



# Department of Agriculture and Markets

**RFA0386**

**Request for Applications**

for the

**2026**

**Agricultural Fairgrounds Advertising, Promotion, and  
Education Program**

**Release Date: January 8, 2026**

**Deadline for Applications: July 1, 2026**

Questions about requirements contained in this RFA may be emailed to:

[fairs@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:fairs@agriculture.ny.gov)

## **1. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (the “Department”) is pleased to announce the availability of funds for the 2026 Agricultural Fairgrounds Advertising, Promotion, and Education Program (the “Program”). This Program will provide funding for advertising, promotion and education activities that will increase participation in and promotion of county and local fairs in New York State.

### **1.2. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants for this Program are agricultural and horticultural corporations and county extension service associations that sponsor an annual fair or exposition for the promotion of agriculture and domestic arts and receive premium reimbursements pursuant to Article 24 of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law.

### **1.3. Available Funding**

There is a total of \$625,000 available for this program from the state’s 2025-2026 fiscal year enacted budget. Each eligible applicant will receive an award of up to \$12,500.

## **2. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

### **2.1. Eligible Projects**

Eligible projects will increase activities that improve public knowledge of, and appreciation for, the benefits of agriculture and domestic arts through advertising, promotion, and education. Projects will enhance and encourage visitor participation and appreciation of agriculture and domestic arts as well as expand existing efforts to attract visitors and showcase agriculture. Projects will expose consumers to the fair brand and create meaningful, long-lasting brand recognition.

Projects will share stories and experiences of local agriculture with the goal of expanding knowledge of the agriculture industry in New York, while bringing greater awareness to visitors that some of the best agriculture in the world is grown right here in New York State. Other project goals will be the preservation and enhancement, by educational endeavors, of the agricultural and historical legacy of New York State. All of this will translate into more fair visits, more revenue to NYS county fairs, and a greater economic impact on New York State.

#### **2.1.1 Eligible Activities**

Projects must involve advertising, promotion, and education programs. Eligible applications will include the following activities:

##### *Traditional Marketing & Advertising*

- Print advertisement including graphic design and ad placement costs.
- Billboard advertisement including graphic design and ad placement costs.
- Radio advertisements that promote agriculture and domestic arts and create meaningful, long-lasting brand recognition.

- Local TV advertising that promotes agriculture and domestic arts and create meaningful, long-lasting brand recognition.
- Costs associated with adding the fair brand to other customer-facing marketing opportunities, e.g., bus and bench placement.
- Product displays that contain the fair brand strategically placed inside local stores, e.g. free-standing displays, end-caps, hang-tags, shelf slides, cooler clings or floor graphics.

### *Digital Marketing*

- Marketing efforts that use an electronic device and/or the internet to display the fair brand, e.g. digital advertising, email marketing, online brochures, social media marketing, etc.

### *Educational Projects*

- Educational projects geared towards the general public to increase understanding of New York's agricultural economy and promote public engagement.

## **2.2. Project Duration**

The project must be proposed for implementation during the 2026 county and local fair season. Eligible applicants will be awarded a contract with a term beginning January 15, 2026 and ending October 1, 2026.

## **2.3. Eligible Costs**

Grant funds may be used for any of the following purposes that are directly related to completion of the project, including but not limited to:

- logo development or redesign;
- salaries and wages;
- contractor services;
- social media design consultant;
- app design;
- local artwork and design for promotions;
- consumer marketing campaigns;
- fair signage for main entrance and agriculture exhibits;
- online ticketing development;
- materials and supplies for educational exhibits; and
- other website improvements.

## **2.4. Ineligible Costs**

Grant funds may not be used for the following:

- any cost unrelated to the eligible project;
- promotional items (swag), clothing, gifts, prizes, memorabilia, souvenirs;
- computer hardware or software;
- vehicles;
- cell phones;
- website maintenance fees;
- shipping;
- indirect and overhead costs;
- fringe benefits; and
- any cost incurred prior to January 15, 2026.

## **3. HOW TO APPLY**

### **3.1. Application Submission**

Applicants must submit a completed Work Plan and Budget to the Department's program manager using the templates included with this RFA. The address for submission of a proposed Work Plan and Budget is: [fairs@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:fairs@agriculture.ny.gov) with a subject line: RFA0386.

**A completed Work Plan and Budget must be submitted to the Department by July 1, 2026.**

### **3.2. SFS Registration**

Your organization must be registered in the State Financial System (SFS) Vendor Portal to apply for this grant opportunity. To start this process, please read the instructions found here: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/register-your-organization>.

NOTE: New York State Grants Management reserves 5-10 business days from the receipt of complete materials to process a registration request. Due to the length of time this process could take to complete, it is advised that new registrants send in their registration form as soon as possible.

If your organization is not currently doing business with NYS, you will need to submit a Substitute W-9 Form to obtain a NYS SFS Vendor ID, in addition to the Registration Form for Administrators to register. Organizations are notified by email once registration is complete.

### **3.3. Pre-Qualification in SFS**

All not-for-profit organizations must be Prequalified in SFS to apply for this grant opportunity. To Prequalify, your organization must first register with SFS and complete an online Prequalification Application. This includes answering basic questions regarding

the organization and uploading key organization documents. Information and training for vendors on SFS and the process for prequalification can be found at: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>.

Once Prequalified, it is the responsibility of the organization to maintain Prequalification. Three of a not-for-profit's essential financial documents – the IRS990, Financial Statement, and Charities Bureau filing – expire on an annual basis. A not-for-profit must upload current versions of these documents and submit an updated prequalification application for review and approval each year to maintain its prequalification. Not-for-profits are provided a full 10.5 months from the end of their fiscal year to provide a current IRS990 or Financial Statement without the interim requirement of uploading extension requests. For more information regarding the pre-qualification process, please view the [Prequalification Manual for Grantees](#).

To start the pre-qualification process, applicants must:

- - Log into the [SFS Vendor Portal](#);
- - Click the “Grant-Management” button on the SFS home page;
- - Click on the “pre-qualification application” tab;
- - Answers all questions;
- - Upload required documents; and
- - Enter or update the organization's contact information.

NOTE: New York State reserves 5-10 business days from the receipt of complete Prequalification applications to conduct its review. If supplementary information or updates are required, review times will be longer. Due to the length of time this process could take to complete, it is advised that organizations Prequalify as soon as possible.

### **3.4. Help with SFS**

Information for live help desk support can be found at:

<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/contact-sfs>.

## **4. AWARDS**

The Department's program manager will review the Work Plan, Budget and supporting documentation to determine project and cost eligibility. The applicant will receive written notification that their Work Plan and Budget have been approved.

## **5. CONTRACT & PAYMENT TERMS**

### **5.1. Contract Agreement**

A contract defining all terms and conditions and responsibilities of the awardee will be developed by the Department after the Work Plan and Budget are successfully negotiated between the Department and the Applicant. The contract will incorporate the approved Work Plan and Budget among its provisions.

## **5.2. State of New York Contract for Grants**

New York State has developed a standard contract for grants that is required for all state grant contracts. The State of New York Contract for Grants will be executed for all projects awarded under the Program, and successful applicants will be responsible for complying with the terms and conditions contained therein. A sample contract will be posted with this RFP on the Department's website.

## **5.3. Payment**

Once the Contract is fully executed, grant funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Awardees may request, at the discretion of the Department, an initial payment of up to fifty percent (50%) of the total grant award. The Department shall retain ten percent (10%) of the award amount to be disbursed to the Contractor upon acceptance of the Final Report. A signed New York State Claim for Payment Form must be submitted to the Department for the Contractor to be reimbursed for funds expended.

Payment to the Contractor shall only be rendered electronically unless payment by paper check is expressly authorized by the Commissioner, at the Commissioner's sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances. Such electronic payment shall be made in accordance with ordinary state procedures and practices. The Contractor shall comply with the Comptroller of the State of New York's procedures for authorizing electronic payments. The Contractor acknowledges that it will not receive payment on any Claim for Payment Form submitted under this agreement if it does not comply with the Comptroller of the State of New York's electronic payment procedures, except where the Commissioner has expressly authorized payment by paper check as set forth above.

## **5.4. Workers' Compensation & Disability Requirements**

New York State Workers' Compensation Law sections 57 and 220 prohibit the Department from entering into a contract unless proof of Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance in a form satisfactory to the New York State Workers' Compensation Board has been secured.

Please visit the New York State Workers' Compensation Board website, [www.wcb.ny.gov](http://www.wcb.ny.gov), for more information. You may contact the Board's Bureau of Compliance with any questions related to workers' compensation or disability insurance at (866) 298-7830.

## **5.5. Liability**

The Department shall not be held liable for any costs incurred by any party for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the formal execution of a contract.

## **6. CONSIDERATIONS**

### **6.1. Department's Reservation of Rights**

The Department reserves the right to:

- Modify application submission requirements and/or change any of the scheduled dates as deemed necessary with appropriate written notice to all

potential applicants.

- Prior to the deadline for applications, amend the RFA specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available and with appropriate written notice to all potential applicants.
- Prior to the deadline for applications, direct applicants to submit modifications to their applications addressing subsequent RFA amendments.
- Withdraw the RFA at any time, at the Department's sole discretion.
- Reject any or all applications received in response to this RFA.
- Make an award under the RFA in whole or in part.
- Disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFA.
- Seek clarifications and revisions of applications.
- Eliminate any mandatory, non-material specifications with which all applicants cannot comply.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification and concurrence of the applicant.
- Waive any requirements that are not material.
- Require clarification at any time during the grant process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an applicant's work plan and budget and/or to determine an applicant's compliance with the requirements of the RFA.
- Utilize any or all ideas submitted in the applications received unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights.
- Negotiate with successful applicants any matter within the scope of the RFA in the best interest of the State, including but not limited to the terms of the budget.
- Make all final decisions with respect to the amount of State funding and the timing of payments to be provided to an applicant.
- Conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects to determine long-term impacts.

## **6.2. Freedom of Information**

All application documents submitted and all related contracts and reports may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law.