



Grant Application and Management Guide

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Introduction

The aim of this summary document is to guide and assist organizations in identifying and formulating good quality and thoughtful projects for implementation in order to promote the mission of PACT. The Guide encourages good planning and design to ensure a well-written project document. It also assists implementing organizations with project management by outlining PACT's procedures and requirements for project application, selection, approval, and administration. The expected result is projects that are more relevant to PACT's mandate, are more focused and effective, and have greater long-term impact.

General Eligibility for PACT Funding

Organizational Eligibility:

- Registered protected area management non-governmental organizations
- Registered protected area management community based organizations
- Government agencies involved in the conservation and management of natural resources
- Must be registered under the NGO Act of 2000 and in good standing
- Must have been legally established for at least six months prior to the date of submission of a proposal
- Must have successfully completed all previous PACT-funded projects
- Must not have two or more PACT grants of the same type ongoing simultaneously
- Must rate successful in an organizational capacity assessment

Project Eligibility:

- Must fit within one or more of the priority areas - PA Management and Conservation; PA Promotion and Development; Environmental Education and Awareness; Community Development around PAs
- Must have counterpart funding – in kind or cash or combination of both (amount varies by grant type)
- Must demonstrate mechanisms for sustainability of outputs
- Must demonstrate community involvement throughout the project cycle (as applicable)
- Must meet maximum grant ceilings and timelines (vary by grant type)

Ineligible Activities:

- Salaries for established staff of Government of Belize agencies
- Core or permanent staff of non-governmental organizations
- Recurrent expenses of Government of Belize agencies and non-governmental organizations.
- Funding for private organizations which are organized for profit

Small Grants

Under the Small Grants Program, prospective grantees submit proposals in response to a “Call for Proposals”. Grants do not exceed \$60,000 and must be implemented within one year.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Minimum of 25% of the total project budget must be counterpart funding
- Range from \$10,001 - \$60,000
- Should not exceed one year of implementation.
- Only awarded to organizations with an operational budget ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 per annum and as such funding is limited only to CBOs.

Developing a Small Grant Project Proposal

- Must use PACT small grant application form
- Must include a certificate of good standing, copy of NGO certificate, Articles of Association, Memorandum of Association, list of current Board, copies of financial statements or audited financial reports for the last 3 years, and letter of endorsement from the relevant GoB agency
- Must include a simplified log frame, detailed implementation plan, and budget inclusive of budget notes
- Must demonstrate strong stakeholder support and must engage key stakeholders in project preparation, implementation and evaluation
- Must present a process for internal monitoring and evaluation
- A planning grant may be made available to assist with the development of the small grant proposal.

Application Process

- A “call for proposals” which outlines priority areas for funding, information on how to apply and the deadline for application is issued for 2 months
- Latest application form for small grants must be used when applying
- Proposals are due to the relevant Government Agency three weeks before the CFP deadline to obtain letter of support
- Late applications are not entertained
- Incomplete applications received before the deadline are returned for modifications provided that they are submitted within two weeks of the deadline

Project Screening, Selection & Approval

- Grants Department screens for completeness and eligibility and conducts the organizational capacity assessment within 2 weeks after the deadline
- Incomplete applications are acknowledged and returned to applicants; completed ones are forwarded to the Internal Screening Committee (ISC) for further review within 3 weeks after the deadline

- Eligible applications are forwarded to the Advisory Council (AC) for further technical evaluation within 1 week of the ISC screening and ineligible applications are returned with the appropriate explanations
- The AC assesses applications based on their technical merits, feasibility of grant application to PACT's mission, strategic plan, etc. Applicants may be invited to present their application
- The AC recommendations for revisions, if necessary, are forwarded to the applicant within one day of AC screening and applicants must provide modifications within 1 week of notification
- Once revisions have been received by the AC, proposals are forwarded to the Board of Directors (BoD) for final evaluation
- Final approval is done through a vote of the BoD no later than 7 weeks after the deadline of the call
- Letter of acceptance by applicant is required within 1 week of notification of approval
- After the acceptance letter is received the Grants Department and the project applicant finalize the implementation plan, disbursement schedule and M&E plan
- Grant Agreement outlining how the grant will be governed is signed by PACT and the Grantee

Medium-sized Grants

Medium-sized grants are awarded to governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations or to several organizations partnering to apply for a larger grant for projects within a specific protected area or several protected areas within the National Protected Areas System which contributes to advancing the implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan. Grants do not exceed \$200,000 and must be implemented within two years.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Minimum of 50% of the total project budget must be counterpart funding
- Range from \$60,001 - \$200,000
- Should not exceed two years of implementation
- Awarded to organizations with an operational budget ranging from \$50,000 - \$200,000 per annum. In the event that more than one organization partner in the submission of an application, the collective operational budget should still remain within this range.

Developing a Medium-sized Grant Project Proposal

- Must use PACT medium-sized grant application form
- Must include a certificate of good standing, copy of NGO certificate, Articles of Association, Memorandum of Association, list of current Board, copies of audited financial reports for the last 3 years, and letter of endorsement from the relevant GoB agency/Ministry
- Must include a simplified log frame, detailed implementation plan, and budget inclusive of budget notes
- Must demonstrate strong stakeholder support and must engage key stakeholders in project preparation, implementation and evaluation

- Must present a process for internal monitoring and evaluation
- A planning grant may be made available to assist with the development of the small grant proposal.

Application Process

- A “call for proposals” which outlines priority areas for funding, information on how to apply and the deadline for application is issued for two months.
- Latest application for medium-sized grants must be used when applying
- Proposals are due to the relevant Government agency three weeks before the deadline of the CFP to obtain the letter of support
- Late applications are not entertained
- Incomplete applications received before the deadline are returned for modifications provided that they are submitted at least four weeks of the deadline

Project Screening, Selection & Approval

- Grants Department screens for completeness and eligibility and conducts the organizational capacity assessment within 2 weeks after deadline
- Incomplete applications are acknowledged and returned to applicants; completed ones are forwarded to the ISC for further review within 3 weeks after the deadline
- Eligible applications are forwarded to the AC for further technical evaluation within one week of the ISC screening and ineligible applications are returned with the appropriate explanations
- The AC assess applications based on their technical merits, feasibility and relevance of grant applications to PACT's mission, strategic plan, national protected areas system plan, etc. Applicants may be invited to present their applications
- The AC recommendations for revisions, if necessary, are forwarded to the applicant within one day of AC screening and applicants must provide modifications within 1 week of notification
- Once revisions have been received by the AC, proposals are forwarded to the BoD for final evaluation
- Final approval is done through a vote of the BoD no later than 7 weeks after the deadline of the call
- Letter of acceptance by applicant is required within 1 week of notification
- After the acceptance letter is received the Grants Department and the project applicant finalize the implementation plan, disbursement schedule and M&E plan
- Grant Agreement outlining how the grant will be governed is signed by PACT and the Grantee

Large Grants

Under the Large grant program, prospective grantees develop proposals with direct contribution to the National Protected Areas System and its connectivity with other regional management regimes. Grants do not exceed \$400,000 and must be implemented within two years.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- A project concept must have been accepted by PACT prior to the development of the project proposal
- Minimum of 50% of the total project budget must be counterpart funding
- Range from \$200,001 - \$400,000
- Should not exceed two years of implementation
- Awarded to organizations with an operational budget exceeding \$200,000 per annum. In the event that more than one organization partner in the submission of an application, the collective operational budget should still remain the same

Priority is given to applicants that demonstrate the following:

- a strong track record of project administration and grant management
- in-house capacity and skill to effectively implement and manage the proposed project
- the project will contribute to building the technical capacity and information available to conservation in Belize
- strong stakeholder support for the initiative being proposed
- rigorous processes for internal monitoring and evaluation of results must be established within the application. In the event where organizations apply jointly, the specific responsibilities of each partner as it relates to monitoring and evaluation must be identified
- the direct contribution to the implementation of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan (NPAPSP) and its connectivity with other regional management regimes

Developing a Large Grant Concept

- “Call for Concepts” is issued for 2 months during the fiscal year based on budget indicating priority areas and eligibility
- PACT concept paper format must be used
- The Grants Department provides guidance to the applicant in strengthening the concept

Concept Screening, Review and Approval

- Grants Department reviews the concept paper and submits recommendations to the ISC
- ISC further reviews for eligibility and submits recommended concepts to the AC for final review and approval within 2 weeks
- The applicant may apply for a Planning Grant to develop the project proposal
- Acceptance of the concept paper does not obligate PACT to approve the project

Developing a Large Grant Project Proposal

- After approval by the AC, the applicant must prepare a first draft of the proposal and comprehensive log frame matrix within 3 months after the concept's approval
- Grants Department provides guidance to the applicant during the formulation of the proposal

- Within 1 week of submission, the first draft is reviewed by the Grants Department and the applicant will be notified of the outcome, including a request for revisions if necessary
- Final proposal must be submitted within 1 month of notification from PACT
- Must use PACT large grant application form
- Must include a certificate of good standing, copy of NGO certificate, Articles of Association, Memorandum of Association, list of current Board, copies of audited financial reports for the last 3 years, and letter of endorsement from the relevant GoB agency/Ministry

Selection and Approval

- Grants Department screens for completeness and conducts the organizational capacity assessment within 2 weeks after submission
- Complete applications are forwarded to the ISC for further review within 2 weeks after the preliminary screening
- Eligible applications are forwarded to the AC for further technical evaluation within 2 weeks of the ISC screening and ineligible applications are returned with the appropriate explanations
- The AC assess applications based on their technical merits, feasibility and relevance of grant applications to PACT's mission, strategic plan, national protected areas system plan, etc. and applicants are required to make a presentation on their project during the AC review
- The AC recommendations for revisions, if necessary, are forwarded to the applicant within one day of AC screening and applicants must provide modifications within 1 week of notification
- Once revisions have been received by the AC, proposals are forwarded to the BoD for final evaluation
- Final approval is done through a vote of the BoD no later than 3 weeks after the AC review
- Letter of acceptance by applicant is required within 1 week of notification
- After the acceptance letter is received the Grants Department and the project applicant finalize the implementation plan, disbursement schedule and M&E plan
- Grant Agreement outlining how the grant will be governed is signed by PACT and the Grantee

Management and Administration of Project and Research Grants

1. Grant Agreement

- Once a proposal is approved the Grants Department and applicant must agree on:
 - Implementation plan
 - Set of benchmarks and timeline
 - Disbursement plan
 - Reporting procedures
 - Monitoring and evaluation plan specifying reporting schedules and field visits
- Once satisfied, the agreement is finalized and signed by PACT and the Grantee; this is done during an award ceremony.

2. Disbursements

- 1st disbursement of funds is made at the signing ceremony after which the grantee must begin implementing the project.
- A disbursement is made after certain benchmarks and as per the grant agreement but not before PACT reviews and approves a report.

3. Reporting

- Reports are the primary means for progress updates to PACT and are submitted based on the schedule outlined in the grant agreement.
- The Grants Department maintains an open line of communication with grantees to provide assistance and support when necessary.
- Reports should include:
 - an activity report which summarizes what has been done and accomplished so far and any challenges experienced;
 - a procurement report that documents services, equipment and supplies purchased;
 - a financial report with original receipts, copies of monthly bank statements and/or cancelled cheques and a detailed expense sheet;
- Review and approval by PACT is completed within 2 weeks from receipt of report provided that the reports are complete and accurate at the time of submission; during the review period the Grants Department may conduct a site visit.
- If a report reveals that project progress is insufficient, an explanation will be requested.
- Once the relevant explanation is reasonable and justifiable then project implementation can continue.
- If it is deemed unacceptable then the matter is taken to the AC for recommendation to the BoD. The Board's decision is final.
- A final financial report is submitted 2 weeks after the last activity and financial reports are approved. It summarizes the total expenditures and will indicate any savings; receipts are not required.
- Within 2 weeks of approval of the final financial report, a Project Completion and Assessment Report is prepared jointly by the grantee and the Grants Department indicating project closure.

4. Requests for Reprogramming

- Reprogramming is a change in the implementation time of project activities and might be as a result of impacts to the project; these might include change in project personnel or long absence due to illness, changes in program schedule or any other significant changes.
- Reprogramming requires prior approval from PACT and is made using an appropriate request form.
- For small grants, only two requests for reprogramming are allowed and no more than two per year for medium-sized and large grants; these must be supported by a revised implementation plan and submitted two weeks prior to the execution of the planned activity.

5. Requests for Reallocation

- Reallocation requires prior approval from PACT and is made using an appropriate request form.
- Categories of reallocation that require prior approval are:
 - Savings: savings are sometimes realized and can be used on any budget category within the project budget once it is justified in writing.
 - Budget transfers: Budget transfers outside of subcategories, to other budget categories, during a disbursement period.
 - Time extensions: grantees are given one-time extension of up to 6 months but they must notify the Grants Department in writing and justify the need for the extension. This must be accompanied by a revised work plan and proposed completion date at least 8 weeks before the grant period ends. Any extension exceeding 6 months must be approved by the Board and does not include budget increases.
- Grantees are allowed to reallocate up to 10% of any major budget category without prior approval. Anything exceeding 10% and outside of the budget requires prior approval.
- For small grants, no more than four requests for reallocation are allowed and no more than four per year for medium-sized and large grants. These must be supported by a revised budget.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Communication of Project and Research Grants

1. Cost for Internal PACT Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is required to ensure that the project is achieving its purpose and that the purpose continues to be relevant; grantees should ensure that they implement projects on schedule and within the budget.
- The cost of internal M&E should be included in the project budget as specific activities.
- The cost of the M&E conducted by PACT is managed by PACT and is in addition to the project budget; it is no more than 5% of the amount requested for large grants, no more than \$1,500 for research grants, and no more than \$3,000 and \$5,000 for small and medium-sized grants respectively.

2. Field Visits

- Periodic scheduled and unscheduled field visits to project sites are conducted by the Grants Department.
- Field visits are planned in advance with the grantee being given due and timely notice of the visit; ad hoc, in-promptu visits may also be made.
- After each visit, if the project is on track and progress is satisfactory, PACT congratulates the grantee.
- If the visit reveals insufficient progress, PACT requests reasonable explanation.
- If the justification and proposed actions are acceptable to PACT, implementation can continue.

- If the response is unacceptable to PACT, the information is brought to the AC for recommendations to the BoD. The decision of the BoD is final.

3. Internal Interim Evaluations

- An interim project audit and evaluation is conducted by PACT at the end of the first 6 months for small and research grants; and at the end of the first year of implementation for medium-sized and large grants.
- This audit and evaluation include a review of financial management of project funds which is tracked via PACT's access to the project bank account information; this is done directly through the respective banks utilized by the grantees; PACT will access this information periodically throughout implementation of the project.
- If this audit reveals unsatisfactory project implementation and/or financial management, project suspension may occur until corrective measures are completed

4. Project Completion

- The grantee and the Grants Department prepare a Project Completion and Assessment report within 2 weeks after the approval of the Final Financial report.
- If any saving is realized at project's end, the grantee is notified and required to remit this saving to PACT before closure of the project.
- After the assessment report is prepared, the grantee is informed in writing of the closure of the project.

5. Communications

- The Grants Department maintains timely and effective communication with grantees to improve understanding of PACT policies and procedures and encourage support for PACT's mission
- PACT develops and disseminates key messages that highlight grants awarded and the impact of these
- This is done through PACT's press releases, media highlights, website, and other activities within its marketing portfolio.

6. Ex-Post Evaluation

- For small and research grants, an external evaluation of 50% of the projects completed within the specified time periods is conducted every two years; for medium-sized grants this is done every three years.
- For large grants, an external evaluation and financial audit of 100% of the projects is conducted every three years.

Planning Grants

Project planning grants are made available for stakeholder consultations and problem analysis in project planning, conceptualization, design, and formulation of a project proposal for submission to PACT. Planning grants do not exceed \$5,000 and require 50% counterpart contribution.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Planning grants are available for small, medium and large grants
- Planning grants are awarded **ONLY** after the project concept has been accepted by PACT in the case of large grants
- If applicant is a Government Department, a letter of endorsement from the respective Ministry must be submitted
- The standard application form must be used when applying for a planning grant
- Planning grants must not exceed \$5,000.00 and 50% cash counterpart contribution is required
- Awarding the planning grant does not guarantee approval of the proposal

Application, Selection and Management Process

- Grants Department screens, reviews and makes recommendation to the Management Team for onward approval by the ED
- Screening and approval process does not exceed two weeks after receipt of application
- Applicants are notified in writing of the outcome of their application; if approved, a contract letter is signed and a full disbursement is processed
- Upon the completion of the planning grant, the organization must submit an activity and financial report accompanied by a copy of the draft proposal. In the case of small and medium grants the proposal is submitted as a deliverable of the planning grant and should be submitted for consideration during the CFP.

Environmental Support Grants

Environmental Support Grants provide financial assistance to eligible organizations, associations, groups and schools, to develop and implement projects, activities or initiatives that promote conservation and preservation of Belize's natural and cultural resources. Maximum funding is \$10,000.

Specific Eligibility Criteria

- Funds must be used for activities or events that promote the appreciation, enhancement, and protection of Belize's natural resources
- Targeted activities or events must promote community awareness, information sharing, and training related to the appreciation and management of Belize's natural resources;
- Only organizations which have not received an Environmental Support Grant from PACT within the last six months will be eligible to receive a grant

- Grants are not awarded to the same organization for a previously funded activity or activities within the same year

Application, Selection, and Management Process

- PACT does not solicit requests for Environmental Support Grants; however, general information about the availability is included when publicizing the Grants Programme.
- Applications must be submitted using the standard application form and are considered on a first-come, first-served basis (as the availability of funds permit).
- Interested parties must submit a request using the standard application form and must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the respective Ministry in the case of government departments.
- Grants Department reviews and makes recommendations to the ED for onward submission to the Finance Committee (FC) for approval.
- Applicants are notified in writing of the outcome of their application and if approved, a contract letter is signed and full disbursement of the funds is made.
- After the completion of the project, the grantee must submit an activity and financial report along with relevant receipts; once approved, the grantee is provided with a formal letter of closure.

Capacity Building Program

PACT makes available capacity building grants to eligible organizations and individuals with the aim of improving capacity in the natural and cultural resources, protected areas management, and community development fields.

Environmental Fellowships

Environmental Fellowships are designed to provide financial assistance to dynamic and successful mid-career and/or senior professional Belizeans to pursue a Master's Degree at a recognized institution.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Be a Belizean citizen
- Be between 23 years and 40 years of age
- Preferably have at least 2 years professional experience in the conservation field
- Be accepted in a graduate study program at a recognized local or international institution, including online degree programs, in areas of conservation management.
- Demonstrate co-financing capacity
- Demonstrate a minimum semester GPA of 3.5 on a 4 point scale or the equivalent
- Demonstrate in an interview academic potential, leadership, personal qualities, and benefit of their fellowship to Belize and their chosen career
- Commit to work in Belize for at least two years after completing degree

- Award request does not exceed BZ\$40,000

Application, Selection, and Management Process

- A call for application is issued at the beginning of the calendar year indicating deadline, priorities, eligibility and submission requirements.
- Applications are screened, shortlisted and recommended by the ISC; recommendations are forwarded to the AC for onward recommendations to the BoD for approval. Applicants are required to be interviewed by the AC. The review and approval process does not exceed 7 weeks.
- Successful applicants are notified within 1 week of the formal approval
- Recipients are required to submit a letter of acceptance of the award within 1 week of the notification by PACT
- Recipients are required to sign a bond agreement that governs the Environmental Fellowship
- PACT will finalize disbursement procedures with the educational institution directly
- Official grade reports should be submitted at the end of every semester/module along with yearly narrative reports.
- Disbursements are not made without the review and approval of grade reports.

Research Grants

PACT will provide research grants to eligible graduate students, researchers, local NGOs, and academic institutions to undertake pure, applied or policy-driven research in accordance with national priorities.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Be a Belizean Master's or Doctoral student undertaking a thesis project; a local researcher; or a locally registered organization/agency actively involved in natural resource or protected areas management
- Be attached directly or indirectly with a local organization/agency involved in protected areas management and conservation to support the research
- Research should be in accordance with priorities outlined in the current research grant announcement and National priorities
- Research must entail high level of capacity building, human resource development, and community engagement
- Valid research permit from the relevant agency
- Counterpart funding of a minimum of 25% is required
- Letter of support from counterpart funders and partner organization
- Must not exceed \$20,000
- Grant duration range from 1 to 3 years at most

Application, Selection and Management Process

- PACT will publish annual calls for research grants outlining priorities, number of grants, geographic target, and opportunities under responsive funding window.
- There is no deadline date to apply for a research grant
- Must be submitted in PACT Research Grant application form
- Applications are screened by the Grants Department and forwarded to the ISC for further eligibility screening and recommendation who in turn forward to the AC with recommendations
- The AC undertakes technical evaluation of applications and may invite applicants to present their proposal.
- The AC recommendations are forwarded to the BoD for approval.
- The review process does not exceed 7 weeks
- Successful applicants are notified within 1 week of the formal approval
- Recipient are required to submit a letter of acceptance of the award within 1 week of the notification by PACT
- Recipients are required to sign a grant agreement that governs the grant
- Research Grants undergo the same administration as that of small and medium grants

Capacity Development Grants

PACT awards capacity development grants throughout the year to eligible organizations for formal, short term training and capacity building activities to strengthening human resource capacity among stakeholders. PACT provides two types of Capacity Development grants:

- 1) Individual Professional Development Grants and;
- 2) Local Workshop/Seminar Implementation Grants.

1. Individual Professional Development Grants (PDG)

PDGs support the training-related costs of the applicant to attend short-courses, seminars, workshops and conferences locally, regionally and internationally. PDGs should not exceed 6 months implementation.

- ✓ PDGs support direct training costs such as registration, hotel, transportation and training materials.
- ✓ Grant budget should not exceed BZ\$10,000
- ✓ PDGs are provided to members of staff and Board of Directors of eligible organizations
- ✓ Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - Be Belizean and is residing in Belize;
 - Be a good-standing member of the Board, administration, or staff of the applying organization;
 - Applicant's current work and proposed training must help advance the mission of the organization;
 - Applicant must be committed to return to employment with, or maintain close involvement in the affairs of the organization at the completion of the training;
 - The training must be directly related to the prospective applicant's area of work, and build institutional capacity of the organization

- Individual for whom the grant is applied for should not have received a Capacity Development Grant from PACT within the last 6 months.
- The applying organization should not have received two or more capacity development grants within the last PACT fiscal year.
- ✓ Applications are submitted by an eligible organization on behalf of individual staff or board member
- ✓ Applications are reviewed and recommended by the Grants Department to the ED for onward submission to the FC for final review and approval.
- ✓ Once approved, the applicant is notified and a contract letter to govern the grant is signed.
- ✓ Successful applicants must submit financial and narrative report and receipts within two weeks of completion of activity.

2. Local Workshop/Seminar Implementation Grants (WG)

Local Workshop/Seminar Implementation Grants are awarded to support eligible organizations to conduct local training workshops for stakeholders involved in protected areas management.

- ✓ WGs support for direct costs related to the workshop such as venue, hotel, food, transportation, and training materials for participants.
- ✓ Grant budget should not exceed BZ\$25,000
- ✓ Applying organizations must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - The applicant organization must demonstrate cash counterpart contribution.
 - The workshop must be conducted in Belize and should not exceed 6 months of implementation.
 - Activities must be designed by the eligible organization and must provide targeted participants with knowledge and skills to advance their role in conservation and PA management.
 - Activities should result in meaningful impact, involve a diverse group of stakeholders, and benefit more than one geographic area.
 - The applying organization should not have received two or more capacity development grants within the last PACT fiscal year.
- ✓ Applications are reviewed and recommended by the Grants Department to the ED for onward submission to the FC for final review and approval.
- ✓ Once approved, the applicant is notified and a contract letter to govern the grant is signed.
- ✓ Successful applicants must submit financial and narrative report and receipts within two weeks of completion of activity.