



AGRI Works

Fiscal Year 2026 Request for Proposals

Applications due by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2025

10/31/2025

Note: The Request for Proposals was updated on December 11, 2026 to clarify the matching requirements. See pages 1 and 6 for more information.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

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Grant Summary

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is now accepting applications for Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Works Grant Program. Grant funds are available for entities and organizations that provide regional and statewide development, education, research, and marketing services that promote agriculture, horticulture, and rural communities.

The program is authorized under MINN. STAT. 41A.12 and funded through Laws of Minnesota, 2025, Regular Session, Chapter 34, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3(d). All information about the program is available on the [AGRI Works Grant](#) webpage. Applications will be accepted until Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 4 p.m. Central Time (CT).

Funding availability

We expect to award approximately \$485,625 using a competitive review process. The maximum award is \$75,000, and the minimum is \$5,000. A 1:1 match is required from the grantee; 50% of the total project costs must come from other non-state sources. We anticipate awarding between 5 and 15 grants. This request for proposals does not obligate the State of Minnesota to award any grant contract agreements.

Grants may last up to three years from the contract start date. We expect most grant contract agreements to start in early 2026. Applicants should anticipate that grant contracts will have an end date in early 2029 and may not be extended.

If selected, grantees may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed, the grant has reached its effective date, and the grantee has been notified by the state's authorized representative that they may begin work.

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 \(PDF\)](#) sets up the expectation that grant programs intentionally show how the grant serves diverse and underserved populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities. Applicants conducting projects that impact or serve Native American Tribal Communities are encouraged to apply.

This grant program will prioritize:

- Legislatively created entities and organizations.
- Projects that are not eligible for other MDA grant opportunities. See our list of [Loans, Grants, and Other Funding Opportunities](#) for more information; contact us with any questions.

Grant outcomes will include development of agriculture, horticulture, and rural communities in Minnesota.

How to apply

Applications are due by 4 p.m. CT on Tuesday, December 16, 2025.

- Apply for the FY 2026 AGRI Works Grant using our [online application system](#).
 - If you’re a new user, you need to create an account first.
 - Once you’re logged in, select “AGRI Works Grant.”
- We will not accept late applications.
 - Apply early so there is enough time to get help with the online application system. It’s best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance.
 - We are not responsible for any technical or logistical problems that result in a late submission. It’s your responsibility to ensure we receive your application before the deadline.

Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated. Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated.

The MDA reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.

By applying, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.

Timeline and deadlines

- Tuesday, December 9, 2025, 4 pm CT.....Deadline to ask grant program questions.
- Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 4 pm CT.....Applications due.
- Mid-December, 2025 – Mid-January, 2026.....Phase one of the review process.
- Late January, 2026.....Phase two of the review process.
- February 10, 2026.....Applicants notified of decisions.
- March 1, 2026.....Expected project start date (after grant contract is fully signed).

Questions

For questions on the grant program or application:

- Submit your question in writing before **Tuesday, December 16, 2025**.
- Email MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with “AGRI Works” in the subject line.

MDA employees are not authorized to give 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 with “AGRI Works” in the subject line.

Application guidelines

- Use plain, easily understood language. Write for reviewers who have general knowledge about the broad agricultural industry but may not have a thorough or deep understanding of your organization, specific industry, or project.
- Answer all questions completely within the character limits specified in the grant application.
- Although some questions are labeled as optional, we strongly recommend responding to those questions or uploading the appropriate documents.
- Review the [Project Evaluation Profile](#) included in this document as it is used to score and compare the grant applications.

Grant Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Applicants must:

- Be an entity or organization that supports regional and statewide development of Minnesota agriculture, horticulture, or rural communities.
- Be in good standing with the State of Minnesota:
 - Registered with the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office.
 - No back taxes owed.
 - No defaults on Minnesota state-backed financing for the last seven years.
 - Acceptable performance on past MDA grants.
 - Not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
 - No conviction of felony financial crimes in the past ten years.
 - Compliant with current state regulations.
- Be appropriately licensed and authorized to conduct business in Minnesota.

Examples of applicants:

- Economic development organizations
- Commodity research and promotion councils
- Producer associations
- Research organizations

Only nonprofit organizations, units of government, and most colleges and universities are eligible to apply. Individuals and organizations incorporated as for-profit entities (including for-profit colleges and universities) are not eligible.

Applicants should review the [conflicts of interest](#) section prior to applying. The selected grantee must agree to these rules as a part of signing their grant contract agreement.

MDA employees and their spouses, farms, LLCs, or businesses principally operated by them are not eligible applicants and are not eligible to receive funds from this grant program.

Collaboration

Eligible applicants may collaborate with other organizations, but it's not required. If eligible organizations are submitting a joint application, they must determine which organization will have the grant contract agreement with the MDA and will work directly with the MDA to meet grant reporting requirements. Note that this organization may receive a 1099 from the State of Minnesota for income tax purposes.

Organizations must provide letters of support from any proposed partners.

Eligible projects

Projects must:

- Provide regional or statewide services.
- Not start until the grant contract is signed by all parties and has reached its start date.
- Be completed in three years or less.

Project examples include but are not limited to:

- Performing research on topics relevant to rural communities across the state.
- Conducting outreach or providing education to farmers or horticultural growers.

Eligible expenses

Eligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Employee salary and fringe
- Travel costs directly related to the project's outcomes or objectives
- Contracted services
- Equipment and supplies

You must be invoiced and pay for all project materials and services between the contract start and end date listed on your grant contract agreement. All requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the MDA no later than sixty calendar days after the grant end date. Any expenses incurred outside of this timeframe are not eligible for reimbursement.

Indirect costs

The MDA generally does not allow grantees to charge indirect expenses to grant awards. However, we recognize that this practice creates difficulties for small organizations. Therefore, applicants may request up to 15% of salaries, wages, and applicable fringe benefits of W-2 employees to support indirect costs.

The indirect cost rate may only be applied to salaries, wages, and applicable fringe benefits of W-2 employees. It does not include materials and supplies, services (including contracted personnel), travel, equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, or participant support costs, among other costs. Other general operational or overhead costs are not eligible as direct costs unless they are specifically allocable to the grant funded project. and a clear description is provided in the application for how the costs directly tie to the project and would not otherwise be incurred as part of the applicant's normal operations.

To receive a grant from an appropriation of state funds, grantees must agree as a term of the grant contract agreement that administrative/indirect costs must be necessary and reasonable ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, Subd. 1](#)).

Ineligible expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement or its start date, whichever occurs later, or those incurred after the grant contract agreement expires.
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal, state, or local government funding or by other grants (e.g., no “double dipping”). Other grant funding from non-state sources may be used as match.
- General operations, overhead, and indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project) above/beyond the rates established in the Indirect Cost section of this RFP.
- Advertising and public relations costs.
- Donations and in-kind contributions, including property and services, made by the applicant (regardless of the recipient).
- Fines, penalties, and other settlement expenses resulting from failure of the applicant to follow federal, state, local, or Tribal nation laws and regulations.
- Entertainment, amusement, diversion, social activities, gifts, or any costs directly associated with such purchases (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, alcohol, and gratuities).
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions, regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used.
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services and payroll taxes.
- Lobbyists, including costs of membership in organizations substantially engaged in lobbying, and political contributions.
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, legal costs, or contingency funds.
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for deciding whether travel is out of state. Contact the grant administrator for exceptions.

Matching funds

All applicants must contribute 50% of the total project costs as match. All matches must be in the form of cash; no in-kind match will be considered. Applicants may count indirect costs towards their cash match as described in the [Indirect costs](#) section above.

Sources of the cash match may include non-state funds (funds that were not obtained through the budgeting process of the Minnesota legislature or granted by a state agency) in the form of cash, loans, other grants, or liquid capital assets dedicated to the project. If a proposed project has been submitted to or funded by a federal grant program, specify the grantor, the funding amount, and the purpose of that grant funding.

Application Review Policies and Practices

Review process

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. During the first phase of the review process, MDA staff and external reviewers evaluate 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 recommendations and makes the award decisions. Reviewers, staff, and the commissioner may consider geographic distribution as well as the applicant's history as a state grantee, including performance on previous grants, compliance with state rules and regulations, and capacity to perform the work.

During the second phase of the review process, applicants that made it past the first phase will be contacted by MDA staff to submit any additional documentation required for the organizational capacity assessment.

The MDA will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing. Applicants may request a summary of reviewer comments.

Pre-award risk assessment

Under [Policy 08-06: Policy on Pre-Award Risk Assessment for Potential Grantees \(PDF\)](#), the MDA is required to complete a pre-award risk assessment of grantees selected to receive a grant award of \$50,000 or greater. Applicants will be asked to submit documents relevant to their entity.

If the MDA determines that the potential grantee has substantial risks that inhibit its ability to perform the required duties under the grant contract agreement, then the MDA may either request more information for the purpose of satisfying the concerns, develop a risk mitigation plan to protect the interests of the state, or not award the grant.

Nonprofit organizations

Nonprofit organizations will need to submit:

- A performance capacity summary to describe previous grants from the State of Minnesota, history of performing work related to the grant request, and current organizational capacity.
- A copy of the nonprofit's two most recent years of their Form 990 or Form 990-EZ with the Internal Revenue Service. If the nonprofit has not been in existence long enough or is not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ, then they must submit the following information:
 - Proof of its tax-exempt status
 - Board-reviewed financial statements for the two most recent business years or pro forma financial projects for at least a two-year period
 - Documentation of internal controls
- The two most recent certified financial audits, if required ([MINN.STAT. 309.53, Subd. 3.](#))
- Certification that the entity is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.
- Certification that it is in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State.
- Certification that none of its current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

Political subdivisions

Political subdivisions, including counties, towns, cities, school districts, and other municipal corporations or political subdivisions of the state authorized to enter into contracts will need to submit:

- A performance capacity summary to describe previous grants from the State of Minnesota, history of performing work related to the grant request, and current organizational capacity.
- Certification that none of its current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

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 [08-01 Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making \(PDF\)](#)).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- A grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to give 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 in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract 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 this 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 proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [MINN. STAT. 13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in 13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

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 to 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

Grant award agreement

Upon approval of an application, completion of the organizational capacity assessment, submission of required certifications and other documents, and before beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant must sign a grant contract agreement showing their intention to complete the proposed tasks. This agreement must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review at [Office of Grants Management Policies, Statutes, and Forms](#) on the “Forms and FAQs” tab. We reserve the right to adjust these templates as we deem appropriate and necessary. The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantees should read the grant contract agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant contract agreement. No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and the State’s Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start. The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker’s compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

Accountability and reporting

Grantees will be required to submit annual progress reports during the grant period, a final report at the completion of the project, and additional information about the long-term impact for up to three years after the grant period. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Information reported to the MDA may be classified as public data. Failure to regularly report, respond to surveys, and promptly respond to information requests may impact the grantee’s ability to secure future funding from the MDA.

Authorized representatives

Grantees must clearly post on the grantee’s website the names of, and contact information for, the grantee’s leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees a grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subd. 5\(d\)](#)).

Payments

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the grant contract agreement has been signed by all parties and the contract has reached its start date, whichever is later.

Grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis. All requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget and tied to documented progress working on the project. Requests must include two types of proof for each expense: proof of purchase (e.g., invoices, itemized receipts, etc.) and proof of payment (e.g., cleared checks, credit card statements, bank statements, etc.). Ineligible items and their cost must be

clearly delineated in the proof of purchase. Additional details can be found in the [MDA Reimbursement Guide \(PDF\)](#). The MDA will generally not reimburse expenses paid for in cash. Contact the MDA for exceptions.

The MDA will perform a financial reconciliation of at least one invoice on grants greater than or equal to \$25,000. 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.

Grant payments may be used to fulfill federal and state tax liabilities or may be withheld until the grantee has paid any tax liabilities (MINN. STAT. 270C.65, subd. 3, and other applicable laws).

Site visits

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

Contract and bidding requirements

All grantees must abide by the state's bidding requirements, based on their entity type.

Municipalities

Grantees that are political subdivisions or municipalities must use these guidelines:

- Municipalities are required to comply with the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law ([MINN. STAT. 471.345](#)).
- The grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules, as applicable ([MINN. STAT. 177.41](#) through [MINN. STAT. 177.50](#)).
- Municipalities and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government (See [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#)) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).
- The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts.

Nongovernmental entities

Grantees that are nongovernmental entities must use these guidelines:

- Any services and/or materials that are expected to cost \$100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.
- Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three verbal quotes or bids or be awarded to a targeted vendor.
- Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two verbal quotes or bids or be awarded to a targeted vendor.
- The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:
 - [Office of State Procurement – Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged, and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
 - [Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business \(MCUB\) Program Directory](#)
 - [Central Certification \(CERT\) Directory](#)
- The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts.
- The grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.
- Notwithstanding the above, the MDA may waive bidding process requirements when:
- Vendors included in the response to a competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or
- It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that the grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.
- The grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules, as applicable ([MINN. STAT. 177.41](#) through [MINN. STAT. 177.50](#)).
- The grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government (see [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#)) and [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).

Publicity

All projects funded must publicly credit AGRI funding, including on the grantee's website when practical.

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](#)).

Right of Cancellation

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.

AGRI Background and Program Goals

The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program (AGRI) was established to advance Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries ([MINN. STAT. 41A.12](#)). AGRI has made significant economic impacts by increasing productivity, improving efficiency, and assisting the development of agricultural products. The primary goal of the AGRI Works Grant is to advance agriculture, horticulture, and rural community and economic development through marketing, promotion, research, and education.

Project Evaluation Profile

Evaluation criteria	Maximum score
Organizational capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates the capacity to successfully implement and sustain the project. 	15
Community engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows community engagement and support for the project, such as through local, regional, or statewide partnerships. Includes strong letter(s) of support that indicate broad impact. 	15
Project objectives and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed objectives and activities are realistic and support program goals. 	15
Work plan and timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work plan is thorough and realistic. Work plan includes marketing efforts and tracking of sales. A detailed description of each step of the grant project is provided with estimated dates. 	15
Budget and match <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget clearly details all project costs. Budget clearly explains source and amount of cash match. Budget is cost effective and planned purchases are backed by quotes or other sources. 	15
Priority Area: Other MDA grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project is not eligible for any other MDA grant opportunities. 	20
Priority Area: Legislatively created entities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant entity was created by the legislature. 	5
Total	100

Application Questions

Contact information

Applicant information

- Organization name
- Organization address
- Organization county
- Organization website
- Point of contact name
- Point of contact title
- Point of contact mailing address
- Point of contact telephone number
- Point of contact name email address
- Minnesota State House District (Use the [District Finder](#) if you don't know your district.)

Authorized representative

- If awarded a grant, is the person authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the organization the same as the point of contact person listed above? (Yes or No)
- If no, provide the following Authorized Representative information for signing any resulting grant contract agreement:
 - Name
 - Title
 - Telephone number
 - Email address

Eligibility

- Confirm that the following statements apply to your organization.
 - The organization does not owe the State of Minnesota any back taxes and has not defaulted on any State of Minnesota backed financing in the last seven years. (True)
 - The organization is compliant with current state regulations, or this project will support the organization becoming compliant. (True)
- Is this organization suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government? If your project is recommended for phase two of the review process, you will need to sign a certification. (Yes or No)
- Is this organization in good standing with the Office of the Secretary of State? If your project is recommended for phase two of the review process, you will need to sign a certification. (Yes or No)
- Have any of your organization's current board members or staff with authority to access grant funds been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years? If your project is recommended for phase two of the review process, you will need to sign a certification. (Yes or No)

- Is the applicant or principal investigator an MDA employee, spouse of an employee, or a business owned by one of them? (Yes or No)
- The MDA is unable to reimburse for any work that is performed prior to the start date of the contract. Has work started on your proposed project or will work start before the grant contract agreement is signed by all parties? (Yes or No)
- I attest that all information supplied in this application is true, correct and reliable to the best of my knowledge. (Yes or No)
- I attest and understand that the submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject me and my organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available by law to the state. (Yes or No)
- I attest and understand that the supporting documentation for the claims and assertions made within this application is available to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for its review. (Yes or No)

Previous MDA grants

- Have you previously received a grant from the State of Minnesota in the past five years? (Yes or No)
- If yes, detail the award amount(s), the duties, and the outcomes of the grant(s). (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Project summary

Grant request

- Project name
- Total project cost
- Total grant request. Maximum of \$75,000, minimum \$5,000.
- Expected project start date
 - Must be after the contract is signed by you and the State of Minnesota.
 - Award notification will be in late January, and applicants should plan on grant contract agreements being signed in March.
 - You may not incur any project related expenses until after the grant contract agreement is fully executed.
- Expected project end date
 - Contracts may last a full three years from start date.
 - You will have up to two months 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.

Project summary

Include a project summary of 250 words or less suitable for dissemination to the public. A project summary provides a very brief (one sentence, if possible) description of your project. A project summary includes:

- The name of the applicant organization that will lead and execute the project;
- The project’s purpose, deliverables, and expected outcomes; and
- A description of the general tasks/activities to be completed during the project period to fulfill this goal.

Example: The ABC Economic Development Organization will work with small-scale producers in Central Minnesota to establish more robust market opportunities and explore options for collaborative distribution networks.

Project purpose

Provide the specific issue, problem, or need that the project will address. Explain how this project is timely and will enhance agriculture, horticulture, or rural community development. (5,000 characters, including spaces)

Project objectives

In the table, list each main objective that this project aims to achieve on its own line. Objectives must be realistic and achievable during the grant. You may list up to five objectives.

In the "Objective name" column provide a short title that summarizes each of your objectives, (e.g., Objective 1: Create Consumer Education Materials, Objective 2: Hold Grower Workshops, etc.). (250 characters per objective name, including spaces)

In the "Objective description" column list provide a very brief description of what you will accomplish and a general plan on what you will do to accomplish the objective within the time frame of the grant. (250 characters per description, including spaces)

Objective name	Objective description
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Business readiness and financial sustainability

Organization summary

- Provide a summary of your organization (2,000 characters, including spaces). The summary should stand alone to describe:
 - The mission and goals of your organization
 - The services and products provided by your organization
 - The leadership of your organization
- Describe your history of performing the work that will be funded by this grant or duties similar to those required. Include your organization's current and past staffing and current and past budget.

Financial sustainability

Describe the financial health and cash flow of your organization over the past year and tell us how this project fits into your business plan and how this project will financially benefit your organization. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

Priority Areas

Priority 1

This grant program prioritizes projects that enhance agriculture, horticulture, or rural areas through community and economic development, marketing, promotion, and research and education. Does your project reflect these priority areas? (Yes or No)

- If yes, detail how your project impacts one or more priority areas. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

Priority 2

This grant program prioritizes entities that were created by the Minnesota Legislature. Was your organization created by the Minnesota Legislature? (Yes or No)

- If yes, cite the Minnesota statute or session law that created your organization.

Measuring outcomes

Describe how you plan to measure the outcomes of your project including impact on your organization and relevant agricultural, horticultural, and rural communities and stakeholders. (1,000 characters, including spaces)

Project support

Stakeholder support

Describe the stakeholders who support this project and why each stakeholder supports this project. (1,500 characters, including spaces)

Stakeholder letters

Attach at least one letter of support from a stakeholder, such as a state, regional, or community partner, who supports this project but is not a partner in completing the project. You may include additional letters of support from other stakeholders that affirm your ability to successfully implement the project.

Partners

List all project partners and collaborators and provide a brief summary of each of their contributions to this project and a short description of their relevant abilities and qualifications.

Partner letters

Attach letters of support from each partner that indicates their role and their willingness to participate and commit adequate time to this project.

Project plan

Workplan and timeline

Create a workplan using the example format shown below. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project. For example, you might include target dates for requesting quotes, installing and testing equipment, and full launch of the equipment. You may also upload a workplan as an Excel or Word file.

Timeframe	Description of task or action item	Responsible party
<i>Ex: July 2026</i>	<i>Contract with University of Minnesota to conduct evaluation of project</i>	<i>Executive director</i>

Budget narrative and match

Complete the budget tables and justifications.

Budget table

Expense category	Total
Personnel – salaries	\$
Personnel – fringe benefits	\$
Travel	\$
Equipment (over \$10,000)	\$
Supplies	\$
Construction	\$
Contractual	\$
Other	\$
Total direct project costs	\$
Indirect costs	\$
Total project costs	\$

Budget narrative

In each budget table, you will be able to include up to 10 lines. You are not required to use every line.

Personnel – salaries and wages

List salary and wage costs for people employed by your organization whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to this project's activities.

Personnel expenses are salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for the number of hours or proportion of time an employee devotes to the grant-supported project or program. Under the formally established policies of the organization, salaries, wages, and fringe benefits must be consistently applied, reasonable for the services rendered, and supported with adequate documentation, such as timesheets or payroll reports.

Employee name and title	Level of effort (# of hours or % of full-time equivalents [FTE])	Total
-	-	\$
-	-	\$
-	-	\$
Personnel subtotal	-	\$

Personnel justification

By name/title, describe the activities each person will complete and approximately when they will occur. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

Personnel – fringe benefits

List fringe benefit rates (e.g., workers comp costs, insurance benefits, retirement benefits, etc.), in percentages, for each of the employees listed in the personnel budget and total grant funds requested for each employee's fringe costs.

Employee name and title	Fringe benefits rate	Total
-	%	\$
-	%	\$
-	%	\$
Fringe benefits subtotal	-	\$

Travel

List costs for trips or grouping of trips that will be needed to conduct this project or to provide outreach or education on project outcomes.

Travel and subsistence expenses are limited to those allowed by formal organizational policy and may not exceed the amounts allowed in Chapter 15 of the current [Commissioner's Plan](#), published by the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget.

Trip destination and description	Type of expense (e.g. airfare, car rental, hotel, etc.)	Unit of measure and number/cost per unit (e.g., 5 nights @\$120/night or 1 flight \$500/ticket)	Number of travelers claiming expense	Total
-	-	-	-	\$
-	-	-	-	\$
-	-	-	-	\$
Travel subtotal	-	-	-	\$

Travel justification

For each trip listed, describe the purpose of each trip and how it will achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. Include approximate date(s) of travel for each trip. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

By checking this box, I confirm that my organization's established travel policies will be adhered to when completing the above-mentioned trips in accordance with the Commissioner's Plan as applicable.

Equipment

List costs for equipment that will be purchased or rented under the grant.

Equipment costs include purchase or rental of general or special-purpose equipment. Equipment is defined as tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds \$10,000 per unit.

Equipment item description	Rental or purchase	Acquisition date	Total
-	-	-	\$
-	-	-	\$
-	-	-	\$
Equipment subtotal	-	-	\$

Equipment justification

For each equipment item listed above, describe how it will be used to accomplish the project's objectives and outcomes(s). (2,000 characters, including spaces).

Supplies

List costs for supplies that are necessary to the completion of your project.

Supplies are materials, supplies, and fabricated parts costing less than \$10,000 per unit. Computing devices (e.g., laptops, tablets, etc.), if the acquisition cost is less than \$10,000 and the item is essential to the performance of the grant project, are allowable.

Supplies item description	Cost per unit	Number of units	Acquisition date	Total
-	\$	-	-	\$
-	\$	-	-	\$
-	\$	-	-	\$
Supplies subtotal	\$	-	-	\$

Supplies justification

Describe the purpose of the supplies listed in the table above and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s). (2,000 characters, including spaces)

Construction

List costs for construction necessary to the project.

Some examples of construction costs include additions, improvements, modifications, modernization, demolition and removal, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, alterations, expansions, or other construction on an existing building, as well as construction of a new building(s) at an existing facility, or construction of a new facility at a new site. Construction of wastewater management structures is also eligible. Site work and construction-related materials are also included in this category, which may include items such as wood, nails, concrete, roofing, gravel, paint, insulation, drywall, or plumbing fixtures.

Construction costs may also include “soft costs” tied to construction such as administrative and legal expenses, relocation expenses and payments, architectural and engineering fees, or project inspection fees.

Add additional lines for each additional line item included in your construction budget.

Construction description	Total
-	\$
-	\$
-	\$
Construction subtotal	-

Construction justification

Describe the purpose of the construction listed in the table above and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s). (2,000 characters, including spaces)

Contractual/consultant

List costs for work on the project that will be performed by individuals or organizations other than the applicant (e.g., consultants, contractors, partner organizations, etc.).

Contractual/consultant services are those performed by an individual or organization other than the applicant that is in a particular profession or with a special skill. These services are paid for through a subcontract.

- Compensation for contractor or consultant services should be reasonable and consistent with that paid for similar services in the marketplace. Note that we do not allow indirect costs for contractors and consultants.
- Any subcontract must be a written agreement between the grantee and the third party. The contract must, as appropriate, state the activities to be performed; the time schedule; the policies and requirements that apply to the contractor; the maximum amount of money for which the grantee may become liable to the third party under the agreement; and the cost principles to be used in determining allowable costs in the case of cost-type contracts.

Contractual name/organization	Hourly rate or flat rate	Rate value (e.g., \$45/hour)	Total
-	\$	\$	\$
-	\$	\$	\$
-	\$	\$	\$
Contractual/consultant subtotal	-	-	\$

Contractual/consultant justification

For each contractual line item listed in your contractual budget describe how it is necessary to your project and how it will be used to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the project. You must also include a justification for why contractual/consultant services are to be used to meet the anticipated outcomes and objectives. Include an estimated timeline for when the contractual work will be performed. (2,000 characters, including spaces)

By checking this box, I confirm that my organization followed the same policies and procedures used for procurements from non-state sources, which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations. If the contractor(s)/consultant(s) are not already selected, my organization will follow the same requirements.

Other

List any costs not covered in any of the previous budget categories.

Other costs may include meetings and conferences; communications; rental expenses; advertisements; publication costs; data collection; and participant support costs, including stipends to participants that complete a project survey or take part in a focus group. Meeting meals cannot be associated with entertainment nor included in a per diem travel cost.

Other item description	Cost per unit	Number of units	Acquisition date	Total
-	\$	-	-	\$
-	\$	-	-	\$
-	\$	-	-	\$
Other subtotal	-	-	-	\$

Other justification

Describe the purpose of each item listed above and how it is necessary for the completion of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s). For meals, the costs must be reasonable, and a justification must be included to show that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants. (2,000 characters, including spaces).

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are any costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives which cannot be readily identified with an individual project, program, or organizational activity. They generally include facilities operation and maintenance costs, depreciation, and administrative expenses. You may request up to 15% of your personnel and fringe costs.

Indirect cost rate	Total
-	\$
Indirect subtotal	\$

Match

Explain how you plan to pay for your project (financing, other grants, private investment, or organization funds, etc.). Other state grant funds cannot be used to provide the funding used to pay for this project, but non-forgivable loans from the state may be used as a match.

Documents showing project costs and ability to pay for project (optional)

- Submit documents such as:
 - Letters of commitment written by financial institutions or other organization that will be providing funding through loans or credit
 - Letters from bank demonstrating sufficient cash available to fund project

Other funds

Are any portions of your project being paid for by another grant or other restricted funding? (Yes or No)

- If yes, explain the other source of funds and what parts of the project are being paid by that funding.