

CEPF Letter of Inquiry Guidelines

To apply for a Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) grant, all applicants must first submit a Letter of Inquiry.

For proposals requesting \$20,000 or less, the Letter of Inquiry constitutes the full proposal. If a Letter of Inquiry requesting more than \$20,000 is recommended for award, the applicant will be notified and invited to submit a full project proposal.

The guidelines that follow are for the Letter of Inquiry process.

Timeframes and procedures for submitting Letters of Inquiry may vary for each region. Details are available in the Apply section on www.cepf.net. CEPF will stop accepting Letters of Inquiry for a particular region or strategic direction in that region once the designated funds are committed. Applicants are advised to consult the CEPF Web site to find out if their region of interest is accepting new funding applications.

Applicants may request funding up to \$1 million. However, specific requests for proposals may include a lower maximum. In general, applicants should keep in mind that we aim to create a diversified portfolio of grantees and projects to best meet our conservation objectives.

Before beginning, it's best to consult the CEPF investment strategy for the region where the project would be undertaken. The strategy is included in the ecosystem profile for the region, and explains and guides our investments. **Each project must be linked to one of the strategic directions in the ecosystem profile to be eligible for funding.** The exact number and title of the strategic direction must be indicated in the LOI under, "Strategic Direction from the Ecosystem Profile."

The ecosystem profiles can be obtained from the Publications section of www.cepf.net.

Other useful resources available on www.cepf.net include:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- The CEPF Project Database, with details about all grants supported by CEPF to date

Letter of Inquiry

In the application, CEPF requests a variety of information, including:

Organizational information, such as full legal name and address

History and mission statement

Project title & the amount of money requested

Proposed project budget in US dollars per the CEPF budget categories

These elements and others are explained in the application form

The final section of the application is for the text of the Letter of Inquiry. The Letter of Inquiry is meant to provide us with an overview of the project concept. It's typically a two- to three-page document, and must include:

- The project rationale including a description of the conservation need
- A brief project description (the conservation need and the proposed strategy and actions)
- A clear explanation of how the proposal relates to a specific strategic direction as outlined in the ecosystem profile for the region
- A description of any potential partners and stakeholders to be involved in the project
- A description of the project's potential for long-term sustainability or replication beyond CEPF funding

Once this portion is completed, send an e-mail to cepfgrants@conservation.org or to the contact address designated in a call for proposals with the completed application attached. You will receive an e-mail acknowledging receipt of the application, and the application will be forwarded to the appropriate team member.

You will be contacted thereafter as to how to proceed.

Questions or concerns during the process can be sent to cepfgrants@conservation.org.