



## **The Canada - Israel Cooperation in Agricultural Research Program 2008**

### **(Canada-Israel program)**

### **Call for Proposals**

This Call for Proposals is issued by a framework of cooperation established between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and United States-Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund (BARD).

The purpose is to provide a framework to foster collaborative, mission-oriented research between agricultural scientists from Canada and Israel, based on scientists carrying out joint agricultural research in predetermined areas of high priority to both countries and to provide agricultural researchers and institutions with opportunities to exchange scientific information and to facilitate exchange of scientists.

**The Canada-Israel program will fund agricultural relevant proposals with a focus on leading edge science in the following areas:**

- A) Animal Production (meat and dairy)
  - a. Understanding the effect of stress on animal performance
  - b. Advanced nutritional technologies
- B) Water Management for agriculture
  - a. Threats arising from climate change
  - b. Irrigation and water management
- C) Food for Health
  - a. Post harvest technologies
  - b. Reduction of pesticides risks
  - c. Organic farming
  - d. Functional genomics (plants and animals)
  - e. Functional foods



## ***Guidelines for the preparation and submission of proposals***

### **Eligibility**

Scientists from Israel affiliated with public or private non-profit research institutions, Canadian scientists affiliated with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and NSERC eligible scientists from Canadian universities can apply for funding.

Proposals must be submitted by at least one scientist from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, one scientist from a Canadian university (eligible for NSERC funding under the SRO program) and one scientist from Israel.

### **Investigators**

*Principal Investigator AAFC (PI)*: is that person whose name appears first on the cover page of the proposal among the scientists from Canada. The PI is responsible for the submission of scientific reports, notification of changes in the work plan and maintaining contact with the selected administration office. That person must come from AAFC.

*Principal Investigator NSERC (PI)*: is that person whose name appears first on the cover page of the proposal among the scientists from Canada. The PI is responsible for the submission of scientific reports, notification of changes in the work plan and maintaining contact with the selected administration office. That person must come from an NSERC eligible Canadian university and be eligible to receive SRO program funding.

*Principal Investigator Israel (PI)* is that person whose name appears first on the cover page of the proposal among the scientists from Israel. The PI is responsible for the submission of scientific reports, notification of changes in the work plan and maintaining contact with the administration office.

The PI whose name appears first on the cover page (whether from Canada or from Israel) is the person responsible to communicate with the BARD office on behalf of the other PI's regarding the submission of joint scientific reports and any team or institutional changes.

*Collaborating investigators* are all other investigators, if any, who are listed on the cover page and are not PI's. Investigators from a country other than Israel or Canada may participate in the research but can not be funded by the Canada-Israel program.

### **Submission Date: February 16, 2009**

Submissions can be made three weeks prior to this deadline.

### **Submission Process**

- ⇒ One complete proposal per team, including the Abstract, is to be uploaded as a PDF file, to the BARD website ([www.bard-isus.com](http://www.bard-isus.com)). The Cover Page indicates: "**Submitted to the Canada-Israel Program**". The proposal should not be sent directly to AAFC or NSERC. By submitting a proposal to BARD website, the applicants agree that the information will be shared with the other agencies.



- ⇒ **The Cover Page and Budget tables** are to be generated from the BARD on-line submission process and incorporated into the proposal file. All sums will be in Canadian dollars, and will clearly indicate the contribution requested from BARD, AAFC and NSERC.
- ⇒ In addition **the Abstract File** (rtf, doc, docx) is to be uploaded on-line as a separate file.
- ⇒ **Disclosure of Additional/Pending Funding Resources** – the PI and co-PI will complete this form on-line.
- ⇒ **Authorization (formerly Signature pages)** will be performed on-line by the research authority (Science director for AAFC), following review by the institution's authorizing officer. BARD will accept a proposal for consideration **ONLY** following its authorization by the institution's authorizing officer via the on-line procedure.
- ⇒ **Five hardcopies**, *identical to the electronic version*, are to be hand delivered to BARD or by courier, post marked no later than the submission date. BARD will forward one electronic copy to AAFC.

## **The Proposal**

Clearly indicate at the top of each section: "**Submitted to the Canada-Israel program**"

Proposals that do not meet the following requirements will *not* be considered.

**1. Layout Format:** English, line spacing of 1.5, font equivalent of 12, margins that allow photocopying (~ 2.5 cm all around). Number all pages. Staple the proposal, once only, in the upper left corner. Do not bind.

**2. Technical Requirements** Include the following items and headings. (If the logic of your proposal so suggests, change the exact heading or order of the items):

- ⇒ **Cover Page** – in the format provided on the web and in these guidelines.
- ⇒ **Table of Contents** – include page numbers and section headings.
- ⇒ **Abstract** - Do not exceed one page. The abstract should clearly state the definition of the research problem, the objectives, the expected contribution to agriculture / environment and the proposed methodology.
- ⇒ **List of Abbreviations** used in the proposal.



- ⇒ **Detailed Description of the Research Plan - Limited to 15 pages (sections I to VI), including** figures, photos and any additional material. Adhere to general format requirements. Include the following items, numbered logically to suit the best presentation of your proposal.
- I. Statement of the research problem and its general background.
  - II. Concise outline of specific, feasible research objectives.
  - III. Hypotheses and their rationale.
  - IV. Preliminary results.
  - V. Research plan.
    1. Strategies, procedures and methodologies used in addressing the questions asked.
    2. Specific experiments to be conducted and a discussion of their potential pitfalls and possible alternatives.
  - VI. Description of the expected results and the significance of their anticipated contributions to the agriculture/environment of Canada and Israel.
- ⇒ **Timetable of the Work Plan** – describe the division of the research tasks between the Israeli and Canadian participants for each year of the project. A graphic or tabular presentation is recommended.
- ⇒ **Details of Cooperation** – The proposal, jointly prepared, should clearly indicate the anticipated cooperative endeavors between the partners, including the work to be done in each country and the responsibility of each collaborator. Explain how the cooperating scientists contribute their expertise to the joint effort and whether joint publications are planned.

The quality of cooperation is scored by reviewers and panels in their evaluation of the proposal. Types of cooperation are defined below. The highest value is given to synergistic cooperation.

*Synergistic:* Each scientist contributes a specific expertise, facility, or equipment that the other partner cannot contribute and without which the final realization of hypothesis testing could not be achieved.

*Complementary:* Each scientist performs essentially the same research using different (biological) systems or methods, thus, widening the scope and strengthening the validity of the results.

*Supportive:* Collaborators with essentially the same expertise divide the research tasks between the laboratories.



- ⇒ **Facilities** – briefly detail the facilities to be dedicated to the project.
- ⇒ **Relevant Bibliography** - include all authors, full title, date, journal name, volume and page numbers. When referencing citations in the text of the proposal, use author(s) names, not the number in the list.
- ⇒ **Curriculum Vitae:** Do not exceed two pages for each investigator. Provide a *brief* professional biography. Include academic background, research experience, recent, relevant publications, inventions or patents, other achievements.
- ⇒ **Addenda to the proposal are not allowed.**
- ⇒ ***in press*** articles in *reviewed* journals: attach to the hardcopies and send a pdf copy by e-mail. Relevant articles that reach '*in press*' status after the submission date should be sent by e-mail to BARD for incorporation into the review process ([Nitsan@bard-isus.com](mailto:Nitsan@bard-isus.com)).
- ⇒ **Letters** *specifically* confirming additional materials, facilities, know-how, etc. may be included. General letters of support for the idea or concept are *not* allowed.
- ⇒ **Tables, figures, etc.** are counted in the 'Detailed Description of the Research Plan' (in the 15 page limit).

### 3. Budget (all sums in Canadian dollars)

**Budget Summary Table:** The total grant budget may not exceed \$300,000. While the funding of Israeli scientists and Canadian scientists affiliated with AAFC and NSERC need not be the same, the maximum budget request per project is limited to \$150,000 from BARD (for Israeli scientists), \$75,000 from AAFC and \$75,000 from NSERC. Applicants are asked to clearly identify the amounts asked from each of these entities. BARD pays each Israeli institution directly. Thus, a summary table, in the format provided at BARD submission website, is required for each funded institution. Use additional columns (or tables) as necessary. Round annual totals to the nearest \$1,000, and individual budget items to the nearest \$100. First year budget may not exceed 36% of the total budget, unless specifically allowed in advance. Overhead expenses may not exceed 20% of the total direct costs. Note: NSERC does not pay for overhead expenses.

**Description of the Budget** – Present a separate budget for each institution and year of the grant period. The budget is in Can dollars. BARD, NSERC and AAFC will not consider requests for additional funding in the life of the grant due to price increases. You are expected to incorporate cost of living and other increases in the initial computation of the grant. Include the following items in the budget description and justify:

- 1) **Personnel services: Salaries:** PI's and Collaborating Investigators who are paid a salary by their institution (Israel: for 9 months or more), are not entitled to receive salaries from the BARD and NSERC grant and AAFC funding.  
When in doubt, please refer to the BARD, NSERC or AAFC office. Specify the percentage of salary that is received from the employing institution and the percentage



dependent upon soft money. Indicate the percentage of time to be devoted to the project by each person.

List support personnel and their role in the project. Support personnel can receive salaries and social benefits in proportion to the time devoted to the research project.

- 2) *Non-expendable equipment*: BARD allows the purchase of specific items of equipment to be used in the supported research and without which the research project cannot be conducted. Large capital expenditures are not included in BARD's obligations to recipients.
- 3) *Operating expenses*: Present general operating expenses and a list of estimated costs. Include in-country travel, computer services and supplies. Provide a detailed breakdown and justification when requesting substantial funds.
- 4) *Foreign travel*: *The Canada-Israel program* allows one trip to Canada by an Israeli investigator, one trip to Israel by an AAFC-affiliated scientist and one trip to Israel by an NSERC affiliated scientist per project.. Per diem is allowed in accordance with the terms prevailing in the investigator's institution. In addition, NSERC-affiliated scientist must follow NSERC's rules on Use of Grant Funds.
- 5) *On all expenses*, NSERC-affiliated scientists must follow NSERC's rules on Use of Grant Funds.

#### Useful Suggestions for a Successful Proposal

- The abstract should offer concise information to those in the evaluation process who will not see the full proposal. Give great care to its preparation.
- The most important aspects are scientific merit, relevance and benefit to agriculture and quality of collaboration. The review process focuses on the objective evaluation of these aspects. Argue them well and present them thoroughly. For Canadian university proposals, high quality people training will also be considered.
- The most common criticisms are 'vague', 'overly ambitious' or 'unfocused'. Present clear objectives, well founded hypotheses and work plans that address the stated objectives. Do not exaggerate the benefits to agriculture.
- As a mission oriented funding effort: aim to solve a specific agricultural/environmental problem.
- Careful proof reading is essential for professional evaluation of the proposal. Give careful attention to correct citations of the literature, spelling and quality photocopying.

#### Regulatory Agency Requirements

Proposals and grants must adhere to policies and regulations as established by the regulatory agencies of the State, or Country in which the research is to be conducted. Exchange of genetically modified organism (GMO) and exotic plant materials between countries may require special authorisation. The signature of the Authorised Officer of the Research Authority indicates to the administration office that these concerns have been met.

-----



## **Evaluation of research proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated by a disciplinary evaluation panel. Evaluations will take place simultaneously and independently by parallel panels in Canada and Israel. Panel members are scientists competent in the relevant area of research. Panel members will participate in the identification of outside (ad-hoc) reviewers to evaluate each proposal. Ad-hoc evaluations will be solicited by the program's administration. Both the Canada and Israel corresponding panels will receive all of the reviewers' comments.

Both panels and ad-hoc reviewers rank (grade) all the proposals in the panel. The panel prepares a written evaluation for each proposal (Strengths, Weaknesses) and a recommendation. Panel members score all proposals according to a common set of criteria and weighting grid for each criterion.

The following criteria will be scored:

- The scientific and technological merit of the proposal.
- The feasibility of the objectives.
- The quality of the cooperation and the suitability of the investigators and their facilities.
- The anticipated benefits to agriculture and or the environment and the uniqueness brought by the joint Israel-Canada collaboration.
- The high quality people training

A Program Management Committee receives all material for its funding recommendations. BARD's Board of Directors makes the final funding decisions.

## **Notification of Awards**

Each agency will advise their respective Principal Investigator and their affiliated research authorities, in writing. The decisions regarding funding are expected to be provided during the month of July 2009. Favourable decisions indicate the amount and duration of the grant and any conditions of support. BARD grants to Israeli institutions will be in US dollars.