**TREE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND**

**TRUSTEE DIRECTED GRANT NUMBER 17-TR-02:**

**RESEARCH IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES STUDY**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, 2017 GRANT CYCLE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Tree Research and Education Endowment (TREE) Fund is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that awards grants to enhance awareness and management of tree populations in urban settings, thereby improving community health, beauty, value and sustainability. TREE Fund has awarded a total of $3.2 million since 2002 for arboriculture and urban forestry research and education. See treefund.org/about for more information about our mission, history and programs.

TREE Fund is interested in better understanding the outcomes and impacts that 15 years of research grants have had on the awareness, knowledge and implementation of technology, practices and management of urban forests in the green industry. As TREE Fund seeks to grow it is important to more fully understand what contribution the organization’s grants have made in the arboriculture and urban forest industries.

Toward this end, TREE Fund’s Trustees have authorized a one-time grant in 2017 to conduct a baseline review of impacts, outputs and outcomes of TREE Fund sponsored research programs. The maximum award for this project is $20,000.

**PROGRAM PURPOSE AND DESIRED OUTCOME**

TREE Fund desires that the subject report be made available to its Board of Trustees in November 1, 2018. The successful applicant(s) will conduct a comprehensive study, likely combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques, of all TREE Fund research grants awarded between 2002 and 2017. The desired outcome is a full report describing previously funded research outputs, outcomes and impacts on the management of urban forests towards healthier, safer and more resilient urban forests.

Measures to be collected might include:

* Research outputs, including:
  + Number of peer reviewed citations
  + Number of extension, industry and newsletter publication
  + Number of webpages, videos or other resulting media
* Research outcomes, including:
  + Number of transferable technologies, techniques or management recommendations
  + Adoption rates of resulting technology, techniques or management (inclusion of data in BMPs, Standards, etc.)
  + Changes in industry or public awareness brought on by research findings
  + Document the process of research implementation into arboriculture and urban forest management
* Research impacts, including estimated:
  + Economic impacts
  + Environmental impacts
  + Health Impacts

**TIMELINE AND REPORT**

Applications will be accepted only via the TREE Fund’s website (treefund.org) from July 1 to August 15, 2017. No advance letter of inquiry is required before applications may be submitted. All compliant applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Board of Trustees’ Research and Education Committee. A single award will be recommended by the Committee for approval by the Trustees on or before September 15, 2017. Notification of award will be made within two weeks of Trustee approval.

Recipients’ signed agreements and requested support materials must be received within two weeks of award notification. The award letter will include a contract issued to the recipient’s academic institution, which must be signed and returned within two weeks of the award notification date. Upon TREE Fund’s receipt of the signed contract and any requested supporting documentation, a first payment equaling the requested grant amount less $1,600 in retained funds will be sent to the recipient’s Institution.

A final report listing the outputs, outcomes and impacts using qualitative and quantitative data is due by November 1, 2018. The report should outline project results by TREE Fund research priorities of: root and soil management, planting and establishment, plant health care, risk assessment and worker safety, and urban forestry. Upon receipt and approval of the final report, the $1,600 retained funds will be paid to the recipient’s academic institution.

**PROJECT BUDGET**

The maximum cash award for this project is $20,000 and proposals must include at least a 10% matching component of in-kind or cash provided by others. Proposed costs must be broken down into the following categories:

* Compensation or Stipends (if benefits are included the proposal, identify them by dollar value and as a percentage of the total compensation/stipend cost);
* Travel or Transportation (specifically identify costs associated with travel beyond 150 miles of applicant’s institution, and reason for such proposed travel);
* Materials and Supplies;
* Institutional Overhead (may not exceed 10% of total requested amount)
* Matching Component (must be at least 10% of total budgeted amount; unrecovered institutional overhead may be credited toward the match).

**CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

Applications will be scored on the following scale:

* Proposal directly addresses each of the tasks described above (20 points)
* Methods for conducting and documenting the research are clear (30 points)
* The proposed team is qualified to conduct the requested work (30 points)
* Objectives are achievable within required time frame and proposed budget (20 points)

TREE Fund does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, disability or national or ethnic origin. Current Trustees of TREE Fund or any member of the family of any such Trustees are ineligible to receive grants from TREE Fund. As an integral part of TREE Fund’s mission, findings from this grant may be freely and widely distributed to any and all parties who may benefit from the work, with full credit provided to the report’s author(s).