

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING FOR SYNTAX FUNDING**

### **OBJECTIVES**

#### **Aim**

The Research Councils' Systematics and Taxonomy Research Scheme is designed to provide short-term funding for research in systematics and taxonomy. The initiative is intended to support preliminary research that will form the basis of novel responsive mode proposals with a substantial systematics/taxonomy component.

#### **Long-Term Objectives**

- To stimulate the submission of high quality taxonomy and systematics-related research proposals to the UK's Research Councils.
- To improve representation of systematics and taxonomy in the UK Research Council's portfolio.

#### **Short-Term Objectives**

- At least 50% of SynTax projects will lead to a full responsive mode application to either BBSRC or NERC within 30 months of project start.
- Follow on full responsive mode applications will achieve no less than the average Research Council success rate.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

- The Administrative Lead for each proposal must be in full-time academic employment within the UK and be eligible to hold a Research Council grant.
- Applications with a taxonomy component are particularly welcomed.
- Collaborative applications are encouraged, where appropriate.
- Resubmissions of unsuccessful CoSyst applications, modified where appropriate, are allowed.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

- The proposal must be excellent science and offer a high probability of the applicant submitting a responsive mode proposal to a UK Research Council within 30 months of project start and of a publication or other appropriate output arising from the research.
- The proposed research must be within the remit of BBSRC or NERC.
- Applications need not be hypothesis-driven but must demonstrate excellent science pertaining to systematics/taxonomy.
- Eligible costs include directly incurred costs associated with acquisition of preliminary data. These may include consumables, travel and subsistence associated with fieldwork including vehicle hire, travel and subsistence associated with visits to collaborators essential to the project, contribution to equipment charges, purchase of small items of equipment and provision of computing facilities and/or licences. Other eligible costs include short-term employment of research staff, and temporary field or laboratory assistance. Resources may also be sought to support existing junior Post-Doctoral Research Assistants, technical and support staff or Post-Graduate Students during laboratory exchanges, sample acquisition and the generation of preliminary data. Please note that this scheme does not support requests for funds to attend conferences and workshops. Overheads cannot be included in project budgets.

- Grants will be in the range of £5-30k, with an indicative range of £10–20k. The sum requested should be for the amounts required to perform the project and all requests should be fully justified on the proforma.
- Project duration will be up to 24 months.

Defra has offered to contribute additional funding for the Scheme. These funds will be used to support taxonomic or systematic-related research that increases the stock of knowledge on Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/NewPriorityList.aspx>. Relevant applications should provide details of which UK Priority Species are included and how the research will improve our ability to conserve these species. Applications which focus on UK Priorities Species will be subject to the same selection criteria (including project size and duration) as any other application under the SynTax scheme.

## **THE APPLICATION FORM**

- Only electronic applications are accepted. Electronic application forms are available at the awards pages of the Systematics Association <http://www.systass.org/>
- Applicants clicking on a field in the online form will see a text box with further guidance of the form's requirements.
- In the \*Details of proposed project\* field, applicants should upload a single document of no more than THREE A4 pages in length. The document can be in Word or pdf format.
- The document should include no more than two full pages of text, though a third page can be used to include figures and/or tables. The project proposal must include the following project details: background, aims, methods and justification for the importance of the work.