

Meat Education and Training Grant Program Fiscal Year 2023 Request for Proposals

Applications due Thursday, March 9, 2023, 4:00 pm Central Time

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Grant Summary

Overview

The Meat Education and Training (MEAT) Grant Program is a competitive funding opportunity for Minnesota secondary career and technical education programs (public or private schools or school districts) seeking to establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery training for secondary students. Grants fund equipment, facility renovation, curriculum development, and faculty training for new and established meat cutting programs. Priority will be given to applicants that collaborate with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) or local industry partners. This grant program is funded through a onetime appropriation by the Minnesota Legislature and is administered by the Agricultural Marketing and Development Division, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA).

Funding availability

The MDA anticipates awarding approximately \$350,000 using a competitive review process. Applicants may request a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$70,000 per project; up to 10% of each grant may be used for faculty training. Schools are not required to contribute matching funds. We expect 5 to 10 grants will be awarded, but the final number depends on the size of awards.

Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

[Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review \(PDF\)](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

This grant will prioritize:

- Projects that coordinate with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State (i.e., Central Lakes College and Ridgewater College) and local industry partners.
- Projects that serve secondary students from communities of color, Native American Tribal communities, and socio-economically disadvantaged communities.
- Projects that source products for instructional use from socially disadvantaged and Emerging Farmers (including farmers of color; American Indian or Alaskan Native farmers; women; veterans; farmers with disabilities; young farmers; beginning farmers; LGBTQ+ farmers; and urban farmers).
- Projects that become self-sustaining after grant period.

Grant outcomes will include:

- Increased number of Minnesota students obtaining knowledge and skills to enter a career in the meat processing industry.
- Increased opportunities for Minnesota students to access training in meat cutting and butchery.

How to submit questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit your questions in writing by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 2, 2023**.
- Email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with “MEAT Grant Program” in the subject line.

MDA employees are not authorized to provide advice on any applications. Applicants who solicit or receive advice from unauthorized MDA employees may be disqualified from eligibility for a grant award.

For help with the online application system:

- Call 651-201-6500 or email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us for technical assistance.
- Include “MEAT Grant Program” in the subject line

How to apply

- Apply for the MEAT Grant Program using our [online application system](#).
 - We must receive your grant application by **4:00 p.m. Central Time on Thursday, March 9, 2023**, to be considered for funding. We will not consider late applications.
- Apply early so there is enough time to get technical assistance if needed.
 - It is best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.

The MDA is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems resulting in the MDA not receiving the application on time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that submission is received by the MDA before the deadline.

Timeline and deadlines

March 2, 2023.....	Questions due by 4:00 pm Central Time
March 9, 2023.....	Applications due by 4:00 pm Central Time
April 2023.....	Applicants notified of decisions; grant agreement negotiations begin

Grant Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Public or private schools or school districts in Minnesota that seek to establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery training for secondary students (Grades 6 through 12, unless otherwise designated by the school district).

Applicants must be in good standing with the State of Minnesota.

- No back taxes owed.
- No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years.
- Acceptable performance on past state grants.

Collaboration

Priority will be given to projects that propose collaborations with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State or local industry partners. School districts may collaborate with other districts on an application but should clearly identify the lead applicant that will have the grant contract agreement with the MDA.

Eligible projects and expenses

Projects must:

- Establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery training for secondary students.
- Not start until the grant contract is signed by all parties and has reached its start date.
- Be completed by June 30, 2024, so that meat cutting and butchery training is available to students by Fall 2024.
- Be conducted in Minnesota.

Project examples include but are not limited to:

- Purchase of equipment required for a meat cutting program (e.g., refrigeration units, tables, saws, knives, cleaning and sanitizing equipment)
- Contractor costs and materials for installation of approved equipment, including plumbing, drainage, venting, and electrical work
- Facility renovation to accommodate meat cutting
- Purchase of livestock and livestock products for instructional use
- Curriculum development for new or enhanced meat cutting program
- Licensing and permitting costs required for new or enhanced meat cutting program (expenses must be incurred and paid during the grant period)
- Training faculty to teach the fundamentals of meat processing may be included as a project component and is limited to 10% of grant

Ineligible expenses

Expenses ineligible for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred prior to contract execution or after grant period
- Wages and benefits for existing staff positions, unless compensation is for additional time or a different role over and beyond normal duties
- Consumable supplies (e.g., gloves, disinfectants)
- Advertising, public relations, entertainment, and amusement costs
- Donated goods and services. While in-kind services may be furnished to an applicant by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor, the value of these services is not eligible for reimbursement. Likewise, the value of tangible in-kind contributions, including property, is ineligible.
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to comply with Federal, State, local, or Indian tribal laws and regulations
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists and political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations

Matching funds

Applicants are not required to provide matching funds to the grant award. Up to 100% of the total project cost may be covered by the grant, with a minimum grant award of \$5,000 and a maximum grant award of \$70,000. However, applicants and their grant proposals will be evaluated based on their long-term sustainability, including their ability to support the project after the expiration of grant funding.

Application Review Policies

Review process

A review committee, composed of MDA staff and external reviewers, evaluates all eligible applications based on the criteria in the Project Evaluation Profile. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The commissioner of agriculture reviews the committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The review committee and commissioner may use rural/urban, geographic distribution, services to prioritized populations, applicant's history as a state grantee, and capacity to perform the work when making their decisions. The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers ([MINN. STAT.16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making, 2022 \(Word\)](#)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the MDA due to competing duties or loyalties.
- A grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

Privacy notice and data classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under the MEAT Grant Program. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a

valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per Minnesota's statute on grants ([MINN. STAT. 13.599](#)):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except for data classified as Department of Agriculture data ([MINN. STAT 13.643, subd. 1](#)) and trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed.

Procedure for Claiming Protection of Trade Secrets: Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e., the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition found in statute ([MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1\(b\)](#)). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application: the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

All persons, businesses, and individuals applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must comply with applicable laws. Under the law titled Right of Setoff ([MINN STAT 270C.65, Subd. 3](#)), a grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies and state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring a grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

Requirements for Grant Recipients

Pre-award financial review

All non-governmental organizations (NGOs) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial review prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher.

To comply with [Policy 08-06: Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations \(PDF\)](#), you may be asked to submit one of the following documents:

- Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit, should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of \$50,000 or more and less than \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.

Accountability and reporting

Grantees must submit written progress reports at least annually until all grant funds have been expended and all the terms of the grant contract agreement have been met. Grant payments will be withheld on grants with past due progress reports without a written extension. Grantees may also be required to respond to requests for follow-up information for three years beyond the term of the grant agreement. Failure to respond to these in a timely manner may impact your ability to secure future funding from the MDA.

To ensure compliance with meat inspection statutory and regulatory requirements, applicants are encouraged to reach out to the [Minnesota Meat, Poultry, and Egg Inspection Program](#) during project planning and incorporate the permitting process in the work plan component of the application.

The MDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the project. Information submitted in any report or survey will be a public record.

Grant award agreement and payments

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review on the [Office of Grants Management Forms and FAQs](#) webpage.

Upon approval of an application and prior to beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant is required to do the following:

- Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the State's accounting system, and submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification.
- Submit a copy of your organization's most recent audited financial statement for non-profit organizations receiving an award over \$25,000.
- Sign a grant contract agreement indicating your intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreement also authorizes the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The grant award document must be signed within 30 days of being sent to you.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties. Grant contracts will have an end date of June 30, 2024, and may not be extended. All project expenses must be incurred and paid during the term of the grant contract.

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. To receive grant payments, grantees may be asked to provide proof that grant project work has been done by submitting details of each purchase on receipts or invoices, and proof that the vendors have been paid.

Site visits and financial reconciliations

The grant agreement allows the MDA to monitor the progress of the project. The MDA will perform a monitoring visit for all grantees with awards of \$25,000 or more before a final payment is approved; grantees with awards of \$250,000 or more will receive annual monitoring visits. Other grantees may receive monitoring visits at the discretion of the MDA.

The MDA will perform a financial reconciliation of at least one invoice on grants greater than or equal to \$50,000; financial reconciliation may be performed on additional payment requests at the discretion of the MDA. For this purpose, the grantee must provide expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents requested by the state.

Bidding requirements

All funded applicants will be required to abide by the state's bidding requirements for larger purchases. See a detailed list of the state's [bidding requirements](#) for details.

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified ([MINN. STAT. 363A.02](#)). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the [Minnesota Human Rights Act](#).

Audits of project

The grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 8](#)). This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Voter registration requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
<p>Objectives and outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives and outcomes of project are aligned with metrics or other indicators to demonstrate the project's success Application describes how the project will increase opportunities for Minnesota secondary students to access training in meat cutting and butchery 	20
<p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget clearly identifies all project costs Budget narrative thoroughly justifies expenses Budget describes plan for sustainability 	15
<p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application demonstrates partnership with meat cutting and butchery programming at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Application demonstrates partnership with local industry partner(s) 	15
<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application clearly describes proposed curriculum, including how curriculum addresses student safety and food safety 	15
<p>Work plan and timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work plan is thorough and realistic A detailed description of each step of the grant project, including licensing and permitting, is provided with estimated dates 	10
<p>Diversity, equity, and inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application demonstrates that project will serve secondary students from communities of color, Native American Tribal communities, or socio-economically disadvantaged communities Application demonstrates that the project will source products for instructional use from socially disadvantaged and Emerging Farmers (including farmers of color; American Indian or Alaskan Native farmers; women; veterans; farmers with disabilities; young farmers; beginning farmers; LGBTQ+ farmers; and urban farmers) 	10
<p>Food safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application clearly describes how project addresses student safety and food safety 	10
<p>Stakeholder support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application includes letter(s) of support from school board or other community stakeholders 	5
<p>Total</p>	100

Application Questions

Contact information

Applicant information

- Name of applicant organization (school or school district)
- Mailing address of applicant organization
- Name of contact person
- Contact person's title
- Contact person's telephone
- Contact person's email
- Legislative district of applicant organization

Authorized representative

If awarded a grant, the person who will sign the resulting grant contract agreement

- Name
- Title
- Telephone
- Email
- Mailing address

Eligibility

Confirm and acknowledge the following statements:

- I have the authority to apply for this grant.
- The applicant organization is a public or private school or school district in Minnesota that seeks to establish or enhance meat cutting and butchery training for secondary students.
- The applicant organization is in good standing with the State of Minnesota. (No back taxes owed, no defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the past seven years, and acceptable performance on past state grants.)
- The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the effective date of the grant contract agreement (anticipated May/June 2023).

Project summary

Grant request

- Project name
- Total project cost
- Total grant request. Maximum of \$70,000, minimum \$5,000.
- Expected project start date
 - Must be after the contract is signed by you and the State of Minnesota.
 - Award notification is in April, and contracts need to be signed by end of June.
- Expected project end date
 - Grant contracts will have an end date of June 30, 2024.
 - You will have up 30 days after your contract end date to submit for a reimbursement.
 - All items and services must be paid for by the end date of the contract.

Executive summary

Include a description of the project and goals to be accomplished. The executive summary of this proposed project must be suitable for dissemination to the public. *(Maximum 1,200 characters, including spaces)*

Project plan

Proposed objectives and outcomes

Describe the project’s objectives and outcomes, including metrics and indicators of success. Address how the proposed project will increase opportunities for Minnesota secondary students to access training in meat cutting and butchery. *(Maximum 2,500 characters, including spaces)*

Budget

Create a budget using the format in the example below. If specific vendors, contractors, or consultants are named in the budget, grantees will not need to undergo a formal bidding process as long as you use those who you have identified. This can save you time and effort later.

Upload the budget as an Excel or Word file.

Item or service	Quantity	Cost per unit	Total cost	Vendor, contractor, or consultant
<i>Example: Installation of walk-in freezer</i>	<i>24 hours</i>	<i>\$75 per hour</i>	<i>\$1,800</i>	<i>ABC Contractors</i>

Budget narrative

Justify your budget by addressing the following (*Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces*):

- Describe the purpose of each expense listed.
- Identify any specific vendors, contractors, or consultants for the project and why they were chosen.
- Attach any quotes or estimates you used to develop your budget.
- Applicants are not required to provide a cash match. If the project requires funds in addition to the grant request, please identify the sources of the other funding.
- Explain how the project will be sustained after the expiration of grant funding.

Collaboration

Describe any proposed collaboration with meat cutting and butchery programs at Minnesota State, local industry partners, or other school districts. (*Maximum 2,500 characters, including spaces*)

Upload letters of support and commitment from proposed partners.

Proposed curriculum

Describe the curriculum planned for the proposed training in meat cutting and butchery. In your description, include specifics as to how the curriculum will address food safety and student safety. If project includes the purchase of curriculum or curriculum development, describe the process that will be used to select or develop the curriculum for the proposed training. Describe any plans to share the proposed curriculum with other schools or districts. (*Maximum 2,500 characters, including spaces*)

Work plan and timeline

Create a work plan and timeline using the format in the example below. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project, including licensing and permitting. The work plan should indicate when meat cutting and butchery training will start with students (this may occur after grant period, but no grant expenses may be incurred after grant period).

Upload the work plan as an Excel or Word file.

Timeframe	Description of task or action item	Responsible party
<i>Example: July 2023</i>	<i>Request bids for meat processing equipment</i>	<i>Ag Instructor</i>

Meat, Poultry, and Egg Inspection Program letter

Applicants are encouraged to reach out to the [Minnesota Meat, Poultry, and Egg Inspection Program](#) to discuss licensing and permitting requirements and include a letter from the program confirming that regulatory requirements have been discussed. This letter is not required.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

If applicable, describe how your project will serve secondary students from communities of color, Native American Tribal communities, or socio-economically disadvantaged communities. *(Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces)*

If applicable, describe how your project will source products for instructional use from socially disadvantaged and Emerging Farmers (including farmers of color; American Indian or Alaskan Native farmers; women; veterans; farmers with disabilities; young farmers; beginning farmers; LGBTQ+ farmers; and urban farmers). *(Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces)*

Food safety

Describe how your project will address food safety and student safety. *(Maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces)*

Stakeholder support

Upload letters of support from school board or other community stakeholders. *(Up to 3 letters)*