

The North American Bluebird Society Grants Program

The NABS mission is broadly stated on the first page of every issue of our journal, *Bluebird*: “NABS, Inc. is a non-profit education, conservation, and research organization that promotes the recovery of bluebirds and other native cavity nesting bird species of North America.” Accordingly, NABS sponsors an annual competitive grants program in support of that mission.

The NABS by-laws mandate the Zeleny Fund wherein monies are put aside and are to be used only for the purpose of supporting grants. The by-laws further dictate that the Society can award grants in three areas: research, conservation, and education. The purpose of this article is to give some guidance on the three types of grants and how individuals might apply for a NABS grant.

All NABS grants must be submitted in Adobe (.pdf) format via email (bdaniel@cinci.rr.com) and all grant applications should be no longer than ten pages in length (including any letters of recommendation and resumes).

Research Grants. Grants for research projects are competitive and all applications are invited via a Request for Proposals (RFP) that is published annually in the summer issue of *Bluebird* and on the NABS website (www.nabluebirdsociety.org). The RFP details precisely the format and time schedule for submitting a competitive grant proposal. The deadline for submission each year is November 1st and awardees will be notified of their selection before February 1st of the next year. Broadly speaking two kinds of research grants are recognized: 1) pure research grants which examine some aspect of bluebird (or other native cavity nesting species) biology, ecology, or life cycle (e.g., a study of nestbox parasites on chick health) or, 2) applied research grants (e.g., finding more effective ways of defeating nest box predators). Regardless of whether the grant falls in the category of pure or applied research the same basic elements of the scientific method must be evident in the proposal. The proposal must clearly state the research question (or hypothesis) and it must show a thoughtful design which has proper controls, a sufficient number of replications (i.e., power) and other quality assurance measures are in place so that conclusions can be verified by some kind of statistical (simple or advanced) analysis. A proposed project budget as well as how much support is requested from NABS is required. It is important that the proposal directly show how it addresses the NABS mission as stated above. Research grants are scored by the NABS grants committee which gives award recommendations to the Board of Directors. Any questions about research grants mentioned in the RFP can be addressed by email (bdaniel@cinci.rr.com) prior to an application submission.

Education Grants Support for ideas pertaining to the development of books, fact sheets, pamphlets, DVDs or other video products, or other kinds of media which can

serve the purpose of educating either members and/or the public about bluebirds and bluebirding (as well as other native cavity nesting species) can be submitted to NABS to for consideration as an education grant. The applicant for an education grant must clearly outline the details of the project and show how they think it addresses NABS mission. The proposal must provide the names and affiliation of the project developers and also show a project budget including all funding sources as well as the support requested from NABS. Letters of recommendation will enhance the application. Education grants can be submitted at any time and they will be evaluated for award by the NABS education committee. The committee will give recommendations for funding the proposal to the Board of Directors.

Conservation Grants Proposals that deal with a broader scale issue related to bluebird recovery may be candidates for a NABS conservation grant. For example, NABS recently participated in the funding of a three-year project to re-introduce Western Bluebirds to an area of North America where they had been extirpated. Other examples might be considered for a NABS conservation grant. Like other grants, the applicant for a conservation grant must clearly define the project and show how its goals would further NABS mission as stated above. The proposal must provide the names and affiliation of the project developers and also show a project budget including all funding sources as well as the support requested from NABS. Letters of recommendation will enhance the application. Conservation grants can be submitted at any time and they will be evaluated by an *ad hoc* committee from the Board. The committee will give recommendations for funding to the Board of Directors.