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INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A LETTER OF INTENT AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) and Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) invite applications of research and development in areas that address priorities identified by the BCRC.

Research proposals will be evaluated for their likelihood to help the Canadian beef industry remain competitive and sustainable over the short and long term, based on three criteria:

1. Relevance to the identified research priorities stated in 'BCRC Call for Letters of Intent',
2. Scientific merit,
3. A clear communication and technology transfer plan to facilitate the uptake of research results by the beef industry.

All proposals submitted to the BCRC must follow the guidelines outlined in this document.

Policy to prevent duplication

The BCRC regularly communicates with other beef research funding bodies. When a researcher that has submitted a letter of intent or proposal to the BCRC also submits similarly titled proposals to other beef research funders, the BCRC is willing to share its proposals and associated peer reviews. The purpose of this policy is to improve communication and coordination of research priorities among funders, minimize duplication of effort, and ensure the most strategic and efficient use of beef research funds.

Who is eligible to apply?

Any individual or organization (academic institution, private industry, government or not-for-profit/non-government organization) from Canada or elsewhere with the ability and/or a track record of success in carrying out research projects in areas relevant to the Canadian beef industry is eligible to apply.

When are applications considered?

Specific timelines are outlined in the 'Call for Letters of Intent – Research' document posted on the BCRC website (www.beefresearch.ca).

As research priorities of the BCRC dictate, the BCRC may solicit specific applications from appropriate individuals or organizations.

Project Timeframe

Projects between one and three years in duration may be submitted; if the need for a longer funding term can be clearly demonstrated, four- or five-year projects may be considered. Please review the most recent 'Call for Letters of Intent - Research' document posted at www.beefresearch.ca to see if a specific duration has been identified.

Letters of Intent

To facilitate project submissions and to avoid unnecessary time and effort being spent on proposals that are unlikely to be funded, the BCRC requires that a letter of intent first be submitted. Applicants must

submit the file entitled 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form - Research'. Following a review of the letter of intent, individuals or institutions may be invited to submit a full proposal. Invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee that the research proposal will be funded.

When the letters of intent submitted do not sufficiently address particular research priorities, the BCRC reserves the right to bypass the letter of intent process and directly solicit specific full proposals.

Proposal Form

If invited to submit a full proposal, the completed 'BCRC Proposal Form – Research'.pdf and the 'BCRC Proposal Budget – Research'.xlsx documents posted at www.beefresearch.ca along with CV's for the Project Leader and all Co-investigators must be submitted. A checklist for submitting a letter of intent and proposal application is provided on page 5 of this document.

Full Proposal Budget

Direct Costs

The proposed budget of direct costs should be completed within the Excel file entitled 'BCRC Proposal Budget - Research' and submitted in Excel file format (.xls or .xlsx) along with the 'BCRC Proposal Form - Research'. Include only funding that is directly applicable to the proposal and do not include funding for other related projects.

AAFC

The 'Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)' column is to include all funds directed to AAFC researchers and facilities for carrying out the proposed research project.

Other

The 'Other' column is to include all funds directed to other/non-AAFC institutions (e.g. universities, provincial governments, industry collaborators) for carrying out the proposed research project.

Equipment

Details must be provided around proposed equipment purchases, as all equipment purchases valued greater than \$10,000 for each item must be preapproved.

Livestock Costs

Details must be provided on proposed livestock costs including purchases (price per animal), animal care costs (i.e. veterinary care and supplies, cannulation), user fees and any other costs associated specifically to the livestock.

Indirect/Overhead Costs

Projects conducted at Universities or at other non AAFC facilities are eligible for overhead costs which will be calculated by BCRC to a maximum of 15% of total project costs.

Additional Funding

Letters of intent as well as full proposals must clearly identify all sources and amounts of additional funding for the proposed research project. This must include both in-kind and cash contributions, specifying whether each source will be applied for, has been applied for, or has been confirmed. Verification of other funding received or pending must be provided with the full proposal. **The BCRC project funding will not exceed 50% of the project total expenses.**

Once a project has been approved for funding by the BCRC and an offer has been extended, confirmation of all additional funding must be provided in writing prior to BCRC funds being released. If required matching funds are not secured within twelve months of the time that a project is approved for BCRC funding, the BCRC reserves the right to review the project's approval.

In-kind Contributions

In-kind contribution means the fair value* attributed to eligible costs of goods and/or services required to complete the project that are provided by the recipient, or other project supporters (governments and/or industry supporters, partners or association members). In-kind contributions do not require a cash outlay and count towards the recipient's contribution. **Full-time salaries of research leads and collaborators are not eligible as in-kind contributions. Verification of all in-kind and other funding must be provided. In-kind contributions cannot normally exceed 10% of the total eligible costs to complete the project.**

**Fair value of in-kind contributions should reflect current, relevant and market-based information or another methodology acceptable to BCRC.*

Project milestones

For each objective listed in the proposal, provide one or more clear, specific output(s) or deliverable(s) that correspond to that objective, plus which collaborator is responsible for each output / deliverable, as well as indicator(s) that can be used to assess whether those outputs or deliverables have been achieved. Ensure that all technology transfer and communication activities are included.

The Project Milestones table will be incorporated into the research funding agreement and will be used to track annual research progress and to assess whether contractual obligations were fulfilled.

Example:

Objective	Expected Deliverable(s)	Research Lead and Timeline
Complete Grazing Trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- swath paddocks (name of researcher responsible)- graze cattle (name of researcher responsible)- collect forage samples (name of researcher responsible)- collect animal data (name of researcher responsible)- annual data analysis (name of researcher responsible)	Start date: January 2020 End date: December 2021 Lead: J. Doe

Communications and Technology Transfer Plan

While recognizing that not all research goes as planned, we are interested in your plans to transfer key results back to the desired beef industry stakeholders to encourage adoption, uptake and/or commercialization where appropriate. Advancement of funds for technology transfer activities will be contingent upon the completion of a technology transfer plan and review of research outcomes by the BCRC. At minimum, researchers are required to develop a fact sheet, based on the BCRC template, for each project funded.

Budget allocations for technology transfer will be contingent on confirmation by the BCRC of most appropriate communications and technology transfer activities.

Animal Care Approvals

All animals used in research projects approved by the BCRC must be cared for according to the Guidelines of the Canadian Council of Animal Care. Where required, documentation indicating that the institution's Animal Care Committee has approved the proposed protocol(s) must be received by the BCRC before funding will be released for the activity.

The BCRC recognizes that obtaining an 'Institutional Animal Care Approval' can be an onerous process and therefore does not insist on having the Institutional Animal Care Approval completed before submitting the proposal. It is encouraged that this process be initiated as soon as practical so as not to delay project initiation if the BCRC approves funding. If there are any revisions to the research protocol required by the animal care committee, the BCRC will review the revised protocol prior to allowing the project to be initiated to ensure revisions do not detract from the validity of the research.

Project Review

Full proposals will be submitted for up to three peer reviews. The BCRC will solicit reviews and reserves the right to use reviewers nominated in the letter of intent or other individuals as appropriate. Project proposals will be categorized and ranked by the priority of research, as set by the BCRC.

Letters of Support

The BCRC does NOT require or read letters of support.

Documentation submitted after the deadline for project proposals

Once a project proposal has been submitted, the BCRC may request any missing or additional documentation. No unsolicited documentation is permitted after the project proposal submission deadline.

Appeals of awards for funding projects

Decisions taken on awards made to projects by the BCRC are considered final.

Reporting

All reporting requirements will be defined in the funding agreement.

Confidentiality of research proposed to the BCRC

All those who review research proposals submitted to the BCRC (peer reviewers as well as persons directly associated with the BCRC), are required to sign a statement of confidentiality in their review of the proposed research.

Signatures

Signatures are required on full proposals only. If the document 'Approvals and Signatures – Research' containing signature(s) of the researcher and co-investigator(s) is not submitted with the proposal, it must be received by BCRC within two weeks following the proposal submission deadline. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

Submit a Proposal

First, submit a letter of intent using the file entitled 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form - Research' prior to the submission deadline outlined on www.beefresearch.ca. Confirmation of receipt will be sent for every LOI and full proposal submitted. If confirmation is not sent within one business day of your submission, the BCRC has not received the documents.

Checklist for submitting a Letter of Intent	
Have you:	
Read and followed the 'Instructions and Guidelines for Submitting LOIs and Proposals – Research' document?	
Completed the 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form – Research'? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including the list of up to five potential reviewers 	
Emailed the following document to proposals@beefresearch.ca prior to the deadline? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form – Research'.pdf 	

If the letter of intent is approved and the BCRC requests a full proposal, then complete and submit the 'BCRC Proposal Form – Research'.pdf and the 'BCRC Proposal Budget – Research'.xlsx before the deadline. The deadline will be indicated in the invitation to submit a full proposal.

Checklist for submitting a Full Proposal	
Have you:	
Been invited to submit a full proposal by the BCRC, following approval of the Letter of Intent?	
Read and followed the 'Instructions and Guidelines for Submitting LOIs and Proposals – Research' document?	
Completed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'BCRC Proposal Form – Research'.pdf 'BCRC Proposal Budget – Research'.xlsx 'Approvals and Signatures – Research'.pdf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Note that electronic signatures are acceptable. Signatures can be submitted separately using the PDF signature file.</i> An Institution Animal Care Approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Note that this is not required upon submission but must be received by the BCRC prior to project initiation. If the institution's Animal Care Committee requires changes to experimental protocol that compromise the scientific or practical value of the research, funding approval may be withdrawn.</i> 	
Emailed the following documents to proposals@beefresearch.ca prior to the deadline? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'BCRC Proposal Form – Research' in .pdf file format 'BCRC Proposal Budget – Research' in .xls or .xlsx file format 'Approvals and Signatures – Research' document signed by project leader and co-investigator(s) CV for the Project Leader (must not exceed 5 pages) CVs for all Co-investigators (each must not exceed 5 pages) 	