

Celebrating 25 Years of Arulagam

‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship - 2026

About Arulagam

Arulagam is a non-profit nature conservation organization established in 2002 and based in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The organization is dedicated to conserving biodiversity through scientific research, field-based conservation, environmental education, advocacy, and active community participation. Arulagam places particular emphasis on the conservation of threatened, endemic, neglected, and lesser-known species, recognizing their ecological importance and the need for evidence-based conservation action.

Over the past two decades, Arulagam has contributed conservation efforts across South India. Its work encompasses species recovery programmes, habitat restoration, native flora conservation, afforestation, environmental education, citizen engagement, tribal livelihood support, wildlife research, monitoring, and conservation planning. The organization is nationally and internationally recognized for its contribution in vulture conservation and has implemented long-term conservation programmes in collaboration with government agencies, academic institutions, local communities, and national and international partners.

Vision

Arulagam envisions ecologically sustainable communities with a focus on nature conservation and endangered species, ensuring equitable access to education, skill development, and livelihoods. Through community-driven initiatives, Arulagam promotes environmental stewardship, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable living practices for future generations.

Mission

Arulagam is committed to nature conservation, focusing on endangered species and ecosystems. We promote agroecological practices, support capacity building, and empower communities through development initiatives that address health, sanitation, governance, housing rights, and public policies - fostering inclusive, community-led transformation.

‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship
Motto: *Supporting Young Researchers for the Conservation of Threatened and Endemic Species.*

The **‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship** is a competitive small-support programme established by Arulagam to enrich **up to five Master's students each year** in undertaking dissertation-based research projects focused on threatened, endemic and lesser known species. The grant promotes scientifically rigorous, field-based research

that generates valuable knowledge, addresses conservation challenges, and contributes to long-term biodiversity conservation with indigenous community participation.

The grant recognizes that students from diverse social, economic, and geographical backgrounds may experience unequal access to resources and opportunities for undertaking field-based research. By helping to reduce financial and practical barriers, ARISE conservation fellowship aims to broaden participation in conservation science, promote equitable access to meaningful field research opportunities, and support the development of a diverse and skilled generation of conservation professionals.

Beyond supporting individual research projects, the fellowship aims to build the skills, experience, and capacity of emerging researchers and nurture the next generation of conservation leaders. Selected fellows will also receive mentorship and guidance, where appropriate, to strengthen their research skills, scientific approach, data analysis, scientific writing, and broader understanding of conservation practice.

The **‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship** gives priority to projects focusing on less studied, less charismatic, Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), and endemic flora and fauna, particularly those integrating scientific research, conservation action, community participation, and sustainable management. Additionally, the fellowship encourages research examining the impacts of pollution and other anthropogenic threats on threatened species and their habitats. Through this initiative, Arulagam aims to strengthen conservation capacity, support emerging conservation leaders, and foster collaborative efforts that generate measurable outcomes for species conservation.

Grant Support

‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship provides financial support upto **₹60,000** for a project period of **six months**. The grant is intended to support field-based research and conservation activities by covering expenses directly related to the selected project, including field surveys, travel, food, community engagement, and other essential project-related costs. Grant funds must be used exclusively for activities that contribute to the successful implementation of the proposed conservation project and its intended conservation outcomes.

Eligibility

Applicants must be currently enrolled in a Master's degree programme at a recognized college, university, or institute in Thamizh Naadu and must be undertaking a dissertation or research project during the project period. The proposed research must be conducted within India and should demonstrate clear relevance to biodiversity conservation, with a primary focus on Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), or endemic species of flora or fauna. Applicants must obtain a recommendation from their academic supervisor and institutional

approval before applying and should be able to complete the proposed research within the six-month grant period. Projects incorporating local community participation, citizen science, Indigenous knowledge, or stakeholder engagement will receive additional consideration. Preference will be given to species locally threatened species, as well as nationally protected and regionally endemic species of significant conservation concern.

Selection Criteria and Review Process

Applications will be assessed through a competitive review process based on their scientific merit, conservation significance, feasibility, and expected impact. Particular consideration will be given to the conservation status and priority of the target species, the quality and appropriateness of the proposed methodology, the project's potential contribution to species conservation, and its alignment with the objectives of the 'Arul' Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship. Projects that demonstrate meaningful community participation, stakeholder engagement, innovation, and the potential to generate practical conservation outcomes will be viewed favourably. The applicant's motivation, commitment, and capacity to successfully complete the proposed work within the six-month grant period will also be considered. Additional consideration will be given to projects with the potential to generate a strong foundation for future research, including doctoral (PhD) studies, long-term ecological monitoring, or further conservation initiatives. The fellowship also encourages research in underrepresented landscapes outside conventional protected areas, including areas recognized as Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), community-managed landscapes, and other biodiversity-rich areas of conservation significance.

Eligible applications will be reviewed by an Expert Review Panel comprising individuals with relevant expertise in biodiversity conservation and related fields. The Panel will assess applications and provide recommendations to Arulagam. The final selection of grant recipients will be made by Arulagam after considering the Panel's recommendations and the overall objectives and requirements of the grant programme.

Application Requirements

Applicants must complete and submit the ARISE Conservation Fellowship – 2026 Application Form through the designated ***Google Form by 30 September 2026.***

Applicants are required to provide accurate and complete information in all sections of the application form. The application consists of the following sections:

1. Applicant Details
2. Academic Details
3. Supervisor Details

4. Proposed Research Project
5. Required Document Uploads
6. Declarations

Budget Guidelines

The proposed budget must:

- Be realistic and reasonable.
- Be directly related to the proposed research and conservation activities.
- Clearly justify each expenditure.
- Demonstrate how each expenditure contributes to the objectives of the project.
- Be planned within the maximum fellowship support of ₹60,000.
- Not including expenses unrelated to the proposed research project.

Applicants must organize their budget under only the following five categories:

1. Travel
2. Research & Data Analysis
3. Consumables
4. Resource Materials
5. Documentation & Dissemination

- ➔ Applicants do not need to use all five categories. Only categories relevant to the proposed project should be included.
- ➔ Applicants must not create additional budget categories outside these five categories.
- ➔ The total proposed budget must not exceed ₹60,000.
- ➔ Applicants should provide sufficient justification for each proposed expenditure. Reviewers may assess whether the proposed costs are appropriate, necessary, and proportionate to the objectives and scope of the project.

Incomplete applications or applications missing required information or supporting documents may not be considered for review.

Grant Conditions

Recipients of the 'Arul' Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship are expected to complete the approved project within the six-month grant period and utilize the funds exclusively for the activities outlined in the approved proposal. The grant will be disbursed in installments based on the satisfactory submission of monthly progress reports and the appropriate utilization of previously released funds.

Grant recipients must submit a monthly progress report throughout the project duration. Each monthly progress report should briefly describe the activities completed, progress towards project objectives, key observations or preliminary findings, expenditure incurred, challenges encountered, and activities planned for the following month. A comprehensive final technical report and a financial utilization statement with supporting documents must be submitted within one month of project completion. Any significant changes to the project objectives, methodology, or timeline must receive prior approval from the ARISE Committee. All dissertations, publications, presentations, reports, posters, and other outreach materials arising from the funded project must appropriately acknowledge the support received from the ‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship.

Deliverables

Upon completion of the project, grant recipients must submit:

- A final technical report summarizing the objectives, methodology, results, conservation implications, and recommendations.
- A copy of the completed dissertation or thesis (PDF format) soft copy.
- Representative photographs documenting fieldwork and the study species (where appropriate).
- Spatial data, maps, or datasets generated during the project (where applicable).
- Copies of publications, conference presentations, outreach materials, or other dissemination outputs arising from the project, if available.

General Conditions

- The ARISE Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason.
- Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.
- Applicants and selected grant recipients are responsible for obtaining all necessary statutory permits, institutional approvals, and ethical clearances required for their proposed research. All project activities must comply with applicable laws, regulations, and institutional guidelines. The ‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE) Conservation Fellowship does not grant or replace any statutory, institutional, or ethical authorization required for conducting the research.
- Any publication or dissemination arising from the supported project must acknowledge the financial support received from the ‘Arul’ Research Initiative for Species and Ecosystem (ARISE).

- Arulagam reserves the **right to use** project summaries, selected photographs, and non-confidential project outcomes for educational, reporting, communication, and non-commercial conservation purposes, with appropriate acknowledgement of the grant recipient. Intellectual ownership of the research data, dissertation, and other academic outputs will remain with the grant recipient, subject to applicable institutional policies and requirements.

Submission of Applications

Applications must be submitted through the **(Google Form: <https://forms.gle/8ts6Kd182nS5btqA6>)** before **(30.09.2026)**. Applications submitted after the deadline may not be considered.

Applicant Support

Arulagam may provide guidance and assistance to prospective applicants in preparing and submitting their fellowship applications. Support may include general guidance on proposal preparation, language editing, and clarification of application requirements and submission procedures. Such assistance is intended to help applicants present their proposals clearly and complete the application process successfully.

However, applicants will remain responsible for the originality, scientific content, accuracy, and final submission of their applications. Assistance provided by Arulagam will not guarantee selection or influence the independent review and evaluation process.

Important Dates

Application deadline: 30.09.2026

Decision deadline: 31.10.2026

Contact

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