

COMPREHENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

2026 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline for Proposal Submissions: August 17, 2026

PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THE END DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

ISA International Society
of **Arboriculture**

&

**Science and Research
Committee**

OVERVIEW

Each year, the **International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)**, in conjunction with the **Science and Research Committee (SRC)**, commissions a comprehensive scientific literature review focused on key areas of concern in the fields of arboriculture and urban forestry. Literature reviews should identify the frontiers of arboriculture and then assist in disseminating this knowledge to the profession worldwide.

The ISA SRC is continuing the series this year and is accepting proposals until August 17, 2026, for literature reviews on topics within the following themes:

- **Tree Benefits and Community Engagement** (e.g., assessing and quantifying tree benefits, public awareness of trees and their benefits, public perception of arborists and urban foresters, equity of access to greenspaces, diversity in the profession)
- **Plant Health Care** (e.g., tree diagnostic practices, application of integrated pest management, abiotic disorder management)
- **Urban and Community Forestry** (e.g., tree-species diversity, resiliency, climate change effects on the urban forest, inventories and management plans, strategic management, planning and design of resilient urban forests, governance, utility urban community)
- **Tree Care and Preservation** (e.g., crown management, root and soil management, preservation ordinances or legislation, balancing tree risk and tree benefits)
- **Technology in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry** (e.g., climbing technology, drone use for assessments, environmental and physiological sensors, AI/machine learning)
- **Tree Establishment** (e.g., nursery production practices, tree planting, young tree care)

The literature review award is up to \$10,000 USD with 20% of the award paid at the start of an accepted proposal and 80% paid upon completion of the deliverables. This Request for Proposals is for the performance of a comprehensive literature review of all research relevant to the proposed topic. The topics should be as focused as is necessary to provide a comprehensive literature review.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- **Timely Topic**
The successful applicant will perform a literature review on a topic that represents a current or expanding topic of focus within one of the six themes listed above.
- **Organizational Access**
The successful applicant must have a means of accessing relevant research and technical publications from relevant sources that include and emphasize, but are not necessarily restricted to, refereed journals.
- **Researcher Qualifications**

The successful applicant and their team must have the educational background, knowledge, and skills necessary to discern the difference between primary and secondary sources in research. In addition, the successful applicant must be capable of making judgments on the rigor and scientific merit of research publications by evaluating the experimental design, data collection procedures, statistical procedures and analysis, and validity/appropriateness of conclusions drawn. Technical articles in refereed and non-refereed journals may contain appropriate literature; the successful applicant must

be able to understand such articles and assess their value to include in the review.

- **Communication Skills**

The successful applicant must be able to communicate the results of this study in a well-written manuscript with comprehensive bibliographic citations, suitable for publishing in English. The successful applicant may also be asked to present a summary of the results at the International Society of Arboriculture conference in the year following completion of the study.

- **Submission Limitations**

We ask that teams submit no more than one proposal for consideration. Proposals should not repeat topics that were awarded grants in recent years. That list of topics follows:

2021: Urban tree canopy assessments: Factors associated with size and distribution of urban tree canopies

2021: Why can't we all just get along? Conflict and collaboration in urban forest management

2022: Urban forest conservation: Reviewing the relationship between urban tree and animal diversity

2023: When, where, and by how much do urban trees reduce temperatures in the city?

2024: Tree-Turfgrass Dynamics Across Managed Urban Landscapes: An Integrative Review

2025: Species Suitability and Functional Diversity as Predictors of Urban Tree Canopy Resilience under Climate Change

SCOPE OF SERVICES (DELIVERABLES)

The successful applicant will be required to perform the following services:

1. Submit a study plan and outline to the Science and Research Committee (SRC) (no more than 3 months after the contract is implemented) for review and feedback.
 - a. A clear description of the research focus(es)
 - b. The scope of studies to be included in the analysis
 - c. A format for coding literature into the database
 - d. Any Intended use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) must be disclosed (see *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry* [author guidelines](#)).
 - e. Anticipated results
2. Submit a final Summary Report to the SRC containing:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Description of how studies were collected
 - c. Description of how the database and coded data was formatted above and beyond ISA Guidelines
 - d. If applicable, description of how AI was used and applied, including proper citations (see *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry* [author guidelines](#)).
 - e. Description of findings and research gaps
 - f. Interpretation of synthesized findings and their implications
 - g. Appendix

3. Prepare a literature review paper for consideration in *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry* (AUF) listing all research published (preferably primary sources in refereed journals) and summarizing previous work, trends that have emerged, research possibilities that have been overlooked, approaches showing promise or proven sterile, and recommendations

for further research. All articles submitted to *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry* are subject to the peer review process of the journal. Note that AUF guidelines for review articles need to be followed, including length limitations and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Large Language Models (LLM).

4. Prepare an article suitable for *Arborist News*, summarizing the work, its relevance, and applicability to practitioners in the profession. The summary should discuss the quality, merit, and scope of the research studies.

PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Only one proposal per principal investigator and/or research group can be submitted for consideration. Principal investigators from around the world are invited to apply.

1. Cover Letter from Applicant's Organization:

Please include a cover letter signed and dated by an authorized individual representing the applicant's Organization indicating support for the application and ability to administer the funds.

2. Plan/Narrative (a maximum of 4 pages, plus 1 page for references):

The narrative must be clear and concise, containing an overview of the proposed topic to be reviewed (i.e., the scope of literature review to be conducted) and a rationale for why a literature review on the proposed topic is important at this time (i.e., recent advances in the literature, absence of other reviews on the topic, etc.), as well as a plan of work describing the proposed methodology and the timeline. Each proposal should show a clear understanding of the needs noted in this RFP and demonstrate how the plan will meet the goals and objectives of this particular RFP.

3. Organizational Capacity and Demonstrated Effectiveness (1 page maximum)

The organizational capacity should show evidence of adequate human, organizational, and technical resources and professional ability to meet the needs of this RFP. The proposal must include a description of relevant prior experience in publications and/or literature reviews completed by the key personnel. At a minimum, this description should include the background and experience of the applicant in providing these services.

4. Resumes or Curriculum Vitae

Please include resumes or curriculum vitae of key personnel as an appendix.

EVALUATION

All proposals accepted by ISA will be reviewed to determine that applicants meet all of the submission and minimum qualification requirements prescribed in the RFP. An evaluation committee will evaluate and rate all proposals under consideration, applying the evaluation criteria below:

Components	Characteristics	Points
Plan/Narrative	Topic of literature review, methodology, timeliness, and innovation of elements	70
Organizational Capacity	Evidence of adequate organizational staff, resources (human, organizational, and technical), and professional ability to provide the requested services	10
Demonstrated Effectiveness	Evidence of prior successful experiences in the provision of services	20

SUBMITTING

1. Applications should be submitted as a single pdf, with a table of contents and page numbers.
2. The entire proposal package shall be submitted to: cashley@isa-arbor.com with the subject line "ISA SRC literature review proposal."