

## Guidelines and Applying for TLC's Bird Conservation Fund Scholarship



The Tasmanian Land Conservancy's Bird Conservation Fund Scholarship is awarded annually to persons undertaking research with an approved institution.

Applications open on **1<sup>st</sup> March**, and close at **5pm, 31<sup>st</sup> March, every year**.

**One application** can be submitted per person using the form downloadable below.

### ***Student Eligibility***

- Applications are open mainly to Honours, Masters and PhD students
- Students are only eligible for funding toward current (not retrospective) research undertaken at an approved Australian tertiary institution
- Award funds are provided on the strict understanding that funds will be exempt from institutional administration charges
- The student's work must focus on the conservation of Australian native bird species, with preference given to projects with a Tasmanian focus
- A group project may be considered providing a key researcher is involved
- Students are only eligible for one award during the life of their project
- Students are responsible for and must obtain all necessary permits and approvals to undertake their research.

### ***Applications in the following areas are encouraged:***

- Ecology of Tasmanian bird species
- Practical, novel and innovative techniques to improve conservation management of native birds, especially threatened or declining species, including:
  - Addressing key threatening processes
  - Habitat management and conservation ecology
- Improving understanding of threatened or poorly known bird species or groups

### ***Preference will be given to projects:***

- Aligned with the Tasmanian Land Conservancy's Strategic Plan
- Undertaken on or utilising TLC reserves or other private covenanted land
- Making an applied contribution to bird conservation

### ***Assessment***

Applications will be assessed wholly by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy through their Science Council with the right to approach external scientific referees if necessary.

The merit of applications will be judged on the following five key areas:

1. The contribution of the project to avian conservation
2. Alignment with the TLC's conservation objectives
3. The likelihood of the project achieving its objectives
4. The novelty of the research or method
5. Communication and engagement opportunities

These criteria are discussed in more detail, below.

1. Contribution of the project to avian conservation

How will this project help to improve the management or conservation status of the focal species? Preference will be given to applications which can demonstrate a clear link between the results of their research and practical outcomes for the species. For example, priority may be given to projects which directly address identified recovery actions for threatened species and communities or demonstrate the effectiveness or otherwise of a management activity.

2. Alignment with the TLC's conservation objectives

The TLC's strategic bird conservation priorities comprise:

- Woodland and hollow-dependent birds
- Tasmanian endemics, Tasmanian restricted or stronghold species declining on mainland Australia
- The importance of private protected lands to bird conservation and applied techniques improving conservation or alleviating threats to birds.
- Nationally or State listed threatened bird species
- Poorly known e.g. King Island species, wetland and grassland bird species, cryptic or island restricted bird species.
- Monitoring Australian birds and development of indices that track population trends.

Please demonstrate clearly how your project relates to these priorities, or other aims and missions of the organisation.

3. The likelihood of the project achieving its objectives

How will your project achieve its aims? Please give sufficient detail to enable the panel to determine whether your study design is feasible and capable of answering your questions. Examples of relevant details include a description of experimental treatments, sample sizes, methods and timeframes for the research.

4. Novelty of the research or method

Priority is given to projects which significantly expand our understanding. In this context, novelty refers to the ability of the project to tell us something new about the species in question and/or the techniques we use to survey and manage species and habitats. New techniques are encouraged, but projects need not be high-tech to demonstrate novelty of research.

## 5. Communication and engagement

What opportunities are there/will there be for relevant stakeholders to learn about the results of your research? Stakeholders may include government agencies, landholders, community or interest groups, and other researchers. To score highly for this criteria, applications should demonstrate an established plan for disseminating their results to those who can put them in to action, and ideally provide evidence of active collaboration and engagement. Examples of strategies to achieve this include, but are not limited to:

- research collaborations and partnerships;
- consultation throughout the project planning phase;
- publication of results in peer-reviewed journals;
- workshops and presentations;
- social media outreach; and
- volunteering opportunities.

### ***Award Value***

Grant value is cash funding up to \$3,000 for Honours, \$4,000 for Masters and \$5,000 for PhD or Post-doctoral research project. Typically one grant is awarded annually with the potential of two grants if both projects are deemed worthy. Funding amounts may be varied from time-to-time at the commencement of a new funding round.

The award is available as a cash payment transferred to the associated institution on receipt of an invoice – or as payment of equipment or services required to deliver a component of the project. The payment method will be discussed with the project supervisors.

### ***Use of Funds***

- Any project costs apart from salaries or stipends; including but not limited to fieldwork expenses, equipment purchases, laboratory or analysis costs, software or licensing, workshops and training expenses.
- Travel to conferences within Australia and abroad by students to deliver a presentation or contribute a paper or poster related to their research.
- The funds are not available for salary, to increase a stipend or as personal cash payments.
- The method and payment of funds will be discussed with the student and supervisors of successful applicants.

### ***How to Apply***

Download the 'Research Award Application' form below. Return the completed application to [business@tasland.org.au](mailto:business@tasland.org.au) no later than 5pm, March 31.

Further details can be found at <https://tasland.org.au/projects/bird-conservation-fund/>