current state of knowledge. Applicants must provide a clear description of how study animals will be selected and what their final disposition will be. Applicants must justify the need to use terminal sampling if that is the expected outcome.

Federal Funding – Federally-funded projects must operate in compliance with the [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable to the applicant. The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the Program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information: [Bats for the Future Fund](#).

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| ✓ Applicant Webinar | March 23, 2018, 1:00pm Eastern |
| ✓ Full Proposal Due Date | May 3, 2018, 11:59pm Eastern |
| ✓ Review Period | May – July, 2018 |

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through NFWF's Easygrants system.

1. Go to easygrants.nfwf.org to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information.
2. Once on your homepage, click the "Apply for Funding" button and select this RFP's "Funding Opportunity" from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A PDF version of this RFP can be [downloaded here](#).

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be [downloaded here](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's "[Applicant Information](#)" page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

Michelle Katz, Program Coordinator

202-595-2413

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For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org

Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday–Friday.

Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to and a description of the issue.