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Organization/PI:

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Project background and/or justification: The Horticultural Research Institute (HRI) was established on September 19, 1962 to support and promote horticultural research that benefits the nursery and landscape industry. HRI is regarded as the research affiliate of the AmericanHort. Since 1962 HRI has directed over \$8 million of industry funds to research projects covering the full range of production, environmental and business issues important to trade. More than 700 research projects have been supported by HRI.

Through HRI's competitive grants program, HRI strives to fund research that specifically deals with green industry related issues. HRI-supported projects focus on significant problems, regulatory issues and emerging opportunities in the nursery and landscape industry. HRI has long invested in research that tackles ongoing and emergent industry challenges in production, resource management, cultural methods, and insect pest and plant disease management. Providing practical and actionable advice for horticultural businesses to improve sustainability and profitability is a key tenet of our work. HRI further supports research with definable outcomes with promising return on investment for the green industry.

In 2020, HRI distributed \$366,800 in grants and scholarships. Donor designated funds are the primary component of funding for HRI's research endeavors. Nearly \$15 million is committed in the endowment by 200 individuals, associations and corporations. The Endowment Fund's principal remains invested and untouched; only investment earnings fund HRI grants.

In the summer of 1994 the Oregon Association of Nurserymen & the Oregon Department of Agriculture established the \$100,000 Oregon Nursery Industry Endowment fund with HRI. Today, the **Oregon Nursery Industry Endowment Fund** annually distributes research grants to projects dealing with priority research issues that impact OR green industry members. Growing the Oregon Nursery Industry Endowment Fund ensures industry research funding in perpetuity.

Project objectives: Funds requested would be designated to the Oregon Nursery Industry Endowment Fund. The funding principal remains within the HRI Endowment while earnings (proceeds) are committed by the fund to research projects each year.

Overview of methods and time lines: HRI has a competitive grants program that funds research projects throughout the United States at mainly land grant universities. Applications are solicited from March to June 1st of each year. Following submissions, the proposals go through a vigorous and highly-regarded review process as follows:

- Phase One: Industry leaders evaluate the significance and economic usefulness of research proposals.
- Phase Two: HRI's scientific advisory panel assesses each project's feasibility and methodology.

- Phase Three: HRI Donors are invited to submit comments regarding top scoring proposals.
- Phase Four: Projects are reviewed by the HRI Executive Committee and final project selections are made.

Budget Summary: HRI funded research projects do not permit indirect costs. All HRI funding must be directed to the proposed research project.

The OR Fund has reached \$405,000 in contributions toward a goal of \$450,000. The Funds received through the Nursery Research Grant Program would be designated to the fund. Proceeds from the Oregon Nursery Industry Endowment Fund are designated to annual HRI funded projects through research grants that meet the Oregon Fund's research priorities.

HRI is requesting \$15,000 in support of the Oregon Nursery Industry Research Fund and research.

Benefit to Nursery Industry: HRI as a green industry information clearinghouse is able to reduce research duplication by encouraging investigators to examine the same problem from different angles. This makes better information and more resources available to the researchers. And it helps HRI dollars to go twice as far. In addition, because of HRI's national presence, close working relationships with USDA agencies such as the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture allow greater leveraging of limited research dollars for a greater impact.

The relationship between HRI and state and regional industry associations is commendable for its collaborative efforts to support research at the local and national level. HRI research allows associations the benefit of a national organization focused on the needs of the entire green industry while assisting at the local level through administrative savings and research grants. Many green industry associations and organizations find that HRI affords greater research opportunities by maximizing a larger endowment like HRI's to fund industry research. By creating a fund within the HRI endowment, an organization does not have the administrative, operational, and overhead expenses typical of managing an investment portfolio. The earnings from a named fund support the named fund's grant award each year.

To date, the Oregon Nursery Industry Research Endowment Fund has provided \$213,650 in funding for 50 research projects benefitting the nursery industry.