

## **GBIF DIGIT 2005 - 2006 Request for Proposals**

### **General Information**

**Program Title:** Digitisation of Natural History Collection Data

**Synopsis of Programme:** The overall goal of the DIGIT programme is to facilitate the digitisation of the estimated 1.5 billion specimens found in the world's natural history collections and through the use of interoperable standards make these specimen records and other species level observational records publicly accessible through the GBIF network. Making this digitised data globally available will open up totally new opportunities for scientific analysis and provide new sources of data for decision making purposes.

Collectively, these data are of fundamental importance in service to global initiatives such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biodiversity related initiatives in establishing a baseline against which to measure the rate of biodiversity loss. In particular, GBIF is interested in supporting the development of datasets, networks and tools that can make a significant scientific contribution to society and sustainable development. For this data to be easily integrated into the GBIF network, certain minimum standards must be met. These minimum standards are incorporated into the GBIF information architecture

<http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/dadi/library?l=/architecture>

particularly the Darwin Core Version 2 data exchange standard

[http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft\\_v1-31\\_HTML](http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft_v1-31_HTML)

### **Rationale for DIGIT 2005-2006 RFP**

In the global context, the resources that GBIF has available to fund digitisation activities are extremely limited. It has always been recognised that the vast majority of funds needed to digitise the world's natural history collections would have to come from local and/or national funding sources. In addition, GBIF's global perspective puts it in a special position to facilitate the initiation of international collaborative projects and activities which are often difficult for local or national governments to support. For the first two years of the DIGIT Seed Money Program the RFP was targeted at the rapid delivery of data sets that could be quickly incorporated within the GBIF portal. However, following the direction of the GBIF Governing Board and the recommendations of the GBIF Third Year review it was decided that rather than having a general call for proposals to support the digitisation of a broad range of taxonomic groups, we would for the 2005-2006 DIGIT RFP target a specific taxonomic group where the digitised data is urgently needed in support of specific International initiatives such as: The International Pollinators Initiative (IPI), The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 2010 Biodiversity Target or a particular Global Species Groups Conservation Assessment. The rationale for this decision was that by targeting a specific taxonomic group it would be possible to develop a series of distributed data sets

that when combined will contain a richness of information that will permit new in-depth innovative scientific analysis that would not be possible without access to these combined resources. We believe that this approach will demonstrate the value of the global digitisation effort and in the longer term will justify increased funding for digitisation. In addition, by engaging particular user groups for the digitised data in the digitisation process we will demonstrate to a broader community the value of this activity.

To achieve the desired outcome it will be necessary to concentrate on aspects of the digitisation effort that will stimulate the development of partnerships and networking among natural history institutions particularly at the international or regional level and develop partnerships between these networks and the user communities. It is anticipated that one or more networks of institutions will partner with a specific user community to develop joint proposals to digitise, share and utilise the resulting data sets.

To identify the specific target taxa the GBIF secretariat hosted a two week e-conference. The outcome of this discussion is archived at [http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/digit/library?l=/digit\\_conference&vm=detailed&sb=Title](http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/digit/library?l=/digit_conference&vm=detailed&sb=Title). Following this e-conference it was decided that the DIGIT 2005-2006 Seed Money Program would only request proposal that would target the digitisation of:

1. Apoidea in support of the International Pollinators Initiative (IPI)
2. Triticeae in an effort to link the GBIF digitisation effort to the international efforts to conserve plant genetic diversity
3. Cypriniformes as indicators in support of monitoring biodiversity change in freshwater ecosystems
4. Amphibians in support of the Global Species Conservation Assessment for Amphibians.

Our e-conference indicated that there were existing networks of data providers and data users that would be in a position to develop the partnerships and networks necessary to submit joint proposals to digitise, share and utilise specimen-based data for these target groups. It is anticipated that there will be multiple proposals targeting each of these taxonomic groups. The final review process will identify which target taxonomic group will be supported based on the strengths of the proposals related to that group. This decision will be based on which of these target groups has developed the broadest partnerships and the most efficient approaches for digitizing and sharing data pertaining to their group. Partnerships between data providers and data users will be particularly important and it is hoped that these partnerships will reflect the willingness of the user community to contribute resources or matching funds to support the digitisation of the data and/or resources to support the analysis and utilisation of the resulting data sets.

To allow sufficient time for to develop the required partnerships and to prepared the joint proposals the pre-proposal stage of the DIGIT RFP process has been eliminated for the 2005-2006 DIGIT Seed Money competition and the deadline for full proposals has be set for Nov. 15, 2005. (See the following **PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**)

For Further Information Contact: DIGIT Programme Officer Larry Speers at [LSpeers@GBIF.org](mailto:LSpeers@GBIF.org).

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Open to consortia of data providers and user organisations. However, in order to ensure adequate fiscal management, all awards will be made to a relevant and appropriate institution or organisation (usually, the institution or organisation of the principal investigator). Consortia and organisations must agree to make the data developed through the project publicly available through the GBIF network either as the data are digitised or no later than two months after the GBIF funding ends.

## **AWARD INFORMATION**

**Type of award:** Seed money

**Size of awards:** Grants to a maximum of \$650,000 US

**Estimated number of awards:** Depending on the number of applicants and the amounts requested there is the possibility of awarding from 1 to many awards globally

**Total amount of funding available:** \$650,000 US

## **BUDGETARY INFORMATION**

### **Cost Sharing Requirements**

A GBIF seed money award may be used to cover up to 30% of the total project cost; the remaining project cost must be funded by non-GBIF sources (See matching funds guidelines.).

## **MATCHING FUNDS GUIDELINES**

Amount of GBIF support per project: Up to 30% of the total project cost. The other 70% of costs may be made up through such items as:

- funds from non-GBIF sources to be or previously spent on the project
- salaries of people involved in the project that are paid by non-GBIF funds (to a percentage equal to the percentage of their working week spent directly on the project)
- volunteer time spent directly on the project calculated at an hourly wage equivalent
- in-kind support of the project (donation of hardware, software, travel costs, etc.)
- waiver of overhead costs normally charged by institutions

## **TARGET DATES**

- RFP released June 28, 2005.

- Proposals due 15 Nov 2005
- Proposals reviewed by 15 Dec 2005
- Successful applicants contacted by 31 Dec 2005

### **Payment schedule**

60% of the award will be submitted as soon as a Seed Money Contract has been signed with the administrating institution of the project. The remaining 40% are to be paid upon receipt and acceptance by the GBIF Secretariat of a mid term report, specifying the amount of progress made against the milestones identified in the Full Proposal.

### **TO BE SUCCESSFUL, PROPOSALS MUST:**

1. Target the digitisation of specimens of one of the following taxa:
  - a. Apoidea in support of the International Pollinators Initiative (IPI)
  - b. Triticeae in an effort to link the GBIF digitisation effort to the international efforts to conserve genetic diversity
  - c. Cypriniformes as indicators in support of monitoring biodiversity change in freshwater ecosystems
  - d. Amphibians in support of the Global Species Conservation Assessment for Amphibians.
2. Be submitted by a regional or international consortium of data providers
3. Explicitly identify how the resulting data sets will be utilised and who will be the main user groups.
4. Include the endorsement and an indication of the level of support for the project from a specific user group outside the data provider consortium
5. Address the overall goal of making specimen based data available through the GBIF network
6. Have a measurable outcome or product
7. Support the GBIF philosophy by:
  - a. Demonstrating a commitment to making the resulting data freely available using recommended GBIF architecture  
<http://circa.gbif.net/Public/irc/gbif/dadi/library?l=/architecture>
  - b. Addressing the issues of data compatibility and interoperability using recommended GBIF standards (See: As a minimum standard - Darwin Core Version 2  
[http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft\\_v1-31\\_HTML](http://darwincore.calacademy.org/Documentation/DarwinCore2Draft_v1-31_HTML)
  - c. Identifying the institution or institutions that will be hosting the data server(s) that will be registered with the GBIF network
8. Projects will be favourably considered if, in addition, they demonstrate a potential for one or more of the following:

- a. Earliest possible access to significant data sets
  - b. International collaboration
  - c. Training and capacity building
  - d. Data-sharing with countries of origin
  - e. Leveraging additional long term funding to support the specimen digitisation process
9. Scientific Merit -- First and foremost, projects will be reviewed for scientific excellence.
  10. Cost-efficiency. Projects that will produce high quality datasets at a low cost per record will be favoured.
  11. Adherence to the preparation and submission instructions below..

## **PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals submissions will only be accepted via e-mail to [Digit\\_proposals@gbif.org](mailto:Digit_proposals@gbif.org) in MS Word, Rich Text Format, or PDF file (without any editing restrictions) using the following outline. Proposals that do not meet these requirements will not be considered. Proposals that are not emailed by midnight 15 Nov 2005 local time of the applicant will not be considered. All proposals must be written in English.

### **REQUIRED FORMAT OF FULL PROPOSAL:**

#### **A. Title for Proposed Project**

#### **B. Contact Information for Principal Investigator**

Name:  
Address:  
Telephone:  
FAX:  
Email:

#### **C. Contact information for Managing Institution**

Institution Name:  
Address:  
Institutional Contact Person  
Name:  
Telephone:  
Fax:  
Email:

#### **D. List of Partner Institutions**

#### **E. Project Summary – An abstract of the proposal (200 words or less)**

**F. Project Description: a description (no more than ten pages) of the project management strategy, which is to include the following items:**

- The proposed product, which is due no more than 18 months after receipt of the initial portion of seed money;
- Project milestones and timeline;
- The human and institutional infrastructure of the project,
- How the proposed product will be made publicly available – describe in detail how the data will be made accessible to the GBIF network including the number and location of the data servers
- How the project will deal with the issues of data compatibility, interoperability and recommended GBIF standards;
- Institutional support and partnerships.
- The technical and human resources necessary to complete the project,
- The estimated number of digitised specimen records in each of the resulting data sets.
- Estimate of costs per specimen record in the various data set products as an indication of efficiency;
- Strategy for supporting the existence and maintenance of the product after the GBIF funding has ended
- Data sharing mechanisms with countries of origin of the specimens to be digitised
- Training and capacity building components, if any

**G. Project budget - Two finalised budgets should be submitted:**

- One showing the uses to which GBIF's 30% project support will be put (may include salaries or wages, travel, equipment and supplies, and other [must be explained]), and
- Another showing how the other 70% of the project costs will be covered (please note the description of allowable cost-share items, above). Please justify the availability of these matching funds if they have not already been spent, e.g. .... .

**H. Letter(s) of institutional commitment to the project.**