

# CRAWFORD FUND



## TIME FOR RENEWAL

Innovation is about new ideas and invention leading to the adoption of new ways of doing things. It is as vital to success in development as it is in any activity—commercial, philanthropic or anywhere in between. The Fund is responding to this challenge, looking to new opportunities, partnerships and services. So, 2015 has been a time for renewal for us and one we will take into 2016 with renewed gusto.

Indeed, the Crawford Fund has undergone a process of almost continuous change over the last ten years or so: a new corporate structure, independent of its founder ATSE, and with deductible gift recipient status; renewed State Committee membership and a new chapter in Tasmania; a new headquarter's location involving a shift from Melbourne to the Parliamentary Triangle in Canberra; a new focus on policy with two major task forces on international agricultural research and policy papers to encourage consideration of research for development on a wider canvas; a root and branch review of our Master Classes with a new emphasis on co-funding and partnerships; the introduction of registration fees for the Crawford Fund Parliamentary Conference and a dramatic shift in its audience demographics with the development of the Young Scholars Program.

The Public Awareness Program has witnessed continued change with new State events, our Food Security Journalism award, a greater focus on social media, the introduction of Master Classes on communication in partnership with a private company, and more.

Our work as part of the 'Alliance for Agricultural R&D for Food Security', co-funded by ACIAR, the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture and the Fund, continues and the development of the training module on demand led plant variety design, for example, will form the basis for a professional development program including a Master Class with the Crawford Fund in 2016.

Our State and Territory training programs have covered a broad range of topics and countries and introduced some new initiatives. The Crawford-in-Queensland and Crawford-in-Tasmania grants both encourage international links in postgraduate agricultural R&D training of Australians. Our WA Committee continues its collaboration with CBH Ltd with training on biosecurity for the grains industry. The Victorian chapter has extended its training, with the help of Melbourne universities, into vocational activities such as furniture design and manufacture in Vietnam, Indonesia and Laos, providing invaluable experience in computer aided design and manufacture of solid and veneered timber furniture. Our NSW Committee has run a very strong program in Mekong countries building capacity in plant biosecurity and reducing the impact of numerous crop diseases, with tremendous senior mentoring of both local staff and Australian volunteers.

The Fund has been alert to the opportunities afforded by modern technology for developing country agriculture. Examples include a Master Class on digital technology to support plant doctors in the identification of plant pests and diseases on small farms in Africa, and its training on the use of social media in its Master Classes in communication with stakeholders.

Importantly, in all this we have seen a steady growth and change in the size and composition of the broader Australian and international networks that sustains us.

It is tempting to see all this change as enough; that all we need now is additional financial resources to do more of what we currently do. However, far from resting on its laurels, the Fund will be looking for new and more effective ways of pursuing its mission.

You can read about our public awareness, policy and training work in the December newsletter. I wish all in our broader family a safe and enjoyable festive and New Year break getting ready for a healthy and successful 2016.

DG Blight  
Chief Executive  
The Crawford Fund