



New Researcher Onboarding

Welcome to the WA Tree Fruit Research Commission (WTFRC) new researcher onboarding page! It is our goal to help you become a successful grant recipient by taking a step-by-step look at our process. Unlike other granting agencies, we encourage and welcome you to contact us at any time during the proposal process, to ensure your proposed research is aligned with the needs of the tree fruit industry. For technical questions, please contact Dr. Ines Hanrahan (hanrahan@treefruitresearch.com). If this is the first time you are considering to submit a proposal, feel free to reach out to Kathy Coffey (kathy@treefruitresearch.com). She will be happy to set up an informal phone meeting with you to go over all procedures, answer questions, suggest connections, and provide tips for success.

Advisory Committees

The WTFRC board utilizes the technical assistance of expert advisory committees: Apple Horticulture and Postharvest (AHP), Apple Crop Protection (ACP), Cherry, Stone Fruit, and Technology. In addition, we administer all granting facets of the Pear Research subcommittee. Each committee is comprised of interested growers, packers and consultants who volunteer their time on committees to give input on research priorities and to give advisory votes on proposals. Each committee is chaired by at least one WTFRC board member and WTFRC internal program staff helps to facilitate all committee activities. Except for pear, the WTFRC board has the ultimate authority to approve or reject all funding submissions for all committees.

AHP & ACP

Request for Pre-proposals

Annually, we post on our website the list of research priorities by committee. Once you have decided to submit a pre-proposal, go to our website <https://treefruitresearch.org/> to view the instructions for completing the pre-proposal form. You may either upload the pre-proposal via the website or send it to Kathy Coffey, WTFRC's Administrative Officer (AO): kathy@treefruitresearch.com. Kathy will assemble all pre-proposals submitted, combining them into one document and send to the committee for review and ranking.

Pre-proposal selection

Once all the pre-proposals have been ranked by committee members and commissioners, the AO tabulates the results and sets up a time to meet with the committee chair(s) and the Executive Director to go over the results. If your pre-proposal is approved, you will receive a notice of such, along some feedback received during the review process, and with important dates to keep in mind throughout the rest of the process. If your pre-proposal is not approved, you will receive an email which contains feedback as to why the decision was made to not forward your submission to full proposal.

New Proposals

Committee research priorities are organized into review categories based on proposals received. Examples of review categories for apple horticulture and postharvest this might include organic, food safety, and postharvest. Once established, each committee member is assigned to at least one content panel based on their expertise/interest and asked to review new full proposals which fall within the assigned category (ies).

Each content panel will have several reviewers, avoiding conflicts of interest. Individuals who have a conflict of interest (example: listed as cooperator on proposal), will recuse themselves from scoring that proposal. Some reviewers may be assigned to multiple panels, depending on their expertise, interests and need. Proposal files will be forwarded to the content panelists for review and scoring. Content panelists will review the proposals and grade them against the scoring criteria (see scorecard link below). Scorecards are to be returned to the Administrative Officer(AO) by the deadline date. Committee members are required to submit reviews of each full proposal assigned to their content panel and are also encouraged to read all proposals in preparation for committee discussion.

If a content panelist has questions about proposed projects, s/he will send them to the AO. The AO will forward the questions to the researcher and ask to respond. All questions and responses will be sent to the entire content panel.

Once all scores have been received, the AO will prepare a spreadsheet which reflects all proposal scores from highest to lowest and all comments for presentation at the committee meeting in February. The AO will also send the compiled scores and comments of the content panels to its members. At the meeting, the scoring of each proposal will be shared with the group along with comments. The entire group is then encouraged to add additional comments on the proposal and determine whether the scoring accurately reflects the group's opinion of the project. After all projects have been reviewed, the proposal scores will be sorted in order from highest ranked to lowest and those results will be shared with the WTFRC board for final review and determination of funding.

There are no in-person presentations for AHP & ACP proposals.

Cherry

Requests for Preproposals

The WTFRC works in combination with the Oregon Sweet Cherry Committee (OSCC) to review and approve projects. Research priorities from both WTFRC and OSCC are compiled and uploaded to our website for review. Preproposals are submitted in the same manner as AHP and ACP, however each entity reviews and scores the preproposals separately. Once the deadline for submittals has passed the AO will tally the results showing a combined ranking along with rankings separated by WTFRC and OSCC. A meeting is then called with the executive director, cherry chair and members from OSCC to review the results and determine which preproposals will be asked to submit a full proposal and to present at the annual research review. If your pre-proposal is approved, you will receive a notice of such along with important dates to keep in mind throughout the rest of the process. If your pre-proposal is not approved, you will receive an email which contains feedback as to why the decision was made to not forward your submission to full proposal.

New Proposals – The Research Review

New proposals are given a 15-minute block of time to present at the annual research review. 10-12 minutes is for presenting the proposal with the balance of time for questions and answers. Time is also set aside during breaks where audience members are encouraged to speak with the presenters to get further clarification on proposals. It cannot be stressed enough that the audience is not comprised of scientists, but rather growers and other interested industry personnel whose main goal in understanding the proposal is, "How will this benefit me/my company?" Keep this in mind and prepare your presentation based on your audience for best results.

Following the research review WTFRC and OSCC meet to discuss new proposals. Turning Point technology is used to rate each proposal based on well it meets one or several research priorities (1-5, 1 being the highest), and the merits of the proposal itself. (1-5, 1 being highest). The AO tallies the scores and sorts them from highest to lowest ranked proposal. At the next WTFRC and OSCC board meetings the board of each entity reviews the recommendations of their committee members approves or rejects projects for funding. It is not unusual to see funding from both WTFRC and OSCC for the same project. Your contract administrator will need to work with both entities on making contract and payment arrangements.

Technology

Request for Pre-proposals

WTFRC recognizes that technology is a broad, all-encompassing category which can include novel research not otherwise considered. That being the case, all technology-related preproposals are welcome.

We have linked up with Submittable, a grants management software company to host our technology grant proposal process. ***Do not use the forms found on our website for technology proposals.*** Click on the link below to go to the website and complete the preproposal form. Make sure to hit “apply” at the bottom of the page. Preproposals will be compiled and distributed to the committees and commissioners for review and ranking. For technical questions in using Submittable, contact customer support:

<https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>

Once the preproposal deadline has passed, the committee will access the files on Submittable in order to review and rank the preproposals.

Pre-proposal selection

Once all the pre-proposals have been ranked by committee members and commissioners, the AO tabulates the results and sets up a time to meet with the committee chair(s) and the Executive Director to go over the results. If your pre-proposal is approved, you will receive a notice of such along with important dates to keep in mind throughout the rest of the process. If your pre-proposal is not approved, you will receive an email which contains feedback as to why the decision was made to not forward your submission to full proposal.

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Following the research review WTFRC committee members meet to discuss new proposals. Turning Point technology is used to rate each proposal based on well it meets one or several research priorities (1-5, 1 being the highest), and the merits of the proposal itself. (1-5, 1 being highest). The AO tallies the scores and sorts them from highest to lowest ranked proposal. At the next WTFRC board meeting the board reviews the committee recommendations and approves or rejects projects for funding.

Pear

Requests for Preproposals

The pear research subcommittee is comprised of 15 appointed members from the PNW pear growing region. These 15 individuals will review and rank preproposals. The AO will include rankings from WTFRC board members as advisory votes and will be included in the overall tally.

Once all the pre-proposals have been ranked by the pear research subcommittee and commissioners, the AO tabulates the results and sets up a time to meet with the chair of the pear research subcommittee, the Executive Director and the WTFRC pear liaison (currently Tory Schmidt) to go over the results. If your pre-proposal is approved, you will receive a notice of such along with important dates to keep in mind throughout the rest of the process. If your pre-proposal is not approved, you will receive an email which contains feedback as to why the decision was made to not forward your submission to full proposal.

The Research Review - All committees

Continuing Reports

Continuing reports will be grouped by areas of similar research. The focus is not to justify funding, but to present results from the past year and to present a plan for the coming year. Time will be allowed to meet and answer any questions that the audience might have during planned breaks.

Final Reports

Final reports are a 15-minute presentation of the results of your work. Key points are highlighted and results are shared. Plan on approximately 10-12 minutes for presenting and allow the balance of your time opening the floor to questions.

No-Cost Extensions (NCE)

If you are slated to give a final report but have valid delays in your research, you can submit a request for a no-cost extension. Follow the directions found on the website to submit a request for an NCE. **Note:** The request for an NCE must be submitted in advance of presenting your final report. If you miss this deadline it is assumed that your work is complete and no other funds/time is to be spent on the project. Any unexpended funds (above \$100) are to be returned to WTFRC. For full details, please refer to the No-Cost extension policy which can be found on our website

Funding

If your project is approved for funding, congratulations! You will receive an email which serves as notice of funding. It is important to make sure that your contract administrator information is correct as the notice will also be sent to them. Included in the email is the feedback received from commissioners and committee members which may include important unanswered questions or slight revisions requested as contingent in funding. Please review this notice carefully.

If your proposal is not funded you will also receive notice with feedback from commissioners and committee members that we hope will help you with further proposal submissions.

I hope that you have found this document valuable. If you have any questions, please call or email me: Kathy Coffey (509)665-8271, ext. 2 or Kathy@treefruitresearch.com