

CONCEPT NOTE

DRAFT JULY 23, 2018

WHEAT INITIATIVE FUNDING EXPERT WORKING GROUP (FEWG)

BACKGROUND:

A key objective of the Wheat Initiative is to better coordinate wheat research to avoid duplication of effort and funding, and take advantage of synergies that can be derived from collaboration among wheat researchers throughout the world.

The various scientific and technical Expert Working Group (EWGs) and Associated Programs of the Wheat Initiative are responsible for exchanging information on their members' ongoing work and identifying gaps and opportunities for strategic science cooperation that will accelerate progress toward common goals. Cooperative initiatives to fill gaps and accelerate cooperation can take many forms and scales. These can include workshops, database development, data standardization within and across EWGs, personnel exchanges, collaborative projects, platforms and joint or linked calls. In some cases, it is relatively straightforward to identify funding sources from either national or multinational (e.g. EU calls) sources or both.

However, in many cases the potential mechanisms for funding international science cooperation initiatives are not readily apparent. Lack of access to funding has been raised frequently by EWGs as an impediment to progress. Therefore, the Wheat Initiative's Institutions' Coordination Committee (ICC) is considering the establishment of an Expert Working Group (EWG) to address funding issues.

ROLE:

The proposed role of the FEWG is to:

- identify and, where necessary, develop mechanisms for funding initiatives identified as priorities by the EWGs, Research Committee (RC), Scientific Board (SB) and ICC;
- identify mechanisms to promote bilateral and multilateral international alignment of national programmes;
- work with individual EWGs to develop the most appropriate options for funding specific initiatives and provide feedback to EWG or others from within the Wheat Initiative on proposals or plans for international research collaborations; and,
- Explore options for providing "seed" funding to EWGs or other groups to develop large international funding proposals.

FEWG ACTIVITIES:

- Develop an inventory and explanation of existing mechanisms and approaches to funding international science cooperation.
- Disseminate information on existing mechanisms and approaches to funding international science cooperation to the EWGs, Research Committee, Scientific Board and Institutions Coordination Committee.
- Work with individual EWGs, the Research Committee and the Scientific Board to determine the best options for funding high priority science cooperation initiatives.
- Engage with national and international organizations (European Commission) to understand and promote mechanisms and opportunities for funding international science cooperation initiatives identified by Wheat Initiative committees.
- Provide letters of support for international research funding applications.
- Membership to include a minimum of 5 – 6 representatives of Wheat Initiative members and Wheat Initiative Manager.

Next Steps:

- Contact Wheat Initiative members to determine interest in participating in FEWG
- Identify a chairperson for the FEWG
- Convene initial working group meeting by teleconference
- Develop inventory and explanation of existing funding mechanisms (first draft) and distribute to ICC members for comment
- Begin working with individual EWGs in order of priority determined by ICC with input from SB and/or RC
- Revise draft inventory and explanation of existing mechanisms and distribute to EWGs and committees
- Report on progress and results at ICC meeting July 2019