

EFAO's Research Advisory Committee

The mandate of the Research Advisory Committee is to provide input around the delivery of EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program and to select farmer-led research applications for funding.

Objectives & Responsibilities

The Committee will be responsible for advising EFAO staff by:

- Reviewing applications annually and providing recommendations for funding;
- Providing input on research projects throughout the season, as needed;
- Providing recommendations for Research Network programming, as needed.

Meetings and Operation

The Committee shall meet once a year (mid February - early March) to select applications for funding for EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program, with limited email follow-up between meetings. Commitment from each Committee member involves evaluating and rating up to 10 research applications in preparation for the meetings, and summarizing and discussing funding decisions in the meetings. The goal of the Committee is to reach consensus on all decisions. Consensus is understood as the absence of sustained opposition but does not require unanimity. If consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote of the Committee will be used in place of consensus.

Committee Size and Terms

The Committee will include 6-10 representatives, not including EFAO staff members, with representation from at least 80% farmer-members. The Committee will be Chaired by EFAO's Research Director, who will also provide administrative support for the Committee. Committee appointments shall be for terms of two-years, starting January 1 of the first year and ending December 31 of the third year. Each member can serve a maximum of two 3-year terms, after which a Committee member must take a one year break before rejoining the Committee, if applicable.

Committee Recruitment

Recruitment and selection of Committee members will include:

- An annual open call to EFAO members for new Committee members, including through the general EFAO e-newsletter and membership as well as through EFAO networks (e.g. Small Grains, BIPOC, No-Till), as needed

- An annual call for nominations from Committee members and other EFAO Advisory Committees (e.g. BIPOC and Small Grains Advisory Committees), as needed

Committee Selection Process and Criteria

The process for selection for new Committee members will include:

- A short application that is reviewed by the Committee, based on the evaluation criteria below.
- Staff recommends a selection based on a balance of experience, range of farm types, range of demographic representation and nominates candidates to the committee for review and discussion.
- The Research Committee accepts, declines, or discusses and proposes alternatives to the nominations proposed.

Selection of new Committee members will:

- Prioritize members facing barriers to equity (i.e. BIPOC, LGBTQ2S+)*
- Take into account farm experience, research experience and other experience
- Seek representation from a diversity of farm types and sectors

* This is based on the current priorities of the EFAO and the Committee.

Equity

EFAO is working to better support farmers who face barriers to equity, and who have been traditionally underrepresented in EFAO and in the agricultural sector more broadly. EFAO will bring an equity lens to EFAO's Research Committee by intentionally reaching out to, and prioritizing, BIPOC members to join the Committee.

Compensation

For each selection meeting in mid-February: \$250/member (including evaluation preparation and meeting time) to be invoiced to EFAO, as well as mileage at \$0.45/kilometer. Committee members are also eligible to claim reimbursement of childcare costs for the meeting of up to \$45 per meeting.

For all other meetings (in the event they are necessary): \$75/member, as well as mileage at \$0.45/kilometer. Committee members are also eligible to claim reimbursement of childcare costs for the meeting of up to \$45 per meeting.

Reporting

Meeting minutes shall be taken and made available to EFAO members and Board members if desired. The Committee will report their activities to the Board of Directors via quarterly reports from EFAO staff members.