



The American Chestnut Foundation Small Grants Program

Call for Research Proposals

Purpose and Vision

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) hosts a small grant program to support targeted, small-scale projects that advance research on disease resistance and American chestnut restoration techniques. These grants are designed to fund innovative efforts that align with TACF's strategic priorities but are not currently addressed in TACF's research and development portfolio.

Funding Parameters

Funding and Overhead: TACF's policy is not to fund overhead charges (i.e., indirect costs).

Payment of faculty salary is not permitted; however, student salaries are allowed.

Demonstration of matching funds is strongly encouraged. TACF does not ordinarily fund projects more than \$10,000, with exceptions made for priority research areas. Funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis.

Eligibility: University and nonprofit researchers, TACF chapter scientists, and qualified private-sector partners.

Restrictions: Applicant must be in good standing with TACF, e.g. submitted past grant reports. Do not submit a proposal if it has not been reviewed/approved by your university sponsored projects office.

Expected outcomes: TACF requires a 1) six-month progress report and two reports at the end of the grant period 2) a final financial report and 3) a final narrative report, both of which are due 90 days after the grant period completion. The final narrative report should be formatted such that it is suitable for publication in Chestnut, the magazine of TACF. Submission: Submit as a single PDF to @tacf.org. It is also encouraged that grant awardees present their findings to TACF Science and Technology Committee.

Priority Research Areas: TACF is particularly interested in the following research areas but will not limit proposals to these topics. The Committee will entertain proposals up to \$25,000 should they address the following priority topics:

1. Investigations into host x pathogen interactions of *Cryphonectria parasitica* or *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in species of *Castanea* or other members of Fagaceae.



2. Studies which compare the ecological functionality, local adaptation, and/or stress tolerance of backcross or other hybrid American chestnuts to wild type American chestnut.
3. The development of methods to optimize vegetative propagation of American chestnut including rooted cuttings, grafting, and tissue culture techniques.
4. Study of novel assays to measure disease-resistance in chestnut, especially non-contaminating methods for screening for phytophthora resistance.
5. Discovery, study, and evaluation of “Large Surviving American” (LSA) chestnuts.

Fund Oversight

Stewardship: TACF Science and Technology Committee, reporting to the Board.

Project Manager: A designated TACF staff or contractor coordinates RFPs, reviews, and reporting.

Duration: Grants are to cover the twelve months following acceptance of the grant. Multiyear proposals will only have the first year funded. Requests for funding of subsequent years will require resubmission (using a nearly identical proposal, with a full report on the research project required before any other requests are considered). Funding for subsequent years’ funding is not guaranteed. A No-Cost-Extension will be considered on a case by case basis with justification from grantee. TACF will entertain proposals for the same project for a maximum of five (5) years.

C. Review Criteria

Evaluation: Proposals will be peer-reviewed by TACF staff and Science and Technology Committee for scientific merit, program gaps, relevance to TACF mission, feasibility, budget justification, and dissemination of results. All grants will be approved by the Board of Directors.

Conflicts of Interest or Commitment: All applicants are to document any known potential Conflict of Interest or Commitment (COI/COC) as part of their proposal.

Evaluation criteria for proposals:

Category	Weight
Under-represented research area in TACF science plan	25%
Relevance to TACF scientific priorities	25%
Feasibility and clarity of approach	20%
Budget justification	15%
Impact and dissemination of results	15%



D. Proposal Requirements

- a. Project Title, Principal Investigator(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s)
- b. Summary (not more than 100 words)
- c. Duration of project
- d. Comprehensive budget: Including the total amount requested. Please list sources and amount of matching funding for the same project and a breakdown of how and when funds will be spent
- e. Narrative (no more than five (5) pages) including the short and long-term goals of the project
- f. Timeline, showing start and completion dates for each goal
- g. How results will be measured and reported, any deliverables from project.
- h. Brief Curriculum Vitae (CV) for each Principal Investigator, including recent publications and grants received. Please restrict each CV to two (2) pages.
- i. A Conflict of Interest or Commitment (COI or COC) statement. If a COI or COC is known, please document them here. If there is no known COI or COC, please certify as such with a statement in this section.

E. Terms & conditions of award

Project oversight – Performer will establish a mutually acceptable periodic status update with the TACF project manager. These updates shall include:

- Progress update
- Funds expended
- Any barriers to completing project

TACF will retain a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to any intellectual property developed as a result of this work.

Any publications resulting from the project should list TACF as a source of support and a reprint (PDF) should be sent to TACF. As stated above, it is expected that the grantee will prepare a final report in the form of a summary of research findings written for a general audience to be published in Chestnut.

Dates:



Grants shall be submitted by **September 25th at 5pm**. Submit your proposal by filling out the survey on this [link](#). Proposals will be reviewed by TACF's Restoration Science Committee on **October 16th, 2026**. Awards will be announced shortly thereafter.