



Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot

Information for CEPF Applicants Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

- **What is CEPF?**

⇒ Established in 2000, the [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund \(CEPF\)](#) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, and the World Bank. Following a first investment in the Caribbean Islands (2010-2016), CEPF returns to the region for a second investment through a five-year programme (2021-2026) of grant-making and capacity building. For more information, visit the [CEPF website](#).

- **What is the Regional Implementation Team (RIT)?**

⇒ The [Caribbean Natural Resources Institute \(CANARI\)](#) is the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the CEPF Caribbean investment. The RIT supports civil society organisations to design, implement and replicate successful conservation projects in line with CEPF's strategy for the region, as outlined in the CEPF Ecosystem Profile. The RIT also manages the CEPF small grant mechanism, monitors and evaluates all grants and supports the CEPF Secretariat in portfolio level monitoring and evaluation. Visit the [RIT project page](#) for more information.

- **What types of grants can I apply for?**

⇒ You can apply for two types of grants:

- *Large grants*: > US\$50,000
- *Small grants*: US\$5,000 and US\$50,000

- **What are the eligible countries/geographies?**

⇒ The targeted countries under CEPF Caribbean Islands Phase II are Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Eligible countries and geographies are different for each call for proposals, however; review the call for proposals document to confirm the sites and conservation corridors eligible under a particular call. The full list of priority sites and conservation corridors targeted during the investment period is available [here](#).

- **Is my organisation eligible?**

⇒ CEPF was formed to champion biodiversity by delivering the financial resources of global donors to civil society groups, who then carry out the conservation work themselves. From CEPF's perspective, civil society includes nongovernmental organizations, communities,

Indigenous people's organisations, universities and small businesses, among others. To learn more about the eligibility criteria, visit the [CEPF website](#).

- **Does CEPF fund research?**
 - ⇒ CEPF does not fund academic research. Research components of projects must be action-oriented and must feed into on-the-ground conservation action and management.
- **Does CEPF cover salary expenses?**
 - ⇒ Yes, CEPF grants will cover salary costs for positions necessary to fulfil project goals. The percentage of salary covered must be commensurate with the level of effort required to fulfil project goals.
- **Can the same organisation apply for several grants/respond to several calls?**
 - ⇒ Yes. There is no limit on the number of proposals an organisation can submit; just be sure your organisation has the capacity to implement what it is proposing to do. Visit the [CEPF website](#) for future call for proposals announcements.
- **Can an organisation with headquarters outside of the eligible countries apply?**
 - ⇒ Yes, however, proposed activities must be carried out in the [priority sites and conservation corridors](#).
- **Can individuals apply?**
 - ⇒ No, CEPF only provides support to registered civil society organisations. Individuals must be affiliated with a registered organisation.
- **Can government agencies be partners?**
 - ⇒ Yes, partnerships are encouraged. However, funds cannot be allocated to, or administered by, government agencies.
- **Are joint projects eligible?**
 - ⇒ Yes, partnerships and collaborative projects are eligible for support; however, one organisation must take the role of lead applicant.
- **Is there a recommended limit for the duration of the projects?**
 - ⇒ There is no prescribed timeframe for CEPF projects. Applicants should ensure their project timeframes are realistic for what they hope to accomplish and are neither artificially long nor short. The current CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands will end in July 2026, therefore, all projects must be completed by then.
- **Are livelihood activities implemented in buffer zones eligible?**
 - ⇒ Yes. CEPF supports communities to develop sustainable livelihoods in and around priority sites and conservation corridors. Livelihoods projects are expected to demonstrate direct tangible benefits for biodiversity and communities.
- **Are there any ineligible activities?**
 - ⇒ Yes, please refer to the list of ineligible activities on the CEPF website: <https://www.cepf.net/grants/eligibility>.

- **Can the project respond to several Strategic Directions?**
 - ⇒ Yes and no. Projects must respond to one primary strategic direction out of the four identified for CEPF's second investment. However, implementation can be across several strategic directions.
- **Is there a character limit to the sections of the LOI forms?**
 - ⇒ No, you can write as much as you want but we encourage you to be precise, yet concise.
- **In what languages can proposals be submitted?**
 - ⇒ Proposals can be submitted in any of the three working languages of the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot project – English, French, Spanish.
- **What criteria are used to evaluate projects?**
 - ⇒ Proposals will be evaluated based on six criteria, for a total of 100 points.

Criteria	Scoring
Strategic importance: How well does the project contribute to achieving the priorities of the CEPF investment strategy of the ecosystem profile?	35 points
Project approach and methodology: Are the project approach and methodology likely to achieve the project's stated objectives and (where applicable) contribute strongly to sustainable conservation outcomes?	20 points
Applicant capacity: Does the applicant have the capacity and experience to implement this project effectively and efficiently, given its scale and complexity?	15 points
Potential to strengthen Caribbean civil society capacity: Will the project help to strengthen Caribbean civil society organizations?	10 points
Sustainability: Will the project results be sustained beyond the phase of CEPF funding?	10 points
Budget: Is the proposed funding request commensurate and reasonable given the project's scale, objectives and likely cost of the work?	10 points

- **Who reviews the proposals?**
 - ⇒ Large grants are reviewed by the CEPF Secretariat, the RIT and the Regional Advisory Committee¹ (RAC). Projects with a budget of US\$250,000 or more are subject to an additional external review. Small grants are reviewed by the RIT and the RAC.
- **How do I apply?**
 - ⇒ There is a distinct application process and portal for each type of grants. All applications must be completed and submitted via the respective portals, the [RIT/CANARI Call for Proposals Page](#) for small grants and [ConservationGrants](#) for large grants. For more information, visit the [CEPF website](#).

¹ The RAC is composed of experts in biodiversity conservation, acting in an advisory capacity.

Large Grants (> US\$50,000)

- **Where do I apply?**
 - ⇒ You must complete and submit your application on [ConservationGrants](#). For more information on the application process for large grants, visit the [CEPF website](#).
- **Is there a maximum budget that should not be exceeded?**
 - ⇒ While there is no formal limit, we recommend that you ensure that the amount you are requesting matches with the proposed activities. Please note however that the review of budgets over US\$250,000 will include additional screening processes.
- **Are printable copies of the application form available to pre-fill before entering the information in ConservationGrants?**
 - ⇒ The CEPF application process is fully electronic and you must complete and submit your application via [ConservationGrants](#). For information purposes, we have extracted the Letter of Inquiry (LOI) text from ConservationGrants, which you can download and review [here](#), prior to completing the form online.

Small Grants (US\$5,000 and US\$50,000)

- **Where do I apply?**
 - ⇒ You must complete and submit your application through an online form on the [RIT/CANARI Call for Proposals Page](#). To learn more about the process and submit your application, visit the [dedicated page](#).
- **Are printable copies of the application form available to pre-fill before entering the information online?**
 - ⇒ You can download the form [here](#). However, you must complete and submit your application on the [dedicated website](#).

**Do you have other questions? Are you having difficulties filling out your application?
We are here to help!**

Contact the CEPF Caribbean Islands RIT at caribbeanrit@canari.org.

RIT Staff Languages: English, Spanish, French

January 2022