

Research Award

2024 Guidelines for completing the application

All applications are due by close of business on June 14, 2024, and must be compiled into one PDF file.

Please upload your file to: <https://bit.ly/AZAResearchAward>

The file name should reflect both the name of the institution and the award name. Abbreviations are allowed. Your file will go to the AZA Digital Dropbox account, but you do not need to sign in, or even have a Dropbox account to use this link—when it opens, just click on the “choose files” box and upload your application.

Please contact Leticia Orti at lorti@aza.org if you have any questions about the application process.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums recognizes exceptional efforts by AZA Institution, Related Facility or Conservation Partner members to advance the body of scientific knowledge as it relates to providing excellent welfare for the animals in our care, advancing field conservation efforts, and maximizing our impact on visitors. Institutions may submit long-term research projects that have already garnered significant results/application but are ongoing. Priority will be given to projects that can demonstrate use of novel methods or technologies to address significant research questions and that have already had clear implications for science or applied purposes.

Submissions should be for AZA mission-focused research on:

- Applied research that informs our understanding and management of animals, including reproduction, nutrition, epidemiology, sensory biology, physiology, population biology, behavior, welfare, etc.;
- Basic research that focuses on increasing understanding of fundamental biological principles, including evolutionary biology, physiology, behavior, etc.;
- Applied research that advances species, habitat, or ecosystem conservation.
- Research that advances the field of science communication or education (visitors' studies, marketing, interpretation, exhibit design, formal and informal education);

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project should be named here. For program length, provide data range by month and year for start to end, i.e. May 2018 to November 2020, include current year and month if still running. For budget, include total budget across full length of project contributed for all applying institutions. This should not include funds for staff time.

B. APPLICANT(S)

If the level of collaboration is such that two or more AZA organizations/institutions wish to be considered collectively, with certificates to each institution, please provide information for each collaborating institution(s), including signature by the director of each collaborating organization. Additionally, please submit a letter from the Director(s) of the collaborating institution(s) indicating

support of the submission. It is the responsibility of the submitting institution to properly determine the level of participation by other institutions.

C. ABSTRACT

Provide a concise description, maximum of one-half of a single-spaced page of 12 point type to introduce the research project objectives, questions, methods, and implications to the judges and possibly be used for publicity purposes. In particular, detail new methods or technologies employed, results of the research and the impact on animal management, husbandry and conservation outcomes.

D. BACKGROUND, SCOPE, AND SIGNIFICANCE

Give brief background on the study subject and significance of the work.

E. PROJECT GOALS AND METHODOLOGY

Include the hypothesis or question the research sought to answer, study species and location, and the data collection and analysis methods. Please emphasize where possible, what, if anything is novel about the research methods.

F. RESULTS AND APPLICATIONS

Describe the primary results of the research and demonstrate how findings have been applied to improve animal welfare, management, conservation, or education or has advanced basic science.

G. MENTORSHIP

Describe capacity building or mentorship that occurred as part of the project (i.e. involvement of undergraduate, graduate students, partners, etc)

H. CITATIONS

Provide a list of citations resulting from the research project with a section for peer-reviewed publications as well as any popular publications resulting from the work.

I. GRANTS

List grants (including title, year(s), and cumulative amount) and other non-AZA awards given to the project.

J. INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

Describe staff and/or volunteer numbers and involvement in the project from the institution(s) applying in terms of roles and time allocation across the years of the program. Describe other financial and non-financial resources allocated to the project (equipment, use of property or labs, etc). Clarify what contributions were made by each of the institutions listed as applicants for the project. This could include further elaboration of % of budget contributed by each institution in relation to amount listed in section A.

K. BROADER COLLABORATION

List AZA and any other non-AZA institutions not already listed as applicants. Outline the main roles and responsibilities played by each collaborating institution in the overall project and any additional financial or non-financial resources contributed by each collaborator. Examples of other institutions include Universities, Hospitals, National Parks/Reserves, NGOs.

Please note if the project is associated with AZA TAGS, SAFE, or SAGS or other professional committees.

L. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Additional materials in support of the application may be included, such as complete pdf of peer-reviewed or popular publications, however this supplemental information may not be reviewed in its entirety and important information should be included in the main submission.

If photos are submitted, the maximum is ten. Limit captions to 50 words or less on each photo.

M. IMAGE

Submit one digital image (JPEG or TIF 300 dpi preferred) that illustrates your research. It will be used during the AZA Annual Conference Awards Ceremony PowerPoint presentation.

N. SUBMITTER

The SUBMITTER is that person responsible for the contents of the entry. An electronic signature on the designated line (note: the signature can be scanned and placed in the document) is required to complete the application.

O. NEWS RELEASE FORM

AZA will create a news release for each award winner. Please complete the form and in the "summary" portion, write a paragraph describing your program, including details such as new techniques or technologies employed and a description of any species of animal involved.

Also, please submit the name, phone number and email address of a media contact for the award and a quote from the institutional director. Copies of the release will be shared with the institution for approval.

It would be helpful to request that the Public Relations Department at your institution complete this form.

Submit the News Release Form (available at <https://www.aza.org/research-award/>) with the application and also email the form as a WORD document to Betsy Hildebrandt at bhildebrandt@aza.org

P. WINNER'S RELEASE: HELP YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS!

If yours is the winning application, would you be willing to have it posted on the AZA website? Many people have asked for examples of a winning application so we are hoping to be able to post them on AZA's website. It would be possible to edit the application before posting if there is information included that you would not wish to share with a wider audience.