

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH GRANTS

The Alberta Land Institute announces a Call for Proposals for its research grants competition in two research areas. The deadline for receipt of applications is **July 31, 2014**. We expect that successful applicants will be notified by **September 30, 2014**.

### About the Alberta Land Institute (ALI)

The Alberta Land Institute (ALI) was established at the University of Alberta in 2012 to connect research and policy for improved land use planning and land management in the province. ALI supports multidisciplinary research to develop, evaluate and promote innovative land-use policies, including those that explore a variety of policy, regulatory and market instruments that will consider and evaluate environmental, social, and economic outcomes. ALI works with stakeholders to identify specific research gaps related to a land use planning issue or policy, then supports researchers at the University of Alberta (with possible collaborators from other institutions) to examine the issue. From 2012-2015, ALI is focusing on four key policy areas: agriculture, water, municipal development, and governance.

### Selection Process

Applications will be pre-screened by ALI staff and then reviewed by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Upon the recommendations of the RAC, the Executive Director and Research Director will make the final decision on the awards.

### Requirements

Applicants must submit a completed application form along with a personal data form from a tri-council agency for themselves and each Co-Investigator. Application forms and guidelines can be downloaded from the following website: <http://www.albertalandinstitute.ca/research-projects/research-projects/> Please review the guidelines carefully before completing the application form. Please submit one PDF containing all required information and documentation on or before the deadline to [albertalandinstitute@ualberta.ca](mailto:albertalandinstitute@ualberta.ca).

A final report must be submitted within two months of project completion (i.e., by January 30, 2016). The report must describe the research findings, methodology and conclusions as well as – and in a substantive manner – the policy issue that the research addresses and the implications of the report for policy and/or practice. For some projects specific synthesis reports will be required as outlined in the description of research areas. These reports will be posted on the ALI website.

Subsequent applications will only be considered if satisfactory final or interim progress reports of all previous and existing ALI grants have been fulfilled prior to the new application.

Any published work that is derivative of the research supported by the grant must acknowledge the financial support received from the ALI. ALI must be provided with a copy of any publications.

## Timeline

The application deadline is 4:00pm, **July 31, 2014**. We expect to notify successful applicants by September 30, 2014.

## Contact

All inquiries can be addressed to: [albertalandinstitute@ualberta.ca](mailto:albertalandinstitute@ualberta.ca). Please clearly indicate the nature of your email in the subject line.

Additional information about the ALI and the Call for Proposals is available at:

<http://www.albertalandinstitute.ca/research-projects/research-projects/> Please refer to the attached Grant Guidelines and Application for further information on the application process.

## RESEARCH AREAS – SPRING 2014 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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### 1) Urban Form, Land Use and Sustainability: Recommendations and Key Research Gaps

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#### Background

Over the past thirty years, Alberta's population has more than doubled, surpassing the 4 million mark in 2013. Eighty-three per cent of the province's population now lives in cities. Calgary, Red Deer and Edmonton attract most of the province's international, Canadian and Albertan migrants. The Calgary-Edmonton corridor is the most urbanized region of the province, covering 6 per cent of land area but nearly 75 per cent of the province's population.

A great deal of research has been conducted on issues around urban and suburban form, urban densification, sustainability and resource use. While some recent reviews have identified automobiles (and lack of full-cost pricing for transportation systems) as the main cause of sprawl, other reviews have indicated that inappropriately priced infrastructure and servicing of new housing developments has encouraged sprawl. Similarly, while many reviews describe the negative effects of sprawl, others identify benefits from expansion including quality of life outcomes. However, considerable uncertainty remains regarding the mechanisms that can be used to balance environmental, social and economic goals while cities continue to grow.

ALI will support an "expert panel" review on the topic of urban form, land use and sustainability in Canada, with focus in Alberta.

#### Research Questions

The applicant(s) will be expected to:

- Assemble a group of experts in the field(s) of urban/suburban growth and design, urban densification, policy and/or planning;

- Develop a “State of Knowledge” report that would:
  - (a) Identify criteria by which sustainable urban or suburban growth can be developed or evaluated,
  - (b) Clarify which mechanisms, in which contexts, appear to be effective in fostering sustainable urban or suburban growth, and
  - (c) Describe the key research gaps or uncertainties in understanding the benefits and costs of urban form and the mechanisms and/or governance structures that would support improved outcomes from urban design.

ALI plans to use recommendations provided in the State of Knowledge report in the development of future Calls for Proposals.

**Project Period:** Call for Proposals in May 2014 with project completion by October 2015.

**Proposed Budget:** A maximum of \$45,000 over one year, including funding for travel costs and/or research assistants. ALI will be able to provide some coordination and writing support for the final report.

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## 2) Linking Environmental Goals with Business Risk Management Programs in Canadian Agriculture

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### Background

Business Risk Management (BRM) programs are fundamental to Canadian agricultural policy, aiming to boost agricultural income, address price and production risks, and improve the lives of rural populations. BRM programs accounted for three-quarters of the \$3.2 billion in annual federal and provincial government financial assistance to agriculture from 2007 to 2012.<sup>i</sup>

Evidence suggests that BRM programs may increase the cost of achieving conservation goals, or even crowd out conservation activities.<sup>ii</sup> In Canada, to the best of our knowledge no requirements exist for farmers to meet specific environmental standards before being eligible for funding through government BRM programs. Such requirements are known as “cross-compliance” measures, and have been adopted in Europe and to a limited extent in the United States. Cross-compliance measures can take a variety of forms, including reductions in costs of accessing government programs if certain environmental outcomes are attained or allowing participation in government programs if a set of environmental requirements are met.

Under Growing Forward 2 (Canada’s policy framework for the agricultural sector from 2013 to 2018),<sup>iii</sup> a provision was introduced to provide provinces and territories the ability to implement cross-compliance measures, including those linked with environmental requirements.<sup>iv</sup> However, no comprehensive reviews have yet been done on the policies or methods that could be used to implement this provision.

ALI will support a research program is to identify the types of mechanisms that may be used in a cross-compliance policy under the current Growing Forward 2 framework, and to explore the implications of their implementation. This research program will assess the potential for achieving environmental and conservation objectives in Canadian agriculture through cross-compliance measures within BRM programs.

### Research Questions

The applicant(s) will be expected to construct a research program that responds to some or all of the following issues:

- Description of potential cross-compliance policy structures (based on those used in other jurisdictions as well as within the existing Canadian institutional and policy framework) and the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches
- Analysis of possible barriers to design and implementation of cross-compliance policies for Canadian provinces and how these concerns could be addressed
- Examination of the potential effects of such a program, in terms of:

- Land use, agricultural outputs, or related measures of impact on the agricultural sector;
- Ecosystem services provision;
- Fiscal/economic impacts on program expenditures; and/or
- Any other related environmental, social or economic impacts, including the distributional effects of such a policy approach (e.g., equity or “winners and losers”)

The project could take a case study approach using modelling/simulation or a conceptual approach.

**Project Period:** Call for Proposals in May 2014 with project completion by October 2015.

**Proposed Budget:** \$30,000-\$60,000 over one year.

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### 3) Municipal Revenue Generation and Implications for Land Use and Environmental Quality

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#### Background

Across Canada, municipal governments provide a range of essential services for residents, including water, waste treatment, electricity, transport infrastructure, and educational and emergency services. Municipalities have a limited number revenue sources to provide these services: property taxes and other forms of taxation; user fees; and transfer payments from provincial and federal governments.

In order keep pace with expanding service responsibilities, many municipalities in Alberta are striving to increase and diversify revenue bases – specifically, by increasing efforts to attract residential, commercial and industrial development.

Municipalities' revenue generation constraints – and subsequent efforts to increase municipal development – can broadly impact land-use decisions and may have adverse environmental consequences, ranging from the fragmentation or loss of agricultural land, increased greenhouse gas emissions, to losses of environmental amenities and wildlife habitat. Further, the fiscal efficacy of the current municipal revenue model is not well understood and concerns remain about inadequate infrastructure cost recovery.

ALI will support a research program to assess the municipal revenue generation model and its impacts on land-use planning decisions and environmental outcomes.

#### Research Questions

The applicant(s) will be expected to construct a research program that responds to some or all of the following issues:

- How do current municipal revenue models used in Alberta impact land development decisions and environmental quality? Do revenue constraints drive land use planning decisions? What are the consequences?
- How might alternative revenue generation models affect municipal development priorities? What might be the environmental, economic and social consequences of alternative revenue generation models?
- What types of policies, tools and processes exist in other jurisdictions that have attempted to address the linkages between municipal revenue generation, service provision, land-use change and environmental quality? How effective have these been? Could these be adapted and applied in Alberta?

**Project Period:** Call for Proposals in May 2014 with project completion by October 2015.

**Proposed Budget:** \$30,000-\$60,000 over one year.

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<sup>i</sup> James Rude and Alison Eagle. 2014. Research Project Fact Sheet - Agricultural Support Policy in Canada: Environmental Implications. Alberta Land Institute. Available online: <http://www.albertalandinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/12/Fact-Sheet-Agricultural-Support-Policy-in-Canada-Environmental-Implications.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> For example, see:

Dawn Trautman, Scott Jeffrey and Jim Unterschultz. Farm Wealth Implications of Canadian Agricultural Business Risk Management Programs. Selected Paper prepared for presentation at the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association's 2013 AAEA & CAES Joint Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 4-6, 2013. Available online: <http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/149881/2/trautman%20et%20al%202013%20aaea-caes.pdf> (accessed March 18, 2014).

<sup>iii</sup> Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. 2014. Website: Growing Forward 2. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/growing-forward-2/?id=1294780620963> (accessed March 18, 2014).

<sup>iv</sup> Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. 2014. Website: Growing Forward 2: AgriInvest Program Guidelines. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1366308493939> (accessed March 18, 2014).

#### 3.5.2 Cross Compliance

The Administrator shall refuse to make a Government Contribution with respect to a Program Year to a Participant who has failed to meet a condition established by a province or territory whereby a Participant's eligibility to receive any of the Government Contribution for that Program Year is contingent upon the Participant undertaking one or more activities within the following themes:

- Traceability
- Environment
- Business development
- Innovation

In order to establish such a condition with respect to a Program Year, a province or territory must:

- Obtain Canada's concurrence with the condition, which must be requested by the province or territory in writing before January 1 of that Program Year. For the 2013 Program Year, the province or territory must request concurrence no later than 3 months after this provision comes into effect.
- In consultation with the Administrator, ensure that the information necessary to identify Participants who have not met the condition is provided to the Administrator within the timeline required by the Administrator. The criteria for identifying such Participants must be agreed to by both parties before the end of the Program Year for which the condition will be applied.
- A producer appeal under clause 5.3 may consider whether the Administrator has properly applied the criteria for identifying Participants who have not met a condition. However, any disputes about the activity required by the province or territory shall not be considered in an appeal under clause 5.3. If the condition established by the province or territory is subject to an appeal process, the Administrator shall accept the results of an appeal.

Also see: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. 2014. Website: Growing Forward 2: AgriInvest Program Handbook. <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1363187618289#s411> (accessed March 18, 2014).

#### 4.1.1 Cross Compliance

Starting with the 2013 program year, an individual province or territory may require participants to comply with certain criteria before they are eligible to receive government contributions under AgriInvest. Provinces with cross-compliance requirements in place will communicate details to program participants as applicable.