

I know this is an opportunity of a lifetime and I intend to use it wisely, therefore I will be applying for the gold level of the Thrive Not Just Survive Grant, which is kindly being funded by Societe Generale. I understand that this is the highest level of the grant and for that reason I have provided a cost breakdown below of how I propose to use the grant.

**GVI South Africa Wildlife Conservation Short Term Internship (8 weeks) – £3,415**

- 24-hour emergency phone
- 24-hour in-country support
- Access to Alumni Services and Discounts
- Airport pick-up
- All necessary project equipment and materials
- All necessary project training by experienced staff
- Certification and summary of training and experience received
- Confidential professional reference
- Final evaluation
- First Aid & CPR training and certification
- GVI Leadership and Teamwork certification
- Location orientation
- Long term experienced staff
- Meals while on project
- Research training
- Reserve fees and permits
- Safe and basic accommodation
- Telemetry training as relevant
- Weekly evaluation with your mentor
- Welcome meeting
- Wildlife identification techniques

Return flights, London to South Africa – approx. £735 based on travel between June & August 2019

Medical and travel insurance – £70.73 quote based on travel between June & August 2019

**Total cost - £4,220.73**

Please find the following responses to the required questions which support my grant application:

**1. What is your education/employment ambition and how do you plan to achieve this?**

I have always dreamed of a career within the animal care industry and my dream started to become a reality when I completed an extended diploma in animal care and management, attaining a high distinction grade in 2016. It was during my course that I discovered my passion for wildlife conservation.

University never appealed to me as I have always been eager to kick start my career as soon as possible. I enjoy gaining valuable skills through hands-on experience, therefore the reasoning behind my desire to use the Thrive Not Just Survive grant on an invaluable internship. This would provide me with the practical experience that I have longed for and potentially assist in gaining a position as a field researcher in wildlife conservation.

Life is too short, so I want to be able to love what I do and do what I love; this grant would allow me to take a step in the right direction of achieving what I would love to do and build a lifelong career upon.

**2. How has your cancer diagnosis impacted achieving this ambition and why is your aspiration important?**

My heart was always set on a career within the animal care industry, with a special interest in wildlife conservation and cancer wasn't going to stop me. After being diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in 2014 during the second year of my college course, it had never been so important to me that I did not lose sight of my career goals. Therefore, I decided to defer my final year of college until I was well enough to put 110% into my workload.

After my extensive treatment was completed, I still had a long road to recovery as my maintenance treatment was due to last approximately 18 months, setting me back even further. My career ambitions were still out of sight, but not out of mind. My physical fitness had plummeted to an all-time low and with the desire for a job that is physically demanding, I knew regaining my fitness levels was a priority. Whilst on maintenance treatment, I was able to redeem some normality in my life where I joined my local gym and got myself a part-time office job to fit around my weekly blood tests and monthly intravenous chemotherapy sessions. After a few months of constant clock watching, I reminded myself of how far I had come but remembered where I wanted to be and that was out in the field and not sitting at an office desk. I soon felt fit enough to venture into the world of animal husbandry by landing myself a position at an equine welfare charity, with the main focus on rescuing and rehabilitating equines. As much as I love my job, my heart is still set on working amongst wildlife and not domesticated animals.

My next hurdle was my suppressed immune system; for that reason I was advised to travel solely within Europe where wildlife conservation internships are limited, if not non-existent. Since completing my maintenance treatment in April 2017, I have just recently been given the go ahead from my doctor for travel further afield which puts me

one step closer to my dream of waking up to the surroundings of wildlife.

**3. How will the grant help realise your ambition and what will success look like once you've achieved it?**

If my grant application is successful, after completion of my wildlife internship there will be potential for field employment; over 50% of the programmes staff is recruited directly from their alumni database which attracted me to this particular internship further.

I will receive extensive training from experienced professionals that will help develop my skills as a potential wildlife researcher, such as GPS and telemetry training, with regular written assignments as well as oral and field discussions. I will also be given the opportunity to undertake additional leadership responsibilities with an assigned mentor who will monitor my progress on a weekly basis. Additionally, I will receive first aid and CPR training and certification which I believe would benefit me in any future career paths I choose to take.

After successful completion of the internship and final evaluation, a certificate and professional reference will be provided. Ultimately, I would hope that the grant would allow me to not only realise my ambitions, but live them, and living my dream is all the success I need.

**4. How else have you tried to achieve this ambition? This could include other funding routes that you have explored.**

I am currently employed full-time at Redwings Horse Sanctuary which focuses on rescuing and rehabilitating equines

I am in a position at the moment where I am able to set some money aside each month to save towards funding the internship myself. I have recently enquired about a second job; this would help me generate additional income so I can put extra money aside each month in the hope that I can save more money faster. Although at the current rate I am saving it will be at least another 2 years until I would be able to afford to fund the internship myself. After being set back from my career goals for approximately 3 years in total due to my cancer diagnosis, the thought of having to wait a further 2 years is unsettling.

In addition to my application, please find attached my consent form and personal reference.

I would just like to kindly thank you for considering my application and possibly giving me the opportunity to change my life. I very much look forward to hearing from you soon.

