

The Morley Agricultural Foundation five-year funding strategy 2021-26

The Morley Agricultural Foundation (TMAF) is a farmer-owned charity which financially supports agricultural research, education and professional development with a particular focus on arable farming relevant to the Eastern Counties. It owns and farms a large commercial arable enterprise in South Norfolk, which also hosts a wide range of trials carried out by several commercial firms and research organisations.

The TMAF Board regularly reviews its preferences for spending its charitable funds, (which average c £400K per annum). The latest review (2021) identifies the main sectors for support as:

1. Arable crop research on the Morley farm
2. Demonstration of best practice on the Morley farm
3. Support for PhD research in certain preferred areas of activity
4. Support for land-based education and initiatives to inform the general public about agriculture
5. Support for continuous professional development in agriculture

The Morley farm is almost unique in possessing a comprehensive database of long-term research and farm records. It is unusual in being able to commit to long-term trials and is of sufficient size to host more extensive trials as well as demonstrating best practice on a farm scale. Most trials work is currently carried out by NIAB, BBRO and JIC but the TMAF farm also supports other research organisations and commercial company trials.

The Board's preferred research list is as follows (although proposals which do not fit neatly into these categories may also receive support providing they are of interest to our farmer members):

6. Maximising best economic yield under different management regimes
7. Measurement of soil health, including structure, carbon content and biodiversity
8. Developing affordable methodologies and management practices to measure soil parameters
9. Examining production systems which enable reduced inputs of agrochemicals, fertiliser and fuel
10. Researching practical farm solutions to reduce farming's impact on the environment

Aside from research projects, the farm currently seeks to demonstrate management practices to prevent or reduce pollution of water or air; ecological good practice in the management of hedges, trees and field margins; and good rotation and cultivation practices. As 'regenerative' agricultural practices become more closely defined, the farm is likely to expand its role in demonstrating these.

TMAF support for doctoral students is guided by the same principles as outlined in 6 -10 above, but is not restricted to work done on the Morley farm. Partnership funding of studentships with other agri-charities, research bodies and commercial firms have increased in number in recent

years, allowing available funds to be spread more broadly and for more professional management of some projects.

In common with many agri-charities, and preferably in partnership with them, TMAF offers support for a wide range of activities to inform society about agriculture. Specifically, we support initiatives aimed at schoolchildren, especially those at secondary school considering their career paths, and those who have chosen land-based courses at college or university.

Also, TMAF supports professional business development courses and, in partnership with the Felix Cobbold Trust, funds an annual three-day communications skills course aimed at improving the capability and effectiveness of future industry leaders.

TMAF welcomes applications for funding from individuals and organisations.

For more information see our website tmaf.co.uk.