



FAIRS AND FIELD DAYS STIPEND AND CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM

FISCAL YEAR 2023 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Administered by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, this funding is appropriated annually to assist fairs throughout the state with 20-year capital improvements to their facilities and operational costs. Approved Capital Grant proposals must be completed within 24 months, budgets must include a 15% cash match, and projects must have a 20-year lifespan. Emphasis is placed on leveraging other funds and generating community support for the fair through improvements to the infrastructure. Stipends are distributed according to the Stipend Distribution Fund Formula as provided in state statute.

KEY DATES

Release Date: November 1, 2022

Application Deadline: December 16, 2022, at 11:59am (noon)

Award Notification: February 1, 2023

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SECTION I: GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

CONTACT

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Agency of Agriculture staff are available to assist you during State of Vermont business hours, Monday–Friday, 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM. Assistance may not be available shortly before deadlines.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Competitive Capital Grants are available to assist nonprofit organizations and municipalities to improve community facilities providing cultural activities to the public. The fairs and events offer opportunities for the agricultural community to highlight their practices, products, skills, and livelihood that are part of the success of maintaining Vermont’s working landscape. Annual Stipends are available to support operating costs, plant improvements, and premiums for agricultural fairs or field days events.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

A total of \$500,000; \$300,000 available for Capital Grants and \$200,000 for stipends. The increase in stipend dollars is the result of a one-time \$90,000 funding increase for FY23.

For more information regarding the two funding opportunities, please take a moment to review the state statutes regarding [Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program](#) and the [Stipend Fund Distribution Formula](#).

MINIMUM & MAXIMUM AWARD

Up to \$35,000 to be distributed per applicant for Capital Grants. Stipends are distributed according to the Stipend Distribution Fund Formula as provided in state statute.

PROJECT LENGTH

Maximum of 24 months from grant start date. Should the project change, grants may be amended once the grant application has been approved.

FUNDING SOURCE

Funding is appropriated yearly to assist our fairs throughout the state with capital improvements and operational costs.

SECTION I: GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

CAPITAL GRANTS ELIGIBILITY

Grants shall be competitively awarded to capital projects that relate to Vermont agricultural fairs and field days operating a minimum of three consecutive, eight-hour days per year.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- A project for which a grant is awarded shall have a minimum useful life of 20 years and shall be completed within two years of the execution of a contract to perform work authorized by the grant.
- A grant recipient shall contribute cash match in an amount equal to 15 percent or more of the value of the grant.
- A grant recipient is required to show all quotes as proof of project costs.
- Project must be completed in 24 months.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Proposals from applicants that do not meet the definition of an eligible fair as outlined by the Vermont statute.
- Proposals from applicants who are out of compliance with any federal, state or local laws or regulations.
- Proposals for projects which will not have a useful 20-year lifespan.
- Proposals for projects that have already been completed for which the applicant seeks reimbursement.
- Proposals from applicants failing to meet requirements for previous Agency grants and/or assistance programs, or from individuals or groups unable to perform or having performance issues with previous Agency grant obligations.

STIPEND ELIGIBILITY

Funds shall be distributed annually to [Vermont Agricultural Fairs Associations as defined in Rule 91-31](#) to support operating costs, plant improvements, and premiums for agricultural fairs or field days events held at least annually at which premiums are offered for competitive exhibits in at least five competitive categories. New applicants must operate their fair or field day for a minimum of three consecutive days, with a minimum of eight hours operating per day. Each stipend application shall be accompanied by both narrative and financial data and indicate the nature of the award sought for the fund, broken down by plant improvement and general operation, with premiums identified as a separate part of general operations.

Vermont Agricultural Fairs Associations which received supplemental funds from the Special Stipend allocated by the Vermont Legislature in FY2022 must also provide details on how those special funds are planned to be spent or were expended when applying for this current round of FY2023 Stipends.

OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

VAAFAM offers a menu of [funding opportunities](#) as well as [business planning and assistance](#) resources available to the Vermont agricultural community:

- Funding Opportunities: agriculture.vermont.gov/grants
- Business Planning & Assistance: agriculture.vermont.gov/businessdevelopment/planning

SECTION II: APPLICATION

HOW TO APPLY

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, & Markets has administered the Agricultural Fairs & Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grants program and the stipend fund for over ten years. These two grant opportunities have been combined into one application, which can be accessed using our online grants portal, Webgrants.

SUBMISSION POLICY

It is the applicant's responsibility to adhere to all application instructions including the submission dates and times included in this request for applications (RFA). The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) will accept the last validated electronic submission through the grants management system, [WebGrants](#), prior to the posted deadline as the final and sole acceptable submission of an application.

VAAFAM will not accept submission or re-submission of incomplete or delayed applications after the posted deadline, barring exceptional circumstances.

WebGrants will prevent applications from being submitted after the cut-off time.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

When an application has successfully been submitted, the applicant will receive a confirmation email from <agriculturegrants.vermont@webgrantsmail.com>. Please add this email address to your "safe senders" list. If you do not receive this confirmation, please check your junk or spam folder.

MATCHING FUNDS

A grant recipient shall contribute cash match in an amount equal to 15 percent or more of the value of the grant. Paid labor is allowable, but volunteer labor is not. No in-kind match can be used to meet this obligation.

APPLICATION REVIEW

There is established an Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee to administer and coordinate grants made pursuant to this section. The Committee shall include:

- (1) two members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets;
- (2) one member appointed by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation;
- (3) two members appointed by the Vermont Fair and Field Days Association;
- (4) one member appointed by the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing;
- (5) one member of the Vermont Senate appointed by the Committee on Committees; and
- (6) one member of the Vermont House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House.

SECTION III: GRANT MANAGEMENT & REPORTING

GRANT AGREEMENT & PAYMENT

Prior to receiving funding, successful applicants must sign a grant agreement with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) indicating their intent to complete the proposed project and authorizing VAAFAM to monitor the project's progress. The grant agreement will include provisions (terms and conditions) set by the State of Vermont as well as any program-specific requirements. Review Attachment C - Standard State Provisions and Contracts and Grants (12/15/2017 Revised) at bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing-contracting/forms for the most recent State of Vermont provisions.

Prior to commencement of work and release of any payments, grantee must submit:

- A. A certificate of insurance consistent with the requirements set forth in Attachment C of the grant agreement [Not required if grantee has a current certificate of insurance on file with the Agency of Agriculture.]
- B. A current [IRS Form W-9](#) (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification), signed within the past six months [Not required if grantee is already a state vendor.]
- C. If grant is state-funded, completed [Act 154 Good Standing Certification](#). Find this form at finance.vermont.gov/vendors-and-grantees.
- D. Documentation verifying pledged matching funds, as applicable

GRANTEE PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Following execution of the grant contract, grant recipients may submit an initial claim for 100% of Stipend funds and 90% of Capital Grant funds. The remaining 10% of Capital Grant funds will be disbursed upon completion of the infrastructure improvement project after the final claim and all required documentation is submitted and with approval from the Program Manager.

CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

A certificate of insurance (COI) is a common requirement for businesses and organizations; most agents are familiar with it. The State of Vermont must be listed as an additional insured on the grantee's policy. We recommend forwarding the insurance requirements below to prospective insurers for accuracy:

Insurance: Before commencing work on this Agreement the Party must provide certificates of insurance to show that the following minimum coverages are in effect. It is the responsibility of the Party to maintain current certificates of insurance on file with the State through the term of this Agreement. No warranty is made that the coverages and limits listed herein are adequate to cover and protect the interests of the Party for the Party's operations. These are solely minimums that have been established to protect the interests of the State.

Workers Compensation: With respect to all operations performed, the Party shall carry workers' compensation insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont. Vermont will accept an out-of-state employer's workers' compensation coverage while operating in Vermont provided that the insurance carrier is licensed to write insurance in Vermont and an amendatory endorsement is added to the policy adding Vermont for coverage purposes. Otherwise, the party shall secure a Vermont workers' compensation policy, if necessary, to comply with Vermont law.

SECTION III: GRANT MANAGEMENT & REPORTING

General Liability and Property Damage: With respect to all operations performed under this Agreement, the Party shall carry general liability insurance having all major divisions of coverage including, but not limited to:

Premises - Operations

Products and Completed Operations

Personal Injury Liability

Contractual Liability

The policy shall be on an occurrence form and limits shall not be less than:

\$1,000,000 Each Occurrence

\$2,000,000 General Aggregate

\$1,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate

\$1,000,000 Personal & Advertising Injury

Automotive Liability: The Party shall carry automotive liability insurance covering all motor vehicles, including hired and non-owned coverage, used in connection with the Agreement. Limits of coverage shall not be less than \$500,000 combined single limit. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, limits of coverage shall not be less than \$1,000,000 combined single limit.

Additional Insured. The General Liability and Property Damage coverages required for performance of this Agreement shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. If performance of this Agreement involves construction, or the transport of persons or hazardous materials, then the required Automotive Liability coverage shall include the State of Vermont and its agencies, departments, officers and employees as Additional Insureds. Coverage shall be primary and non-contributory with any other insurance and self-insurance.

Notice of Cancellation or Change. There shall be no cancellation, change, potential exhaustion of aggregate limits or non-renewal of insurance coverage(s) without thirty (30) days written prior written notice to the State.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grant recipients must track and report all paid and unpaid event attendance, as well as, the value of all premium categories, plant improvements, general operations, associated expenditures, and must also provide project updates from previous years when applying for Stipend and Capital Grant funds the following year.

Upon completion of the infrastructure improvement project, grant recipients must submit expense documentation including an itemized list of expenses related to the proposed budget and actuals from the completed project, copies of related receipts and invoices, and project photos along with the final claim for Program Manager approval.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

§ 5608. AGRICULTURAL FAIRS AND FIELD DAYS CAPITAL PROJECTS COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

(a) Grant guidelines. The following guidelines shall apply to capital grants made for Vermont agricultural fairs and field days projects pursuant to this section:

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(1) Grants shall be competitively awarded to capital projects that relate to Vermont agricultural fairs and field days operating a minimum of three consecutive, eight-hour days per year.

(2) A project for which a grant is awarded shall have a minimum useful life of 20 years and shall be completed within two years of the execution of a contract to perform work authorized by the grant.

(3) A grant recipient shall contribute matching funds or in-kind services in an amount equal to 15 percent or more of the value of the grant.

(b) There is established an Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Program Advisory Committee to administer and coordinate grants made pursuant to this section. The Committee shall include:

(1) two members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets;

(2) one member appointed by the Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation;

(3) two members appointed by the Vermont Fair and Field Days Association;

(4) one member appointed by the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing;

(5) one member of the Vermont Senate appointed by the Committee on Committees; and

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(6) one member of the Vermont House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House.

(c) Administration.

(1) The Advisory Committee created in subsection (b) of this section shall have the authority to award grants in its sole discretion; provided, however, that the Committee may consider whether to award partial awards to all applicants that meet Program criteria established by the Committee.

(2) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall provide administrative and technical support to the Committee for purposes of administering grants awarded under this section.

STIPEND FUNDS

Vermont Agricultural Fairs Stipend Fund Distribution Formula

Rule 91-31 Effective July 1, 1991

Section 1. Definitions.

(1) "Agricultural Fair" or "field days" means an exhibition held at least annually by an agricultural fair association at which premiums are offered for competitive exhibits in at least five competitive categories.

(2) "Agricultural Fair Association" means an organization or association incorporated under state law and governed by an elected board of directors that operate fairs and agricultural shows that are representative of the mutual interests of those who are engaged in the production, processing, marketing and distribution of specific farm and food products such as livestock, poultry, fruits, vegetables, horticultural products, maple products, honey, Christmas trees, and other commodities normally defined as agricultural products.

(3) "Competitive Exhibits" means exhibits entered in competition demonstrating the improvement of grains, fruits, vegetables, cultivated flowers, livestock, poultry, maple products, dairy products or other agricultural crops or products. To be considered a competitive exhibit there must be at least three entries in a class.

(4) "General Operation" means the goods and services required to operate a fair in the ordinary course of business other than plant improvement and which, in usual accounting practice, give rise to ordinary expenses.

(5) "Plant improvements" means improvements of fixtures, machinery, apparatus, equipment, display facilities, or housing required for each fair.

Section 2. Time.

In order for any fair association to be eligible for an award from the State Stipend Fund for any calendar year, it shall make application to the Commissioner of Agriculture on or before February 1, of the succeeding year.

Section 3. Application.

Each application shall be accompanied by both narrative and financial data in a form to be prescribed by the Commissioner of Agriculture to support a claim for an award from the State Stipend Fund. Each application shall indicate the nature of the award sought for the fund, broken down by plant improvement and general operation. Premiums shall be identified as a separate part of general operations. A stipend awarded to any applicant may include funds on account of one or both such categories and need not necessarily be in the ratio required by statute for distribution of the overall Stipend Fund. The overall stipend fund shall be divided one half for plant improvement and one half for premiums and general operation.

APPENDIX A: VERMONT FAIRS AND FIELD DAYS STATUTE AND RULES

Section 4. Criteria.

Since the State Stipend Fund is based upon competing needs of fair association throughout the state, the Commissioner will consider both the quality of the application, the importance and impact of respective fairs historically, and the relative needs of fair association throughout the state. The Commissioner shall establish a list of fairs comparing the total attendances, the amount spent for premiums on qualifying categories, the amount spent on plant improvements and the amount spent for other operating expenses.

The allocation of the fund shall be accomplished by dividing the fund into four equal parts and allocating one fourth to all eligible fair associations at the same ratio as their total attendance relates to the total attendance of all eligible fairs; one fourth to all eligible fair associations as the permanent improvements relates to the total spent on permanent improvements by all eligible fairs; and one fourth at the same ratio as the amount spent for operating expenses excluding the above categories relates to the same expenses of all eligible fairs.

No fair may receive more than 10% of the total amount allocated in any one of the four categories unless fewer than ten fairs apply in a particular year. Since the statute does not impose a rule of exact quality but confers discretion upon the Commissioner to make awards in as fair a manner as possible, given competing needs, the list will serve only as a guideline in determining the final awards to each fair association.

New applicants must operate their fair or field day for a minimum of three consecutive days, with a minimum of eight hours operating per day. Any fair or field day that received stipend money during the 1990 calendar year shall be deemed in compliance with this requirement.

Section 5. Notification.

Each applicant will be notified on or before March 15, in any year of application whether it has been granted or denied an award from the State Stipend Fund. Any fair association denied or aggrieved by the amount of an award may within ten days from such denial request reconsideration with information and arguments indicating why the decision should be reconsidered. The fair association may request a hearing before the Secretary in conjunction with any such reconsideration. A hearing will be set for a date within 15 days after receipt of the notice and shall be preceded by at least five days' written notice.