

**PTES Conservation Insight Grants
Guidance for Applicants
March 2026**

1. Purpose of PTES Conservation Insight Grants (CIGs)

Funds will be awarded for work that aims to:

Generate the scientific evidence that will facilitate the conservation of a species. The evidence may include testing a conservation intervention to address a particular threat, or answer a key conservation question, which will enable conservationists to undertake critical conservation action. Recently funded projects include trialling livestock insurance schemes, learning more about dietary needs to inform habitat creation, testing wildlife bridge designs and testing conservation translocation methods.

High priority projects include:

- Gathering evidence needed to undertake necessary mitigation work
- Using scientific evidence to get changes made to local, national or international policy
- Devising and testing a new methodology for monitoring a species or group of species

Priority will be given to those projects that focus on sound research or conservation work that is likely to lead directly to practical conservation outcomes with a lasting benefit to the species and habitat concerned.

Projects that require funds to promote, within local communities and or policy makers, the dissemination/public awareness of conservation strategies based on sound research will also be considered.

Preference is given to projects with outcomes that are clear and sustainable.

Low priority projects would include:

- General survey work to determine population status of a species in an area
- Local habitat restoration or conservation translocations that are unlikely to impact the national or global status of a species.
- Land acquisition, unless in exceptional circumstances.

Recent successful projects can be found at www.ptes.org/grants/worldwide-projects/

2. Criteria

- Applications are welcomed from scientific researchers and those working in the field of practical conservation. The project leader should be based either within an NGO or a university research department.
- These grants are suitable for research or conservation projects that focus on one or more endangered species, or their habitat.
- Priority will be given to projects working on those species **classified by the IUCN Red List as Endangered, Critically Endangered and Extinct in the wild**. However, applications for work on species listed as Vulnerable and Near Threatened will also be considered.
- Applications will only be considered from those working in countries classified by the World Bank as low and middle-income. Please go to the **World Bank web page** to check if your country is eligible.
- Preference is given to applicants working in their own country rather than UK or other nationals working abroad.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have a proven, successful history working on the species and/or in that region.
- The project should be up to two years in duration.
- Applicants may apply for grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 per annum, up to a maximum total of £20,000 for the full grant.
- The project should have a clear end point. If aspects of a project are likely to continue over the long-term, the applicant should make clear how they will be funded after grant completion.
- The Trust will consider funding a project in its entirety or jointly with other bodies or organisations. We are prepared to award funding subject to other funding bids being successful.
- The Trust will only transfer funds to an organisational bank account (we will not transfer grant funds to a personal bank account)

What will not be considered for funding:

- Applications from local or national governments
- Applications from one-person bands (applicants must be part of an organisation)
- Applications for work on bird species, as there are other specific grants for this work
- Student fees or living costs for any level of course
- Projects that are part of an undergraduate or Masters course
- Core salary or administrative costs of an organisation unrelated to the project
- University overhead costs
- Work on an alien species to a country unless it is likely to result in benefit to a native species
- Applications for projects run by western-based NGOs such as Raleigh International, Frontier, EarthWatch.

3. Application process and timetable

We use a two-stage application process for our Conservation Insight Grants:

Stage 1 – Pre-application form. A short standardised form designed to reduce the workload for applicants. Forms from eligible organisations will be reviewed by PTES staff. Selected applicants will then be invited to submit a full project proposal. Up to 20 applications will be invited to proceed to the Stage 2 project applications.

Stage 2 – Full project proposal. Applicants will need to complete the full online application form which requires more detailed information about the project. Before doing this, they will be invited to attend an online training session on Conservation Evidence and PTES will also provide guidance on project methodology and development if needed. These proposals will be assessed by PTES trustees at a meeting in October and approx. 5-6 applications will be awarded funding.

At both stages of the process, project applicants (both successful and unsuccessful) will receive notification of the results by email to the project leader.

Due to the anticipated high number of applications, we will not be able to provide individual feedback at Stage 1.

The provisional timetable for applications is

Deadline for Stage 1 pre-applications	28th May 2026
Announcement of Stage 1 results	Early July 2026
Deadline for Stage 2 full project applications	27th August 2026
Announcement of Stage 2 results	Early November 2026

4. Submission of pre-applications

Pre-applications should be submitted by **23.59 (UK time) on Thursday 28th May 2026**.

1. Make sure you have carefully read these guidelines, as well as the feedback from last year's applications and download the Word version of the pre-application form to draft your answers before submission. All documents can be downloaded at www.ptes.org/grants/apply-grant/worldwide-grant-criteria/
2. Complete and submit the online pre-application form at www.ptes.org/grants/apply-grant/worldwide-grant-criteria/ by 28th May
3. Your application will be assessed, and you will be notified in July whether your application has been progressed to the second round

All related questions may be e-mailed to grants@ptes.org.

5. Use of Artificial Intelligence

By applicants

As a funder we want to understand how your project will address a critical threat affecting your chosen species. This specific information is unlikely to be successfully produced by AI and therefore the project should be designed by you and your team without using AI.

We also want your passion to shine through in your application. Using AI can make your application more generic and similar in both language and the points being made to others being submitted to us. This can make it more difficult to understand what is different or special about an applicant, or the work they are describing.

AI tools can also generate inaccurate or misleading content and these are often obvious when reviewing applications.

For the above reasons, we strongly discourage using AI to design a project and complete our application form.

However, we recognise that AI tools can support some elements of the grant application process, such as if English is not your first language, however, we would still recommend asking a colleague or friend who speaks English to check that nothing has been lost in translation after you have used the translation tool. AI tools can also be used to summarise text that has already been written to fit a set word count.

If you do use AI, it is your responsibility to ensure that all information provided is accurate and honest and that the actions proposed are realistic.

By PTES

We do not use AI to assess grant applications or for decision making.

As both a funder and conservation organisation, we are still learning more about and exploring the potential implications of AI tools. We anticipate our position may evolve along with the technology.

Information for applicants who are invited to proceed to Stage 2

6. Referee criteria

If you successfully progress to stage 2, you will need to provide two letters of support from referees, professional or academic.

- One should know you personally and can comment on your ability to carry out the project.
- The other referee must be an expert in the species you are hoping to work on (preferably sitting on the IUCN Species Specialist Committee). They do not need to know you personally but must be able to comment on your methodology and the needs of the species in terms of long-term conservation.
- Both referees must be external and **not work within your organisation**.
- Each referee will need to email a letter of support by the application deadline to grants@ptes.org. The project title should be included in the subject heading. Emails should be submitted from an **institutional email account**. References sent via web-based services such as Yahoo, Gmail or Hotmail cannot be accepted.

7. Evidence and testing actions

As an Evidence Champion of the Conservation Evidence Project, a University of Cambridge initiative, PTES would like all our grantees to check the evidence for their proposed projects on the Conservation Evidence website. This will help us to fund the projects with the highest chance of success. We also encourage the conservationists that we fund to test their work and publish it in Conservation Evidence's journal (or elsewhere), so we can be constantly improving conservation science and learning.

This year we will be asking for more information about the types of evidence applicants have consulted when designing their project and how they plan to test any conservation actions in the full project proposal.

Evidence sources

Evidence is any relevant information used to assess one or more hypotheses related to a question of interest.

Evidence sources: synopsis, scientific paper (peer reviewed), scientific report (non-peer reviewed), indigenous and traditional knowledge, expert opinion, own data or monitoring, personal experience

- Synopsis (or synthesis and summaries): systematic reviews, meta-analyses, websites showing summaries of primary research (e.g., Conservation Evidence).
- Scientific paper (peer reviewed): documented, peer-reviewed and published scientific research paper
- Scientific report (non-peer reviewed): primary research data, reports, books, or other data that are not published in a formally peer-reviewed scientific journal

- Indigenous and traditional knowledge: knowledge passed down through generations
- Expert opinion: an expert's or group of experts' (ideally named) opinion
- Own data or monitoring: internal primary research, reports, monitoring, notes, or data that is unpublished or private
- Personal experience: undocumented knowledge that is simply known but difficult to attribute to a source or mechanism

Types of evidence: Systematic review, Experimental, Review, Observational, Expert Opinion
Anecdotal

- Systematic review: brings together all the published evidence for a certain topic using a standardised methodology (e.g. using PRISMA checklists and guidelines)
- Experimental: data and observations are obtained through scientific experiments to support or refute a hypothesis or theory
- Review: brings together some evidence for a certain topic using a non-systematic approach
- Observational: data and observations are obtained during studies without an experimental intervention
- Expert Opinion: the opinion of one or more, ideally named, experts on a topic
- Anecdotal: a person's own personal experience, not necessarily reflective of typical experiences

Table 1. How evidence can be described for an assumption/action being tested

Evidence source	Type of evidence	Direction and strength of results	Relevance (L/M/H)	Evidence quality (L/M/H)
Assumption	Burning will promote native woodland regeneration			
Personal experience	Observational	Low regeneration when sites far from seed trees	High	Medium
Scientific paper	Experimental	Burning strongly increases rates of natural regeneration in this habitat type	High	High
Assumption	Livestock-guarding dogs will reduce predation by wolves			
Peer-reviewed paper (Treves et al. 2016)	Review	Review found 2 experimental tests that showed guard dogs were effective at preventing attacks on livestock	High	High
Practitioners' beliefs	Anecdotal	Several local shepherds say predation has increased in recent years, linked to wetter spring weather	Medium	Low

Testing conservation actions

A conservation action or intervention is anything you might do to manage, protect, enhance or restore wildlife or ecosystems. Actions include types of habitat or species management, methods of species or site protection, methods of controlling invasive species, species reintroduction, captive breeding, legislation, and education programmes

For any conservation action you are thinking of testing, it's important to:

- find out what has already been tested (Conservation Evidence has summarised documented evidence about the effectiveness of over 3,000 actions)
- decide if the test is appropriate
- and if so plan how to effectively collect the data needed to test the action.

Table 2. Some possible questions for grant applicants to answer to identify whether a test is appropriate, with an example.

Questions	Example from a project looking at the effectiveness of livestock corrals to prevent snow leopard predation
What is the exact action to be tested?	Erect a tall predator proof fence to protect livestock
What difference will knowing the answer to the experiment make to the future effectiveness of your management?	Reduce livestock predation by snow leopards and reduce human/wildlife conflict in the area.
Have you checked the existing evidence? Has the experiment previously been carried out?	Yes, some examples in other countries that suggest it might work, but none specifically for snow leopards and in this habitat type (e.g. high mountain pastures) so unclear if it would be effective in this case.
Will there be a control or a comparison? If so, give details.	Tall predator proof enclosures will be installed for some livestock herds but not others, across a number of areas to make it a replicated controlled trial. Information on livestock kills will also collected using cameras before fence installation, so that before and after data can be compared.
Will there be replication? If so, give details.	Five tall enclosures will be built and then five control herds with no enclosures will also be monitored
How will it be carried out?	A 2m high wire mesh fence will be installed in five locations.

<p>What data will be collected, when and by whom?</p>	<p>Predation data will be collected using camera traps before installation of the fences. Camera footage will be collected by the project team each month for 6 months.</p> <p>After the corrals are built, camera traps will be used to monitor how many livestock are killed by snow leopards (or how many attempts there are by snow leopards) in each location. The camera footage will be collected by the project team each month for 6 months.</p>
<p>What analysis will be done and by whom?</p>	<p>The camera footage will be recorded in a spreadsheet by the project team. It can then be compared between locations with predator proof fences and those locations without.</p>
<p>Have you considered potential risks, trade-offs or negative impacts?</p>	<p>Fences can be problematic if not well designed. Camera footage will be reviewed for potential risks or injuries to livestock and wildlife, and we will collect data on this also from discussions and interviews with the local communities.</p>

8. Terms and conditions of accepting the grant

All successful applicants will be required to comply with the following Terms and Conditions.

1. An interim report is expected at the end of each year. See separate Interim report template for information on what to include in interim reports.
2. A full report with an executive summary (one side A4) must be submitted as soon as possible after completion of the work. With the consent of the project co-ordinator, and unless the report is confidential, the Trust reserves the right to put either the full report and/ or the summary (both provided by the project co-ordinator) on the Trust website for general information. See separate Final Report template for information on what to include in final reports.
3. The project coordinator, or an appropriate colleague, will make all reasonable effort to respond to PTES in the event of media interest or in generating media interest in the work funded by the Trust.
4. The project coordinator, or an appropriate colleague, will notify PTES of any media engagement during the project (filming, social media etc) and will seek sign off from PTES for any press releases about the project before they are sent out.
5. The Trust's logo must be on any press releases sent out relating to the work funded by PTES, and a draft sent to the PTES for comment/to add a quote, before release.
6. The financial support given by People's Trust for Endangered Species must be acknowledged in all reports, posters and papers written as a result of the work.
7. If, for any reason, the project is cancelled, all unspent monies must be returned to PTES.
8. People's Trust for Endangered Species reserves the right to repurpose any equipment bought as part of the project if not longer used by the project
9. If for any reason the programme is delayed, confirmation of the revised schedule should be sought from PTES.

10. A summary of the work may be written for distribution to all supporters of the charity with a view to fundraising and the Trust will seek the co-operation of the applicant in its preparation. Similarly, on completion of the work, a short report may be prepared for the Trust's supporters.
11. If possible, applicants are asked to provide images to be used by PTES to highlight the work being funded, to help fundraise and to illustrate the project on the Trust's website.