

The Britton Fund, Inc.
Policies and Procedure Statement

Subject: Research Committee

Policy Statement No.: 0003

PURPOSE

The Britton Fund Research Committee is charged with the following tasks and responsibilities:

1. Identifying research needs of the Western Chapter that are not being addressed by other granting agencies;
2. Developing requests for proposals (RFP) for research and education projects of interest and value to its members;
3. Evaluating proposals submitted to the Fund for scientific soundness and applicability to research priorities;
4. Funding projects deemed appropriate, desirable and feasible, and monitoring their progress;
5. Facilitating distribution of information generated from research projects grants.
6. Maintaining records of active and completed projects.
7. Submitting committee reports to the Britton Fund Board of Directors.

ORGANIZATION

The Research Committee is composed of 3-5 Western Chapter ISA (WCISA) members, including at least two (2) people with strong research skills and experience. Committee Members should have an interest in research and be able to evaluate the scientific merit of proposals. Committee Members should represent the geographical and professional diversity of the Chapter. Term length is 4 years; consecutive terms may be served. The Committee Chair is a member of the Britton Fund Board of Directors, and serves for two years; consecutive terms may be served. The Chair nominates Committee members. The WCISA President appoints a representative of the WCISA Board of Directors. The Board representative and Executive Director are *ex officio* members of the Committee. The Executive Director does not vote.

Review Committees

Review Committees may be created by the Research Committee to review grant proposals or oversee grant projects that require specialized knowledge and/or participation of grant partners. Review Committees must include at least two Research Committee Members, 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 RFPs, select researchers, monitor progress and oversee the grant.

Editorial Committee

An Editorial Committee may be created by the Research Committee to review manuscripts, articles, transcripts, or other written materials to be published, or distributed by, or being considered to be published or distributed by The Britton Fund.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Research funded by the Britton Fund must focus on the biology, management and care of trees, and their relation to environmental, social and economic benefits. Projects to be funded will generally be regional in nature, and must benefit members of the WCISA directly. Preference is given to projects conducted in the Western Chapter geographical area (California, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada).

FUNDING

The Committee and the approved projects will be funded by the Britton Fund established by the WCISA. The amount will vary each year depending on the financial status of the WCISA and contributions to the Fund. The Committee will prepare an annual budget and request for funding for submittal to the WCISA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will inform the Committee of the level of funding for the coming year by October. Matching funds are encouraged, and viewed as favorable.

The Britton Fund Executive Director shall maintain accounting of expenses and income.

GRANT PROGRAMS

All grant proposals must be evaluated by the Research Committee and approved by the Britton Fund Board of Directors. The Fund has two granting programs:

Britton Fund Grants - Researchers are invited to submit research proposals for funding by the Britton Fund. Grants may either be **directed**, by which the Committee sends out a Request for Proposals, or **non-directed**, by which researchers submit unsolicited proposals.

Sponsored Grants - Funds are donated by a sponsor with a specific project or subject area in mind. The Committee develops an RFP, reviews proposals, selects the contractor, monitors and administers the project.

Qualified members of the Research Committee may submit proposals for consideration, but they will be excluded from the review process.

Britton Fund Grants

The goal of this program is to provide money to support regional research projects that address topics of interest to arborists in the WCISA. Projects submitted by researchers working within the Western Chapter geographical area will be given priority. Projects are expected to be completed within one to three years.

Operational procedures

1. The Committee sends RFP, description of research priorities, application form and instructions to qualified researchers.
2. RFP announcements are sent out by October 31 of each year, and completed applications are due by December 15. The Executive Director assembles the proposals and distributes them to the Research Committee.
3. Proposals are reviewed and rated by the Research Committee. The Committee determines which projects should be funded, and the amount of the grant. Awards are ratified by the Britton Fund Board of Directors in January.
4. Grantees are notified by the Research Committee Chair by March 1. Unsuccessful applicants are notified and given brief summary comments from reviewers.
5. Funds are forwarded to the Grantee.
6. Grantees provide annual progress reports if project is not completed within one year, and inform Chair when project is complete.
7. Grantee publishes research results in the Western Arborist, and, where appropriate, submits a paper to the Journal of Arboriculture. In addition, Grantee reports results in an oral presentation and/or poster at a WCISA regional or annual meeting.

Sponsored Grants

Sponsored grants are funded by a sponsor or donor for a specific project or topic.

Operating procedures

1. The Britton Fund Board of Directors discusses interests with donor/sponsor and determines if suggested project is appropriate for the WCISA. Financial arrangements are negotiated. 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 three ways:
 - a. Research Committee develops an RFP. RFP is sent to select group of researchers qualified to conduct project. Proposals are reviewed and rated. Successful proposer is notified.
 - b. The sponsor/donor may designate an awardee. Awardee must be determined by the Research Committee to have adequate credentials and experience to conduct project. Awardee submits a detailed project description for evaluation and comment by the Research Committee.
 - c. The researcher with a funded project may contact the Research Committee and offer to pass funds for a specific project through the WCISA. The project is subject to review and oversight by the Research Committee. The WCISA Executive Director administers the grant.
4. Grant awarded; contracts developed by the Britton Fund Executive Director.

5. Project progress monitored by Research Committee (or Review Committee). Awardee provides periodic progress reports. Funds are released according to terms of contract.
6. Awardee provides deliverables. Information disseminated by awardee, Research Committee, The Britton Fund, WCISA and/or its partners in the project.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals are required for all projects considered by the Research Committee. Proposals must clearly describe the project and research team. Information to be provided includes:

1. Project Title
2. Investigator (name, title, address, phone)
3. Statement of problem and objective of project
4. Significance of proposed project to the arboricultural industry
5. Brief description of what is currently known about proposed research area, or currently available for education projects.
6. Research plan or outline of education project
7. Budget (minimum funding requested, estimated completion date, how funds will be used, matching funds, other funds contributing to project)
8. Relevant citations by investigator

Proposals are limited to five pages. Proposals must be received by December 15 to be considered for funding in the following year. Awardees will be determined at the January-February Board meeting, and announced by March 1. Grants are initiated in March. Projects are to be completed within 2 years time. If the project cannot be completed within that time, grantee will submit a progress report and request for extension.

Proposals for 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.

Pre-proposals

For large projects, the Research Committee 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.

UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

Applicants submitting unsolicited proposals will be advised to resubmit the proposal for consideration Oct. 31-Nov. 30, if the proposed project is consistent with the interests of the WCISA. Unsolicited proposals may be reviewed by the committee when timelines is a concern.

For **general research ideas or concepts** the following procedures are followed:

1. Concept statements are submitted to the Research Committee.
2. Suitability of the idea for development into a project is evaluated.
3. The applicant will be directed in one of the following ways:
 - a. Submissions that are not applicable for the WCISA will be returned to the sender
 - b. For applicable projects, the researcher will be invited to submit a full proposal and provided with appropriate application
 - c. For ideas the Britton Fund cannot fund alone, the Committee may recommend trying to match the possible project with a sponsor. Procedures would then follow the Sponsored Grants program.
4. To protect the proprietary rights of the applicant, the Committee may not develop a project from a concept statement or idea, or undertake the RFP process without the knowledge and consent of the applicant.

Criteria for Project Selection

Projects funded through the WCISA must be scientifically based, meet the research priorities of the WCISA , and provide accurate and unbiased information. The Committee will consider a wide range of project types: basic research, applied research, technology transfer, education, innovative demonstrations (if strong technology transfer component)

Projects will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. 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?

2. Performance

Is it likely the project can be completed in the time frame planned?

Are the outcomes of the project realistic?

How will the information be disseminated?

Do investigators have necessary qualifications to accomplish the project?

3. Funding

Are requested funds sufficient to complete the project? Are there other funds to be used on project?

Is there adequate explanation of how funds will be used?

Is the potential cost/benefit ratio for this project appropriate?

4. Impact/Appropriate topic

Does the project address a problem/issue within the Trust's priority research/technology transfer areas?

Will this project be useful for the arboricultural industry?

Will this project have application to a broad international sector?

GRANT CONTRACTS

A contract must be written between the grantee and the Britton 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. Projects involving multiple funding sources will require all parties reaching agreed upon terms regarding copyrights, source codes and patents.

PARTNERSHIPS

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