

# Call for Proposals Is Coming Soon!

**T**he mission of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) is to advance disease and production research and product development activities to ensure the survival and competitiveness of Florida's citrus industry through innovation. Since the inception of CRDF, the majority of investment has focused on HLB, while still addressing strategic topics in other diseases.

On a regular basis, CRDF has refreshed the portfolio of research projects. CRDF staff members facilitate and coordinate the work of the committees and reviewers, while the board has the responsibility to make the final funding decisions. Even before the open call for pre-proposals goes out, the staff and committee members are determining a schedule, finalizing templates and reviewing instructions to applicants.

But how is the list of topics to be funded generated for the call for proposals? CRDF begins the process by listening to our stakeholders — the citrus growers, processors and researchers. CRDF held public listening sessions focused on eliciting ideas for research priorities that are most important to the growers, production managers and processors. In order to receive input from researchers, CRDF asked Michael Rogers, the director of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Citrus Research and Education Center, and Brian Scully, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service Horticultural Research Laboratory, to work with the research community to provide feedback to CRDF regarding those questions and ideas that researchers feel would most benefit the industry.

In addition, CRDF is looking forward to a report from the National Academy of Sciences that is the culmination of months of review and input from both the growers and the scientific community nationwide. This report should detail strategic directives for CRDF and HLB research. All of this input will be compiled by CRDF staff for review by the technical committees, which will make recommendations on the research priorities. The board of directors considers these recommendations and makes the final decision.

CRDF has a Research Management Committee (RMC) and a Commercial Product Delivery Committee (CPDC). This year, the call for pre-proposals will encompass both committees with a separate set of priorities for each. Both committees will review pre-proposals and make recommendations to the board for decisions regarding invitations for full proposals. The parallel process should provide a mechanism to fund experimental research that contributes to durable solutions through the RMC, and delivery projects designed to lead to practical applications in the near term through the CPDC.

Even though CRDF has had many calls for proposals over the years, this year will be slightly different as we will be putting into place a call for proposals for both RMC and CPDC. Vincent Van Gogh once said, "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." With the challenges the citrus industry faces, we are all looking forward to the next round of project proposals to do great things.

*Prepared by the CRDF project management team*

