

# Frequently Asked Questions

## General Questions

1. What kind of grant opportunities does WWF's Russell E. Train Education for Nature Program (EFN) currently provide?

EFN has four core grant opportunities available on an annual basis – Russell E. Train Fellowships, Professional Development Grants, Conservation Workshop Grants, and Alumni Grants.

- **Russell E. Train Fellowships** support individuals from select countries to pursue graduate degrees (master's and PhD) in a variety of conservation-related fields.  
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/russell-e-train-education-for-nature>
  - **Professional Development Grants** (PDGs) support mid-career conservationists to pursue short-term, non-degree training to upgrade their knowledge and skills.  
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/professional-development-grants>
  - **Conservation Workshop Grants** fund organizations to train communities, stakeholders, park guards, and others on local and regional conservation issues.  
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/initiatives/conservation-workshop-grants>
  - **Alumni Grants** support ongoing education, training, and research opportunities for former Russell E. Train Fellows and Professional Development Grant recipients who have completed the terms of their WWF grant contract and meet all of the eligibility criteria necessary to be considered for a grant.  
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/projects/alumni-grants>
2. Why is my country not included in the list of eligible countries?  
Eligible countries are reflective of areas where WWF-US manages projects. Each year, EFN reevaluates the list of countries and makes changes based on updated priorities.

3. Do I have to attend a course, training, or degree program in my home country?  
No, applicants may attend courses, trainings, or degree programs in any country.
4. I am working in an eligible country, but not in a WWF priority area. Can I still apply?  
Yes, but preference will be given to individuals working in a WWF priority area. If you are not working in a WWF priority area, please provide a compelling reason why your work is relevant to WWF's goals and mission in your application.
5. Can I request a paper application if I am having difficulty accessing the online application?  
No, paper applications are not available. Please try to access our online application system on a different internet browser, such as Google Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer, or Mozilla Firefox.
6. Can I apply for more than one grant opportunity at a time?  
Yes, individuals can apply to more than one grant opportunity at a time. However, EFN cannot provide two different streams of funding to an individual at the same time. EFN will award the grant that we feel best meets the needs of the individual based on availability of funding.
7. How many grants can one individual receive from EFN?  
EFN will award a maximum of 4 grants per individual.

## **Train Fellowship Questions**

1. When can I apply for a Russell E. Train Fellowship?  
EFN announces fellowship competitions in September of every year. Applicants have until March 1<sup>st</sup> to complete and submit an application to be considered eligible. Results will be sent to individuals via email approximately 8 weeks after the application deadline. Funds will be awarded to selected fellowship recipients starting in July of the year selected based on the applicant's program start date and correct documentation.
2. I am a WWF employee. Am I eligible to apply?  
Yes, WWF employees are eligible to apply for a Train Fellowship. However, if they are awarded a fellowship, they must take a leave of absence or resign from their position at

WWF for the period in which they receive funding. EFN is not allowed to provide fellowship funding to individuals who are earning a wage from WWF.

3. I am a former Professional Development Grant recipient. Can I apply for a Train Fellowship?

Yes.

4. Is there a template I can follow for the letter of recommendation?

No, we do not have a template for letters of recommendation. However, we have included some helpful tips below. Please address letters of recommendation to the Russell E. Train Fellowship Selection Committee.

### Helpful Tips

- Provide specific information about the applicant that the selection committee members can use to determine the applicant's strengths.
- Provide some context of how the writer knows the applicant—from class, research, work, etc.—and for what period of time the writer has known the applicant.
- Demonstrate that the writer knows the applicant personally. Including specific examples as evidence of this relationship in the recommendation letter is more credible than information that could be gathered from the resume.
- Point to specific examples of what the applicant has done. If the student wrote a brilliant paper, mention its topic and why it stood out. If the student did outstanding work in another regard, explain the nature of this work and its particular strengths, especially as they relate to the goals of the fellowship.
- Discuss why the applicant would be a strong candidate for the specific fellowship. How does this candidate exemplify the personal qualities or selection criteria specified by the fellowship? Specific examples are crucial.
- Indicate what particularly qualifies the applicant for the proposed course of study or project. Such letters provide the links between past performance and what is proposed.
- Place the applicant in a larger context. For example, a letter could compare the present applicant to others who have applied for similar honors in the past, or who have succeeded in such competitions. Quantitative remarks and percentages may be useful: "among the three best students I have taught," "top 5% of students in my 20 years of teaching."

5. Can letters of recommendation be submitted directly by my recommender?  
Yes, but we prefer that applicants attach their letters of recommendation to the online application. If your recommender prefers to send the document directly to EFN, they may email the letters to [efn@wwfus.org](mailto:efn@wwfus.org) by the application deadline.

## Professional Development Grant Questions

1. What is the Professional Development Grant cycle?  
EFN updates the list of eligible countries for Professional Development Grants every June. Competitions are held 4 times a year—in February, May, August, and November. Applicants are notified on the status of their grant approximately 4 weeks after submission of their application.
2. Are WWF employees eligible to apply for a Professional Development Grant?  
Yes, however all funding will be awarded to your country office.
3. I am a former Russell E. Train Fellowship recipient. Can I apply for a Professional Development Grant?  
No, individuals who have received a fellowship from EFN are not eligible for a Professional Development Grant. However, they can apply for an Alumni Grant.
4. I have received two Professional Development Grants, am I eligible to apply for a third?  
No, individuals are not eligible to apply for a third Professional Development Grant. Previously, this was allowed; however, we have recently updated our rules. Now, former Professional Development Grant recipients are only eligible to apply for Alumni Grants and Train Fellowships.
5. I'm having difficulty uploading my employer approval form to my application. What should I do?  
If you are having difficulty downloading the form online, you can send a signed and stamped letter from your employer to [efn@wwfus.org](mailto:efn@wwfus.org). Please make sure the letter includes your supervisor's authorization to attend the conference, training, or activity you have proposed in your application. Additionally, please explain why the conference or training is beneficial for you and your employer.

## Conservation Workshop Grant Questions – *not offered June 2018 – June 2019*

1. What is the Conservation Workshop Grant cycle?

Conservation Workshop Grant competitions are held 4 times a year—in February, May, August, and November. Applicants are notified on the status of their grant approximately 4 weeks after submission of their application.

2. Do Conservation Workshop Grants cover conferences, meetings, and non-training events?

No, Conservation Workshop Grants are specifically for locally-based training events. The main purpose of the activity should be to increase skills and knowledge on a specific topic through an active training program.

3. I work for a private company, is my organization eligible to apply?

No, Conservation Workshop Grants are only available to legally registered non-profit local organizations, government agencies, or academic institutions.

## Alumni Grant Questions

1. Who is eligible for an Alumni Grant?

Any individual who has received a Russell E. Train Fellowship or a Professional Development Grant is considered an alumnus.

2. What is the Alumni Grant cycle?

Alumni Grant competitions are held 4 times a year—in February, May, August, and November. Applicants are notified on the status of their grant approximately 4 weeks after submission of their application.

3. I am a former Train Fellowship recipient. How do I know if I am eligible for an Alumni Grant?

If you answer yes to all of the questions below, you are eligible for an Alumni Grant.

- Did you submit your final technical and financial reports?
- Did you complete the degree program that EFN provided you funding to attend?
- Have you completed your 2-year work requirement?

- Are you currently working and conducting research in your home country?
- Has it been more than 3 years since you have received funding from EFN?
- Have you received less than 4 grants from EFN?
- Do you have a bank account in your name that can receive US dollars?

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5. I am a former Train Fellowship recipient. How many Alumni Grants can I apply for?  
Each individual can receive a maximum of 4 grants. For example, if you have received a Train Fellowship, you are eligible for up to three Alumni Grants. If you have received a Train Fellowship and one Alumni Grant, you are eligible for up to two more Alumni Grants, etc.

6. I am a former Professional Development Grant recipient. How many Alumni Grants can I apply for?

Each individual can receive a maximum of 4 grants. For example, if you have received a Professional Development Grant, you are eligible for up to three Alumni Grants, or one Train Fellowship and two Alumni Grants.

**For additional questions about any EFN grants, please email [efn@wwfus.org](mailto:efn@wwfus.org).**