

Vermont Agriculture, Food, Beverage, Forest and Fiber Product Association Grant Request for Proposals (RFA)

Overview

This program is designed to enhance the promotion of Vermont products by supporting discrete marketing projects for producer association groups that represent and promote Vermont agriculture, food, beverage, forest, or fiber products.

Request for Applications Release: April 18, 2018 at:

<https://go.usa.gov/xQ4Tg> (case sensitive)

Applications Accepted: May 3, 2018 – May 24, 2018 via WebGrants at:

<https://agriculturegrants.vermont.gov>. Applicants are encouraged to register in WebGrants at least one week prior to May 3, to avoid complications at the time of submission.

Eligible Applicants: Vermont-based nonprofit producer association groups that represent and promote Vermont agriculture, food, beverage, forest, and fiber products. For the purposes of this grant, producer association group, also known as a trade association, industry trade group, business association, sector association or industry body, is an organization founded and funded by businesses that operate in a specific industry.

Ineligible Applicants: Producer cooperatives, for-profit organizations, organizations that do not represent an industry trade group, business association, sector association, or industry body.

Funding Availability: A total of \$16,000 in grant funds are available. Awards will be made to eligible applicants, in chronological order as applications are received, until total grant funds have been obligated. A 50% cash match is required.

Funding Limits:

Minimum: \$1,000

Maximum: \$2,000

Grant Period: Ends November 15, 2018

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Eligibility

Applicants:

Successful applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Vermont-based producer association group that represents and promotes Vermont agriculture, food, beverage, forest, and fiber products
2. Nonprofit entity
3. Represent more than 15 Vermont-based members who pay regular dues to the association (applicants will be required to describe dues structure and frequency in application)
4. Host an annual membership meeting or conference

Grant Funding:

\$16,000 in total grant funding is available with grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Grants will be awarded to eligible applicants in the order applications are received until all grant funds have been obligated. To receive funding, successful applicants must provide a certificate of insurance ([Attachment C - Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants](#)) within 14 days of receiving notification of award. Grantees may submit an initial invoice, for 50% of the grant award, with their signed grant agreement. Awarded producer associations must submit an IRS W9, if not currently a state vendor.

Eligible Proposals:**Applications must communicate the following:**

1. The product/s promoted by the applicant are grown, raised, or processed in Vermont
2. The proposed project budget must have a minimum 50% cash match
3. The funding will be used for approved expenses, as described in this RFA
4. Proposed project expands consumer outreach and/or expansion of existing marketing strategy
5. The proposed project must be part of an established, multi-year marketing plan and growth strategy of the industry represented
6. The budget includes reasonable estimates for proposed costs, and demonstrates an implementation timeline that aligns with the grant period

Approved Expenses:

- Vendor Services
 - Design and marketing: Web/graphic/digital/print design/trade show display, including graphics/banners
 - Marketing material development
 - Branding
 - Advertising: traditional print, direct mail, bus and other advertising wraps, television, radio, digital, social media (can include ad boosts)
 - Exhibiting fee for a distinct consumer event
- Direct Production Cost and Distribution
 - Printing, postage, distribution costs

Ineligible Proposals:

- Proposal budgets that include ineligible expenses: food; personnel/labor for existing organization staff; travel (including lodging and transportation); overhead/fixed costs; room or space rental fees
- Proposals from applicants failing to meet requirements for previous Agency programs or from individuals or groups unable to perform or having performance issues with previous obligations with the Agency
- Proposals that fail to demonstrate how the project will promote the Vermont product/s the applicant's association represents
- Proposals for projects that take place before grant agreement start date and/or after November 15, 2018

Applicant Information:

- Name of Organization
- First Name
- Last Name
- Title
- Email
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number

Application Questions:

1. What product/s does your association promote?
2. Explain the connection between the product/s your association promotes to Vermont’s working landscape and/or economy.
3. Describe your organization’s marketing efforts directed at promoting your product/s or to increase dues-paying membership within your organization. Our Agency is interested in seeing how a proposed project is part of an established, long-term marketing and growth strategy.

Marketing Activity	# Reached/Other Metric of Success	Audience Type (members and/or consumers)	Activity Start Date	Activity End Date	Money Invested

4. Current member count and member counts for the last five years
5. Describe your membership’s dues structure, including frequency and cost.
6. How do you communicate with your membership—and how often? For example, email, listserv, etc.
7. How many staff (per FTE) does your association employ?
8. How long has your organization been organized as a non-profit?
9. How many membership meetings/conferences do you have on an annual basis?
10. How will you communicate your project’s success to your organization’s membership?

Performance Measures and Expected Outcomes

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets looks forward to learning about the impact of each grant. We ask that grantees share observations about what changed because of the investments this grant enabled, and what was learned that others could benefit from. Sharing these experiences and observations will help us improve

future grant rounds and will help us demonstrate the value of these funds to public policy makers and budget writers, as well as other funding partners. Please use the table to demonstrate the expected *measurable* reach of your project. This measurement must be based on quantitative outcomes and can be related to increasing reach related to the industry your organization represents. Make sure you can make a connection between the funded project and quantitative, positive outcomes, as a result of the grant. Enter details about your project into the appropriate field in the WebGrants system. You may wish to utilize the template below to construct your project proposal before entering into the online system.

<u>Project Name</u>			
Task	Start Date	End Date	Expected Increase in Reach

Budget

Please show budgeted amounts of the proposed project. Enter each line item of your budget into the appropriate field in the WebGrants system. You may wish to utilize the budget template below to construct your budget before entering numbers into the online system. A 50% cash match is required.

Eligible match sources can include: applicant’s own capital, outside investment capital, special membership contributions toward the project, and grants from private or public sources. All matching funds must be directed to the same project for which the applicant is requesting grant funds.

Category	Total Costs	Grant Funds Requested	Describe Use of Funds	Match Funds	Match Source
Design/Marketing Services					
Printing					
Materials/Equipment					
Branding					
Advertising					
Vendor Booth Fee					
Other					

Public Information:

Except for grantee proprietary and personal identifying data, as provided under 1 V.S.A. § 317(c), grantee names, projects, the amount of grant awards, and all other information regarding awarded grant projects are considered public information and may be subject to disclosure.

Duration:

All projects funded in this round must be completed no later than November 15, 2018. Final reports must be submitted no later than December 15, 2018.

Disbursement of Funds:

The Agency will provide 50% of funds upon the receipt of 1) a signed grant agreement and related documents; 2) the submission and approval of a claim with associated invoice in the WebGrants system. The final 50% of funds will be provided after completion of the project, and when a final report, claim, and invoice have been submitted and approved in the WebGrants system.

Reporting:

Grantees should submit a final report as soon as their project is complete but no later than December 15, 2018, that describe the increased reach and effectiveness of marketing efforts as a result of funding associated with this grant. Verification may include photo and/or video documentation of the project, proof of purchases, or other documents showing the grant funds have been used to complete the project.

Application Submission:

All applications must be submitted through our online grant management system, WebGrants. A notice of receipt will be issued by the WebGrants system after the application has been successfully submitted.

Attachment C -Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants

All grantees must read and agree to the terms in [Attachment C - Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants](#). A certificate of insurance (COI) is a common requirement for businesses and organizations. The State of Vermont must be listed as an additional insured on the grantee's policy. For complete insurance requirements, see 8. Insurance in [Attachment C - Standard State Provisions for Contracts and Grants](#).

Note: Grantees must submit a claim in WebGrants and upload an invoice to receive funds. The invoice must use the same address as the Form W-9.