



Research Grants

Guidelines for Applicants

Revised November 2016

Introduction

This document outlines the criteria and procedures for applying for a Research Grant from the Lion Management Forum of South Africa (LiMF). It is vital that you read and understand this document before submitting your application.

The LiMF was formed in 2010 by a group of conservation/protected area managers in South Africa, to discuss the Forum Management issues surrounding free-ranging wild managed lions in small reserves and/or protected areas. Such discussions range from over-population, disease control, to genetics and potential human-animal conflict in such areas. The purpose of the Forum is for LiMF members to meet regularly to share ideas and/or problems, and discuss possible solutions to lion management challenges.

The LiMF is committed to a holistic approach that mimics natural systems when developing management strategies and to follow basic scientific principles. LiMF members continually strive to find and test practical solutions to the challenges faced by managers. Finally, the LiMF is a membership-driven forum with input from all members.

You can only apply for funding once in any 12-month period. If you apply and are rejected, you will not be able to re-apply for at least 12 months.

Applications are normally processed within 3 months of the annual deadline. **Please note that applications cannot be processed until at least one reference has been received by the LiMF.** If reference(s) have not been received 2 weeks after submission of an application, that application will be considered invalid and withdrawn from the review process - **this will mean that you will not be eligible to re-apply for funding for at least 12 months.**

Before completing the full application (see below), applicants must email a 100 word abstract to info@limf.co.za for screening. Only after you have received approval for your abstract will you be permitted to submit your application for consideration.

Deadlines

Applications for Research Grants must be submitted by 12:00 on 1 September annually for consideration at the annual Board of Trustees meeting which is normally held in November.

What Sorts of Projects are Generally Funded?

For all Research Grants there are basic eligibility criteria as outlined below:

- Projects must focus on African lions (*Panthera leo*) in South Africa.
- Projects must be aligned with the objectives of the LiMF as outlined above.
- LiMF Research Grants are designed to support small-scale or pilot projects, rather than providing a small amount of funding for a large-scale project.
- LiMF Research Grants will not normally exceed R50 000-00.
- If the work is part of a postgraduate study, there needs to be a strong emphasis on fieldwork with clear conservation and lion management benefits. Any award will be for the field-based element. Moreover, the judging panel will scrutinize how any application meets our general criteria.
- A key outcome of LiMF funded projects is the translation of results for lion management in South Africa. The LiMF reserves the right to withhold the final tranche of funding if this aspect is not forthcoming.

Grants Available from the LiMF

General Criteria

- Projects should focus on African lion (*Panthera leo*) conservation activities in South Africa.
- The grant requested must make up a significant part of the total budget.
- The project should be a minimum of 12 months duration although each application is assessed on its own merit and the project length can be flexible.
- Funds must be used predominantly for field-based activities.
- The impact of the project must be pragmatic, measurable and long-lasting.
- Preference will be given to work which is broadly applicable to all lion managers in South Africa.

General Exclusions

The following types of projects/budget items will not generally be eligible:

- Projects outside of South Africa.
- Pure research with no obvious conservation/management benefit.
- Expeditions, particularly where the applicant has to raise funds in order to participate.
- Funds for attending conferences or seminars.
- Funds for student/researcher stipends and funds for research assistants.

Application Form

To assist with your application, we recommend structuring your application in line with the headings provided below. Please note that there is a strict word limit on most sections. Once you have completed your application, you must email the word document to info@limf.co.za

Project Title

Maximum 160 characters.

Executive Summary

An outline of your proposed project in **no more than 100 words**.

Amount Applied for in ZAR

The Origin of Your Work

Please explain why you decided to undertake this work. **(Word limit 200 words)**.

The Contribution of Your Work

Please explain briefly what the work is going to achieve. Specific explanation about alignment with the objectives of the LiMF is vital **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Project Site

Provide a brief description of your project site(s) (including geographic location, habitat and conservation importance) (if relevant). **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Fieldwork

How long will you be in the field? **(Word limit 100 words)**.

Activities and Timescale

Describe the key activities you will carry out and when these will be undertaken. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Methods to be used

Describe in detail the research methods/techniques will you use to undertake each of the activities outlined in Question 2.3 **(Word limit 500 words)**.

Reasoning

Explain why you have chosen these research methods/techniques. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Conservation Outputs

What will be the practical conservation and/or management outputs from this work for lions? **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Monitoring

How will you monitor the success of your work? **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Team Description

Please describe who will be working with you on this project, and explain what experience they bring. **(Word limit 300 words)**.

Your Skills

Why do you feel you are qualified to lead this team? **(Word limit 100 words)**.

Financial Information

This is one of the most important parts of your application. Please ensure that you provide as much information as possible to ensure that the panel can fully understand your application. The information that you provide will be subject to close scrutiny. **Figures MUST be stated in ZAR.**

You should provide an itemised budget. For each item state the Total Cost. If you have obtained or hope to obtain any funding from other sources for this item, include the amount. The total funding requested from the LIMF should then be calculated and should match the amount listed on the first page of the application.

Referees

References are critical to your application. We rely very heavily on these objective opinions of your project. Applicants must provide at least one, but may include up to three references - applications will not be reviewed until this has been received.

Other important points:

- If your reference(s) have not been received 2 weeks after the application has been submitted, that application will be considered invalid and removed from the review process - you will then not be able to re-apply for funding for at least 12 months.
- It is the job of the applicant to ensure that all references are received promptly.

There are other issues to be considered when choosing your referees:

- Referees should email their reference to LiMF directly on info@limf.co.za
- All referees should know you personally. Do not choose referees you have never met or who have little knowledge of your proposed project.
- Do not choose referees who will be participating in the project either directly or in an advisory capacity.
- All references should, where possible, be on a letterheaded document and signed by the referee.
- Referees are expected to comment on the **scientific validity** of the proposed study, its **feasibility** and on **your ability to conduct the work**. References should not exceed 1 page in length.
- **Finally, the LiMF takes the issue of fraud very seriously. If we consider that an applicant is using fraudulent references to try and obtain funding, their application will automatically be rejected. They will not be eligible to apply for funding in the future and the suspected fraud will be reported to the relevant authorities.**

Dissemination of Your Results

The LiMF stresses the importance of making the results of your project available to the wider conservation community. In addition to interim or final reports that you may provide to the LiMF or information that you may publish on your webpage on the LiMF website, you should, where possible, aim to publish your results in peer-reviewed journals. Information published in this way will then be available to others via mainstream search facilities such as Google Scholar.

We encourage grant recipients wherever possible to consider publishing results, even if they are of a preliminary nature. Preliminary results can act as an encouragement to generate additional information that will help provide a more complete picture about a particular topic. Preliminary data can also be helpful for informing project development, working hypotheses, etc., for future, perhaps larger projects. In this case, local national journals that are searchable may represent an appropriate outlet for preliminary data. In general, all studies in the field of nature conservation that are sound scientifically, but with small sample sizes, are valuable and worth publishing particularly if they are unlikely to be expanded into larger projects.

There will be national and regional peer-reviewed journals that may be appropriate for publishing your results.

Effective conservation will almost always have strong science/social science underpinnings that need to be documented rigorously. Using peer reviewed publications we can create the longer term knowledge base that is critically needed.

Grant recipients will be required to give presentations from time to time at LiMF meetings to update on the progress of the project, or at least give a presentation of the final results of the projects at a LiMF annual meeting after completion of the project.

Output – projects need to have translation of results to managers – written and/or presentation – final project support will only be delivered after this has been received.