



Canadian National Wheat Cluster

Request for Letter of Interest (LOI)

Due Date: December 15, 2016

BACKGROUND

Funding organizations from across Canada are participating in the development of a Canadian National Wheat Cluster for submission to the next federal Agriculture Policy Framework (APF), the successor to the current Growing Forward 2 programming. The current National Wheat Improvement Program (NWIP), funded by many of these organizations and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the *Growing Forward 2* AgriInnovation Program, is a \$25.2 million five-year investment into wheat improvement that ends in March 2018. The funding partners wish to build on this successful venture for the next APF and are initiating a Request for Letter of Interest (LOI). The next APF is expected to be accepting funding applications by the summer 2017 and to be fully launched by April 1, 2018.

The Funding Organizations supporting this Request for LOIs include the Alberta Wheat Commission, the Canadian Field Crop Research Alliance (whose members include Grain Farmers of Ontario, Producteurs de grains du Québec, Atlantic Grains Council, and SeCan Association), Ducks Unlimited, Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission, Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission, Western Grains Research Foundation and Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc.

The Funding Organizations have met to discuss the research issues of greatest importance to producers. The eligible research areas defined below are intended to provide researchers with the scope of research that is of interest for the Canadian National Wheat Cluster.

SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED CANADIAN NATIONAL WHEAT CLUSTER

The Funding Organizations aim to invest in scientific research that ensures profitability for producers and long term sustainability of wheat in cropping systems.

Research priority areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

New variety (and germplasm) development in all Canadian wheat classes

In addition to breeding for increased yield and yield stability, producers in Canada are interested in the development of varieties with improvement in the following traits:

- Improved resistance to disease with a special emphasis on Fusarium head blight*, rust, ergot and for eastern Canadian varieties powdery mildew
- Strong straw with good lodging resistance
- Pre-harvest sprouting resistance (grade protection)
- Improved winter survival for winter wheats
- Solid stem varieties for sawfly resistance (western Canadian varieties)
- Orange wheat blossom midge resistance (western Canadian varieties)
- Early maturity (western Canadian varieties)
- Higher, more consistent protein in spring wheat (eastern Canadian varieties)
- Breeding tools aimed at accelerating the wheat breeding process (i.e. marker validation) will be considered eligible

*It should be noted that genetic disease control is of utmost importance to the producers of Canada with a special emphasis on resistance to Fusarium head blight.

In your LOI submission, please include measurable five year targets for each trait of interest (including, but not limited to, those required for registration in a specific wheat class).

Wheat yield improvement through genetics, as defined in the Cereals Canada draft Wheat Research Priority Setting Report, are aiming at 1% per year for wheat classes with a strong focus on quality requirements and 2% per year for other wheat classes.

Wheat-specific agronomy

Producers are committed to investing in agronomic and production research leading to optimum performance for wheat. Research of high priority to producers includes:

- Management and production practices to mitigate diseases, specifically Fusarium head blight, ergot, leaf diseases and seedling/root rot diseases

- Development of predictive models for wheat diseases such as Fusarium head blight, rust, ergot and mildew
- Studies aimed at quantifying the environmental and economic value of wheat in rotation and encouraging its presence as a key part of a healthy crop rotation. This research should focus on crops of economic value to producers.
- Wheat variety-specific response to inputs and management practices

LOI SUBMISSION

- A LOI submission must align with the eligible research areas
- Eligible researchers include those in universities, not-for-profit research institutions, and federal and provincial research organizations
- Research funding may be secured for up to five years from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2023
- Proposals that involve broad regional and national collaboration are strongly encouraged. International collaboration should be noted, where relevant.

TIMELINE FOR SUBMISSION

- The process will be carried out in two stages: i) the LOI and ii) full proposal stage
- **LOI submission deadline: December 15, 2016**
- Successful applicants will be notified of the decision and asked to provide a full proposal for further consideration
- Full proposals will go through a robust review process prior to final decisions

LOI SUBMISSION DETAILS

***Please submit your LOI in Word format and use the “Letter of Interest Template Form – Canadian National Wheat Cluster”.**

Send completed LOI by email to:

Gina Feist, Research Program Manager (WGRF)
ginafeist@westerngrains.com
(306) 975-0201

All submitted LOI will receive an email confirming receipt within 2-3 business days.

FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS' CONTACT INFORMATION

Alberta Wheat Commission	Lauren Comin	lcomin@albertawheat.com	(403) 219-7911
Atlantic Grains Council	Richard Martin	oasis29@bellaliant.net	(506) 380-9663
Ducks Unlimited	Paul Thoroughgood	p_thoroughgood@ducks.ca	(306) 569-0424
Grain Farmers of Ontario	Josh Cowan	joshcowan@gfo.ca	(519) 767-4129
Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association	Lori-Ann Kaminski	lakaminski@mymts.net	(204) 750-2656
Producteurs de grains du Québec	Salah Zoghلامي	szoghلامي@pgq.ca	(450) 679-0540
Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission	Blair Goldade	blair.goldade@saskwheatcommission.com	(306) 221-8898
Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission	Jake Davidson	jake@swcdc.info	(866) 472-4611
Western Grains Research Foundation	Gina Feist	ginafeist@westerngrains.com	(306) 975-0201
Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc.	Jake Davidson	jake@swcdc.info	(866) 472-4611