

# 2007-2008 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: GBIF SEED MONEY FOR CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: 1 NOV 2007



## INTRODUCTION

This 2007-2008 RFP is a call for GBIF **data content development** in response to data needs associated with clearly identified global biodiversity issues.

We are encouraging mobilisation of *data content that has the potential to serve multiple purposes*. We seek to couple this content mobilisation with use and evaluation of data already available via the GBIF Portal (<http://data.gbif.org>).

Proposed projects can target either occurrence data that falls within the DIGIT (Digitisation of Natural History Collections) programme, or taxonomic checklist content that falls under the auspices of ECAT (Electronic Catalogue of Names of Known Organisms), *or both*.

The most important factors in the review process will be the added value of the data to be made available, their relevance to one or more global issues and the potential for multiple uses.

The funds distributed in this awards programme are called "Seed Money" because they are intended to be the seed for additional investments in the same project by entities other than GBIF.

As in previous calls for proposals, the intent is to stimulate the development of datasets to be made available via the GBIF Portal that can make a significant scientific contribution to society and sustainable development and strengthen the GBIF network by encouraging consortium-building among data providers.

## DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED PROJECT RESULTS

First, we seek projects that link the proposed content to at least one issue that is important to sustainability. The proposal should explain why and how the data to be provided as a result of the project will contribute to addressing the identified issue. Examples of such issues include (but are not limited to):

- Global Climate Change
- Pollinators
- 2010 Indicators
- Invasive Alien Species
- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation

Second, we seek datasets with maximal capacity for re-use. This means well-documented datasets (metadata include various precision metrics) from which it is possible for potential users to assess fitness-for-use for their purposes. Among the most important attributes are adequate description of geographic and taxonomic information. We seek geo-referenced datasets (that is, including latitude and longitude) with explicit statements of precision or a reasonable justification for not including them, and taxon references assigned to the appropriate columns (e.g. family to family, genus to genus) as complete as possible. A complete list of required or preferred attributes is provided in the Requirements section (below).

Third, we wish to see explicit statements of evaluations to refine and extend the capabilities of the GBIF Portal:

1. Use of the new GBIF data portal in determining the need for the proposed dataset. Were qualitative or quantitative gaps in currently accessible content detected? What other evaluations were used to determine the need for the proposed dataset?
2. Use(s), via the GBIF portal, to which the data may be put in addressing an important issue or theme (see suggestions above). How could the portal be used, in concert with the newly mobilised content, to address the target issue?

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## ELIGIBILITY

This funding opportunity is open to individual or consortia of, data providers, or consortia of data providers and users. However, in order to ensure adequate fiscal management, the finances must be handled by an appropriate institution or organisation (usually, the institution or organisation of the principal investigator).

Awardees (investigators and their institutions) must agree to make the data developed through the project openly and freely available through the GBIF Portal, preferably as the data are digitised (minimally, the data may be made available at the end of the funding period, but a justification for such a delay in release of the dataset must be provided in the proposal).

Although we continue to consider the documented availability of matching funds for proposed projects (the idea of "seed money") as a point in favor of a proposal and encourage proposers to seek them, matching funds are not required in order to be eligible for awards under this RFP.

## AWARD INFORMATION

**Type of award:** Seed Money

**Size of awards:** Maximum of €50,000

**Estimated number of awards:** The final number of funded proposals will be determined by the collective budgets of the highest scored applications up to the total available funds.

**Total amount of funding available:** €350,000.

**Funding date:** Funds will be available for disbursement beginning January 2008

**Project duration:** 18 months maximum, but completion prior to end 2008 is desirable

**Budgetary details:**

### COST SHARING

Past Seed Money RFPs have explicitly required substantial matching funds. This is not a requirement under this RFP, but projects that can demonstrate matching funds will be considered favourably during review of the proposals.

### PAYMENT SCHEDULE

1. 40% of the award will be provided when these conditions are met:
  - a. A contract for the work has been signed with the institution that is administering the project, AND
  - b. The awardee(s) have registered with the GBIF Portal as a data provider and successfully submitted a sample 100-record dataset.
2. 30% of the award will be provided upon receipt and acceptance, by the GBIF Secretariat, of a mid term report on progress made against the milestones indicated in the original proposal.
3. The remaining 30% will be awarded when:
  - a. all of the proposed data are made available via the GBIF portal, AND
  - b. a final report on the project is received and accepted by the GBIF Secretariat.

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## REQUIREMENTS

### To Be Successful, Proposals Must:

1. Demonstrate scientific merit -- First and foremost, projects will be reviewed for scientific excellence.
2. Target the digitisation and provision of content via the GBIF Portal that contributes to recognised and important issues relating to biodiversity that include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Global Climate Change
  - b. 2010 Indicators
  - c. Pollinators
  - d. Invasive Alien Species
  - e. Global Strategy for Plant Conservation
3. Explicitly identify how the resulting datasets will or can be utilised, accounting for any limitations in record completeness or precision and how these data may be applied toward the target issue.
4. Include the endorsement and an indication of level of support for the project from a specific user group outside the actual data provider.
5. Be cost-efficient. Projects that will produce high quality datasets at a low cost per record will be favoured.
6. Follow the Proposal Preparation and Submission guidelines (next page).
7. Support the GBIF philosophy by:
  - a. Making the resulting data freely available using recommended GBIF architecture <http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/dadi/library?l=/architecture>
  - b. Addressing the issues of data compatibility and interoperability using recommended GBIF standards (See: As a minimum standard - Darwin Core Version 2 [http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft\\_v1-31\\_HTML](http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft_v1-31_HTML))
  - c. Identify the institution or institutions that will be hosting the data server(s), and
  - d. register an example dataset of at least 100 records with the GBIF network
8. Demonstrate potential for or actuality of one or more of the following:
  - a. International collaboration
  - b. Training and capacity building
  - c. Data-sharing with countries of origin
  - d. Leveraging additional long term funding to support the digitisation process
  - e. Increase for the visibility of the GBIF network through improved linkages with other projects
  - f. Improvement in visualisations, analyses, or summaries that provide means to evaluate the capacities of the GBIF network.

### In Addition:

Proposals to provide **NAMES DATA (ECAT) CONTENT** and/or **OCCURRENCE DATA (DIGIT) CONTENT** should pay specific attention to the separate guidelines below:

Proposals to provide **NAMES DATA (ECAT) CONTENT** should declare in the proposal the implicit qualifying attributes (verified nomenclature, synonymy, citations, etc.) of the dataset to be made available. We will favour ECAT data proposals that are cognisant of the applied use of ECAT data. This includes differentiation of taxonomic and nomenclatural synonyms, inclusion of vernacular names, explicit declarations of verification against the relevant Code of Nomenclature and an indication of the recency of the taxonomic treatment followed (e.g. "Smith's 2007 list of the family XYZidae", "Jones' 1935 list of the genus PQRus").

(continued, next page)

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Proposals to provide OCCURRENCE DATA (DIGIT) CONTENT should pay close attention to the following attributes of data records:

- g. Geo-referencing. Include latitude and longitude, or else provide clear justification for its proposed absence.
- h. Country. Inclusion of country (and subordinate geographic units if available) in addition to georeferencing is required to provide valuable error-checking and verification.
- i. Geographic precision: Explicit declaration of precision of the geo-reference is mandatory.
- j. Taxonomic Data. Include minimum of Kingdom, Family and referent taxon name in appropriate fields.
- k. Basis of record: Explicit statement of the basis of record (see example: <http://wiki.tdwg.org/twiki/bin/view/DarwinCore/DarwinCoreVersions>) is mandatory
- l. Other highly recommended fields include:
  - i. Collector
  - ii. Collection Date
  - iii. Identified by
  - iv. Identification Date

#### PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposal submissions will be accepted only via e-mail to [RFP@gbif.org](mailto:RFP@gbif.org)

All proposals must

1. be written in English
2. be submitted in document (.doc), rich text (.rtf) or portable document (.pdf) format, without any editing restrictions
3. follow the outline given below, under **REQUIRED FORMAT OF THE PROPOSAL**
4. restrict the Project Description to five (5) single-spaced pages (2.5 cm margins all around) in at least 11 point type (Times New Roman or equivalent)
5. be received in the [RFP@gbif.org](mailto:RFP@gbif.org) inbox by midnight 1 Nov 2007 local time of the applicant

**PROPOSALS *MUST* MEET *ALL* THESE REQUIREMENTS TO BE ACCEPTED.**

For additional information contact:

ECAT Programme Officer David Remsen ([dremsen@gbif.org](mailto:dremsen@gbif.org)) or DIGIT Programme Officer Vishwas Chavan ([vchavan@gbif.org](mailto:vchavan@gbif.org)).

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**REQUIRED FORMAT OF THE PROPOSAL:**

**A. Title of the Proposed Project**

**B. Contact Information for the Principal Investigator**

Name:  
Postal address (including institutional affiliation):  
Telephone:  
FAX:  
Email:

**C. Contact information for the Managing Institution**

Institution Name:  
Address:  
Institutional Contact Person  
Name:  
Telephone:  
Fax:  
Email:  
Bank deposit information (include bank address)  
IBAN:  
SWIFT:  
Account number:

**D. List of Partner Researchers and their Institutions (if applicable)**

**E. Project Summary - An abstract of the proposal (200 words or fewer)**

**F. Project Description:** A careful, concise description (do not exceed five (5) single-spaced pages, use at least 2.5 cm margins and at least 11 point type) of the project management strategy, which shall include answers to the following items (preferably in this order):

- What is the proposed product?
  - What is the estimated number of digitised specimen records or treated taxa in the dataset(s) to be made available?
  - What is the estimated cost per specimen record or name record in the various dataset products (provide this as an indication of efficiency, and explain how the estimate was derived)?
- How does this product address one or more societally important biodiversity issues?
  - How was the need for this project's product determined/evaluated using the GBIF Data Portal?
  - To what types of uses could this project's product be put, using the GBIF Data Portal?
- What is the human infrastructure of the project? That is,
  - Who are the partners involved in the project, and what are their roles in it (If only one individual or institution is involved, explain why networking with others was not included.)?
    - Researchers
    - Institutions
    - User group(s)

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*Human infrastructure (continued):*

- Data sharing mechanisms with countries of origin of the specimens to be digitized, if any
- Training and capacity building components, if any
- What is the institutional infrastructure available to the project? That is, what are the technical resources necessary and available to complete the project?
  - Describe in detail how the data will be made accessible to the GBIF network, including the number and location of the computers that will serve the data.
  - How will the project deal with the issues of data compatibility, completeness, precision, interoperability and recommended GBIF standards?
  - What is the strategy for supporting the existence and maintenance of the product after the seed funding has ended?
- What is the project's due date? (This should be no more than 18 months after receipt of the initial portion of seed money, and preferably be by the end of 2008)? In this answer, include:
  - Project timeline
  - Milestones for measuring progress (that is, what are the estimated delivery dates; what markers of progress will be used to report on progress for the midterm and final reports?)
- What additional support does the project have (that is, are there matching investments being made by one or more institutions, granting agencies, etc.)?

**G. Project budget - Two one-page budgets should:**

1. Show the uses to which GBIF's contribution to the project will be put (may include salaries/wages, travel, equipment and supplies, and other [must be explained]), and
2. Show how any additional costs of the project will be covered

**H. Letter(s) of endorsement of the project by user group(s)**

**I. Letter(s) of institutional commitment to and support for the project (at the very least, from the Managing Institution)**

**J. Additional documentation (illustrations, maps, samples), if any**

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

GBIF is transitioning from the prototype phase to a new operational phase. Providing current access to over 130 million records, and a mandate towards continued growth, GBIF offers a unique, collective perspective on the world's primary biodiversity data.

The 2007-2008 GBIF Work Programme continues our tradition of investing in the biodiversity sciences community through our seed money awards programme. To date, GBIF has made nearly USD 4 million in awards in the two areas of DIGIT and ECAT.

**SYNOPSIS OF DIGIT** (Digitisation of Natural History Collections): The original overall goal of the DIGIT programme is to facilitate the digitisation of the data associated with an estimated 1 to 2 billion specimens found in the world's natural history collections. Through the use of interoperable standards, DIGIT also works to make these specimen records, *as well as species-level observational records*, globally accessible through the GBIF network.

Globally available occurrence data will open up new opportunities for scientific analysis, and support evidence-based decision-making. Collectively, these data are of fundamental importance in service to such decision-making in global initiatives such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the analysis and response to invasive species, movement of disease vectors, global climate change, etc. These data can be used to establish baselines against which to measure the rate of biodiversity loss or the rate of change in species distribution over time, and employed in other kinds of analyses.

For the data resulting from supported projects to be easily integrated into the GBIF network, certain minimum standards must be met. These minimum standards are incorporated into the GBIF information architecture (<http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/dadi/library?l=/architecture>), especially the Darwin Core Version 2 data exchange standard ([http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft\\_v1-31\\_HTML](http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft_v1-31_HTML))

**SYNOPSIS OF ECAT** (Electronic Catalogue of Names of Known Organisms): The ECAT work area of GBIF is focused on resolving impediments to easy access to biodiversity data and information by compiling a comprehensive catalogue of the names of Earth's known biota. This goal is addressed by increasing access to authoritative taxonomic checklists, nomenclatural data, and other useful names list compilations such as regional species lists, invasive or endangered species lists, and lists of vernacular names in any language.

Together, these components form the foundation of an information infrastructure dedicated to ensuring informed and comprehensive access to biodiversity data within both the GBIF Portal as well as other online resources that utilise our web services. ECAT seeks partnerships and collaborations with providers of taxonomic data, and through the ECAT work programme, supports the Catalogue of Life Partnership, individual taxonomists, nomenclators and other related activities.

## THE GBIF SEED MONEY AWARDS

Since its inception in 2003, the GBIF Seed Money programme has evolved, in response both to advisory consultation with the data provider community and to submitted proposals. In earlier years, the DIGIT and ECAT programmes each focused on their own respective priorities. More recently, the two programmes targeted content development focused on a small number of relatively large awards that addressed a defined subset of relevant biodiversity issues.

This RFP combines the separate DIGIT and ECAT programmes of previous years under the single GBIF thematic area of (data) **Content**. This means that proposals may target occurrence data, taxonomic checklists, or a combination of both.