

New York State Grown & Certified Infrastructure, Technology, Research and Development Grant Program

Funding Available: Up to \$5.8 million

Description

The New York State Grown & Certified Infrastructure, Technology, Research and Development Grant Program will provide grants on a competitive basis to eligible applicants (Program Administrators) who will administer a grant program that will assist agricultural entities in implementing projects that will invest in critical farm infrastructure, adopt state-of-the-art practices, purchase innovative technology or equipment, or conduct cutting edge research to aid in the development of new products to meet consumer demand marketed under the New York State Grown & Certified program (NYS G&C).

Projects must have a direct and timely benefit to New York agricultural producers/processors and significance to the region served by the eligible applicant. The Program will be administered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM).

Program Administrator Requirements

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Program Administrator (PA) applicants include: counties and municipalities, local development corporations, regional development corporations, public benefit corporations, Industrial Development Agencies, regional planning councils, economic development organizations, and not-for-profit corporations. Eligible PA Applicants will apply for a block grant for the purposes of providing grants to agricultural entities. Eligible PA applicants will enter into a grant agreement with agricultural entities to complete individual projects.

Funding Available:

A total of \$5.8 million is available for the Program. Of that, \$5.0 million is available for capital projects and \$800,000 for research and development projects. Block grants will be awarded to deliver and administer a program in the NYS Regional Economic Development Council Regions, with funds distributed per the following REDC groupings:

- *Southern Tier REDC, Western New York REDC* - \$1,000,000 total for capital projects; \$200,000 total for research and development projects
- *Finger Lakes REDC, Central New York REDC* – \$1,000,000 total for capital projects; \$200,000 total for research and development projects
- *Long Island REDC, New York City REDC, and Mid-Hudson REDC* - \$1,500,000 total for capital projects; \$200,000 total for research and development
- *Mohawk Valley REDC, Capital District REDC, North Country REDC* -- \$1,500,000 total for capital projects; \$200,000 total for research and development projects

One administrator will be awarded for each of the above REDC groups. No more than 15% of the grant funds may be used for administration costs. All administration costs must be directly related to execution of the Program.

If a qualified PA is not identified for a regional REDC grouping, AGM reserves the right to contract with a PA from another region.

Program Administrator Responsibilities:

Program Administrators will be responsible for day-to-day administration of the Program, including, but not limited to: educational/promotional activities to ensure industry participation; accepting and evaluating proposals received from agricultural entities; awarding grants; executing and administering contracts with eligible agricultural entities, including contract oversight and reporting to AGM; and ensuring that awarded entities enroll in NYS G&C.

Agricultural Entity Grant Program

Eligible Agricultural Entities:

- 1) Agricultural producers located within New York State which produce an edible agricultural product. Agricultural producers are generally defined in section 328(2) of the NY Agriculture and Markets Law. For purposes of this grant, a producer is defined as a commercial operation that involves land and on-farm buildings, equipment and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products. Agricultural product is defined as any agricultural or aquacultural product of the soil or water, including but not limited to fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy products, meat and meat products, poultry and poultry products, fish and fish products, grain and grain products, honey, nuts, preserves, maple sap products, apple cider, and fruit.
- 2) Food processing establishments located in New York State. Food processing establishments include, but are not limited to processing plants, beverage plants, food manufacturers or other places that receives food or beverages ingredients to products for the purpose of processing or otherwise adding to the value of the product for commercial sale. The term "processing" means processing foods in any manner, such as by manufacturing, canning, preserving, freezing, drying, dehydrating, juicing, pickling, baking, brining, bottling, packing, repacking, pressing, waxing, heating or cooking, or otherwise treating food.
- 3) Distributors that represent at least ten New York producers. A distributor is defined as a food or beverage distributor that provides direct services for agricultural producers, of edible products, such as through consolidation, storing, and delivering products, or who otherwise serves as an intermediary between producers and wholesale or retail buyers, such as restaurants, schools, grocery stores, etc.
- 4) Agricultural Cooperatives of edible products must have at least 10 members residing in New York State or at least 51% of membership residing in New York State. An "agricultural cooperative" means a cooperative, either stock or non-stock, operated for the mutual benefit of the members in which (1) no member is allowed more than one vote because of the amount of stock or membership capital he or she may own therein, and (2) the cooperative does not pay dividends on stock or membership capital in excess of twelve per centum per annum.
- 5) New York not-for-profit corporations partnering with one or more NYS G&C producers, food processing establishments, distributors or agricultural cooperatives (as defined in #1-4 above). Not-for-profit corporations are generally defined in New York Consolidated Laws, Not-For-Profit Corporation Law - NPC § 102. A "Corporation" or "domestic corporation" means a corporation (1) formed under this chapter, or existing on its effective date and theretofore formed under any other general statute or by any special act of this state, exclusively for a purpose or purposes, not for pecuniary profit or financial gain, for which a corporation may be formed under this chapter, and (2) no part of the assets, income or profit of which is distributable to, or enures to the benefit of, its

members, directors or officers except to the extent permitted under this statute.

Applicants must be currently enrolled in the NYS Grown & Certified program or provide a letter of commitment to be enrolled by the conclusion of the project. Dairy and grape farms who sell to NYS G&C processors may be eligible to receive grant funds if they meet the environmental requirements of the NYS G&C program.

Eligible Agricultural Projects:

a). Capital projects that will improve critical farm infrastructure or implement innovative technology and/or state-of-the-art equipment.

OR

b). Research and development projects that will aid the development of new products to be marketed under NYS G&C.

All projects must implement new and innovative practices or approaches to meet industry needs and consumer demand.

All projects must have a direct and timely benefit to New York agricultural industry and significance to the region served by the eligible applicant with a focus on one or more of the following priority areas:

- Production automation and labor efficiency
- Distribution capacity enhancement
- Processing and packaging
- Food safety
- Environmental sustainability directly related to NYS G&C participation
- New product development targeting consumer demand

Funding Available:

Up to 90% of the total project cost will be made available to eligible agricultural entities for eligible projects. Total individual capital project costs can range between \$20,000 to \$250,000 each. Total individual research and development project costs can range between \$10,000 to \$50,000 each.

Matching Funds:

The eligible agricultural entity must provide at least 10% of the total project cost. Eligible matching funds include cash, grants or loans.

Eligible Costs for Capital Projects:

1. Machinery and Equipment
2. Construction
3. Acquisition or expansion of buildings
4. Architectural and engineering costs
5. Consultants
6. Technical service providers

Eligible Costs for Research and Development Projects:

1. Consultants
2. Technical service providers

Ineligible Costs for all Projects:

1. Working capital
2. Purchase of land
3. Passenger vehicles

4. Routine costs associated with day-to-day operations

NYS G&C Requirements:

Agricultural entities receiving funding through this grant program will be required to participate in the NYS G&C program upon completion of the project.

Project Term Completion Date

Awardees will have 5 years from the date of the execution of a contract to spend all program funds. It is anticipated this will be in the Fall of 2027.

Pre-application Requirements

Eligible not-for-profit corporations must submit their NYS Office of the Attorney General Charities Bureau Registration or Exemption.

Selection Criteria of Administrators

An application is eligible to receive a total final score of 100, of which 80 percent is derived from AGM review criteria and 20 percent is allocated to the applicable Regional Economic Development Council (REDC). The REDC rates the degree to which project aligns with the REDC's Strategic Plan.

AGM will evaluate, score and select proposals based on the following criteria:

1. Degree to which the applicant demonstrates the ability to market and promote the program to achieve maximum agricultural industry participation. **10 points**
2. Applicant's knowledge and experience of the region's agricultural needs and opportunities and degree to which the applicant proposes to successfully deliver the program and achieve the program goals and objectives. **30 points**
3. Degree of demonstrated experience in delivering regional grant and or loan programs. **20 points**
4. Reasonableness of administrative costs. **20 points**

Limitations

AGM reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all proposals received with respect to this program.
2. Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of the applicant.
3. Request from an applicant additional information as deemed necessary to more fully evaluate its proposal.
4. Amend the program's specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice.
5. Select only certain portions of proposals for state funding.
6. Negotiate the terms of any agreement proposed by the applicant.
7. Make all final decisions with respect to the amount of State funding and the timing of payments to be provided to the applicant.

8. All eligible proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will become the property of AGM.

Successful Applicant Requirements

1. Strong alignment with the state and regional agricultural needs, opportunities, and priorities.
2. Ability to promote the program to ensure agriculture industry participation.
3. Experience evaluating proposals and awarding grants.
4. Experience executing and administering contracts.
5. Ensuring that projects have a direct and timely benefit to New York agricultural producers/processors.
6. Knowledge and familiarity with the NYS Grown & Certified Program (NYS G&C).
7. Administrative costs no more than 15% of the total project cost.
8. Awardees will be required to execute a contract with AGM.
9. Prior to the execution of a contract, awardees must be registered in the Grants Gateway.
10. Awardees will be required to comply with the New York State Workers' Compensation Law sections 57 and 220 require that the Department not enter into a contract unless proof of Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance in a form satisfactory to the New York State Workers' Compensation Board.
11. Appendix A, which is posted on AGM's website at www.agriculture.ny.gov, contains standard clauses that are required in all State contracts. Appendix A will be a part of any contract awarded, and successful applicants will be responsible for complying with the terms and conditions contained therein.
12. Some projects may be subject to review under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). Municipalities should go to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation web site www.dec.ny.gov for further information regarding applicability.
13. AGM and State Comptroller's Office reserve the right to audit the Applicant's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to six years after the completion of the project.
14. Successful applicants will be required to submit a current New York State Vendor Responsibility Form. See http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor_index.htm.
15. All proposals submitted and all related contracts and reports may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law.
16. Successful applicants will be required to comply with all applicable Federal statutes, regulations and policy requirements.
17. Projects which include ground disturbing activities, construction of new buildings, or modification of buildings over 50 years old will be subject to further review by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). The Department reserves the right to request such additional information as is necessary to allow OPRHP to make a determination regarding the potential impacts of the project on historical sites or artifacts and possible alternatives which avoid or mitigate adverse impacts.