

Call for Applications – Conservation Grants

Closing date: 31 July 2026

1. The African World Heritage Fund

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) is an intergovernmental organization created in 2006 by the African Union and UNESCO to support the effective conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value in Africa. The main objective of the AWHF is to address the challenges faced by African States Parties in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, specifically, the underrepresentation of African sites on the World Heritage List and the insufficient conservation and management of these sites. The Fund became a Category II Centre under the auspices of UNESCO in 2010 hence, an official partner of UNESCO. The Fund is hosted by the Government of the Republic of South Africa, at the Development Bank of Southern Africa, on behalf of the African continent. For more information about the activities of AWHF follow this link: www.awhf.net.

2. Conservation Grants

Each year, the AWHF provides conservation grants to African States Parties to support the implementation of projects and activities aimed at enhancing the sustainability and state of conservation of World Heritage properties. In addition, AWHF offers preparatory assistance to sites on national heritage lists, supporting their inclusion on Tentative Lists and the development of nominations for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

3. Eligibility

- a) Projects activities are restricted to African World Heritage Sites as declared by UNESCO, and sites to be, or included on the National Tentative List.
- b) Project proposals **MUST** address challenges affecting the State of Conservation of the selected World Heritage property. Projects addressing the conservation issues raised in the State of Conservation (SoC) reports and the decisions made by the World Heritage Committee have added advantage.
- c) Projects focusing on entrepreneurship initiatives, youth development or addressing sustainability issues at African World Heritage properties.
- d) Projects aiming at enhancing the legibility and accessibility of World Heritage properties through digital technologies.

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- e) This grant is for Government institutions involved in the management and protection of World Heritage Sites. Civil society organizations working in close cooperation (formal partnership) with responsible government institution are also eligible.
- f) The application must be approved by the Head/Director of heritage institution/organization accompanied by a cover letter endorsing the project.

4. Duration

The projects **MUST** be implemented between April 2027 and February 2028.

5. Budget

- a) AWHF grant will only cover costs directly related to project activities.
- b) Applicants should provide detailed budget in **US\$** for every activity to be implemented.
- c) Applicants should indicate the contribution of the State Party as well as any other contributors to the project.

6. Application procedures

- a) The application form (English, French and Portuguese versions) can be downloaded from the AWHF website www.awhf.net
- b) Completed applications and the supporting documentation must be submitted via the [AWHF Conservation Grant 2026/27 Application Link](#) before the deadline. No physical copies will be accepted.

7. Deadline for submission

The deadline for submission is **Midnight SAST on 31 July 2026**. However, applicants are highly encouraged to submit their proposals prior to the deadline. **Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.**

8. Evaluation and selection process

All applications will be assessed before the final decision is made. The assessment will be based on the “Key Funding Criteria” outlined in Section D of the Application Form, including the following:

- a) Relevance and contribution of the project to addressing conservation and sustainability challenges at the nominated African World Heritage property;

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- b) Quality of project design and use of innovative and cost-effective approaches;
- c) Clearly articulated, realistic and measurable outcomes;
- d) Level of stakeholders' involvement and participation;
- e) Accurate and realistic budget.

9. Final decision and notification

All applicants shall be notified of the outcome by **29 January 2027**.

For any queries regarding the application process, please contact the African World Heritage Fund, 1258 Lever Road, Headway Hill, Midrand 1685 South Africa, Tel: +27 11 313 3523, Email: lungelod@dbsa.org with copy to info@awhf.net.

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