



## **Tree Research & Education Endowment Fund Policy/Procedure Statement**

Subject: Research Committee Policy

Policy No.: 09-BOD

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Activities of the TREE Fund are directed by its Strategic Plan, which specifies means to accomplish its mission.

### 1. Mission of the TREE Fund

- a. We support sustainable communities and environmental stewardship by funding research, scholarships and education programs essential to the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge in the fields of arboriculture and urban forestry.
- b. The Research Committee is responsible for directing all research and technology transfer (defined as the direct application of research findings, different from general outreach and education programs, which are the responsibility of other TREE Fund committees) activities of the TREE Fund. The objectives of this document are to establish policy and operational procedures for the Research Committee of the TREE Fund.

### 2. Committee Organization

- a. The Research Committee reports to the TREE Fund Board. It is composed of 9-15 regular members, including at least three Trustees, and 5-7 people with strong research skills and experience. At least one committee member represents the Canadian TREE Fund. Remaining members will be chosen to compliment the above members and assure that the interests and perspectives of all professional disciplines within arboriculture and urban forestry are represented. Committee members should have an interest in research and be able to evaluate the scientific merit of proposals.
- b. Committee members are limited to two full consecutive three (3) year terms, except under special conditions as approved by the Board of Trustees. Members whose terms expire are eligible to serve on the Research Committee again after a three year hiatus. The Committee chair must be a TREE Fund Trustee appointed by the TREE Fund Board of Trustees. Non-trustee members of the committee must be current members of ISA or own or work for a TCIA-accredited company. Professional Affiliates of ISA may nominate candidates to represent their organization. The Research Committee Chair selects Research Committee members, with consultation from other committee members as appropriate.
- c. The Research Committee's responsibilities include:
  - i. Identifying research and technology areas of greatest need/interest/value to ISA and TCIA members, donors and the profession
  - ii. Developing requests for proposals (RFP) for grant programs
  - iii. Evaluating proposals submitted to the TREE Fund for scientific soundness and applicability to research priorities

and the Mission of the TREE Fund

iv. Recommending action to the Board

v. Oversight of records of active and completed projects funded by TREE Fund

d. Review Committees

Review Committees may be created by the Research Committee to oversee grant projects that require specialized knowledge and/or participation of grant partners (See directed and sponsored grants below). Review Committees must include at least one Trustee and one member of the Research Committee, and may include a representative of the sponsor and other partners (if any). Review Committees operate in a manner similar to the Research Committee to develop RFP's, select researchers, monitor progress and oversee the grant.

e. Conflict of Interest

Any member of the Research Committee who submits a proposal for funding consideration will not participate in the review of any proposals to that program during the granting cycle during which his/her grant is submitted. Any member of the TREE Fund Board of Trustees who has any interest, monetary or otherwise, in the proposed project must excuse themselves from the discussion and vote within that granting cycle for that program.

3. Research and Technology Transfer Priorities

a. Research funded by the TREE Fund must be in keeping with its Mission Statement. The Research Committee, representing a broad base of knowledge and experience in the major areas of commercial, municipal, and utility arboriculture, will establish priority areas for Hyland Johns Grants and all other grants as described below.

- b. Research and technology transfer priorities will be derived from surveys of TREE Fund stakeholders: donors, ISA Membership, TCIA Membership and others within the arboricultural and urban forestry community. The TREE Fund Research Committee will survey stakeholder groups on a regular (10 year) basis to identify research and technology transfer priorities.
- c. The Research Committee may elect to revise the priorities at any time in between survey cycles. Once ratified by the TREE Fund Board, the research and technology transfer priorities are advertised through the TREE Fund Grant Program announcements. These announcements will be updated on the TREE Fund website regularly. Projects funded by the TREE Research and Education Endowment Fund shall fall into one or more of the priority areas.

#### 4. Grant Program Descriptions

All grant proposals must be evaluated by the Research Committee and approved by the TREE Fund Board. The TREE Fund's grant programs are:

- a. John Duling Grants
- b. Jack Kimmel International Grants
- c. Hyland R. Johns Grants
- d. TREE Fund Fellowship
- e. Directed Grants
- f. Sponsored Grants

These grant programs are different in nature. Proposals should be submitted to only the most appropriate program.

- a. John Duling Grants

The goal of this program is to provide seed money or partial support for research and technology transfer projects that address

topics with the potential to benefit the everyday work of arborists. Projects are expected to be completed within one to three years. Funding is derived from the earnings of the John Duling Endowment. A maximum funding level is determined, and revised periodically (\$10,000 in 2011), by the TREE Fund Board. Grants may support expenses over multiple years, but no more than one grant will be awarded to any project. Projects requesting partial funding must show that requests for the balance of funding have been submitted to (an)other grant program(s) within twelve months of submission to TREE Fund. The Duling Grant program is overseen by the Research Committee Chair, or his/her designee. Administrative support is provided by TREE Fund staff. Duling Grants are not restricted by topical area.

i. Operational procedures

1. TREE Fund staff posts the grant program announcement, description of research priorities, application forms and instructions on the TREE Fund website. Announcements are also published through ISA, TCIA, and other outlets, with guidance and support of the Research Committee Chair and Communications Committee. The application process opens 90 days prior to the due date. Completed applications are due by October 1.
2. Proposals are received, reviewed and rated by the Research Committee or appropriate Review Committee. The Committee recommends which projects should be funded, and the amount of the grant to the Board of Trustees. Funding levels of individual grants may be adjusted by the Research Committee. Grant funds may not be used to pay overhead expenses. Grant Funds may

not be used for educational costs unrelated to the project (e.g. tuition, books, and lab fees). Awards are approved by the TREE Fund Board during the fall/winter Board of Trustees meeting or via electronic vote.

3. All grantees are notified by telephone within 30 days of Board approval.
4. Telephone notification will be followed with a formal award letter and Grant Agreement detailing the terms of the grant no later than February 1. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified, in writing, within 60 days of the award decision.
5. Grantees are expected to provide progress reports as requested by TREE Fund and stated in the Grant agreement.
6. Grantees must report use of funds, whether objectives of proposal were met, and the impact the research has had on the field (s) of arboriculture or urban forestry.
7. Grantees must provide a financial report based upon the original budget submitted.
8. Grantees who receive partial project funding from TREE Fund must report on the whole project, including work done with TF grant-leveraged funds.
9. Grantees are expected to publish research results, preferably in *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* or another peer-reviewed journal and send notice of publication to the TREE Fund President/CEO.

b. Jack Kimmel International Grants

The goal of this program is to provide seed money or partial support for research and technology transfer projects that address

topics that have the potential to benefit the everyday work of arborists. Projects are expected to be completed within one to three years. Funding is derived from the Canadian TREE Fund, and administered by TREE Fund. A maximum funding level is determined, and revised periodically (\$10,000 in 2011), by the TREE Fund Board. Grants may support expenses over multiple years, but no more than one grant will be awarded to any project. Projects requesting partial funding must show that requests for the balance of funding have been submitted to (an) other grant program(s) within twelve months of submission to TREE Fund. The Jack Kimmel International Grant program is overseen by the Research Committee Chair, or his/her designee. Administrative support is provided by TREE Fund staff. Jack Kimmel International Grants are not restricted by topical area.

i. Operational procedures

1. The Canadian TREE Fund funds this grant; TREE Fund administers this grant.
2. TREE Fund staff posts the grant program announcement, description of research priorities, application forms and instructions on the TREE Fund website. Announcements are also published through ISA, TCIA, and other outlets, with guidance and support of the Research Committee Chair and Communications Committee. The application process opens 90 days prior to the due date. Completed applications are due by October 1.
3. Proposals are received, reviewed and rated by the Research Committee or appropriate Review Committee. The Committee recommends which projects should be funded, and the amount of the grant to the Board of

Trustees. Funding levels of individual grants may be adjusted by the Research Committee. Grant funds may not be used to pay overhead expenses. Grant funds may not be used for educational costs unrelated to the project (e.g. tuition, books, and lab fees). Awards are approved by the TREE Fund Board during the fall/winter Board of Trustee meeting or via electronic vote.

4. All grantees are notified by telephone within 30 days of Board approval
5. Telephone notification will be followed with a formal award letter and Grant Agreement detailing the terms of the grant no later than February 1. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified, in writing, within 60 days of the award decision.
6. Grantees are expected to provide progress reports as requested by TREE Fund and stated in the Grant Agreement.
7. Grantees must report use of funds, whether objectives of proposal were met, and the impact the research has had on the field (s) of arboriculture or urban forestry.
8. Grantees must provide a financial report based upon the original budget submitted.
9. Grantees who receive partial project funding from TREE Fund must report on the whole project, including work done with TF grant-leveraged funds.
10. Grantees are expected to publish research results, preferably in *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* or another peer-reviewed journal and send notice of publication to the TREE Fund President/CEO.

c. Hyland R. Johns Grants

This program funds research projects that address topics that have the potential of benefiting the everyday work of arborists. Projects are expected to be completed within two to five years. Funding is derived from donations to the TREE Fund and awarded in a range determined, and revised periodically (\$24,790-\$25,000 in 2011), by the TREE Fund Board. Grants may support expenses over multiple years, but no more than one grant will be awarded to any project. The Hyland R. Johns grant program is overseen by the Research Committee Chair or his/her designee. Administrative support is provided by TREE Fund staff. Research and technology transfer priorities for Hyland R. Johns Grants are not restricted by topical area.

i. Operational procedures

1. The TREE Fund staff posts the grant program announcement, description of research priorities, application forms and instructions on the TREE Fund website. Announcements are also published through ISA, TCIA, and other outlets, with guidance and support of the Research Committee Chair and Communications Committee. The application process opens 90 days prior to the due date. Completed applications are due April 1.
2. Proposals are received, reviewed and rated by the Research Committee or appropriate Review Committee. The Committee recommends which projects should be funded, and the amount of the grant to the Board of Trustees. Funding levels of individual grants may be adjusted by the Research Committee. Grant funds cannot be used to pay overhead expenses. Grant funds may not

be used for educational costs unrelated to the project (e.g. tuition, books, and lab fees). Awards are approved by the TREE Fund Board during the summer Board of Trustee meeting or via electronic vote.

3. All grantees are notified by telephone within 30 days of Board approval
4. Telephone notification will be followed with a formal award letter and Grant Agreement detailing the terms of the grant no later than October 1. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified, in writing, within 60 days of the award decision.
5. Grantees are expected to provide progress reports as requested by TREE Fund and stated in the Grant Agreement.
6. Grantees must report use of funds, whether objectives of proposal were met, and the impact the research has had on the field(s) of arboriculture or urban forestry.
7. Grantees must provide a financial report based upon the original budget submitted.
8. Grantees are expected to publish research results, preferably in *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* or another peer-reviewed journal and send notice of publication to the TREE Fund President/CEO.

d. TREE Fund Fellowship

Research Fellow Grants are designed to address a specific topic as defined by the TREE Fund Trustees and to provide support to a young scientist who is being mentored by an established and published scientist. Research Fellow Grants support multi-year research projects (three to five years in duration), but no more

than one grant can be awarded to any project. Grants are for a total of \$100,000 over three years, with approximately one third released each of the three years, pending completion of interim and final reports. Funds cannot be used to pay for overhead expenses, student tuition or student fees.

The TREE Fund priority areas are derived from input from the TREE Fund Research Committee, TREE Fund Trustees, and the Science and Research Committee of the International Society of Arboriculture. Tree Biomechanics have been defined as the overall research priority area for 2009. Grant proposals should focus on tree biomechanics issues relating but not limited to:

- i. Root pruning/structural loss
- ii. Tree risk assessment
- iii. Long term effects of drought and root loss
- iv. Soil biology/soil amelioration
- v. Radar and other analyses devices

Proposals are evaluated by the TREE Fund's Research Committee, which is composed of research scientists and practicing arborists. Recommendations on grant awards will be presented to the TREE Fund Board of Trustees for final approval.

- i. Operational procedures
  1. The TREE Fund staff posts the grant program announcement, description of research priorities, application forms and instructions on the TREE Fund website. Announcements are also published through ISA, TCIA, and other outlets, with guidance and support of the Research Committee Chair and Communications

Committee. The application process opens 90 days prior to the due date.

2. Proposals are received, reviewed and rated by the Research Committee or appropriate Review Committee. The Committee recommends which projects should be funded, and the amount of the grant to the Board of Trustees. Funding levels of individual grants may be adjusted by the Research Committee. Grant funds cannot be used to pay overhead expenses. Grant Funds may not be used for educational costs unrelated to the project (e.g. tuition, books, and lab fees). Awards are approved by the TREE Fund Board during the Trustee meeting or via electronic vote.
3. All grantees are notified by telephone within 30 days of Board approval.
4. Telephone notification will be followed with a formal award letter and Grant Agreement detailing the terms of the grant no later than 30 days after board approval. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified, in writing, within 60 days of the award decision.
5. Grantees are expected to provide progress reports as requested by TREE Fund and stated in the Grant Agreement.
6. Grantees must report use of funds, whether objectives of proposal were met, and the impact the research has had on the field(s) of arboriculture or urban forestry.
7. Grantees must provide a financial report based upon the original budget submitted.

8. Grantees are expected to publish research results, preferably in *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* or another peer-reviewed journal and send notice of publication to the TREE Fund President/CEO.

e. Directed Grants

The Research Committee, with approval by the TREE Fund Trustees, may select an area for focused funding, and solicit proposals from specific researchers for a directed grant project. An open and objective process for identifying special needs will be developed by the Research Committee. The amount of the grants may vary, depending on the nature of the work and funding available.

i. Operational procedures

1. Research Committee may establish a Review Committee to oversee the project on its behalf.
2. To identify a researcher to conduct the project, the Research Committee develops an RFP to be sent to a select group of researchers qualified to conduct the project. Proposals are reviewed and rated. Successful principal investigator is notified. Grant is awarded; contracts developed by TREE Fund President/CEO.
3. Project progress monitored by Research Committee (or Review Committee). Grantee provides annual progress reports. Funds are released according to terms of contract.
4. Grantees are expected to publish research results, preferably in *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* or another peer-reviewed journal and send notice of publication to the TREE Fund President/CEO.

f. Sponsored Grants

Sponsored grants are funded by a sponsor or donor for a specific project or topic. The purpose of the grant must meet the mission of the TREE Fund.

i. Operational procedures

1. President/CEO and Research Committee Chair or designee discusses interests with donor/sponsor and determines if suggested project is appropriate for the TREE Fund. Financial arrangements are negotiated, including an appropriate administration fee for the TREE Fund. Letter of agreement between parties is signed.
2. Project is referred to the Research Committee. Research Committee may establish a Review Committee to oversee the project on its behalf.
3. Identification of the researcher to conduct the project occurs in one of two ways:
  - o Research Committee develops an RFP. The RFP is sent to select group of researchers qualified to conduct project. Proposals are reviewed and rated. Successful principal investigator is notified.
  - o The sponsor/donor may designate an awardee. Awardee must be determined by the Review Committee to have adequate credentials and experience to conduct project. Awardee submits a detailed project description for evaluation and comment by the Research Committee.
4. Grant awarded; contract developed by TREE Fund President/CEO.
5. Project progress monitored by Research Committee (or

Review Committee). Grantee provides annual progress reports. Funds are released according to terms of contract.

6. Awardee provides deliverables. Information disseminated by awardee, TREE Fund, ISA and/or its partners in the project.

## 5. Submission of Proposals

Proposals are required for all projects considered by the TREE Fund. Proposals must clearly describe the project and research team.

Information to be provided includes:

- a. Project title
- b. Investigator (name, title, address, phone)
- c. Executive Summary
- d. Statement of problem and objective of project
- e. Brief description of what is currently known about proposed project area
- f. Project plan
- g. Itemized budget (minimum funding requested, funds received and pending from other sources)
- h. Project schedule (starting and completion dates)
- i. Relevant citations by investigator
- j. Significance of proposed project to arboriculture and urban forestry
- k. Instructions specific to grants
  - i. For John Duling and Jack Kimmel International Grants, proposals are to be prepared on the online application form. Online applications must be completed and submitted by midnight CDT October 1 to be considered for funding in the following year.

- ii. For Hyland R. Johns Grants, an executive summary must be included. Initial screening of proposals may be based on the executive summary. Online applications must be completed and submitted by midnight CDT April 1 to be considered for funding in the following year.
- iii. Proposals for directed and sponsored grants are limited to the size specified in the RFP. The schedule for submission of proposals and awarding of grant is dependent on the individual project. For large directed and sponsored projects, the TREE Fund may elect to use a pre-proposal phase. Pre-proposals are brief outlines (2 pages or less) describing the project, methods (including personnel, equipment, and facilities) to be used to complete the project, time schedule and a preliminary budget of anticipated costs. Pre-proposals will be reviewed by the Research Committee. Full proposals may be requested from those applicants with the highest rated pre-proposals.

## 6. Criteria for Selection

All projects funded through the TREE Fund must be scientifically sound, meet the Mission of the TREE Fund, and provide accurate and unbiased information. The TREE Fund will consider a wide range of research and technology transfer project types.

### a. Projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:

#### i. Potential impact of the project

Is the need clearly stated? Does the project address a problem/issue within the TREE Fund's mission and priority areas? Is there a clear link to arboriculture or urban forestry? Will the project have application to a broad sector

of the arboriculture and/or urban forestry communities? Is the potential impact immediate or long-term?

ii. Approach

Is the project feasible and scientifically sound? Are the proposed methods and existing resources appropriate for successful completion of the project? Is the project creative in its approach to the problem? If technology transfer, is the transfer vehicle/method appropriate for the target audience?

iii. Performance

Do investigators have necessary qualifications and experience to accomplish the project? Is the project time frame realistic? How will the information be disseminated?

iv. Funding

Are requested funds sufficient to complete the project? Is an adequate explanation of funding use provided (including project budget in excess of grant requested)? Is the potential cost/benefit ratio for this project appropriate? Are the funds leveraged or matched?

b. If the committee determines that an insufficient number of high quality proposals have been submitted, the committee is not required to award all of the funds available. The committee will recommend to the Board how the remaining funds should be directed.

i. Unsolicited proposals

Applicants submitting unsolicited, detailed proposals will be advised to resubmit the proposal for consideration under an existing TREE Fund grant program.

## 7. Grant Agreements

An agreement must be written between the grantee and the TREE Fund which delineates the scope of the project, schedule for progress reports, deliverables, review period, completion date, phased payment schedule (if any) and total project cost. The TREE Fund will negotiate with the Principal Investigator (PI), parent organization or agency the ownership of copyrights, source codes and patents resulting projects funded.

a. Partnerships

The TREE Fund encourages research partnerships to enhance industry involvement, increase interdisciplinary interaction and provide broader funding potential.

These policies and procedures will be provided to all new committee members.

Issued by

Date revised:

Board Action (give date of vote) December 13, 2011

-or-

TREE Fund Chairman's Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

-or-

President/CEO's Signature \_\_\_\_\_