

TDA-TIE/BARD Grant Program Request for Proposals - 2007

Statement of Purpose

Pursuant to the Texas Agriculture Code, Chapter 45, the Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Texas-Israel Exchange Fund (TIE) Board in cooperation with the Binational Agricultural Research and Development Fund (BARD) Board are hereby requesting for a new submission of proposals for projects for the joint TDA-TIE/BARD Grant Program. The purpose of this grant program is to promote mission oriented, applied, collaborative agricultural research and development activities conducted jointly by scientists in Texas and Israel. Funded projects are expected to be of interest to the relevant agricultural industries and yield applicable results within 3 years and possible public-private partnerships. Benefits would result through developing solutions to mutual agricultural problems that will in turn foster the development of trade, mutual assistance, and business relations between Texas and Israel. The TIE and BARD Boards may award a total amount of up to \$1.5 million cooperatively, and with the required matching of the recipient institutions in Texas, this amount will be increase to \$3 million.

Submission Dates/Locations

Proposals and Signature Pages must reach BARD and TDA not later than November 1, 2007:

PDF file of the complete proposal is to be uploaded to the BARD and TDA websites – www.bard-isus.com and www.tda.state.tx.us. Twelve (12) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy of the proposal copy in PDF format (either by diskette or CD Rom) must arrive not later than 5:00 p.m. on November 1, 2007 to each of the following: Texas Department of Agriculture, Attn: Catherine Wright Steele, P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711 or physical address of 1700 North Congress, 11th Floor, Austin, Texas 78701; and the main BARD office, Agricultural Center, P.O. Box 6, Bet Dagan, 50250, Israel – physical address is: Room 412, Old Administration Building, Volcani Center, HaKiryat HaHaklait, Derech Hamakabim, Rishon LeZion, Israel.

Signature pages should not be included in the proposals. Pages are to be scanned and forwarded by e-mail to each of the following addresses: (mary @ bard-isus.com) and Catherine.wright-steele @ tda.state.tx.us.

No additions or amendments to the proposal will be accepted after 5:00 p.m. on November 1, 2007.

Eligibility

Grant proposals, submitted jointly by at least one scientist in Texas and one in Israel, will be accepted from public or private non-profit research institutions. This includes institutions of higher education and governmental research entities.

Funding Areas

All proposals must meet at least one topical area of the five listed below that has been identified jointly by the TIE and BARD Boards:

1. Efficient use and management of soil and water for agriculture
2. Post harvest food technologies – quality, safety and security, transportability and shelf life extension
3. Horticulture (excluding floriculture), field and garden crops – including drought tolerance
4. Mariculture
5. Renewable energy and agricultural biofuels

For any questions please contact:

Texas: Ms. Catherine Wright-Steele at (512/463-7700) [Catherine.wright-steele @ tda.state.tx.us](mailto:Catherine.wright-steele@tda.state.tx.us)
Israeli: Mary Schweitzer (972)-3-965-2244 [mary @ bard-isus.com](mailto:mary@bard-isus.com)

Proposal Requirements.

Proposals may be prepared and submitted as one to three year projects. Consecutive second and third years of funding of the initially awarded projects will be contingent upon an annual joint review and approval by TIE Board and BARD, of documentation of the achieved objectives through the timely submission of semi-annual, annual and final scientific reports, adherence to grant guidelines which include quarterly fiscal reports for the Texas institutions and annual fiscal reporting for the Israeli institutions, as well as upon the availability of funds.

Funding Limitations

Each project is limited to a maximum award of \$100,000 (\$50,000 from TIE and \$50,000 from BARD) per year, not to exceed duration of three years and a maximum amount of \$300,000 (\$150,000 from TIE and \$150,000 from BARD) for the three-year period. The match requirement by the institution in Texas might double the matching funding by BARD of the Israeli collaborating institution. Thus fully funded and matched projects might amount to a maximum budget of \$600,000 for a three-year project (\$150,000 from TIE, \$150,000 from the awarded Texan institution and \$300,000 from BARD).

Grants are awarded for a one-year period of time with any subsequent funding for multi-year projects contingent upon documentation of achieved objectives and adherence to grant guidelines, reporting requirements and the availability of funds.

Grant projects are limited to one year of funding at any one time; however, a no-cost extension may be requested if properly justified in writing 30 days prior to the termination of a project or the funding period. If approved, the extension shall not exceed one year past the original termination date.

General Format Requirements:

- The proposals should be prepared in English.
- The line spacing must be not less than 1.5.
- Font size must be at least 12.
- The margins should be 2.5 cm (1 inch) all around.
- Each page must be numbered.
- Staple the proposal once only in the upper left corner. Do not bind.
- Photocopies must be legible and of high quality.

Technical Requirements

Include the following items, with these headings:

1. **Cover Pages** –In the format provided in BARD's and TDA websites and in these guidelines available from the BARD www.bard-isus.com and the TDA website www.tda.state.tx.us.
2. **Table of Contents** – include page numbers and section headings.
3. **Abstract** – do not exceed one page. Abstracts will be used by TDA-TIE/BARD throughout the review process and are the reviewer's initial contact with the proposal. Care should be taken in its preparation. The abstract page should immediately follow the table of contents. Adhere to general format requirements regarding font size, spacing, etc. Include the title of the proposal and names of the Principal Investigators of Texas and Israel and all collaborating investigators, if any, followed by a summary, not exceeding one page. Clearly state the research problem, objectives, proposed methodology, expected contribution to agriculture and potential for commercialization.
4. **List and give full names of Acronyms/Abbreviations used in the proposal.**
5. **Detailed Description of the Research Plan.** Limitation of 15 pages. Length and general format requirements (above) are rigidly enforced. Include the following items in the detailed plan:
 - Statement of the research problem and its general background.

- Concise outline of specific, feasible research objectives.
- Hypotheses and their rationale.
- Preliminary results (particularly important in highly innovative proposals).
- Research Plan: strategies, procedures and methodologies used in addressing the questions asked.
- List specific experimental designs and a discussion of their potential pitfalls and possible alternatives.
- Description of the expected results and their anticipated contributions to the agriculture of Texas and Israel.

Tables, figures, etc. are counted in the section above (15 page limit).

Detail the commercial applicability of the research results, including information on, and contact information for, private interests in the research and the potential of eventual development of public-private partnerships is required but will not be included in the 15 page limit.

- 6. Timetable of the Work Plan** – describe the division of the research tasks between the participants in Texas and Israel for each year of the project. A graphic or tabular presentation is recommended.
- 7. Details of Cooperation** – The proposal, prepared jointly by all investigators, should clearly indicate the anticipated cooperative endeavors between the partners, including the work to be done in each location and the responsibility of each collaborator. Explain how the cooperating scientists contribute their expertise to the joint research and whether joint experiments and or publications are planned. The level and quality of the cooperation will be 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 and lowest value to supportive cooperation:
 - *Synergistic*: Each scientist contributes a specific expertise, facility, or equipment that the other partner cannot contribute and without which the final expectations 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.
- 8. Facilities** – briefly detail the facilities to be dedicated to the project.
- 9. Relevant Bibliography** - Include all authors, full title, date, journal name, volume and page numbers. For references in the text to citations, use author(s) names not number in the list.
- 10. Curriculum Vitae**
 - Do not exceed two pages for each investigator.
 - Provide a *brief* professional biography and academic background.
 - List previous research experience.
 - List recent, relevant publications.
 - List other achievements, including new inventions and patents.
- 11. Addenda to the proposal:**
 - Cited *in press* articles in *reviewed* journals should be attached to the hard copies. Journal name (and where possible, volume number) must be specified. In addition, pdf copies should be sent 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 (mary @ bard-isus.com).

- General letters of support are *not* allowed. Only letters *specifically* confirming additional materials, facilities, know-how, etc. may be included.
- **No other attachments** are allowed.

12. Details of the Budget

A. Eligible Expenses. Generally expenses that are necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient performance and administration of a project are eligible.

Expenses must be properly documented with sufficient backup detail, including copies of invoices. Examples of eligible expenditures are:

- Personnel costs – both salary and benefits
- Travel – both foreign and domestic
- Equipment – nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.
- Supplies and direct operating expenses – equipment that costs less than \$5,000 per unit, research and office supplies, postage, telecommunications, printing, etc.
- Indirect/overhead costs – limited as described below.

B. Ineligible Expenses. Expenses that are prohibited by state or federal law are ineligible. Examples of these expenditures are:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Entertainment
- Contributions, charitable or political
- Expenses falling outside of the contract period
- Expenses for expenditures not listed in the project budget
- Expenses that are not adequately documented

C. Budget Summary Table: Use the format on the website. Present separate figures for each participating institution. Use additional columns (tables) as necessary. Round annual totals to the nearest \$1,000. Round individual budget items to the nearest \$100.

D. Description of the Budget – Present an overall project budget, as well as a separate budget for each institution and year of the grant period. No increases in budget based on expected inflation during the course of the grant will be considered. Take into account anticipated inflationary changes in costs when preparing the budget for subsequent years of research.

E. Include the following items in the Israel budget description:

- Personnel services: List both PI's by name. Individuals who receive their salary from sources other than research grants (soft money) are **not** entitled to receive any fraction of the grant as salary. Requests for part or full salaries of PI's require prior approval by BARD. Specify the percentage of time devoted to the project by each person. List support personnel or their role in the project. Support personnel can receive salaries and social/fringe benefits in proportion to the time devoted to the research project.
- Non-expendable equipment: Defined as tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. BARD will allow the purchase of unique, 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 TDA-TIE/BARD's obligations to recipients.
- 3. Operating expenses: Present operating expenses in general terms, together with a list of estimated costs. Include in-country travel, computer services and supplies.

- Foreign travel*: TDA-TIE/BARD allows one trip from Israel to Texas for a multi-year project. Per diem is allowed in accordance with the terms prevailing in the investigator's institution.
- Overhead expenses: may not exceed 20% of total direct costs.

F. Include the following items in the Texas budget description:

- Personnel services: List both PI's by name. Individuals who receive their salary from sources other than research grants (soft money) are not entitled to receive any fraction of the grant as salary. Requests for part or full salaries of PI's require prior approval by TDA. Specify the percentage of time devoted to the project by each person. List support personnel or their role in the project. Support personnel can receive salaries and social/fringe benefits in proportion to the time devoted to the research project.
- Professional/Contractual: Any contract or agreement entered into by a grantee that obligates grant funds must be in writing and consistent with Texas contract law. Grantees must maintain adequate documentation supporting budget items for a contractor's time, services, and rates of compensation.
- Travel*: Grant funds used for travel expenses, both foreign and domestic, must be limited to the grantee agency's established mileage, per diem, and lodging policies. If a grantee does not have established mileage, per diem, and lodging policies, then the grantee must use state travel guidelines.
- Equipment: Defined as tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. Applicants must submit with their grant applications a list of all proposed equipment purchases for approval. Grantees must request any additional equipment purchases through grant adjustments. Grantees are not authorized to purchase any equipment until they have received written approval to do so from TDA through the original grant award or a subsequent grant adjustment notice. TDA may refuse any request for equipment. Decisions regarding equipment purchases are made based on whether or not the grantee has demonstrated that the requested equipment is necessary, essential to the successful operation of the grant project, and reasonable in cost.
- Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses: Expenses that are directly related to the grantee's day-to-day operation of the grant project that are not included in any of the Grantee's other standard budget categories and has an acquisition cost of less than \$5,000 per unit. Grantees must allocate costs on a prorated basis for shared usage, including research and office supplies, postage, telecommunications, and printing.
- Indirect Costs: May not exceed 10% of total direct costs.

G. Funding Match Requirement (Texas Only)

The Texas portion of the TDA-TIE/BARD grant program has a 100 percent matching requirement from other funding sources. For example: if the Texas portion of the request is \$50,000, then the matching funds must equal \$50,000. This pertains **only** to the TDA-TIE portion. The matching funds must be documented on the budget submission form as well as on the quarterly budget reports regarding how much has been expended from the other sources. All matching funds must comply with the same rules and guidelines that apply to the grant award with the exception of matching indirect costs. Up to 20 percent of indirect costs may be charged to the matching portion of the project budget. If the applicant does not demonstrate an adequate match to meet the requirement, the TDA-TIE portion of the funding request will be decreased to compensate.

*International Travel: TDA/BARD will organize two "status seminars," once in Texas during the second year of the three year projects and once in Israel toward the end of the third year. In these meetings PI/CoPI of awarded projects will summarize their progress and results. The budget allocated for foreign travel must be assigned for the purpose of participation in these status seminars.

Regulatory Agency Requirements

Proposals and grants must adhere to policies and regulations as established by the regulatory agencies of the country in which the research is to be conducted. *Exchange of GMO materials, exotic species and some biological materials between countries may require special authorization and must not delay the project.* The signature of the Authorized Officer of the Research Authority indicates to TDA-TIE/BARD that these concerns have been met. PI/CoPI of funded projects will be asked to present to BARD and TDA the required authorizations prior to the initiation of funding.

Evaluation of Proposals

One or more disciplinary panels will evaluate TDA-TIE/BARD proposals simultaneously and independently by parallel panels in Texas and Israel. Panel members (2-6 per panel) are scientists competent in the relevant area of research. Panel members will participate in the identification of outside reviewers to evaluate each proposal. The ad-hoc reviews assist the panels to formulate their recommendations regarding the proposal. Panel members rank and prioritize all proposals in their panel and prepare a brief written assessment (strengths/weaknesses) of each proposal.

The proposals will be evaluated on the following elements:

- The scientific and technological merit of the proposal.
- Does the proposed project meet the applied research requirement with expected commercial applicability of results within 3 years of the project's initiation?
- The feasibility of the objectives.
- The potential for commercialization and anticipated benefits to agriculture and the environment in Texas and Israel.
- The quality of the cooperation between the investigators.
- The suitability of the investigators and their facilities.
- The requested budget in relation to the research plan.

The recommendations of both panels in Texas and Israel will then be forwarded to a TIE/BARD Joint Advisory Committee for further discussion and recommendations to the respective TIE and BARD Boards.

Award Information and Notification

The TIE and BARD Boards will make all final funding decisions. The TIE and BARD Boards reserve the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted. Neither the TIE Board, nor BARD Board is under a legal or other obligation to execute a grant on the basis of this RFP. Neither the TIE Board, nor BARD Board shall pay for any costs incurred by any entity in responding to this RFP.

The public announcements and written notifications will be made to all applicants and their affiliated research institution. Favorable decisions will indicate the amount of award, duration of the grant and any special conditions associated with the project.

General Compliance Information

1. Any delegation by the Grantee to its counterpart or any subcontractor regarding any duties and responsibilities imposed by grant award shall not relieve the Grantee of its responsibilities to the TIE and BARD Boards for the performance thereof.
2. All grant awards are subject to the availability of appropriations and authorizations by the Texas Legislature and BARD Board of Directors.
3. While TIE/BARD attempts to observe the strictest confidence in handling the research proposals, neither can guarantee complete confidentiality on any matters that lie beyond its control. The confidentiality of recipient's "proprietary data" so designated shall be strictly observed to the extent permitted by appropriate Texas and Israeli laws, including the Texas Public Information Act. There shall be no restriction on the publication of research results except when taking into consideration effects of prior publication on possible subsequent patent and TIE/BARD's license to use copyrighted material.
4. Awarded grant projects must remain in full compliance or be subject to termination.

Grant recipients must keep a separate bookkeeping account with a complete record of all expenditures relating to the research project. Keep records for three years after the completion of the research project or as otherwise agreed upon with TIE/BARD. TIE/BARD, and the Texas State Auditor's Office reserves the right to examine all books, documents, records and accounts relating to the research project at any time throughout the duration of the agreement and for three years immediately thereafter. If there has been any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action started prior to the expiration of the three-year period involving the records, then the records must be retained until the completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it, or until the end of the regular three-year period, whichever is later. TIE/BARD and the Texas State Auditor's Office also reserves the right to inspect the research locations and to obtain from the research team full information regarding all project activities.

5. In any year in which a financial audit is conducted, a copy must be submitted to both the TIE and BARD Boards, including the audit transmittal letter, management letter, and any schedules in which the Grantee's funds are included.
6. In accordance with Texas Government Code Ann. § 783.007, grant awards to Texas institutions shall comply in all respects with the Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS). Upon grant award, Grantees will be provided a copy or it may be downloaded from the following website:<http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/stategrants/guidelines/>.
7. Grant management guidelines for the TIE/BARD grants will be published under separate cover.

For any questions please contact:

Texas institutions:

Ms. Catherine Wright-Steele at (512/463-7700) **Catherine.wright-steele @ tda.state.tx.us**

Israeli institutions:

Mary Schweitzer (972)-3-965-2244 **mary @ bard-isus.com**



TDA-TIE BARD Auxiliary Program
Research Proposal Title Page



Date of Submission: November 1, 2007

Proposal Title:

Investigator Names:

| Position in Proposal | Name | affiliated institution |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) Principal Investigator (PI) | | |
| 2) co-PI | | |
| 3) Collaborating | | |
| 4) Collaborating | | |
| 5) Collaborating | | |
| 6) Collaborating | | |

Investigator Contact Information:

| Position in Proposal | mailing address | e-mail | telephone |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |



TDA-TIE BARD Auxiliary Program Budget Summary



Principal Investigator (PI): _____

Affiliated Institution:

| Budget Item | First Year | | Second Year | | Third Year | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------|-------------|--------|------------|-------|
| | Israel | Texas | Israel | Texas | Israel | Texas |
| 1. Salaries and Social Benefits | | | | | | |
| 2. Non-expendable Equipment | | | | | | |
| 3. Operating Expenses | | | | | | |
| 4. Foreign Travel | | | | | | |
| Total Direct Costs | | | | | | |
| 5. Overhead Expenses | | | | | | |
| Annual Totals | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | 50,000 | ,000 | ,000 |

If more than one institution per country is to be budgeted in the project, provide either a *separate* table or additional columns with the same format for those institutions.

| Project Totals | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|---------|
| Budget Item | Israel | Texas | Project |
| 1. Salaries and Social Benefits | | | |
| 2. Non-expendable Equipment | | | |
| 3. Operating Expenses | | | |
| 4. Foreign Travel | | | |
| Total Direct Costs | | | |
| 5. Overhead Expenses | | | |
| Project Totals | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 |