

2009 John Wald Science Grants

RINHS and The Nature Conservancy of Rhode Island seek proposals for the 2009 John Wald Science Grants. These small grants are made to support research addressing RINHS and TNC priorities. We anticipate funding three to five projects for between \$2,000 and \$4,000 per project on or before 15 May 2009. Applications following the format described below must reach the Rhode Island Natural History Survey office by 5 P.M., Monday, 23 February 2009.

Overview:

This grant program is funded by an endowment created in memory of the late John Wald, an editor, writer, photographer, and outdoorsman. The objective of this program is to provide small grants in aid of research for projects addressing priorities of The Nature Conservancy of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Natural History Survey. The results of research funded by this program will advance knowledge of Rhode Island's biota and be used to identify critical lands for conservation in Rhode Island and to provide information for the stewardship of existing protected lands.

Priorities:

A John Wald Science Grant may be awarded to any highly ranked project meeting the needs of RINHS and TNC-RI for scientific information that benefits the understanding or stewardship of biological diversity in RI. Nonetheless, this year, priority will be given to proposals addressing RI's marine, coastal, or freshwater species and ecosystems—the status and trends of species or community diversity, or ecological health as well as methodological research directed at improving assessments of these factors. Projects could, for example, apply ecosystem-based management to Narragansett Bay (or other RI marine areas) and marine resources important to Rhode Island, tie habitat factors to fisheries management, develop information on habitat or diversity trends through historical methodologies, or integrate marine, freshwater, or terrestrial ecosystems. Projects could investigate bio-indicators for monitoring general environmental conditions, restoration outcomes, or directional changes of natural or anthropogenic origin. Researchers are encouraged to demonstrate creative use of existing but previously under-utilized data sources, in addition to generating new field data. We recommend contacting RINHS or TNC prior to submitting your proposal if you have any questions on the relevancy of the project or on the type of specific outcomes that would be most applicable to this grant opportunity. Contact information is provided on the last page.

Application procedure:

5 copies of the proposal must be received by RINHS by 5 P.M., Monday, 23 February 2009. Proposals received after that date will not be considered. Proposals must be typed in single-space with a font size no smaller than 11 point and be no more than 5 pages long including budget and excluding cover page and resume. All proposals must include the following sections:

Cover Page—

Provide the name, address, telephone number, fax number, and email address of the principal investigator and primary contact for this project, as well as the total funds being requested from the Wald program. List the names and affiliations of any collaborating investigators. Include a single paragraph abstract describing the proposed research and its potential results.

Introduction—

(approximately 1 page) Describe the research issue you will address and how this will support TNC-RI science programs. If possible, frame your research project in the form of a question or null hypothesis. What published literature exists for this research topic?

Methods—

(approximately 1 page) Explicitly describe the methods you will use and the study sites you intend to work in. What are your target sample sizes? What statistical methods will you use to analyze your data? What is your time schedule?

Expected Results—

(approximately 0.5 page) What kind of results will your project produce and what format will they be presented in (tables, figures, maps, GIS data, narrative)? What are the ecological implications of your results and what is their value to the conservation community?

Qualifications—

(approximately 0.5 page) What skills, resources, or experience do you have that qualify you for this project?

Budget—

(approximately 0.5 page) Itemize the cost of your project in the following categories: Personnel, Supplies and Equipment, Travel, and Subsistence (food, lodging). Describe the contents of each budget category. Tuition costs will not be considered. Institutional indirect costs will be limited to 10% of direct costs.

Literature Cited, Tables, Figures, Appendices—

(no more than 2 pages) Include citations to published literature and any supportive materials in this section.

Resume—

Include a curriculum vitae for the PI (required) and collaborators (optional). If the PI is a student, a letter of recommendation from the major professor is required.

Five copies of the grant proposal must be received on or before Monday, 23 February 2009. Proposals should be directed to:

Kira Stillwell, Program Administrator
Rhode Island Natural History Survey (RINHS)
P.O. Box 1858
Kingston, RI 02881
Tel: (401) 874-5800
Email: programadmin@rinhs.org

Proposals may be hand delivered to RINHS in Ranger Hall, Room 200, URI Kingston Campus until 5 P.M. on the due date. Note, however, that proposals mailed to the Ranger Hall address will NOT reach RINHS. Faxed or electronic submissions will not be accepted.

All proposals will be reviewed by a panel consisting of scientists and program managers representing TNC-RI and RINHS. Proposals will be evaluated in light of their relevance to TNC-RI and RINHS priorities, needs, and goals stated above and the likeliness of positive results, as well as by the clarity of objectives, scientific merit, appropriateness of methods and budget, and qualifications of the research team. Proposals may be funded in whole or in part and all decisions are made at the complete discretion of the RINHS and TNC-RI panel.

Notification, payment, indirect costs, and other conditions:

Applicants will be informed of the outcome on or before 7 April 2009 and must complete a contract with RINHS before any funds can be issued. Successful PI's will be given a single payment of 80% of the granted amount at the start of the project. The remaining 20% will be awarded upon receipt and approval of the final project report. PI's may include institutional overhead or indirect costs in their project budget but only to a maximum of 10% of direct costs.

Principal Investigators will need to provide a final report. Final reports will be due by 1 July 2009. Final reports should be prepared in the format of a scientific journal paper (abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, literature cited, tables, figures, and appendices). Final reports will be submitted in printed and electronic format (MS Word or WordPerfect Formats). Printed and digital (when appropriate) copies of raw data must be provided in addition to the written report. GIS data that are developed will be submitted in digital form (ArcExport or Shapefile format) and be accompanied by FGDC-compliant metadata. Explicit instructions for preparing final reports will be provided to PIs at the start of the project. Successful PIs will also be asked to make an oral or poster presentation of their research findings at the Rhode Island Natural History Survey's annual conference.

All new data collected will be jointly owned by the PIs, TNC-RI, and RINHS. TNC-RI and RINHS may use data internally or externally in support of their science and stewardship programs and RINHS may incorporate any or all data into its proprietary databases and make them available to the public in accordance with its data policy (see www.rinhs.org for the current policy). PI's are encouraged to publish their results and TNC-RI and RINHS will agree not to present or publish on the subject of a project in a form that uses primarily the data from the project without the PIs' expressed, written permission.

Questions? Contact either:

Kira Stillwell, Program Administrator or
RI Natural History Survey (RINHS)
Tel: (401) 874-5800
Email: programadmin@rinhs.org

Dr. Caroly Shumway, Dir. of Conservation Science
The Nature Conservancy
(401) 331-7110X 13
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