

## **GUIDELINE FOR NEF RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMME**

NEF Research Grant Programme financially supports academic and scientific research that aims to understand nature, ecosystem, and biodiversity and contribute to conservation actions based on scientific data in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The programme is designed to enhance the research capability of young researchers in that region, and applicants are limited to individual researchers who prepare proposal but not to groups or organisations. We expect our applicants to take this opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge and enrich their experience through their own research work.

### **1. GRANT SIZE AND DURATION**

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The maximum grant size in this programme is 1,000,000 Japanese yen per project for a maximum duration of two years.

### **2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

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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);
- be either of the following:
  - ① a researcher who has at least three (3) years of research experience and sufficient achievement in the field of his/her study and works full-time at a research institution or relevant organisation locating in one of the countries listed on 3. *TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS* below, OR
  - ② a full-time doctoral student who enrolls at a research institution locating in one of the countries listed on 3. *TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS* below;
- be a young researcher/scientist, whose age is under forty (40);
- have research experience and skills sufficient to conduct and manage the proposed research;
- be able to communicate in English;
- not have another application to the NEF;
- not have another ongoing 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.); AND
- be exclusively funded by the NEF Research Grant Programme.

#### **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 an ecosystem;
- relationships between nature and humans (e.g., mutual interference, sustainable use of natural resources, wildlife management);
- economic valuation of the natural environment for conservation action; 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 environmental pollution problems, public health, and climate change economics;
- project focusing on mainly public awareness activities;
- project to be discussed and concluded only from interview results and/or reference;
- project unable to be handled by an individual researcher but by a large group of researchers; etc.

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

### **3. TARGET COUNTRIES AND REGIONS**

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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**

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#### **4.1 Eligible expenses**

- expendables necessary for field survey and analysis (e.g., sampling gear, reagent);
- local travel expenses for the field trip (e.g., accommodation, food, transportation);
- reference materials (e.g., article, book);
- labour costs necessary for the proposed research (e.g., local guides/porters, field assistants); 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 the 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.). An exception might be made only when the NEF

Secretariat approves the importance of the 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;
- publication costs
  - \*\*\* NEF offers financial supports to publish research findings in different programmes after completion of the proposed research. If interested, please see **Grant for Submission/Publication Fees** for submitting a scientific paper or **Publication Programme** for printing a scientific book);
- expenses for the past activities already done;
- general administrative expenses and overheads; etc.

## 5. OBLIGATIONS OF GRANT RECIPIENTS

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If granted, recipients should:

- conduct the approved research project following 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

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### 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 instructions inside the form. Both the guideline and the application form are available on our website (<https://www.nagaofoundation.or.jp/e/research/research.html> ).

### 6.2 What to submit

Applicants are required to submit the five (5) documents below:

- two (2) copies, one in MS Word and the other in PDF, of a completed **Application form**;
- 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: electronic map image(s), with its caption, less than 700 KB in file size; and one (1) scientific paper, which has been published in a peer-reviewed journal and is listed on ‘4. Selected publications’ of **Applicant’s background**.

Other items will be discarded.

### 6.3 Where to submit

Required five (5) 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 2024 are twice: **16 April 2024 at 10:00 AM in JST** for those research projects starting from/after August 2024 and **15 October 2024 at 10:00 AM in JST** for those research projects starting from/after February 2025. All the required documents mentioned in 6.2 must reach the NEF Secretariat by the deadline. Neither incomplete application documents nor delayed submissions will be accepted.

### **7. EVALUATION/SELECTION**

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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 and experience in related research; and
- recommender's statement on the applicant and application.

### **8. SCREENING FOR PLAGIARISM**

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Please note that applications will be screened for plagiarism using the 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**

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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 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 professional scientists. 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](mailto:secretariat@nagaofoundation.or.jp)).