



2020 APPLICATION FORM

Small Grants Fund for Working Groups & Task Forces

For office use only

Application received	
Application assessed	

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

1. Applications should be targeted towards EAAFP key species or habitats, regions, or emerging threats or other specified Partnership objectives. All applications should demonstrate how the project will contribute to the implementation of the [EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028](#).
2. The maximum amount annually provided by the Small Grants Fund to an applicant or for a specific project is \$5,000 (USD). If the project budget exceeds this amount, then the supporting funds and funders need to be identified in the Application.
3. Funds are limited and not all applications may be funded.
4. Applications with in-kind contributions and other matching financial are preferred.
5. Grants are awarded on the strict understanding that funds will be exempt from institutional administration charges, unless Partner government law so requires.
6. Conference attendance will be supported to a maximum of \$1,000 (USD) and is only for Task Force or Working Group members delivering their own work as a presentation, paper or poster.
7. Applications must be reviewed by the relevant EAAFP Working Group or Task Force Chair or Coordinator, who will provide a statement of the relative merit of the application against the assessment criteria, prior to submission.
8. EAAFP Working Groups and Task Forces are eligible for funding to go towards meetings, research, monitoring, site management, training and CEPA events and materials.
9. Students, with the support of the relevant Working Group or Task Force, are only eligible for funding toward studies being undertaken at a research institution or travel to a conference to present original research.
10. Lead investigators are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits from government authorities, indigenous communities, ethics committees etc., to undertake approved research or monitoring studies.
11. Project completion is required within 18 months of the close of the Application period.
12. Successful applicants will be required to provide a short write up of their project outcomes for the EAAFP newsletter and website and to report to the relevant Working Group or Task Force. They are also strongly encouraged to publish their results in peer-reviewed journals.

Call for proposal opens on 3 January. Applications close at 5pm (Seoul Time) on 3 February annually. Announcements of funding will be made by 3 March.

A follow-up application process may be available 6 months later should funds remain.



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Guidance to Applicants

1. Eligibility of Projects

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1.1 The focus of the project is migratory waterbirds and their habitats. | Yes | No |
| 1.2 The project will improve the understanding of factors important for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the EAAF. | Yes | No |
| 1.3 The applicant agrees to provide a final report within 3 months of the completion of the project. | Yes | No |
| 1.4 The applicant agrees to submit 1-2-page article and photographs for inclusion on EAAFP's website and/or write a brief article for the EAAFP's newsletter. Photographers will be acknowledged. | Yes | No |
| 1.5 The applicant will acknowledge the support of the EAAFP in any publications, presentations and reports arising from this work. | Yes | No |

2. Project Assessment Criteria

- 2.1 The contribution the project is anticipated to make to the Key Result Areas listed in the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028.
- 2.2 The alignment of the project with priority Single Species Action Plans or overall Working Group and Task Force objectives. Applications are encouraged to contact the relevant Working Group and Task Force Chair or Coordinator to brief them on the Project Proposal. Please contact the EAAFP Programme Officer if additional information is needed (programme@eaaflyway.net).
- 2.3 The justification for the grant funds requested relative to the overall budget of the project.
- 2.4 Leveraging of in-kind contributions and other matching financial.
- 2.5 The track record of the lead investigator and the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives.

3. Project Assessment Process (for information)

- 3.1 Following initial Secretariat and WG/TF screening and review, the Technical Sub-Committee (TsC) will select at least 1 reviewer per 5 applications (e.g. 4 reviewers for 20 applications). Reviewers should be TsC members or other persons with appropriate expertise and a flyway-wide perspective. Considerations for reviewer selection will include geographic and technical expertise diversity. A lead reviewer will be identified to coordinate the process for each application.
- 3.2 Reviews should ensure calibration on the ranking definitions and scoring criteria prior to beginning reviews.
- 3.3 Ensure that each application is reviewed by a minimum of 2 reviewers, with an offset system so pairs of reviewers are rotated in different combinations (for example, with 20 applications, Reviewer A gets applications 1-10, B gets 6-15, C gets 11-20, D gets 16-5). Reviews are encouraged to review as many additional projects as possible.
- 3.4 Reviewers are to recuse themselves from reviewing any application where there is a conflict of interest. These applications will be assigned to another reviewer.

- 3.5 Conduct independent reviews, including reading the application, scoring, ranking, and notes. Submit reviews to lead reviewer for compilation in a table. Note that all applications should be read prior to scoring to increase perspective. Submit to the lead reviewer, who will share tallied results back with the other reviewers.
- 3.6 Discuss the merits of all applications as a group.
- 3.7 Provide for an opportunity to reach out to applicants with questions, recommendation, or requests for more information. Communicate with the WG/TF Chairs/Coordinators if necessary.
- 3.8 Strive for consensus on overall applications ranking and recommendations on funding.
- 3.9 If there are numerous projects that are scored/ranked closely near the “funding line”, then all reviewers should review those projects prior to a final recommendation.
- 3.10 The lead reviewer will compile and deliver the final recommendations for funding to the Secretariat.
- 3.11 Review Team and the Secretariat should examine the process and recommend changes for the next cycle.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: Dr Choi Chi Yeung
(Mr, Ms etc) Family name Given Name/s

Institution: Southern University of Science and Technology

Institutional address: No. 1088 Xue Yuan Boulevard
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Degree type: Nan Shan District, Shenzhen Guangdong Province, China 518055
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Primary contact number Mobile phone number

Email address: choimo@yahoo.com; choicy@sustech.edu.cn

Relevant Working Group or Task Force Chair/Coordinator - DETAILS

Please contact the EAAFP Programme Officer if additional guidance is needed in relation to this section (programme@eaaflyway.net)

Title: Mr Yu Yat-tung
(Mr, Ms etc) Family name Given Name/s

Email address: bfspoonbill@hkbws.org.hk

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Title: Please provide a concise and informative title of your entire project (not just the component for which funds are sought)

Juvenile distribution pattern and conservation of the endangered Black-faced Spoonbill

Part A. Project Proposal

Details of your entire project (not just the component for which funds are sought) (2.5 page maximum)

- 1. Objectives:**
- Quantify the wintering distribution pattern of juvenile Black-faced Spoonbills
 - Determine the potential drivers for the observed juvenile wintering distribution pattern
 - Evaluate the extent to which protected areas encompass the full range of habitats used by Black-faced Spoonbills during non-breeding season

2. Background:

Coastal wetlands along the EAAF are being converted into new terrestrial-dominated land uses rapidly, mainly as aquaculture and agriculture land, together with erosion, resulting in the loss of more than 2/3 of coastal wetlands in the Yellow Sea over the last 50 years, a rate that is comparable to the loss of tropical forest (Murray *et al.* 2014). This is therefore, not surprising that the populations of many migratory waterbird species along the EAAF have been declining rapidly (Studds *et al.* 2017; Clemens *et al.* 2016), leaving the EAAF with one of the highest number of globally threatened or near threatened waterbird species compared to other flyways (Stroud *et al.* 2006). The conservation of these long-distance migratory species requires substantial improvement in the protection, management and monitoring of their habitats in wintering, stopover and breeding grounds (Szabo *et al.* 2016), with their adequate protection in China particularly crucial (Murray and Fuller 2015).

Among the threatened migratory waterbird species in the EAAF, the Black-faced Spoonbills (hereafter BFS) stands out as one of the very few species showing a recovering trend, from just a few hundreds to more than 4,500 over the last 30 years partly due to the extensive conservation effort and BFSs' ability to utilise artificial wetlands (Sung *et al.* 2018). Nonetheless, the BFS

population that winter in some sites such as Hong Kong, seemed to have reached their carrying capacity in the last decade, with very little increase compare to other sites that experienced a steady increase in wintering population. Over the years, the foraging ecology (Yu *et al.* 2004a), habitat use (Yu *et al.* 2004b), threats (Sung *et al.* 2018) and migration routes (Wood *et al.* 2013) of BFS have been studied in various locations. However, very few of these studies were conducted simultaneously beyond local site level to collect quantitative, comparable information to understand drivers behind various population trends. There is an urgent need to understand the movement, especially juveniles, during winter to gain insights into the key drivers for the various wintering population trends in different wintering sites. The long-term synchronized census data collected by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (>20 years), on-going satellite tracking studies and breeding ecology data accumulated in Korea, created an exciting opportunity to fill the important knowledge and management gap in BFS migration ecology and conservation.

In this proposed project, we aim to 1) quantify the wintering distribution pattern of juvenile BFS using GPS-GSM transmitters; 2) determine the potential drivers for the observed juvenile wintering distribution pattern by combining the tracking data with findings from another wintering ground project; 3) analyse the tracking data to evaluate the extent to which protected areas along the flyway encompass the full range of habitats used by BFS during non-breeding season. The ultimate goal to identify the key regions where juvenile BFS winter and safeguard these areas for the continuous recovery of this endangered population.

3. Project plan, timeline and methods:

Please include the proposed timing of project commencement, start and completion of fieldwork (if applicable), project completion. Please also comment on the flexibility of the timeline of the project.

The BFS is reasonably large in body size and easy to observe, allowing researchers to attach GPS GSM transmitters to reveal the detailed individual movement and behaviour. In the proposed project, we will work with colleagues from Korea (Waterbird Network Korea and National Institute of Ecology) to deploy transmitters at BFS breeding sites in South Korea. We aim to deploy Druid technology's Lego solar-powered GPS/GSM transmitters (19g or 1.3% of juvenile BFS body weight) onto 16 BFS using the backpack method. Our collaborators from Korea have been tracking BFS since 2009 with around 100 birds already been tracked. The team is experienced and fully competent with the catching, handling processes and attaching transmitter to BFS while minimising negative impacts on the birds. Our proposed timeline is listed as follow,

Timeline	
2020.03-2020.05	Preparation
2020.06-2020.07	Fieldwork – visit various breeding colonies to deploy 16 transmitters
2020.08-2021.04	Data collection, analysis, write up
2021.04-2021.07	Data analysis and write up, communicate with local stakeholders

4. Likely benefit to conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitat / or key research outputs:

In addressing this question, please also identify which EAAFP Key Result Areas the project will contribute to (see the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019 – 2028).

We aim to publish at least two peer-reviewed articles, with one focusing on juvenile wintering distribution pattern and another on protected area design for BFS. We will also extract key management recommendations, as well as making the key ranges of tagged birds openly available to the public so that decision makers and local stakeholders could use our findings to help with conserving and managing habitats for BFS.

Our work will also contribute to some of the *EAAFP Key Result Areas*,

KRA 1.1 A comprehensive and coherent Flyway Network of Sites is developed for migratory waterbirds, including sites that are not currently Protected Areas.

Identify network sites, especially those overlooked ones in Zhejiang and Fujian provinces in mainland China.

KRA 1.3 Flyway Network Sites are valued by the community and sustainably managed.

Analyse local movement of tagged BFS to inform local managers / communities how their sites should be managed.

KRA 3.3 Updated list of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds for conservation management and prioritization.
See point 1 above.

5. Alignment with EAAFP priorities:

Please indicate which of the EAAFP Working Groups and Task Forces priorities are addressed in this project.

Our proposed project will address BFS working group's priorities in

- a) preserving important breeding, staging, and wintering habitats for the species.
- b) promoting the exchange of information between different countries and agencies.
- c) maintaining and sharing a database on the BFS information and important sites; carry out studies and research on the BFS conservation.
- d) carrying out studies and promoting the sustainable use of wetlands, particularly tidal areas, in the region.
- e) promoting communication, public awareness, and education on this charismatic species in the region.

6. Explain the part of your project for which you are seeking funds in this application:

We have already tested 2 transmitters last year with our Korean colleagues with 1 transmitter still working after 9 months in the field. We currently have funding to deploy 16 transmitters this year and we would like to seek additional funding to purchase another 4 transmitters, giving us a total of 20 transmitters this year. Among the BFS tagged in South Korea, the migration success rate is about 70%, this will give us about 14 southward migration and wintering track records if 20 transmitters are used, providing us with a reasonable sample size and chance to cover much of wintering range of the BFS and make comparison between years. These tracking data will be critical in fulfilling all our key objectives.

7. Scientific References cited in the application:

- Clemens, R.S., Rogers, D.I., Hansen, B.D., Gosbell, K., Minton, C.D.T., Straw, P., Bamford, M., Woehler, E.J., Milton, D.A., Weston, M.A., Venables, B., Weller, D., Hassell, C., Rutherford, B., Onton, K., Herrod, A., Studds, C.E., Choi, C.-Y., Dhanjal-Adams, K.L., Murray, N.J., Skilleter, G.A. & Fuller, R.A. 2016. Continental-scale decreases in shorebird populations in Australia. *Emu*, 116, 119-135.
- Murray, N.J., Clemens, R.S., Phinn, S.R., Possingham, H.P. & Fuller, R.A. 2014. Tracking the rapid loss of tidal wetlands in the Yellow Sea. *Frontiers In Ecology And The Environment*, 12, 267-272.
- Murray, N.J., Fuller, R.A. 2015. Protecting stopover habitat for migratory shorebirds in East Asia. *J. Ornithol.* 156, 217–225.
- Stroud DA, Baker A, Blanco DE, Davidson NC, Delany S, Ganter B, . . . & (on behalf of the International Wader Study Group). 2006. The conservation and population status of the world's waders at the turn of the millennium. In G.C. Boere, C.A. Galbraith & D.A. Stroud (Eds.), *Waterbirds around the world* (pp. 643-648). Edinburgh, UK: The Stationery Office.
- Studds, C.E., Kendall, B.E., Murray, N.J., Wilson, H.B., Rogers, D.I., Clemens, R.S., Gosbell, K., Hassell, C.J., Jessop, R., Melville, D.S., Milton, D.A., Minton, C.D.T., Possingham, H.P., Riegen, A.C., Straw, P., Woehler, E.J. & Fuller, R.A. 2017. Rapid population decline in migratory shorebirds relying on Yellow Sea tidal mudflats as stopover sites. *Nature Communications*, 8, 14895.
- Sung Y-H, Tse IW-L, & Yu Y-T. 2018. Population trends of the Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor*: analysis of data from international synchronised censuses. *Bird Conservation International*, 28(1), 157-167.
- Szabo, J.K., Choi, C.-Y., Clemens, R.S., Hansen, B. 2016. Conservation without borders – solutions to declines of migratory shorebirds in the east Asian–Australasian flyway. *Emu* 116, 215–221.
- Wood, C., Tomida, H., Jin-Han, K., Lee, K.S., Cho, H.J., Nishida, S., Ibrahim, J., Hur, W.H., Kim, H.J., Kim, S.H., Koike, H., Fujita, G., Higuchi, H. & Yahara, T. 2013. New perspectives on habitat selection by the Black-faced Spoonbill *Platalea minor* based upon satellite telemetry. *Bird Conservation International*, 23, 495-501.
- Yu YT, & Swennen C. 2004a. Feeding of wintering Black-faced Spoonbills in Hong Kong: When and how long? *Waterbirds*, 27(2), 135-140.
- Yu YT, & Swennen C. 2004b. Habitat use of the Black-faced Spoonbill. *Waterbirds*, 27(2), 129-134.

Part B. FOR CONFERENCE APPLICANTS ONLY

Conference Title:	Location:	Date:
Presentation Abstract (250 word maximum):		

Part C. FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Experience Relevant to Project:

0.5 page maximum

I am an applied ecologist with expertise in animal ecology, conservation biology, wetland ecology and environmental management. I study the relationship between animals and their environment. Current study systems include the ecology of migratory birds, with a focus on their foraging and movement ecology within and between coastal intertidal wetlands. This has led to investigations of diet, habitat use, local movement, population dynamics, migration phenology and strategies in the last 15 years, often using the latest technology in wildlife tracking and remote sensing. These studies took place in many areas along the flyway, ranging from Alaska, Incheon, Brisbane, Melbourne, Auckland and many important waterbird sites in China. Many of these projects have a strong field component that involved daily waterbird counts, bird catching and ringing, marked bird resighting, behaviour scans, focal bird observations, collecting faeces, and benthos sampling. In some of these projects, transmitters (radio, satellite, GPS-GSM) were deployed to study the movement of birds.

Based on the findings from these studies, long-term habitat quality monitoring, protected area boundary adjustment and integrated natural and artificial management are proposed to improve the habitats for migratory waterbirds. These efforts do not only contribute to nature conservation, but also to the restoration of wetland ecosystems on which humans depend. My waterbird research experiences, successful international collaboration history and ability to engage with public, protected area managers and government officials, are essential for the completion of the proposed project of international quality.

Please **also** attach a maximum 2-page CV or list non-academic research experience and experience with migratory waterbirds/conservation e.g. work experience, volunteer experience, bird banding, birdwatching.

PROJECT BUDGET (please outline your entire project, not just the component for which funds are being sought)

Item (Please list)		\$ Budget (in USD)	Current support / Requested Support (source and amount)	Requested support from EAAFP (source and amount)
Equipment: (details)	GPS/GSM transmitter x 20	17607.72	14107.72	3500
Consumable items (details)				
Travel and accommodation (details)	Boat hiring to reach nesting islands (10 trips)	7000	7000	
	Local transportation (Petrol for 10 trips, 3 vehicles each time)	2100	2100	
	Accommodation (10 trips, 2 rooms per night)	840	840	
Computing & clerical (details)				
Other (details)				
Total amount requested from Small Grants Fund: (All amounts in USD)				3500

Budget justification: Please provide brief description and justification of all major budgetary items requested, indicating any that are essential to the project and/or conference for which you are applying (250 word maximum):

We currently have funding to deploy 16 transmitters and we would like to seek additional funding to purchase another 4 transmitters, giving us a total of 20 transmitters this year. With a 70% migration success rate, this will give us about 14 southward migration and wintering track records, providing us with a reasonable sample size and chance to cover much of wintering range of the BFS and make comparison between years. The travel and accommodation costs will be covered by other sources (my university and collaborators' institute) and these are essential since the breeding islands of BFS are relatively remote and scattered. They are impossible to reach without a boat.

DECLARATION

I have discussed the contents of this application with the relevant Chair/s and Coordinator/s of relevant Working Group and/or Task Forces and I certify that to the best of my knowledge all documentation and information submitted or made available by me is true, accurate and complete.

By ticking the following box you are agreeing to the above statement:

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

All relevant sections of this application have been completed.	Yes	No
Full payment details have been provided on the final page.	Yes	No
Application is being submitted electronically as one single document.	Yes	No
Application is being submitted in MS Word format.	Yes	No
Application has been discussed with the relevant Chair/s and Coordinator/s of relevant working Group and/or Task Forces and these have been carbon copied (cc) to this application submission as evidence they have seen and approved this application.	Yes	No

Applications that do not comply with these guidelines will be returned to the applicant.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please email your application as a single document to:
secretariat@eaaflyway.net

EAAFP will acknowledge the receipt of your application.

Applications close at 5pm (Seoul Time) on 3 February 2020
Results will be announced on 3 March 2020

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Decision: _____

Authorised: __ / __ / __ _____

Entered: __ / __ / __ _____

Comments: _____

Lead Investigator Advised: __ / __ / __ _____

PLEASE COMPLETE PAYMENT DETAILS ON FINAL PAGE

PAYMENT DETAILS

To ensure prompt payment of successful applications please complete the following details and submit with your application.

PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD

Electronic funds transfer (EFT)

GRANT CONDITIONS

In accordance with the application criteria, the following conditions must be met:

- Funds are to be strictly exempt from organisational administration charges.
- You are required to submit one copy by email of the final report within 3 months of the completion of the project.
- You are required to acknowledge the EAAFP and the Small Grant Fund in any presentations, publications, reports or promotional material arising from this work. Please email secretariat@eaaflyway.net in order to obtain an electronic copy of EAAFP logo for use on any display material you will be preparing.
- You may be requested to write a brief article for the EAAFP newsletter.
- You are required to provide EAAFP with an electronic copy of your final report at the completion of your project, as well as a copy of any publications that result from your grant.