



Call for Letters of Inquiry Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Small and Large Grants Dominican Republic and Jamaica

Eligible Countries:	Dominican Republic and Jamaica (please refer to Table 2 for eligible geographic areas)
Opening Date:	Wednesday, 13 October 2021 (9:00 a.m. GMT-5)
Closing Date:	Sunday, 21 November 2021 (11:59 p.m. GMT-5)
Grant Size:	Small grants – between US\$5,000 and US\$50,000 Large grants – greater than US\$50,000

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) and the [Caribbean Natural Resources Institute \(CANARI\)](#), as regional implementation team (RIT) for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, are inviting letters of inquiry (LOIs) from non-governmental organizations, community groups, private enterprises, universities and other [civil society organizations](#) active in the eligible geographic areas in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

BACKGROUND

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. The CEPF Phase II investment (August 2021 – July 2026) in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot is financed through the CEPF Caribbean Hotspot Project of the World Bank, using funds provided by the Government of Japan.

The Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, an archipelago of biodiversity-rich tropical and semi-tropical islands, comprises 30 nations and territories and stretches across nearly 4 million square kilometres of sea. Its insular geography and complex geology have created unique habitats and high species diversity. Despite their small land area, the Caribbean Islands support one of the highest numbers of globally threatened species of any hotspot in the world. With around 1,000 globally threatened species, the Caribbean is one of the most threatened hotspots in the world.

CEPF's niche for the current investment in the Caribbean Islands was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region in 2017 and 2018. The resulting investment strategy (2021-2026) is documented in the [Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Ecosystem Profile](#) (PDF – 16.6 MB). This investment strategy is comprised of a series of strategic directions broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that are eligible for CEPF funding.

This is the first call for proposals under the 2021-2026 CEPF Phase II investment in the Caribbean Islands.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the CEPF website, particularly the sections on [Eligibility](#), [Before You Apply](#) and [How to Apply](#). Potential applicants who are uncertain of the eligibility of their organization or project concept are encouraged to contact Nicole Brown, RIT manager, at caribbeanrit@canari.org for clarification.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The present call seeks to support activities under Strategic Directions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the ecosystem profile.

Please refer to Table 1 below for guidance notes for the strategic directions and investment priorities eligible for support under this call. These guidance notes are not a substitute for a thorough review of the CEPF investment strategy and programmatic focus in Chapter 13 of the ecosystem profile and the logical framework for the CEPF Caribbean investment in Chapter 14.

Please refer to Table 2 for eligible geographic areas.

Table 1. Strategic Directions and Investments Priorities Eligible Under This Call

Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities	Guidance
<p>1. Improve the protection and management of 33 priority sites for long-term sustainability.</p> <p>1.1 Strengthen the legal protection of priority sites.</p> <p>1.2 Prepare and implement participatory management plans that support broad stakeholder collaboration.</p> <p>1.3 Assess climate change impacts and integrate climate change adaptation into management plans and their implementation responses to protect ecosystem functions and build resilience.</p> <p>1.4 Eradicate, control or prevent further spread of invasive plants and animals that are affecting globally threatened species populations at priority sites.</p>	<p>Only priority sites listed in Table 2 are eligible for support under Strategic Direction 1.</p> <p>CEPF will only support activities in nearshore marine ecosystems where they relate to terrestrial ecosystems, such as through ridge-to-reef approaches; activities in offshore marine ecosystems will not be eligible for support.</p> <p>CEPF will not fund academic research, but it will support focused, applied data gathering for management, testing management responses and investigating climate/ecosystem interactions with a view to improving management.</p>

Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities	Guidance
<p>2. Increase landscape-level connectivity and ecosystem resilience in seven priority corridors.</p> <p>2.1 Prepare and support implementation of participatory local and corridor-scale land-use and watershed management plans to guide future development and conservation efforts.</p> <p>2.2 Support sustainable livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and nature tourism that enhance ecosystem resilience and landscape-level connectivity and deliver gender-equitable benefits in order to maintain the functionality of priority sites.</p> <p>2.3 Promote the adoption and scaling up of conservation best practices in those enterprises compatible with conservation to promote connectivity and ecosystem services in the corridors</p>	<p>Strategic Direction 2 targets corridor or landscape-level activities only.</p> <p>Activities under this strategic direction must occur in one of the following three conservation corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Massif de la Selle – Sierra de Bahoruco – Hoya de Enriquillo Basin Binational Corridor [<i>Dominican Republic-side only</i>]; ii. Cordillera Central Corridor; iii. Surrey County Corridor <p>All corridor-level activities must have a demonstrable link to the functionality and ecosystem services of priority sites (see Table 2).</p>
<p>3. Safeguard priority Critically Endangered and Endangered species.</p> <p>3.1. Prepare and implement conservation actions plans for priority Critically Endangered and Endangered species.</p> <p>3.2. Identify climate impacts and develop and implement management plans in response to climate change impacts on priority Critically Endangered and Endangered species.</p> <p>3.3. Support assessments of high priority plant families to update national lists and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and develop conservation action plans</p>	<p>CEPF investment in species conservation will target globally threatened single-island endemic species occurring in <i>at least one priority site</i> (see Table 2). Please refer to Appendix 9 of the ecosystem profile for the full list of priority species; only species occurring in Jamaica and/or the Dominican Republic are eligible for support under this call.</p> <p>Species action plans must be institutionalized into management plans or local conservation plans. Applications under this strategic direction are strongly encouraged to leverage co-funding.</p>
<p>4. Improve the enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation in countries with priority sites.</p> <p>4.1 Support the role of civil society organizations in policy dialogue, and advocacy focused on government policies and practices that impact priority sites.</p> <p>4.2 Mainstream biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service values into development policies, projects, and plans by government and the private sector, with a focus on addressing major threats, such as unsustainable</p>	<p>Activities under Strategic Direction 4 must be implemented in the conservation corridors and priority sites listed in Table 2.</p> <p>Efforts to strengthen policy frameworks, integrate conservation and ecosystem service values into development policies, projects, and plans must have a demonstrable link to conservation targets in the priority sites (Table 2).</p> <p>Regarding Investment Priority 4.4, considering the limited impact of many reports and toolkits, whether produced in</p>

Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities	Guidance
<p>agriculture, mining, tourism and infrastructure development.</p> <p>4.3 Establish and strengthen sustainable financing mechanisms.</p> <p>4.4 Build stakeholder and constituency support for the conservation of priority sites and priority globally threatened species through targeted communication and information dissemination.</p>	<p>hard copy or electronic format, CEPF will give particular preference to projects that propose alternative, innovative communication products.</p>

Proposed projects must support one of the four strategic directions in Table 1. Even if actions contribute to more than one strategic direction, you must identify the primary strategic direction under which the project falls.

Proposed projects that target direct global environmental benefits and meet the following eligibility criteria are welcome:

- Project is located in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot.
- Project is located in a country that is not subject to sanctions under U.S. law or other applicable law.
- Project supports a strategic direction outlined in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot ecosystem profile and investment strategy (see Table 1).
- Applicant is authorized under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions.
- Applicant is not a government agency or institution.

In addition, CEPF encourages proposals that demonstrate the following characteristics, as relevant:

- Existence of co-financing or the ability to leverage additional funds.
- Demonstration of coordination with other organizations to reduce duplication of efforts.
- Existence of partnerships or alliances with one or more other organizations.
- Endorsements from other recognized agencies or authorities.
- Transnational or regional projects.
- Clear plans for continuation and/or replication after initial CEPF funding.
- Support to local communities in community-based or co-management activities for biodiversity conservation and actions that enhance local communities' tenure and resource use rights, and facilitate equitable and sustainable economic recovery post COVID-19.

Biodiversity monitoring: Each civil society organization working at one or more priority sites will develop its own biodiversity monitoring framework using the [global Important Bird Area monitoring framework](#), with indicators related to the status of biodiversity, the severity of threats and the effectiveness of conservation responses.

Capacity building: Applicants are encouraged to think about their technical and institutional capacity needs as they develop their projects, and to include a specific component responding to these needs, where needed.

Ineligible Activities

CEPF grants cannot be used for activities on the following "negative list":

- The use of child or forced labor.
- Purchase and use of formulated products that fall in the World Health Organization classes IA and IB or formulations of products in Class II if they are likely to be used by, or be

accessible to, lay personnel, farmers or others without training, equipment and facilities to handle, store and apply these products properly.

- Financing of elections or election campaigning.
- Funding salaries or salary supplements of government security personnel.
- Purchase of firearms or other weapons.
- Activities that contravene local laws related to purchase and consumption of tobacco, alcoholic beverages and other drugs.
- Manufacture of alcohol for local consumption and/or cultivation of crops for this purpose.
- Activities carried out in relation to the adjudication of lands under dispute.
- Physical resettlement of people (voluntary or involuntary).
- Purchase of land.
- Activities that have potential to causes adverse impacts to critical habitat.
- Conversion, deforestation or degradation of natural forests or other natural habitats, including, among others, conversion to agriculture or tree plantations.
- Activities related to commercialization of illegal timber and non-timber forest products.
- Construction and/or restoration of religious buildings.
- Removal or alteration of any physical cultural heritage property (includes sites having archeological, paleontological, historical, religious or unique natural values).

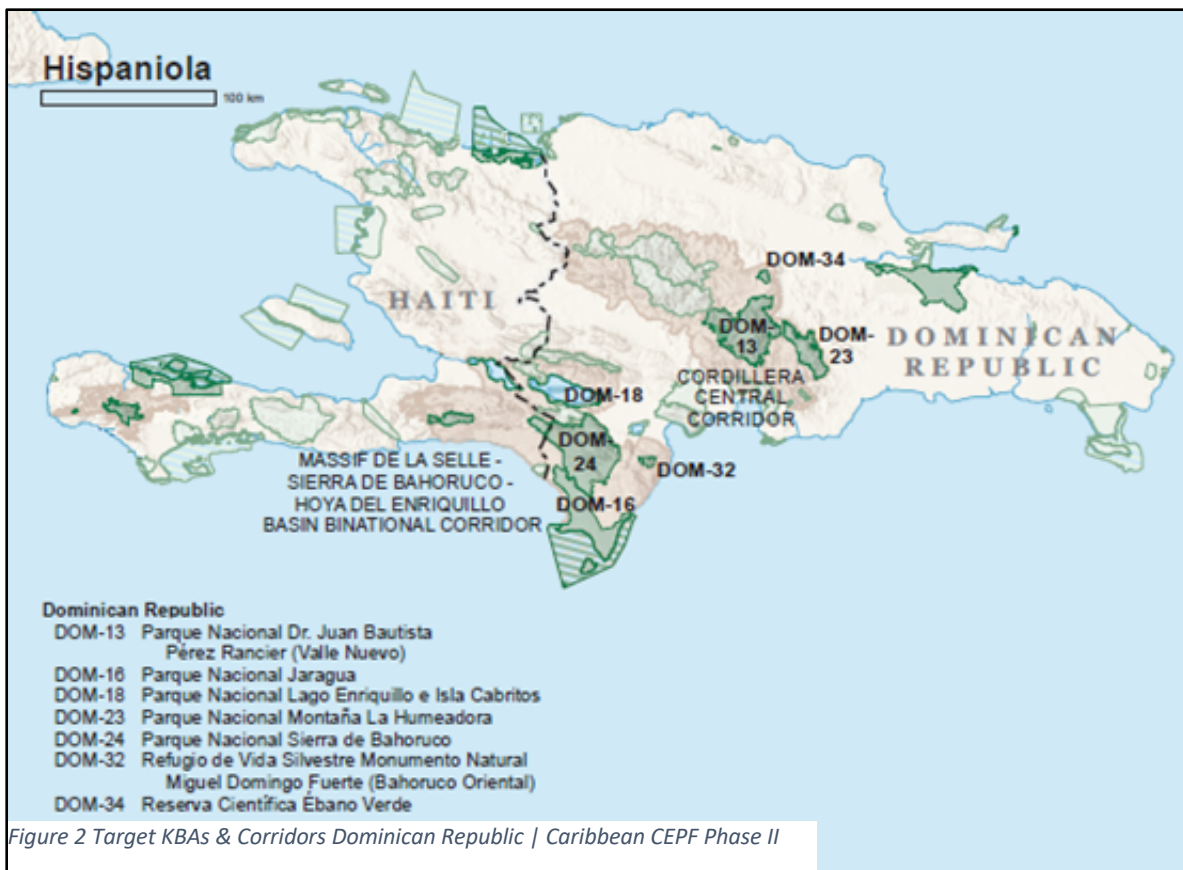
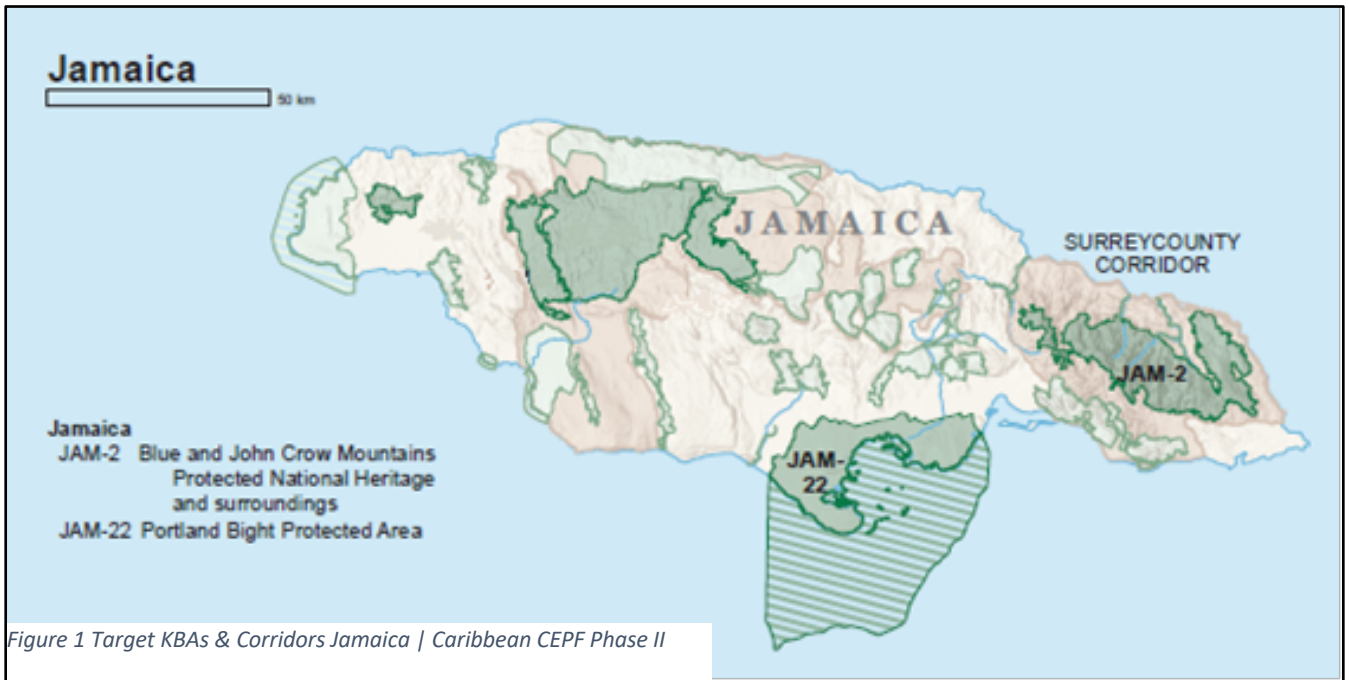
Moreover, proposed activities must observe all relevant environmental and social standards, as set out in the [Environmental and Social Management Framework](#) (PDF – 2.2 MB) for the CEPF Caribbean Hotspot Project.

ELIGIBLE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

This call for LOIs is focused only on the priority corridors and sites in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Priority Corridors and Sites Eligible Under This Call

CEPF Priority Corridor	CEPF Priority Sites	Country
Massif de la Selle – Sierra de Bahoruco – Hoya de Enriquillo Basin Binational Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parque Nacional Jaragua • Parque Nacional Lago Enriquillo e Isla Cabritos • Parque Nacional Sierra de Bahoruco • Refugio de Vida Silvestre Monumento Natural Miguel Domingo Fuerte (Bahoruco Oriental) 	Dominican Republic
Cordillera Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parque Nacional Montaña La Humeadora • Parque Nacional Parque Nacional Dr. Juan Bautista Pérez (Valle Nuevo) • Reserva Científica Ébano Verde 	Dominican Republic
Surrey County Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue and John Crow Mountains Protected National Heritage and surroundings 	Jamaica
-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portland Bight Protected Area 	Jamaica



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Non-governmental organizations, community groups, universities and private enterprises may apply for funding. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

To qualify for a CEPF grant, the applicant must not be a government agency or institution. Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can establish that they:

- (i) have a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor;
- (ii) have the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and
- (iii) may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Applicants based outside of the eligible countries may submit an LOI as long as the project deliverables are focused on the conservation need within a priority corridor or site in Table 2.

Joint projects with other organizations are eligible, with one lead organization submitting the application and project partners with clear roles stated in the application.

BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME

This call covers funding for small and large grants:

- Small grants are between US\$5,000 and US\$50,000. The RIT expects small-grant projects under this call to be contracted and start implementation between March and May 2022.
- Large grants are defined as greater than US\$50,000. CEPF decides on the amount to be awarded based on the scope and magnitude of the conservation results expected to be achieved. CEPF expects large-grant projects under this call to be contracted and start implementation between April and June 2022.

HOW TO APPLY

All applicants should complete and submit an LOI before the deadline for submission and follow the established procedures and formats. Applications may be submitted in English or Spanish.

Remember that the deadline for the submission of your LOI is **11:59 p.m. on Sunday 21 November 2021 (GMT-5)**. You may submit your LOI before the deadline. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

Large Grants

LOIs must be prepared and submitted via the [ConservationGrants](#) electronic portal. CEPF will not accept LOIs via email or any other mechanism.

If you have not previously used ConservationGrants, you will need to [register for a new account](#). If you encounter any technical difficulties with ConservationGrants, please email conservationgrants@conservation.org.

Small Grants

Applicants for small grants must prepare their LOIs in a Word template in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) and submit them to the RIT through this [online form](#).

Table 3 Step-by-step Instructions for Applying for Large and Small Grants

<p style="text-align: center;">Large Grants (>US\$50,000)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Small Grants (US\$5,000 - \$50,000)</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read through all sections of this call to understand the strategic and geographic priorities. This call includes recommendations and links to additional information. 2. LOIs for large grants must be prepared and submitted through the ConservationGrants electronic portal open for this call. 3. Applicants must register in advance in ConservationGrants. We strongly recommend initiating your proposal well before the deadline to familiarize yourself with the system. 4. Submit your LOI and supporting documentation by the deadline of 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, 21 November 2021 (GMT-5). 5. You will receive an acknowledgement confirming that your submission through ConservationGrants has been accepted. CEPF will not accept LOIs submitted by post, email or any other mechanism. 6. Questions about the application process should be sent by email to cepf@cepf.net. For technical issues in registering for the ConservationGrants portal, please contact conservationgrants@conservation.org. 7. The CEPF Secretariat will inform you of the result of the evaluation of your LOI by email. 8. If your application is successful, the CEPF Secretariat will invite you to prepare a full project proposal. Detailed instructions for preparing the project proposal will be provided in the invitation letter. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read through all sections of this call to understand the strategic and geographic priorities. This call includes recommendations and links to additional information. 2. LOIs for small grants must be prepared in a Word template that can be downloaded in English or Spanish. 3. Once you have completed your LOI in the Word template, you should submit it through this online form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you cannot enter data in the form, you must log in with a Google/Gmail account. • If you do not have a Google/Gmail account, you can register here to create one. 4. Submit your LOI and supporting documentation, through the online form, before the submission deadline of 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, 21 November 2021 (GMT-5). 5. Once we receive your LOI, the RIT will send a confirmation email. Note that no printed LOIs or LOIs sent via email will be accepted. 6. Questions about the application process should be sent by email to caribbeanrit@canari.org. 7. The result of the evaluation of your LOI will be communicated by email by the RIT. 8. If your application is successful, the RIT will request that you provide additional information (e.g., a financial risk assessment form, a security screening form, a World Bank debarred entity screening form, environmental and social instruments) before signing a contract for a small grant.

Informational Webinar for Prospective Applicants

CEPF and the RIT will host an informational webinar for prospective applicants on **Tuesday, 19 October 2021** from 2.00 – 3.30 p.m. (GMT-5, Jamaica);
3.00 – 4.30 p.m. (GMT-4, Dominican Republic).

[Register for the webinar](#)

SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

All applicants will receive a notification following the review of their LOI.

Large-grant applicants whose LOIs receive a positive review will be invited to submit a full proposal, again through ConservationGrants. Full proposals that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a grant between Conservation International, as the host of the CEPF Secretariat, and the applicant organization (the “grantee”). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

Small-grant applicants whose LOIs receive a positive review will be advised of the application finalization process by the RIT. Small-grant LOIs that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a grant between CANARI and the applicant organization (the “grantee”). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

Both small and large grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Eligible LOIs will be reviewed by the CEPF Secretariat, the RIT, a regional advisory committee and other external technical reviewers when necessary. The evaluation will be conducted according to the following technical and strategic criteria:

1. **Strategic importance:** How well does the project contribute to achieving the priorities of the CEPF investment strategy of the ecosystem profile? (35 points)
2. **Project approach and methodology:** Are the project approach and methodology likely to achieve the project’s stated objectives and (where applicable) contribute strongly to sustainable conservation outcomes? (20 points)
3. **Applicant capacity:** Does the applicant have the capacity and experience to implement this project effectively and efficiently, given its scale and complexity? (15 points)
4. **Potential to strengthen Caribbean civil society capacity:** Will the project help to strengthen Caribbean civil society organizations? (10 points)
5. **Sustainability:** Will the project results be sustained beyond the phase of CEPF funding? (10 points)
6. **Budget:** Is the proposed funding request commensurate and reasonable given the project’s scale, objectives and likely cost of the work? (10 points)

REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the ecosystem profile for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, which provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority.

Ecosystem Profile

- [English](#) (PDF - 16.6 MB)
- [Spanish](#) (PDF - 18.1 MB)

Ecosystem Profile Summary

- [English](#) (PDF - 3.3 MB)
- [Spanish](#) (PDF - 4.1 MB)

Gender

CEPF is committed to integrating gender into its portfolio. Applicants should design projects and write proposals that consider gender issues in the achievement of their conservation impacts.

CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#), PDF – 351 KB) and understand what CEPF seeks in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#), PDF – 318 KB). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports.

Additional Resources

- [Before You Apply](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)
- [Life Cycle of a Grant](#)
- [ConservationGrants Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Environmental and Social Management Framework for the CEPF Caribbean Hotspot Project](#) (PDF – 2.2 MB)
- [RIT Project Page](#)
- [RIT Call for Proposals Page](#)

CONTACT

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas, eligibility and alignment with the specific priorities for this call for proposals. Please contact Nicole Brown, CEPF Caribbean RIT manager, at caribbeanrit@canari.org.

For general questions, please contact Deanna Albert, CEPF Caribbean small-grants officer, at caribbeanrit@canari.org.