

Xenarthra Conservation Fund Swift Grants for Conservation Field Research



The IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group works to support xenarthran conservation by targeting financial resources to conservation projects in habitat countries.

Given the importance of timely and accurate data from the field, the ASASG has established the Xenarthra Conservation Fund, a small-grants program meant to support short-term field projects. The application process is streamlined to provide a quick turnaround and the rapid delivery of funds, allowing prospective researchers to begin their fieldwork within weeks of submitting a successful proposal.

Although any qualified researcher may apply, the Fund has a preference for supporting projects designed and carried out by citizens of habitat countries. Preference will be given to projects on species listed in a Threat Category (CR, EN, VU), considered Near Threatened, or listed as Data Deficient (DD) by the last available version of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (see <http://www.iucnredlist.org>).

The Xenarthra Conservation Fund will award grants between US\$ 1000–3000 for projects investigating the ecology, behavior, distribution, genetics and/or demography of edentates, as well as the impact of the wildlife trade and trafficking on wild populations. Conservation education programs targeted at reducing the human impact on xenarthrans are welcome to apply. Exceptional proposals addressing captive breeding or other aspects of xenarthrans in captivity are also considered.

The funds will be available to cover specific project costs, such as food, fuel, field supplies and laboratory analyses, but will not be applied to salaries, overhead, infrastructure or outsourced data analysis. Payments will be made directly to the principal investigator of a successful proposal. A financial report will be required, including proofs of all expenses (tickets or bills), and any funds not directly applied to the specific project must be returned within one year of disbursement.

The Xenarthra Conservation Fund is administered by Mariella Superina, Chair of the IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group.

Projects submitted to the Fund should have one or more of the following characteristics:

1. a focus on threatened, endangered or data deficient xenarthrans living in their natural habitats;
2. direction and management by nationals from habitat countries, to help increase local capacity for implementing biodiversity conservation;

3. the ability to strengthen international networks of field-based Xenarthra specialists and enhance their capacity to be successful conservationists; and/or
4. projects that result in publication of information on endangered Xenarthra species in a format that is useful both to experts and the general public.

Projects should contribute to at least one, and preferably more, of the following themes:

1. enhancement of scientific understanding/knowledge of the target species/ecosystem;
2. improved protection of a key species, habitat, or protected area;
3. demonstration of economic benefit achieved through the conservation of a species and its habitat, as compared to the loss thereof;
4. increased public awareness or educational impact resulting from the project in question;
5. improved local capacity to carry out future conservation efforts through training or practical experience obtained through project participation; and/or
6. modification of inappropriate policies or legislation that previously led to species or habitat decline.

All proposals submitted to the Xenarthra Conservation Fund must:

1. Include a descriptive title that includes the name(s) of the target species and the geographic location of the project (e.g., “Conservation of the silky anteater, *Cyclopes didactylus*, in the state of Amazonas, Brazil”).
2. Describe the main objectives of the project, its specific activities, how they will contribute to conservation of the target species and ecosystems, and how these are consistent with the Fund’s mission. This must be the main body of the application and must not exceed five double-spaced pages.
3. Provide an abstract/summary of approximately 300 words, which a) provides the background, b) gives the purpose of the project, c) indicates the methods, and d) indicates the chief outcome of the project.
4. Provide a map of the project area and relevant published references.
5. Specify the dollar amount of the grant requested, provide an itemized budget for the project, and confirm the total budget of the project, including funds being provided from other sources.
6. Provide the time frame and schedule for project implementation, including starting date and duration.
7. Describe the project personnel and their institutional affiliations (include a curriculum vitae of the principal investigator and identify personnel from any collaborating institutions).
8. Describe the specific outputs of the project, e.g., expected scientific publications, popular

articles, conservation action plans, management plans, etc. Each project should have one or more outputs of this kind as one of its objectives.

9. Describe the collaborating institutions with which the applicant will be working in the project country, and include letters of support from them if at all possible. This is especially important for applicants who are not nationals from the country in which the work is to be conducted.
10. Attach or inform about the status of all permits needed to carry out the project. The projects must be approved by the corresponding authorities prior to the initiation of the fieldwork.
11. List two references that the Fund can contact about the project should it choose to do so. The list of references should include mailing addresses, phones, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses if available.

Typical grants range from US\$1,000–\$3,000. Please note that, should a grant be awarded, you will be responsible for providing the Fund with the following materials during the course of the project and at its conclusion:

1. Photographs showing the fieldwork to feature the project on the ASASG website.
2. A progress report no more than six months after receipt of the grant, if the project period is one year or less; a progress report no more than 12 months after receipt of the grant if the project period exceeds one year.
3. A final report no more than two months after completion of the project.
4. A full financial accounting of the project.
5. Three copies each of any scientific or popular publications, newspaper or magazine articles, or reports, action plans, etc., resulting from the project.
6. One brief, informative article, which will be published in *Edentata*, the newsletter of the IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group.

Applications to the Xenarthra Conservation Fund are considered throughout the year with no deadlines for submission. Proposals will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt and funding decisions provided within no more than six weeks. Proposals should be sent by email to <conservationfund@xenarthrans.org>.