

Advice for applicants to ABS grants

The Australasian Bat Society provides grants to support projects by members that promote the conservation and knowledge of bats in Australasia. The grants may support scientific research, student projects, on ground bat conservation work, education programs or materials, equipment or materials purchased to support bat conservation programs or projects.

Sometimes, good projects fail to win a grant simply because the application is incomplete or poorly constructed. We have compiled this document to provide guidance to give applicants the best chance of success.

1. Check and confirm that you are eligible to apply for a grant

- ABS grants are open only to members of the Australasian Bat Society Inc.
- **Confirm that your membership is current.** If you are not sure if your membership is up to date, check the online Members Portal. (<https://www.ausbats.org.au/members.html>) or contact the Membership Officer (membership@ausbats.org.au).
- If you are not already a member, you are welcome to join and become eligible for the grants. Contact the Membership Officer (membership@ausbats.org.au) or register on-line at <https://www.ausbats.org.au/join-us.html>.

2. Answering the questions

Describe your project, including background to the issue or question that you hope to address, what you will do, and the location where you will implement the work.

In this question we want to know what exactly you are proposing to do and why it is important.

- **Be concise**
Your proposal will be reviewed by bat experts - we don't need to be educated about basic bat facts such as bats are the only flying mammal or that they are critical for pollination/insect control. We want to know exactly the question or issue you hope to address, why it is important, and what exactly you propose to do.
- **Is the project situated in Australasia?**
Confirm the location - ABS Grants are only available for projects that promote the conservation and knowledge of bats in Australasia; that is, the islands east of 'Wallace's Line' including Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, and the islands of the south-west Pacific.
- **Is the proposed activity eligible?**
Check that you are not applying for an activity that is not supported.
ABS grants cannot be used for: conference travel; attendance at meetings or other short-term activities mainly involving travel; activities which are properly the responsibility of another organisation or body; recurrent funding of existing projects; or payment of salaries, wages etc.
If you are unsure contact the Conservation Officer conservation@ausbats.org.au
- **When the proposal is part of a larger project** (for example a PhD)
Focus on the component(s) you are seeking funding for – you can briefly cover the broader aims of your project to give us some context, but we want to know specifically about the component of the work that the ABS funding would enable.

If successful, describe how the money will be spent, or to what aspect of your project the grant will contribute to.

In this question we are trying to understand what specifically you are planning to spend the grant on.

- Avoid generalisations like the funding will “assist with fieldwork” or “contribute to construction of...” or “help to produce...”
- Give a specific breakdown of what exactly the money will be used for, for example:
\$XX will be used to purchase xx items @ \$XX ea,
\$XX will cover travel cost to visit xx sites and take xx samples
\$XX will be used to cover half the total cost of producing an xx-minute video to be posted on the xx website
the funds will be used to purchase xx metres of shade cloth and x number of timber posts valued @ x\$ each / per metre’, to build a flight aviary.

What are the expected outcomes and/or outputs of your project?

In this question we want to know what exactly the outputs of the project will be, and what specific outputs will result from the grant funding.

- Be honest and specific about the tangible outputs - things such as a report/publication, a presentation, video, rehab facility or carers’ resource.
- Provide details if possible, e.g., “up to 1000 bats per year will use the facility”, “we will visit 50 schools”, “we will genetically analyse xx samples”.
- Avoid broad generalisations like “improved understanding of...”
- **Clearly link the expected outcome to the ABS aims** (below)
We want to understand clearly how the project will achieve one, some, or all of the following:
 - Improve or promote the conservation and/or scientific knowledge of bats and their habitat in Australasia
 - Raise positive public awareness of bats in Australasia
 - directly or indirectly contribute to bat conservation in Australasia
 - Support the role that wildlife carer and rehabilitation organisations play in bat conservation in Australasia.
- When the proposal is part of a larger project (for example a PhD) – focus specifically on the outputs that will result from the grant funding. You can briefly cover the broader outcomes but we really want to know about the outcomes of the components you are seeking funding for, not the entire project. For example, if the funding allowed you to measure additional samples or use an additional analysis you could discuss the implications of measuring the additional samples / additional analysis on the overall project.

Detail the factors that lead you to believe your project will be a success (e.g., your experience/knowledge, partnerships/collaborations with other organisations or experts, examples of similar projects that were successful elsewhere) as well as key uncertainties, caveats or risks

In this question we are trying to get an idea of how likely it is that the project will achieve your intended outcomes. We want to know if you have the skills or support to get there.

- If there have been similar things done successfully in the past refer to them here.

- If your proposal has never been attempted explain your reasons for thinking it might work.
- Be honest about shortcomings and limitations and how you can (or can't) address these. The assessment panel will probably think of potential pitfalls, if there are any, so it is better to address them rather than hope they're overlooked.
- Make sure you mention any collaborators/mentors/supervisors or experienced people who you have called on to assist with the project or whom you will call on if things don't work as planned.

How important is the grant for your project (maximum 300 words)?

*In this question we are trying to understand the context of your project and the relative contribution or importance of the ABS funds to the project. We want to know if the ABS funds will make a significant contribution. **Make sure you answer the 2 sub-questions specifically with details.***

- Give details of all other funding sources and amounts – include amounts for in-kind contributions if possible/relevant.
- Describe the impacts to your project if your application for the grant was unsuccessful.
- In describing the impacts, provide context as well as quantification. For example, “Without ABS funding we will only be able to sample xx sites instead of xxx sites. The consequences of this are xyz.”
- Be honest about the project's context. We recognise the ABS grants are not large relative to some project budgets. If this is the case (for example a PhD), don't try to hide this. Instead, clearly focus on what exactly the funded components are and provide context on this specific element if possible.