

# **Western Grains Research Foundation**

## **Call for Proposals: Phase 2 Capacity**

### **1. Background**

In recent years, the agricultural community has expressed concerns about the status of capacity for crop-related research in Western Canada. Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) has made it a priority to support and impact research capacity through project and program funding as well as a targeted capacity-building initiative. Phase 1 of this initiative has focused on expanding research capacity through human resources. WGRF has supported the Universities of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan in their vision to establish Research Chairs. WGRF is now initiating Phase 2 of this initiative, a competitive proposal-based process to expand the toolboxes (infrastructure and tangible assets) necessary to accelerate crop research for the benefit of crop producers in Western Canada. The guidelines for this Call for Proposals are described in detail below to assist research organizations in developing proposals to submit to WGRF by no later than midnight, February 7, 2020. Applicants are strongly encouraged to directly engage with WGRF about the nature of their application early in the process of proposal development.

### **2. Purpose**

To build capacity in Canadian public research institutions, in the WGRF priority areas of variety development and production, for crop research of benefit to western Canadian crop producers.

### **3. Eligibility Requirements** (Proposals will be screened in or out of further consideration based upon the following criteria)

- a. **Eligible Applicants:** The eligible applicants for this Call for Proposals must be research organizations. Only eligible research organizations (and not individual researchers) may submit a proposal. Eligible organizations must demonstrate the capacity to support and conduct excellent crop research, and given WGRF's status as a registered Canadian charity under the Income Tax Act, applicants must be public entities or registered charities with the ability to provide receipts for charitable donations;
- b. Show evidence of benefit to research disciplines in **crop research**: for example, including agronomy, soil science, crop protection (pathology, entomology, weeds), breeding and pre-breeding, NOT value-added nor crop processing;
- c. **Eligible Costs:** costs of acquiring or developing research infrastructure such as, equipment (including fabrication, installation and initial training), buildings, lab retrofits, computer software and hardware;
- d. **Ineligible Costs:** land, human resources, research projects, supplies, ongoing costs such as maintenance, insurance, rental or lease of equipment or buildings or land, overhead;
- e. **Completeness of proposal:** If an incomplete application is received with large gaps, it will be rejected without further consideration.

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### **4. Available Funding**

#### **a. Stream A:**

- **Up to \$300K** total request per application, no minimum
- Up to \$5M of WGRF funding is potentially available for investments in crop research capacity relating to WGRF's priority areas (see website)

#### **b. Stream B:**

- **Over \$300K and up to \$3M** total request per application
- Up to \$15M of WGRF funding is potentially available for investments in crop research capacity relating to WGRF's priority areas (see website)

### **5. Merit (and Ranking) Criteria**

*This will be a competitive process and attention to merit criteria will be paramount. For proposals that have met the eligibility requirements, ranking will be based on how well they meet the following merit criteria:*

- Meet the defined **purpose** of this funding call: show a potential benefit to Western crop producers;
- Show evidence of impact for an identifiable **bottleneck or gap issue or strategic enhancement or unique opportunity**. Impact refers to both the positive impact and the impact of delay in acquisition of asset;
- Show **scientific merit** (value to science, not demonstration or non-science);
- Show evidence that the **organization** has the infrastructure, ongoing maintenance budget, and resources, to support the new capacity over the life expectancy of the asset (institutional readiness), and that the institution is supportive of the application and, that this is a priority;
- Provide a **profile** of the organization including history, financial capacity, management capability, track record of applicant and associated researcher(s).

#### ***Additional merit will be associated with the following:***

- Show evidence of benefit to research associated with **multiple crops** (although value to multiple crop research is not required it will provide additional support for the application);
- Show evidence of benefit to **multiple research disciplines** (although value to multiple research disciplines is not required, it will provide additional support for the application);
- Show evidence of **collaboration/linkages** with other researchers/institutions, where it would benefit western producers;
- Show plan for acquiring additional **funding** and any other resources from other source(s) within 12 months of WGRF offer (although matched funding is not required

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it will provide additional support for the application). When applicable, evidence will be required prior to transfer of funds. Letters of Support, having no funding or tangibles associated with the letter will not be accepted;

- Show both a timely and realistic **timeframe** for milestones to be achieved (payment terms will reflect milestones achieved, and an offer expiry date will be provided).

### **6. Application and Award Process**

- **April 2019:** Call for Proposals Opens
- **Midnight, September 6, 2019** (or earlier): Registration. WGRF strongly encourages applicants to participate in an optional registration process to facilitate engagement between WGRF staff and applicants during the development phase of the application and to detect any potential eligibility issues for the applicant or the assets proposed.
- **Midnight, February 7, 2020:** Full Proposals due
- **March 30, 2020:** Decisions are expected to be provided to applicants. WGRF reserves the right to require a site visit and/or further information prior to decisions.
- **Implementation:** Agreements, as negotiated by both parties and reflecting WGRF requirements as a registered charity, will be developed for each successful proposal and must be fully executed prior to the offer expiry date. Disbursements will be made according to meeting strategic milestones, including provision of evidence that leveraged funds are in place. Payments will be based upon expenditure reporting as reasonably requested by WGRF, including but not limited to proof of purchase, general ledger transaction listing and supplier invoices for major equipment.