

Press release: Call for Applications: Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge and Darwin Initiative

The British Embassy Manila is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for funding as part of the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Initiative run by the UK's Department of Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for International Development (DFID).

Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge

The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund helps developing countries to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, by addressing demand reduction, strengthening enforcement and criminal justice, and providing alternative livelihoods.

The IWT Challenge Fund is already supporting 47 projects around the world, with a value of £14m. In its 4th Round, the priority areas we are looking to fund include:

1. Developing sustainable livelihoods and economic development, especially by:
 - supporting alternatives to engaging in the illegal wildlife trade
 - encouraging community led wildlife conservation, including retention of benefits within local communities
 - addressing the challenges of human-wildlife conflict
2. Strengthening law enforcement, especially by:
 - addressing corruption
 - building capacity to prevent illicit financial flows from the illegal wildlife trade
 - improving law enforcement and border control in key source, transit and destination countries
3. Reducing demand for IWT products by:
 - using evidence-based interventions to reduce demand for IWT products
 - working with businesses to keep IWT products out of the supply chain
 - establishing partnerships between source, transit and destination countries

The deadline for the first phase of the bidding process is 12 September.

Darwin Initiative

The Darwin Initiative is a UK government grants scheme that helps to protect biodiversity and the natural environment in developing countries. The initiative funds projects that help countries rich in biodiversity but poor

in financial resources to meet their objectives under one or more of the following biodiversity conventions:

1. the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
2. the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)
3. the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing
4. the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

The Darwin Initiative has funded 1,055 projects from 159 countries, with a value of £140m, since 1992.

In its Round 24, the priority areas we are looking to fund include:

Projects expected to address key threats to biodiversity, such as:

- habitat loss or degradation
- climate change
- invasive species
- over-exploitation

In addition, applications that focus on:

- agro-biodiversity that generates alternative livelihoods
- food security and water security
- biodiversity and health
- integrating natural capital related data, information, and knowledge into policy development and decision making
- enhancing the extent and management of protected areas in the marine environment

The deadline for the first phase of the bidding process is 21 September.

Further information, including the guidance for applicants, the application forms and the timetable, can be found in the links below:

[IWT Challenge Fund](#)

[Darwin Initiative](#)

Contact Information

Applicants are encouraged to make early contact with the British Embassy Manila by sending their proposal via email. Please email Ms. Joy Anne Icayan JoyAnne.Icayan@fco.gov.uk prior to deadline of submission.

Press release: Government launches proposals to better protect holidaymakers

Enhanced regulations will better protect an extra 10 million UK package holidays booked online, under proposals outlined today (14 August 2017) by Consumer Minister Margot James.

The [Consultation on the Package Travel Regulations](#) sets out the government's proposals for the introduction of new consumer rights around package holidays.

Proposals outlined today include:

- an extension to current protections to cover the millions of UK holidaymakers who buy package holidays online
- a requirement for better information to be provided to travellers at the point of booking, making it clear what their rights to refund are
- ensuring the business that puts the package together is responsible for the entire holiday – even if some elements will be fulfilled by third parties

According to the [Association of British Travel Agents \(ABTA\)](#), changes to how we book travel – such as using online booking sites to build personalised holidays – has created a gap in consumer rights, with 50% of holiday arrangements not currently financially protected if a company ceases trading. Changes will provide clearer and stronger protections for holidaymakers, ensuring people who book holidays online enjoy the same rights as those who book with a traditional travel agent.

Consumer Minister Margot James said:

While consumer laws protect millions of holidaymakers from the fallout if a travel company goes into administration, the way we book holidays has changed significantly in recent years and it is important that regulations are updated to reflect this.

On average UK households put aside £100 every month for their holidays. The proposals outlined in this consultation will ensure that an extra 22% of holidays can be booked online with holidaymakers safe in the knowledge that they will get their hard-earned money back if something does go wrong.

Government is encouraging travel agents, booking sites, trade associations and consumer groups to respond to the consultation, which runs for 6 weeks. The European Package Travel Directive comes into force in July 2018.

News story: Green light for driving lessons on motorways

Learner drivers will be able to have lessons on motorways in a bid to improve road safety, Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced today (13 August 2017).

The law change will be active from 2018, when learners will be allowed on motorways with an approved driving instructor in a dual control car. This will provide a broader range of real life experiences and better prepare learners for independent driving when they pass their test.

Currently learners cannot drive on a motorway until after they have passed their test. This means the first experience of motorway driving for many is as a new driver without the guidance of a driving instructor or the safety of a dual control car.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The UK has some of the safest roads in the world and we want to make them even safer.

Younger drivers are up to 7 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured compared with drivers over twenty-five and lack of experience is an important factor.

Allowing learners to drive on motorways in a supportive environment will help them develop a practical understanding of how to use motorways safely before driving independently.

Improving road safety is a priority for this government, and allowing learners on motorways with an approved instructor will better protect young drivers and other motorway users. It will ensure the current generation of adults about to start their driving career have the best possible introduction to what should be a lifetime of safe driving.

RAC road safety spokesman Pete Williams said:

We welcome the news that learner drivers will be allowed to take lessons on the motorway under the supervision of an approved driving instructor in a dual-controlled car, something that motorists we surveyed were overwhelmingly supportive of.

While motorways are statistically our safest roads, it can be daunting using them for the first time after passing the driving

test. Giving learners the option to gain valuable experience on our fastest and busiest roads should further improve safety and enhance the confidence of new drivers.

The Department for Transport [consulted on these changes earlier this year, receiving wide support from both learner drivers and approved driving instructors](#). These changes apply to England, Wales and Scotland only.

DVSA Chief Driving Examiner, Lesley Young, said:

DVSA's priority is to help you through a lifetime of safe driving.

Our roads are among the safest in the world, but we're determined to do more to improve safety for all road users.

We want to modernise driver training so that novice drivers gain the skills and experience they need to help them and everyone else to stay safe on our motorways.

Jasmine Halstead, head of learning and development for British School of Motoring, said:

Per mile travelled motorways are our safest roads.

If learners aren't allowed to practise on motorways under supervision then some will avoid motorways, and others will use motorways incorrectly when they have passed their test.

Hence it is great news for road safety that learners will be able to drive on motorways under supervision.

[News story: Certificate refunds: overseas and unregistered companies](#)

You can apply for a refund if you've bought an incorporation certificate for overseas or unregistered companies from Companies House.

Certain companies don't need a certificate of incorporation or registration from us.

These companies are:

- Overseas companies
- European public limited liability companies
- Unregistered companies

We won't be issuing certificates or certified copies for these companies any more, as we don't have any legal power to do this.

If you've bought these products for the above companies directly from us, you're entitled to a refund.

How to get a refund

To apply for a refund, send a proof of purchase and your request to:

Lynda Brown
Companies House
Crown Way
Cardiff
CF14 3UZ

There's no time limit to send us a claim for a refund.

Refund price

Depending on how you ordered the product, you'll be refunded the following costs:

For a certificate of incorporation or registration:

By post or collection	£15
Same day certificate of incorporation by post or collection	£50
Additional certificate (for same company) by post or collection	£10

For a certified copy:

By post or collection	£15
Same day certified copy of document by post or collection	£50

Third party suppliers

If you purchased the product from a third party supplier, you'll need to contact the company you bought the information from. We can only provide refunds to customers who bought from us directly.

Queries

If you need any further advice, email enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk or telephone our contact centre on 0303 1234 500.

[News story: Learner drivers will be allowed on motorways from 2018](#)

Allowing learner drivers to have lessons on motorways will help to make sure more drivers know how to use motorways safely.

At the moment, you can only have driving lessons on motorways after you've passed your driving test. Some newly-qualified drivers take lessons through the voluntary [Pass Plus](#) scheme.

How the change will work

The change will apply to England, Scotland and Wales.

Learner drivers will need to be:

- accompanied by an approved driving instructor
- driving a car fitted with dual controls

Any motorways lessons will be voluntary. It will be up to the driving instructor to decide when the learner driver is competent enough to have a motorway lesson.

Trainee driving instructors won't be allowed to take learner drivers on the motorway.

Motorway driving will not be included in the [driving test changes](#) coming into force on 4 December 2017.

The change will only apply to learner drivers of cars – learner motorcyclists won't be allowed to have motorway lessons.

When the change will happen

The exact date in 2018 will be confirmed nearer the time.

The change will be well-publicised so driving instructors and learner drivers are prepared for the change, and other road users know what to expect. [The Highway Code rules on motorways](#) will also be updated.

Until the law is changed, it's still illegal for a learner driver to drive on a motorway.

Driving instructor vehicles and training

Driving instructors will be allowed to decide whether or not to keep their driving school roof-top box on during motorway lessons, based on the manufacturer's instructions.

However, the car will still need to [display L plates on the front and rear](#) if the rooftop box is removed.

It will be up to the instructor whether or not they keep their driving school roof-top box on – but the car will still have to display L plates on the front and rear

Guidance for driving instructors

DVSA won't give driving instructors extra training on providing motorway lessons, but [learning materials](#) and the [car driving syllabus](#) will be updated to incorporate motorway lessons.

DVSA will also work with driving instructor associations and Highways England to provide extra guidance and advice for driving instructors.

Preparing drivers for a lifetime of safe driving

The changes are being made to allow learner drivers to:

- get broader driving experience before taking their driving test
- get training on how to join and leave the motorway, overtake and use lanes correctly
- practise driving at higher speeds
- put their theoretical knowledge into practice