



2008 REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PRE-PROPOSALS

The International Rhino Foundation (IRF) is requesting pre-proposals for research that is directly applicable to management, propagation and conservation of rhinoceros species under intensive protection and management in the wild or maintained in captivity.

Pre-proposals for research involving any scientific discipline(s) can be submitted, but projects must directly address the targeted IRF research priorities specified below. The priorities also include a subset of those listed in the AZA Rhino Advisory Group's 2008 Research Masterplan and were chosen because they address the greatest challenges faced today in maintaining healthy, self-sustaining rhino populations that will exist far into the future. **Pre-proposals must be received by 15 December 2008** and must follow the requested format to be considered for support. (If applicants believe their proposal idea is outstanding but does not address the priorities listed below, they can submit an explanation of the idea in 250 words or less to s.ellis@rhinos-irf.org by November 15, 2008. If approved after review, the applicant may proceed with submitting a pre-proposal.)

Research Priority Target Areas (only pre-proposals addressing the following will be considered)

I. Improving Translocation Success

Pre-proposals in this area may include but are not limited to:

- Sedation/transport/release
 - Retrospective survey (drugs, team, equipment)
 - Decision tree
 - Drug combinations
- Post-release success
 - Retrospective survey
 - Post-release monitoring
- Boma management (e.g., energy requirements, white rhino anorexia)
- Developing criteria for selecting rhinos for translocation

II. Improving Rhino Identification and Monitoring

Pre-proposals in this area may include but are not limited to:

- Investigating new technology for monitoring rhinos
- Improving telemetry for monitoring rhinos

III. Conservation Genetics

Pre-proposals in this area may include but are not limited to:

- Fecal DNA analysis
- New ways of metapopulation analysis
- Defining rhino genetic conservation units
- Diversity of the three black rhino subspecies recovering *in situ* and the two *ex situ*

IV. Black rhino Health and Mortality Issues

Pre-proposals in this area may include but are not limited to:

- Iron overload
- Measures of stress
- Nutrition as related to black rhino disease and mortality
- Superficial necrolytic dermatitis

A panel of established scientists, veterinarians and IRF Board Members will review and score all pre-proposals and the final decision on those investigators invited to submit a full proposal will be made during the annual IRF Board meeting in November 2008. Pre-proposals will be evaluated on their quality, soundness of science, feasibility, likelihood that the results will lead to progress in resolving the challenges, effectiveness of the budget, and importance to the overall effort of maintaining healthy, self-sustaining populations of rhinos.

Projects selected to submit a full proposal will be announced no later than 30 January 2009, with full proposals due 1 April 2009.

Project costs should range from \$5,000 - \$50,000 per year but exceptions to these limits may be considered. The total funding currently committed to support the RFP is approximately \$250,000 but this amount may differ by the time grant evaluations are conducted. The IRF will not fund administrative overhead. Budget requests that consist primarily of salary will generally not be considered favorably. Conditional support may be committed for subsequent years of multi-year projects at the time of initial approval of a funded grant and funding will be contingent upon satisfactory review of the prior year's performance. Multi-year projects should not exceed 3 years.

Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate:

- Scientific Soundness - projects must follow accepted scientific principles so results are credible.
- Relevancy - projects must aim to significantly improve the conservation management of rhinos.
- Cost Benefit - each project must aim to obtain scientific information or an applicable benefit for the money expended.
- Projects with matching funds or supported by sound preliminary data.
- Past Performance - Principal investigators must have a reputation for completing projects, publishing results in an expeditious manner and cooperating with funding agencies in providing reports and educational materials. If awarded funding previously by the IRF, satisfactory performance on previous grant awards is essential.
- Humane Treatment - Projects must meet humane standards of care when animals are involved. Each of these studies must be approved by the appropriate agency at the facility or institution where the study is conducted.



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APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Pre-proposals must be received electronically by 15 December 2008
Send proposals electronically in Word or PDF format to s.ellis@rhinos-irf.org.**

Pre-proposals should be no more than 4 pages, single-spaced, using 12-point Arial font and consist of:

A) A title page containing:

1. Title of project
2. Research priority(s) addressed (choose one or more of the four listed)
3. Name, position, affiliation, address, e-mail, telephone and fax numbers of Principle Investigator and Co-Investigators.
4. Duration of project
5. Total amount requested
6. Signature of the PI and the Director of their institution/organization

B) A summary (abstract) of 500 words or less describing in lay language:

1. The problem being addressed
2. The general objectives of the study
3. A general explanation of the methods to be used and experimental design
4. The expected results and how they will be applied to captive populations

C) Body of the pre-proposal

1. Title
2. Investigator and Co-Investigators and affiliation
3. Research priority addressed (one or more of the four listed)
4. Specific Objectives
5. Importance of Research
6. Preliminary Data (if available)
7. Experimental Design
8. Literature Cited
9. Project Budget
10. Duration of project
11. Part of an ongoing program?: (If yes, specify)