



Beef Cattle Research Council
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Instructions and Guidelines for Submitting a Letter of Intent and Research Proposal

Introduction

The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) invites 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 research team 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 nongovernment organization) from Canada or elsewhere with 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 'BCRC Call for Letters of Intent' 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.

Timeframe for projects

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 'BCRC Call for Letters of Intent' 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'. Invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee that the research proposal will be funded. Following a review of the letter of intent, individuals or institutions may be invited to submit a full proposal.

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.pdf' and the 'BCRC Proposal Budget.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.

Budget

Direct Costs

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

Fiscal Years – Fiscal years begin April 1 and ends March 31. For example, fiscal year marked "2019/20" refers to April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020. Researchers need to carefully consider their annual budget allocations; once a project is approved, funds cannot be moved from one year to another without substantial advance notification.

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 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 AAFC research centers, Universities or at other facilities are eligible for overhead costs which will be calculated by BCRC to a maximum of 10% of total project costs for AAFC research centers and 15% for Universities and other facilities.

Additional Funding

Indicate all sources and amounts of additional funding for the proposed research, including both in-kind and cash, 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.

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. **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 AAFC.*

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:

Project Milestones			
Objective	Expected Outputs/Deliverables	Output Indicators	Fiscal Year (April 1 – March 31)
Complete Grazing Trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - swath paddocks (name of researcher) - graze cattle (name of researcher) - collect forage samples (researcher) - collect animal data (researcher) - annual data analysis (researcher) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - animal data collected - data analysis completed - data summarized - final report 	2019/20

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

Any and all animals used in research projects approved by the BCRC must be cared for according to Guidelines of the Canadian Council of Animal Care. Research projects will not be funded until the institution where the research will be conducted has provided documentation showing that the proposal has been approved by the local Animal Care Committee. If there are any revisions to the research protocol required by the animal care committee, the BCRC will review the proposal prior to allowing the project to be initiated to ensure revisions do not detract from the validity of the research. Animal Care Approvals are not required at the time of submission of the proposal form, only upon project approval.

The BCRC recognizes that obtaining an 'Institutional Animal Care Approval' can be a fairly 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 prior to or upon proposal submission so as not to delay project initiation if the BCRC approves funding.

Project review

Project proposals should contain up to five nominations of potential reviewers and will be submitted for up to three peer reviews. BCRC will solicit reviews and reserves the right to use reviewers nominated in the proposals 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

If the signature(s) of the researcher and co-investigator(s) are not included in the proposal, they must be received by BCRC within two weeks following the proposal submission deadline. Electronic signatures are acceptable and can be submitted using the proposal signature document posted at www.beefresearch.ca.

Submit a proposal

First submit a letter of intent using the file entitled 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form' before the deadline. The deadline is outlined on www.beefresearch.ca.

Checklist for submitting a Letter of Intent	
<i>Have you:</i>	
Read and followed the Instructions and Guidelines document?	
Completed the BCRC Letter of Intent Form? <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' PDF format <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Signatures can be attached as a PDF or submitted separately 	

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

Checklist for submitting a Full Proposal	
<i>Have you:</i>	
Been invited to submit a full proposal by the BCRC, following approval of the Letter of Intent?	
Read and followed the Instructions and Guidelines document?	
Completed the 'BCRC Proposal Form.pdf', including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all signatures required on the Approvals sheet(s)? <i>Note that electronic signatures are acceptable. Signatures can be submitted separately using the PDF signature file</i> • an Institution Animal Care Approval? <i>Note that this is not required upon submission but must be received by the BCRC prior to approval in order for BCRC to release funds. BCRC strongly recommends pursuing animal care approval as early in the process as possible. 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> • the list of up to five potential reviewers? 	
Completed 'BCRC Proposal Budget'?	
Emailed the following documents to proposals@beefresearch.ca prior to the deadline? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'BCRC Proposal Form' in .pdf file format with signatures or confirmation that signatures will follow. • 'BCRC Proposal Budget' in .xls or .xlsx file format • CV for the Project Leader (each CV must not exceed 5 pages) • CVs for all Co-investigators (each VC must not exceed 5 pages) 	