

Request for Proposals

October 2023



The mission of the **Monarch Butterfly Fund** is to foster the conservation of North American Monarch butterflies and their migration. We do this through habitat restoration, research, monitoring, education, and support for sustainable community development in and near monarch habitats in Mexico. To fulfill this mission, MBF provides funding for projects that address one or more of our four stated strategic initiatives (described more fully on page 3):

- Habitat conservation
- Scientific research and monitoring
- Outreach and education
- Sustainable development

I. Overview of Proposals

We encourage projects in and near the Monarch Biosphere Reserve in central Mexico. We welcome applications by students and local community members as well as by university faculty members; preference is given to those who have had some experience working in this area and to Mexican nationals. For most projects, funding is limited to \$2,500 US per year, with the possibility of renewal for a subsequent year. To illustrate the types of projects we have funded in the past, please visit our website at <https://monarchconservation.org/our-work/projects>.

Proposals should be for projects that can be completed in one year, with a possibility of renewal following successful completion of the first year. Although larger amounts will be considered, most grants will not exceed a maximum of \$2,500 (USD). Funds may cover supplies, travel, stipends for field assistants, and room and board during research. Grants will rarely cover salaries. We encourage the hiring of field assistants from local Reserve communities. Continued funding will depend upon the quality and thoroughness of the end-of-year report.

All projects to be carried out within the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve and surrounding areas must have the approval of the Reserve's authorities. If the projects involve research, interaction/participation of local communities (ejidos and indigenous communities) or are in the communal properties, then they must also have approval from the parties involved. Applicants should submit the relevant documentation in the form of an approval letter from the Reserve and/or local community(s).

In addition to a final report at the completion of the project, interim reports should be submitted by email to mbf@monarchconservation.org whenever there are changes in the activities or planned expenses of the project. The final report should include an assessment of the value of the work achieved by the project.

Potential applicants should contact MBF at mbf@monarchconservation.org or any questions and/or need input during proposal development.

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II. Applications

Proposals should include the following components. Applications may be submitted at any time.

1. A cover page with the title of the proposed project; the strategic initiative(s) that the work addresses; the date of submission; the name, address, and e-mail address (if available) of the person responsible for the work; and the total amount requested.
2. An abstract of 150 words or fewer.
3. A description of the affiliations and role of each participant in the project in addition to the primary applicant.
4. A summary of previous work by the organization, including, if relevant, websites and names of individuals who are involved with the work of the organization (no more than 1 page). If the proposal is submitted by a student, it should include a summary of relevant previous work by the student or advisor.
5. A summary of proposed work, with a project description and timeline. This section **MUST** address how this work contributes to forest or monarch conservation. The timeline should include details for the first year, with some description of the researcher's plans for the work after the initial funding period (typically several pages).
6. A detailed budget with justification of proposed expenses (1 page), including funding from other sources and an estimate of what amount will be needed to reach your goals.
7. Approval by groups affected by this proposal.

If work is to be accomplished in the Reserve, approval in writing from the Director.

If work involves local communities, approval in writing from those affected.

If the proposal is submitted by a student, confirmation in writing of support for the project by the student's faculty advisor.

All research proposals should clearly address 1) the questions and hypotheses that will be addressed, 2) the methods that will be used to test the hypotheses, 3) proposed project timeline, 4) any relevant previous findings by the applicant, 5) the relevance of the proposed work to monarch conservation, and 6) references cited.

Applications may be submitted electronically as a PDF or a Microsoft Word document to mbf@monarchconservation.org.

The **checklist** below shows the items that must be included. A proposal will not be considered until all required components, as noted on the checklist, have been submitted. Items in the checklist are explained in more detail in the sections that follow. Please note the need for written approval from other groups that would be affected by the proposed project.

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Checklist for Submission.

- _____ Cover page
 - _____ title of project
 - _____ strategic initiative(s) addressed by this project
 - _____ date submitted
 - _____ name, mailing address, and email address of principal applicant
 - _____ total amount requested
- _____ Abstract
- _____ Description of the affiliations and roles of additional participants in the project
- _____ Summary of previous related work
- _____ Description of proposed work
- _____ Timeline of activities
- _____ Detailed budget
- _____ Written approval by affected groups (the Reserve, local communities, faculty advisor)

III. Review process

Proposals may be submitted at any time during the year. Whenever possible, submissions that are complete are reviewed by the MBF Board at the next scheduled board meeting. If timing is critical for the start of a project, please ensure that the proposal is submitted early enough for the Board review. If support of the project is required from others – Reserve authorities, local communities, or faculty sponsor – please ensure that written support is submitted with the proposal or project review may be delayed until receipt.

IV. Strategic Initiatives of the Monarch Butterfly Fund

Projects must address one of the strategic initiatives of MBF as described below. Current funding priorities are marked with a double asterisk (**), but we will consider proposals that address any of the initiatives listed.

1. Forest Conservation. Forest restoration in the monarchs' Mexican overwintering sites and surrounding areas is important for the well-being of the local residents and for monarch butterflies. MBF supports projects that:

- recover and restore critical monarch forest habitat;
- assess natural regeneration as an alternative to traditional reforestation**
- promote stewardship, management, and sustainable use of areas that have been reforested;
- build the skills and capacity of local communities to restore forests and provide stewardship;
- evaluate the risks and benefits of the removal of trees that have died by storms or disease**
- evaluate water quality, quantity, and availability within the MBBR**
- foster greater understanding, appreciation, and awareness of the need for and value of establishing and maintaining forested areas within the MBBR.

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2. *Scientific Research and Monitoring.* MBF supports scientific research and the exchange and distribution of scientific information that has direct relevance to conservation in the overwintering sites. Collaborative projects are encouraged. Research funds will be available to graduate or advanced undergraduate students who are from Mexico or are studying at a Mexican university. Experience in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve increases the likelihood that a researcher's proposal will be funded. Research may address a wide range of subjects related directly to forest or monarch conservation. Any proposed assessment or monitoring activities must have direct relevance to monarch conservation. MBF supports projects that:

- conduct forest inventories;
- study fire regimes in the forest;
- assess past reforestation efforts;
- examine conditions required for successful forest restoration;
- investigate the effects of climate change on the MBBR**
- provide monitoring of monarchs (including the condition, movement, location, and timing of monarchs in the forests);
- develop methods to assess monarch habitat quality or monarch distribution and abundance.

3. *Outreach and Education.* MBF supports the engagement of local communities in education and other activities that encourage greater understanding, appreciation, and support of monarch conservation. We encourage proposals that address public awareness. In the past, MBF has supported environmental education in schools and communities near the monarch overwintering sites, workshops for local ejidatarios and Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve Guides, signage, and support for educational displays directed toward tourists in the Reserve.

4. *Sustainable Development.* MBF supports projects that address the improvement of the livelihood of residents of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, including those that involve local non-profit organizations, artisan projects, and activities that increase tourism-related income.

Any questions about possible projects or the application process should be directed to mbf@monarchconservation.org.