



Request for Proposals 2020 Funding Cycle

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Contact Us

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www.nyfvi.org



Farmer Relevant Projects Wanted. Helping Farmers Know What Works.



NYFVI is pleased to share this Request for Proposals (RFP) for its 2020 competitive grant program. We are seeking **proposals that have clear relevance to New York’s agriculture community, demonstrated producer support, and the ability to deliver farm-level economic impact over time.**

As in the past, we are asking applicants to carefully review our mission statement and portfolio priorities and show us how your work will create and share knowledge that will ultimately result in farm-level impact.

In short, we want you to help farmers know what works to solve their most pressing challenges or leverage their biggest opportunities.

Similar to the last few years we are expressing an interest in projects focused on new technologies as well as work that encourages better understanding of soil **health management practices that improve a farmer’s bottom line.**

In both areas, we are particularly interested in seeing more proposals that accelerate practice changes.

Ideas include, but are not limited to:

- Determining or demonstrating the usefulness and cost effectiveness of new **technology and tools. We call this the “Consumer Reports” approach. How can your work help farmers understand which new tools are valuable?**
- Increasing the use of data based decision making on farms.
- Projects that increase understanding of soil health practices or help farmers see the economic value of those practices to their business.
- Projects that will help farmers better understand climate change and the practices that will help mitigate the impacts.

Since 2005 NYFVI has been funded primarily by the Governor and the New York State Legislature. We are appreciative of the trust and confidence they have placed in our organization.

This RFP anticipates that the NYS legislature will continue their support with a 2020/2021 funding appropriation through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.

NYFVI Mission

Our mission is to help New York farmers become more profitable and improve the long-**term economic viability and sustainability of our state’s farms,** the food system, and the communities which they serve.

We strive to achieve our mission through a **farmer-driven** grant making process connecting **farmer-identified** needs to practical research and education solutions.

We amplify our efforts and the efforts of others through leadership and collaboration. This creation and sharing of knowledge results in positive **farm-level impact.**



FVI Grant Eligibility and Project Requirements

Eligible Applicants

Eligible grant applicants include farmer groups, researchers, educators, organizations, agencies and businesses. Applicants may represent nonprofit or for-profit sectors. NYFVI encourages individuals with ideas to partner with existing organizations to ensure project viability and execution. If you are an individual and need guidance in this regard, please contact NYFVI staff.

Former and current NYFVI grantees are eligible for funding. Those seeking funds for project continuation will face scrutiny in regard to financial viability and project performance.

FVI Grant Requirements

Dollar value: Proposals between \$15,000 to \$125,000 will be accepted.

Time frame: Projects should last at least six months and no more than two years.

Duration: Funded projects will begin between April 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021. Funded projects must last at least two quarters (six months) and may last no more than eight quarters (two years). All projects must be fully completed by December 31, 2022

Location: Projects must work with New York State resident farmers and outcomes must benefit agriculture in New York State.

Payment schedule: All funds are paid on a reimbursement basis each quarter. Payments are made only after a quarterly report and reimbursement claim, with required documentation are submitted and approved.

Impact Measurement: All projects must measure and report on the outcomes of their work.

Reporting Requirements: The NYFVI online database is used to manage the initial application as well as all reporting and expenditures. Project leaders are required to submit quarterly reports that must be approved before reimbursements are made. A final report is due within 60 days of project completion. 10% of the total project budget will be held until the final report is completed and approved.

Funding Source Acknowledgement: All projects must acknowledge NYFVI as the funder, or partial funder for their work, in all materials and presentations.

NYFVI staff is happy to work with you to ensure your proposal meets our requirements. Please call 315-453-3823, or email info@nyfvi.org

Online Application System

All applications must be submitted online through our database system at www.db.nyfvi.org. The link can also be found at www.nyfvi.org.

Applications will be accepted from September 9, 2019 through 11:59 pm November 12, 2019.

Applicants must file all internal paperwork, receive any permission, grant office numbers, or other requirements of your employer, prior to submitting an application; failure to do so may make applications ineligible for funding consideration.

On December 4, 2019 staff will provide written feedback to applicants. Applicants will have the opportunity to revise their proposal based on that feedback. Revised proposals are due no later than December 18, 2019.

If you have not previously used the NYFVI online applications system, you **will need to apply for system credentials. Don't wait until the last minute,** staff is available to activate your log in and password only during normal business hours.

Key Dates

- November 12, 2019
Proposals due by 11:59 pm
- September 17 and 25
Grant writing webinars
- December 4, 2019
Staff comments to applicants
- December 18, 2019
Proposals resubmitted
- Mid-April 2020
Applicants notified

Grant Writing Webinars

NYFVI holds grant writing webinars during each RFP cycle. Attendance is optional, but encouraged. These workshops will give you the opportunity to work with NYFVI staff to develop your proposal.

WEBINARS

90 minute webinars:

Tuesday September 17, 2019 at 10 a.m.

Wednesday September 25, 2019 at 1 p.m.

Face-to-Face Meetings and or phone calls are encouraged and may be scheduled upon request

For more information about these workshops and how to sign up, visit www.NYFVI.org



NYFVI Strategic Portfolio Priorities

At its core, the New York Farm Viability Institute's mission is to help New York farms become more viable. We do this through strategic management of our grant portfolio, ensuring the projects we fund will create and share knowledge that will directly benefit farmers.

In 2014 as the board considered the organization's mission and goals, they realized that it would be helpful to develop a structure for the project portfolio that will allow progress to be measured against the organization's goals.

To that end, we created "portfolio priorities" and assigned areas of emphasis to our active projects. The priorities are as follows:

Improve Operational Practices. Sometimes it's the willingness to do something differently that can put more money in a farmer's pocket. These projects are focused on helping as many farmers as possible refine existing production practices, or learn how to implement a new process to improve their profitability. Some projects will utilize outreach and education to drive changes, others may use applied research to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed change. In any case, the risks are fairly low and the project should be delivering farm-level impacts in less than two years.

Foster Industry-Wide Innovation. Applied research is a tricky area. While there is always valuable knowledge gained from testing in the field, sometimes what you learn is what doesn't work well in specific conditions, or perhaps in New York overall. This group of projects is focused on learning how New York farmers can best adopt new production practices. The risks involved are moderate, and mainstream adoption of the practice is likely to be 2 -5 years from demonstrated success.

Incubate New Ideas. While most NYFVI projects are building from existing knowledge, sometimes there are projects that are focused on developing a new idea or technique. These projects may or may not succeed, but have the potential to significantly alter the industry. The projects are likely to be high risk, and if successful may take five or more years to reach mainstream adoption.

Improve Route to Market and Marketing Practices In addition to producing quality products, farmers must ensure they have profitable sales outlets. Farms of all sizes benefit from increased access to aggregators, and processors that add value to their products. And, for farms that sell directly to consumers, they must understand the most effective way to market their product. This group of projects work to build market share by increased route to market opportunities, and improve profits by improving marketing expertise. The risk level for these projects is moderate, and they should be delivering a return on investment in their first two years.

Develop People. Strong management practices, and training and development of workers are critical in almost every industry. Farming is no different. Projects in this area of our portfolio strive to develop better managers and management practices, build business plans and ultimately, better bottom lines for all involved. Projects should be delivering an impact in less than two years.

Insider's Guide: What We've Been Hearing from the Farmer Review Panels and NYFVI Board



Our goal at NYFVI is to have the best possible proposals for review by the commodity specific review panels and staff.

What we've observed over time is that choosing the right topic is what really hits home with the reviewers.

On our website we have surveys of producer groups that strive to identify the topics that are most important to NY farmers. If you're not yet sure of your topic, we encourage you to take a look at the farmer research needs section of the website.

Following are some general topics that seem to frequently generate strong interest:

- Weed management
- **Soil management practices that increase a farmer's bottom line**
- Bird deterrents
- Labor saving practices
- Alternate solutions for protectants that are receiving regulatory scrutiny
- **"Consumer Reports" style of testing for new tools and new products**
- Helping farmers understand or access markets, market opportunities

Topics that have NOT been faring as well with reviewers in recent years include:

- Proposals with weak evaluation plans.
- Regional branding programs and/or work that may benefit a specific group of farmers, but will not be replicable by others without further investment. This is often the case with direct market proposals.
- Development of online platforms/software/apps without identifying how the tools will be self-sufficient at the end of the project.
- Development of knowledge, such as an algorithm or predictive model without a proposed plan to make it accessible to farmers.
- Proposals that are competing with options that are already available in the private sector.
- Proposals that fail to collaborate with others in the State working on the same topic.

[NYFVI Board Members Wish List](#)

"More farm impact for dollar spent"

"Nursery and green industry proposals"

"Conciseness and clarity"

"More work that helps farmers adopt proven practices."



Please call or email NYFVI staff with any questions.

We are happy to make introductions among individuals we know are interested in similar topics.

NEW FOR 2020!

Paired Proposals: Collaboration Opportunity

At Farm Viability we believe that today's rapidly changing ag world requires a wide variety of disciplines to develop the most effective solutions. One way to achieve this is through collaboration. That said, we have received feedback over time that our dollar limit often restricts the opportunity to develop multi-disciplinary, multi-organization proposals. To encourage more **collaboration, NYFVI is formally accepting "paired proposals"** for consideration in the 2020 FVI grant round.

Guidelines

- Paired proposals must have some level of interdependency to be considered as such.
- Each of the proposals in the pair should have a distinct scope of work, to be executed by complementary project leader skill sets.
- Paired proposals are not intended as an option to simply expand work or add geographic regions to the effort.
- Each of the paired proposals is allowed to request up to \$125,000.
- It will be critical to articulate why the problem/opportunity requires additional resources and expertise.
- These proposals will be evaluated among the general group of FVI applicants and both must be competitive in that pool.
- If funded, paired proposals will be contracted independently.

Pairing Ideas

Below are organizations that are working to advance agriculture for New York's farmers and may be good partners for collaboration. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list, it is simply where we have seen collaborations work previously. Descriptions of the smaller programs interested in collaborations are on the next page. Extensive information about the Cornell programs is available online.

- *Cornell Cooperative Extension*
- *Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences*
- *Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine*
- *Miner Institute, Chazy NY*
- *NOFA-NY*
- *Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Lighting Research Center*
- *Rochester Institute of Technology*
- *SUNY Cobleskill*
- *SUNY Morrisville State College*
- *SUNY, University at Buffalo*

Instructions

- The titles should reflect the paired nature of the proposals.
- If both proposals must be funded in order for either of them to be effective, or if one can be funded without the other and effectively executed, this should be explicitly noted at the end of each abstract.

Please call NYFVI staff with any questions.

William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute. **Miner Institute's** highly regarded professional staff, exceptional technical staff, and well-managed dairy herd and crop program combine to support a unique research model focusing on the interface of crops, dairy cattle, nutrient management, and milk quality. In addition to conducting research on-site, we have considerable experience working with area producers leading research projects in dairy nutrition, nutrient management, calf management, and heat stress. The professional staff at Miner Institute include Dr. Rick Grant, Dr. Heather Dann, Dr. Sarah Morrison, Laura Klai-ber and Katie Ballard and spans a broad range of areas of expertise. We look forward to collaborating with other entities to undertake projects which will **provide solutions for New York State's** dairy producers. To learn more about our research staff and activities, please visit www.whminer.com.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of NY (NOFA-NY) . NOFA-NY is the leading organization in New York State that focuses on organic farming. Through this Collaboration Opportunity, NOFA-NY can offer over 30 years of organic expertise and a trove of organic farmers who can participate with on-farm research projects. NOFA-NY is interested in partnering with academic institutions to extend work by reaching the organic community and to conduct advanced soil health testing to understand the cumulative impacts of applying farming practices believed to improve soil health. Research results intend to better understand healthy soils and potential increased productivity, profitability and sustainability. Through our members and affiliates, NOFA-NY can share information with hundreds of organic farmers across the region. Visit nofany.org for more information or email our Education Director, Bethany Wallis at Bethany@nofany.org

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. The Lighting Research Center at RPI has **over 30 years' experience developing** light-based science, systems and solutions, with extensive facilities and expertise in optics, electronics, mechanics, thermal design, sensing and imaging. Broadly, our goal is to develop precision light dosing solutions as a complementary and alternative form of pest man-

agement. Our current approaches include tractor-based UV treatments for reduction of powdery mildew on strawberries and cucurbits, downy mildew on cucurbits and are testing ideas for weed reduction. We are interested to expand our scope to new crop and pest systems. We seek partnerships with growers, cooperative extension, agricultural researchers and farm equipment manufacturers that are looking for new solutions to treat above ground pests, such as bacteria, fungus, insects and weeds. https://www.lrc.rpi.edu/programs/plants/plants_home.html

Rochester Institute of Technology. **Rochester Institute of Technology's** faculty and students are tackling food and agriculture challenges faced in our region and beyond. Expertise spans throughout all of our nine Colleges **whether it's precision agriculture, imaging and color sciences, data collection and analysis or developing effective sensors and UAVs (Drones) and designing biodegradable food packaging.** At RIT, faculty and students also take on challenges in nutrition, food security and food safety. A culture of creativity, innovation and collaboration ensures the success of our students and faculty. RIT faculty regularly partner with leaders and experts in industry, government, and the community to take on any challenge. RIT faculty and students welcome partnerships from farmers and other agriculture experts to further their desire to make a difference in society.

SUNY Cobleskill
NYS Farm and Food Business Incubator (FFBI) provides business development and technical assistance services to agriculture business entrepreneurs. Incubator clients have access to the **campus' USDA certified meat processing** laboratory and the new dairy processing center.

Agricultural Engineering. Trains students to diagnose, maintain and service state-of-the-art agricultural and construction equipment, including diagnostics of electrical and hydraulic systems. Faculty have developed innovative agricultural engineering solutions including a patent-pending waste to energy gasification system.

Institute for Rural Vitality. The Institute for **Rural Vitality's mission is to engage the** substantial resources of SUNY Cobleskill in collaboration with regional

partners to enhance community and economic vitality in rural New York. The Institute funds faculty fellows who work with students to address rural vitality issues in the community. For more information contact Barry Gell – gellbf@cobleskill.edu 518-255-5450 www.cobleskill.edu

SUNY Morrisville State College. SUNY Morrisville is an Agriculture and Technical college located in Morrisville, NY. The faculty expertise falls in the area of designing demonstration projects, and utilizing applied learning to involve Morrisville students, future industry practitioners, in applied research to improve industry outcomes. We have close ties with industry and community partners and have expertise in outreach education events. The disciplines related to Farm Viability grants include but are not limited to: field crop production, soil fertility and soil health, pasture management, landscape design, horticultural production, agricultural business development, agricultural entrepreneurship, livestock husbandry, dairy farm management, natural resource protection, arboriculture, aquaculture, and renewable fuels production. All faculty can be reached by calling the School of Agriculture and Business main number: 315-684-6056.

SUNY University at Buffalo. With ever growing global population coupled with depleting soil fertility and changing climate, there is an urgent need to optimize the limited food production resources to increase productivity and profitability with minimal environmental impacts. While advances in agricultural machinery and autonomous data acquisition produce huge amounts of data, the utilization of such big-data to support farm management decisions require a high-level of data processing expertise. SUNY at Buffalo has a Digital Agricultural Team (UBDAT) of multi-disciplinary computational scientists with expertise in data analytics (spatial and time-series data analysis, machine learning, etc). With a state-of-the-art Center for Computational Research (<http://www.buffalo.edu/ccr.html>), the team is seeking collaboration to provide ag-analytics support to fully leverage the information content of big-data projects to advance the viability of NYS Agriculture. The team also provides services in field mapping of soil electrical and magnetic susceptibility, and laboratory soil particle size analysis tests.



Note Changes for 2020! Selection Process and Proposal Evaluation Criteria

NYFVI relies on over 100 farmers serving on farmer review panels, organized by production sector to read, comment and score each proposal. Once all proposals are scored each review panel conducts a conference call to discuss and rank the proposals. Each member of the board also reads, comments and scores each proposal prior to meeting in March to review the input from the review panels and prioritize projects for funding.

Proposals are reviewed and scored in each of the categories below. Historically each section was weighted equally. For the 2020 grant round the board decided to **revise the weighting to reflect the importance of “Relevance to NY Agriculture and the “Evaluation Plan”**. **New weightings are indicated below.**

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Producer Involvement | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there confirmation that the barriers this project addresses were identified by farmers as high priority?• Is there evidence that sufficient numbers of farmers are involved in at least some of the following activities: proposal development, project advisory committee, project implementation, outreach and information dissemination, and project evaluation?• Proposal sections where producer involvement information may be found include: Producer Contacts, Producer Involvement, Identification of Barriers | |
| Relevance to NY Agriculture | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the problem, or opportunity that the project seeks to address a critical one for New York farmers?• Will the project, as presented, effectively address the identified barrier or opportunity in a significant way for the betterment of NY agriculture?• Does the project, as described, have a high probability of success? | |
| Work Plan (Performance Targets, Milestones, and Activities) | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are the performance targets (outcomes, farm level impacts) specific, clearly stated, and measurable at the farm or enterprise level?• Are the milestones measurable and when they are achieved will they move participating farm businesses toward the stated performance targets?• Are the activities to be undertaken appropriate for reaching the milestones and achieving the performance targets?• Is there enough detail provided to evaluate the rigor of the research design? | |

Outreach Plan 15%

- Is there a specific, practical and well laid out plan for how the information gained from, or materials developed for, this project will be disseminated to the broader agricultural industry?
- Are the activities in the outreach plan likely to be effective in creating change in the agricultural sector across New York?
- Is there an opportunity or a plan to disseminate information from this project to other crop or production areas if it is appropriate to do so?
- Is the outreach plan innovative and creative?

Evaluation Plan 20%

- Is there a clear and effective plan describing how individual farm or enterprise level impacts will be measured, collected, and verified?
- Is there a plan to track or estimate changes in the broader agricultural industry **that resulted from the project's outreach efforts?**
- How much confidence do you have that the proposed evaluation plan can be successfully executed and will result in useful information?

Project Team *Evaluated on a confidence/no confidence basis*

- **Are the descriptions of individual's roles sufficient to understand what each will be doing in the project?**
- Is it clear that the qualifications described for each individual relate to and match their role in the project?
- Are you confident that the combined knowledge, skills and abilities of the team are adequate to successfully complete the project?
- Do you believe the size and diversity of the project team is appropriate to the size and scope of the project?

Budget 15%

- Is the total budget appropriate to the size and scope of the project?
- Are the individual budget line amounts reasonable and realistic?
- Are the justifications for each budget line clearly stated, adequate, and acceptable?
- If there are labor charges, do the tasks outlined justify the labor budget?
- Is the budget reasonable and appropriate for the importance and value of this project to the crop it addresses?

General Comments

- Overall, is this a valuable project in which to invest public funds?
- Is there likely to be an acceptable and measurable return on investment?



As a board, we couldn't make good decisions without all the input from our review panels. I really believe that our review process, driven by farmers is what helps us achieve our goals.

Rob Noble
Chair, NYFVI
Noblehurst Farms



IMPORTANT TECHNICAL TIP!

If you plan on creating your proposal in a word processing program like MS Word, prior to copying and pasting into our online application, you must first copy and paste into a plain text editor, such as Notepad. This will eliminate a great deal of hidden coding that is pasted in from Word. This code may make your text harder to edit, harder to read when it is printed out and will add to your character count in each section.

The Online Application: Know What Goes Where.

Frequently NYFVI reviewers express frustration over the repetitive nature of some applications. Please read the following information closely to ensure that you are developing a competitive, not repetitive, application.

TITLE, DURATION

Title: Create a title for the project. Keep in mind the title of the project will appear in NYFVI publications. Generally, a title that is brief but descriptive of the project and its goals, works best. If your project is part of a paired proposal submission, please reflect that in the title. *Note: The title is limited to 150 characters*

Duration: Indicate the start and end date for your project. Funded projects will begin between April 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021. Funded projects must last at least two quarters (six months) and may last no more than eight quarters (two years). All projects must be fully completed by December 31, 2022.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SECTOR

Indicate the agricultural sectors represented in the proposal by participating producers/farmers. Keep in mind that you are also indicating which NYFVI review panel(s) you believe would be best suited to review your proposal. Check only those that will be significantly benefited by your proposal. When in doubt, generally fewer is better.

EMPHASIS/PORTFOLIO PRIORITIES

Please read the following descriptions closely and choose the NYFVI priority that most closely aligns with the intent of your project. If absolutely necessary a secondary priority can be selected as well.

Improve Operational Practices. This work will result in direct on-farm changes during the life of the grant, and is often incremental in nature. This could include outreach efforts to share information about best practices, or applied research that demonstrates the effectiveness of a practice to encourage its adoption.

Foster Industry-wide innovation. This type of work typically could result in large-scale changes in an industry. This usually takes the form of applied research with a somewhat longer timeline to on-farm implementation.

Incubate new ideas and methods. This type of work helps to develop a new idea with potential to transform an industry. While direct farm impact may be far off, a successful project in this category will demonstrate that significant impact is possible.

Improve Route to Market and Market Practices. This work will improve a **farm's marketing practices, help them find new markets, and develop new business** models for getting to market.

Develop Human Capital. This type of work will develop the capacity of individuals in agriculture to effectively manage farms and implement new strategies. This may take the form of improvement of farm business acumen or the support of a skilled agricultural workforce, among others.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

Please select the outcome(s) you believe your project will deliver. *Note: your project should be able to provide impact data or deliverables for your selections.*

CONTACTS

NYFVI collects names and contact information from all individuals associated with a project. Please read the descriptions carefully to ensure you are utilizing the categories correctly.

Note: The producer section and other collaborators section both include a check box area where an applicant certifies that all individuals listed have discussed and agreed to participate in the project. Applicants should not include the names of any individuals that have not clearly agreed to participate. All names that are provided may be contacted about the proposal at any point.

Contractor: Provide the name and contact information of the person responsible for grant contracts within your organization. In most cases this is not the same person as the project leader. This is the person who will sign the contract.

Administrative Point of Contact: Provide the name and contact information for the person who will handle invoicing, record keeping, and related aspects of the project. This should be someone familiar with the project leader and the proposal who can be consulted when the project leader is unavailable. Applicants are highly encouraged to include this contact person.

Producers: Enter the names and contact information of farmers--and only farmers--who are actively providing assistance in the proposed project.

Check the appropriate box or boxes to indicate how the producer is participating. Choices include co-leader, project staff, proposal development, project advisory committee, project implementation, outreach and/or evaluation.

Grant applicants are not required to identify the farms who will be implementing the project during the application phase of the project. However, competitive proposals will demonstrate farm-level support for their efforts, including farmer participation in the project planning process.

If your work is focused on applied research, your application will be greatly strengthened by naming specific farms that have agreed to implement the project on their farm.

If necessary, anonymity of farm participants in tracking project progress may be permitted. For more information, contact NYFVI staff.

Do not include in the producer section the names of project participants who are not farmers. Do not include more than one name entry per farm.

Other Participants & Collaborators: Provide the name and contact information for all other individuals that will be supporting the project. These may include extension educators, consultants and other agribusiness professionals. Check the appropriate box or boxes to indicate how the individual is participating. Choices include co-leader, project staff, proposal development, project advisory committee, project implementation, outreach and/or evaluation.

Project Leaders and Co-Leaders

The online application assumes the person issued credentials is the project leader. The project leader is the person with central administrative and managerial responsibility for the project.

The project leader is ultimately responsible for the project's work. For NYFVI's purposes, there may be only one project leader.

A project may have multiple co-leaders. These individuals may receive duplicates of all correspondence originating from the database to the project leaders, such as quarterly report reminders.

Co-leaders can access the proposal and the reporting system using their own credentials.

Technical Tip

For your convenience in adding new participants you will be asked to first enter an individual's last name. A list of entries from the database with that last name will be returned. If the individual you intend is in the list click on "Add" and proceed.

If the individual you refer to is not in the list you will then have the opportunity to add them.

Producer Involvement: Character count for all five tab sections is limited to 1,500 characters total, including punctuation and spaces.

PRODUCER INVOLVEMENT

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that farmers are, or will be, actively involved in each aspect of the project. It is NOT necessary to provide your full implementation and outreach plans here, just provide detail about how farmers will be participating.

Proposal Development: Describe specifically how, when, and where farmers, including the number of farmers, were involved in developing the proposal.

Project Advisory Committee: Some project leaders use Advisory Committees in their project. These committees may be informal or formal and may be an existing group or sub-group or a group gathered for the purpose of the project. These committees may be wholly comprised of farmers or a mix that includes non-farmers. If a **Project Advisory Committee is used, describe the committee's makeup, number of participating farmers, purpose, meeting schedule and the role it will have in the project.**

Project Implementation: Farmers that will implement the project on their farm are those for whom project leaders will track and report on change at those farms. In this section, provide a brief narrative of how farmers will implement the project and the planned measurement of progress.

Project Outreach: Provide a brief description of how farmers will be part of the plan to share information.

Project Evaluation: How will farmers participate in project evaluation? Opportunities include providing farm financial data; feedback through testimonials or surveys; assessment of materials developed through the project, such as fact sheets, how-to guides, etc.; assessment of research data or project results; review by project advisory committee; review by local board of directors; and more.

The Target Beneficiaries text box is limited to 1,500 characters, including punctuation and spaces.

TARGET BENEFICIARIES

Use specifics to describe the target audience for this project. Numbers help build the case for the value of the work proposed and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the audience for outreach. Consider including:

- commodities, sectors, enterprises, groups and sub-groups involved,
- geographical region and reach,
- farm size,
- types of production systems.

The Identification of Barriers text box is limited to 1,500 characters, including punctuation and spaces.

IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS

This section should create an understanding of the specifics and scale of the problem your work will solve, or the economic opportunity your work will help create. Be sure to include specifics on how you know this problem is important to farmers. Do not discuss the solution to the problem in this section.

Grant applicants may cite barriers and opportunities identified by NYFVI through its efforts. Applicants may also cite other sources.

Other methods of identifying needs and opportunities for your project include, producer groups assembled specifically to develop this project, an agricultural organization's **strategic planning or needs assessment document, program councils, producer program committees, focus groups, and program advisory committees.**

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Describe the overarching, long-range goals or outcomes of this project and the potential impact on New York agriculture, connect it to the problem or opportunity described in the previous section.

Include a synopsis of previous research and outreach efforts at the local, state, national or international level. The synopsis should focus on the level of applicability, awareness or comprehension of earlier work within New York State or its regions. Detail how your proposed project builds on existing knowledge or previous efforts. Reviewers **frequently comment “this has already been done” or “there is nothing new here”**. This is your opportunity to address those concerns.

THE WORKPLAN: PERFORMANCE TARGETS, MILESTONES AND ACTIVITIES

This section should provide a detailed work plan for your project, and include specific detail about materials and methods to allow your research design to be fairly evaluated. Typically, projects will have just a few performance targets with numerous measurable milestones and activities.

Performance Targets: The performance target is the primary goal/s of the project. **How will the farm ‘perform’ differently as a result of the project? What will the project achieve, as measured on participating farms? Priority in funding decisions goes to proposals whose performance targets are measurable within the duration of the grant funds. If goals will be achieved after the contract period ends, then what measurements can be made during the period of the project that shows progress toward achieving the desired goal?**

Milestones: For each performance target, list the milestones that you will track, measure and report on during the course of the project. Think of milestones as sub-goals, the means by which you will verify progress toward achieving each performance target. Consider including milestones for project outreach and evaluation.

Activities: For each milestone, list the activities you will undertake to achieve the milestone. Ensure that enough information is included to allow your research design to be fairly evaluated.

OUTREACH PLAN

This section should provide detail as to how you will extend the knowledge gained by your work beyond the participants in the project.

Describe how the information will be accessible to the broad agricultural producer audience across New York State. If applicable, as you develop the outreach plan, consider how you might measure its effectiveness in changing practices on farms, include this information in the Evaluation Plan. It is also appropriate to include outreach specific milestones in your workplan.

EVALUATION PLAN

This section should provide detail as to what and how you will measure the impact of your project. It should be based on outcomes at the farm level, relative to project performance targets and the anticipated results selected earlier in the application.

The Project Justification text box is limited to 3,200 characters, including punctuation and spaces.

TIP: If funded, the workplan will be the foundation of your quarterly report., so please plan carefully!

There is no limit to the number of characters in the Performance Targets, Milestones and Activities section. Specifics are welcome. Be sure to include enough detail so that reviewers clearly understand what you are proposing to do.

After adding each new Performance Target, Milestone, or Activity (and date), you must click the “Add” button just to the left of the statement. Failure to click “Add” will result in lost data.

The Outreach Plan text box is limited to 1,500 characters, including punctuation and spaces.

The Evaluation Plan text box is limited to 1,500 characters, including punctuation and spaces

Describe what defines project success, the information you will collect, how you will collect it, and the proposed analysis of the information. Reviewers are particularly interested in how you will document the economic value resulting from the project. Evaluation may include how and why a project, or aspect of the project, worked or failed to work. Funded project leaders will provide an extensive evaluation as part of the Final Report.

PROJECT TEAM

Reviewers frequently look in the proposal for indications that the project leader, co-leaders, or staff have the collective capacity to successfully implement all the various **aspects of a project**. All individuals entered in the either of the “Contacts” sections and indicated as co-leaders or project staff will automatically appear in the Project Team section of the application.

For each individual, describe in 750 characters or less (including spaces and punctuation) the role or function they will play in the project. Then, again in 750 characters or less, describe their qualifications to perform their specific role or function. We are not seeking information about academic credentials, simply an understanding of an **individual’s experience, and expertise that would make them the right person to implement** the proposed work.

PRODUCER IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Itemize the specific contributions farmers will make to this project and estimate a reasonable dollar value for each. To help with data standardization please use \$50 per hour as a value for producer time contributed to a project. Contributed items may include, but are not limited to:

- Time committed to various aspects of the project: development, implementation, outreach, evaluation
- Donated supplies, e.g. seed, fertilizer, chemicals, feed, fuel
- Use of facilities or equipment
- Use of farmland for research plots or trials
- Sacrifice or donation of crops or material that would have otherwise been used or sold
- Applicants are not required to include Producer In-Kind Contributions. However, reviewers look for it and contributions may be considered an indication of farmer support for the project.

BUDGET

Grant applicants will create a budget for each quarter of the grant-funded project. Quarters are established as 3 month periods beginning on the start date of the project. Think through your workplan and match expenses to the relevant quarter.

Plan carefully within each budget category. Without exceeding the total grant amount project leaders may only overspend a budget line by 15% or \$1,000, whichever is greater. Expenditures beyond these limits will require formal budget amendments and are discouraged. A well-organized budget can also build confidence in your overall proposal.

Salaries and Wages: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for salary, wages and fringe benefits for new or currently employed staff for the portion of staff time devoted to NYFVI-funded project, **up to 100% of the employee's time.**

List the employee or employee's title/job description, and the percentage of each employee's time devoted to the proposed project in the Budget Justification section of the application. Any required stipends or tuition reimbursements should be included in the "other" category.

Plan salary needs carefully, NYFVI discourages the movement of funds from non-salary lines into salary and will require extensive justification for such changes.

All persons seeking reimbursement for salary, wage or fringe benefit expenses must maintain records and may be required to present documentation of the amount of the employee's time devoted to various efforts and funding sources.

Fringe Benefits: NYFVI may pay fringe benefits at a rate consistent with the applicant's place of employment for the class of employee being paid through the project. Contact NYFVI staff for more information.

Consulting: NYFVI may reimburse consultant fees. Project leaders will document daily or hourly rates. Describe specific roles and expected deliverables or outcomes for each consultant in the Budget Justification section of the application. A commitment letter from the consultant outlining their specific role in the project must be filed with NYFVI if the proposal is selected for funding. It is expected that applicants will have worked out the details of any subcontracts prior to submission.

Subcontracts: NYFVI may reimburse for subcontracted portions of the project completed by persons or organizations other than the contracted organization. Describe specific roles and expected deliverables or outcomes for each subcontractor in the Budget Justification section of the application; itemize the total cost of each subcontract. Submission of subcontracts will be required if the project is approved. Indirect, overhead, or F&A charges cannot be levied twice, i.e. if indirect cost are charged in the subcontract they cannot be charged for the overall project and vice versa.

Travel: NYFVI may provide reimbursement for reasonable expenses for travel directly related to the project. Reimbursement will be for expenses that are not excessive and similar to "government rates." Out-of-state travel is discouraged but may be allowed and requires detailed explanation in the Budget Justification portion of the application, as well as prior written approval from NYFVI.

Fees: If a farmer is being reimbursed for any direct costs incurred through implementation of the project, please include it here and provide an explanation in the budget justification section.

Services and Lab Analysis: NYFVI may provide reimbursement of expenses for services and laboratory fees essential to conducting the project. Reimbursement will be for the percentage of the fees used for purposes of the funded project.

Materials & Supplies: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for materials and supplies that directly relate to the project. Rates of expenses should not be excessive. Generally, materials and supplies are items whose per unit purchase price is less than \$1,000. Often these items have a useful life of one year or less.

Conferences & Seminars: NYFVI may reimburse reasonable expenses associated with *conducting* a conference, workshop or seminar that benefits farmers directly and relates to the project. Costs may include speaker travel, honoraria, meals, site rental, etc. Charging participants for a portion of the conference, seminar or workshop is strongly encouraged. Please describe charges participants will pay in the budget justification. NYFVI may also provide reimbursement for expenses for conference registration fees for individuals involved in the project *to attend and present* at a conference in New York State and related to the project. If reimbursement is for attendance, provide a detailed explanation of the conference and its importance to the project within the Budget Justification section.

Advertising & Promotions: NYFVI may reimburse expenses to produce and distribute brochures, flyers, displays or other items to promote project activities or outcomes; paid advertisements; etc.

Rentals: NYFVI may provide reimbursement of expenses for rented equipment that is essential to conducting the project. Reimbursement will be for the percentage of the rental cost of the item used for purposes of the funded project.

Equipment: NYFVI generally does *not* reimburse equipment expenses. Equipment refers to items, including machines, tools, electronics, structures and other items with a per unit purchase price of \$1,000 or more and whose useful life is more than one year. Project leaders requesting equipment reimbursement must provide a detailed explanation of why the item is essential to the project, cannot be obtained at lesser cost through rental, lease, borrowing, etc., who will use the item, what percent of the item will be used in service of this project and what percent of the item will be used in service of other projects, how the item will be disposed of or used after the grant project ends.

Other: **If you have costs that don't fit elsewhere, please include them here, with a detailed explanation in the budget justification section.** In some academic organizations, it is necessary that a student receive tuition reimbursement in order to be allowed to work on a project. In other organizations, living stipends are considered payment for work. If either of those scenarios is required by your organization, please include those costs here. *Note: if these costs are excessive, they may make your proposal less competitive.*

Indirect Costs: NYFVI may reimburse expenses for indirect costs or overhead at a rate negotiated between the applicant institution and NYFVI. Contact NYFVI before submitting the grant application. Indirect, overhead, or F&A charges cannot be levied twice, i.e. if indirect cost are charged on the project direct cost total then they cannot be charged on subcontracts or consulting agreements and vice versa.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Project leaders must provide a detailed description for each requested budget category, including all major expenses. Provide detail of how the components of each

budget line were calculated. Provide explanations of how the items will advance the proposed project. This section contains no character limits.

LEVERAGED FUNDING

Describe all sources of current and/or potential funding for this project proposal. Indicate which sources are current, and which are potential. Note the funding source (ex. USDA SARE, etc.) and the total grant amount. Describe how additional funds from NYFVI will expand the scope and/or impact of this project. Leveraging NYFVI funds to obtain other non-NYS funds is strongly encouraged and project leaders will be asked to report those funds and funding sources in their final report.

ABSTRACT

Although this is the last component of the application as entered online, it is the first section that reviewers see. Be sure to keep it concise and clear. Write for the layman- avoid jargon. Edit and edit again, every word is important.

Provide a brief and comprehensive synopsis of the proposed project, including a description of the need for the work, farmer participation, expected outcomes, impacts and goals, as well as how the project will progress or met goals. Major project partners and outreach work may also be part of the abstract. If you are submitting a paired proposal please indicate how they are interdependent in the last line of the abstract. **“This project is paired with NAME’s work on the same topic. Both would need to be funded for it to execute” Or “This project is paired with NAME’s work on the same topic. It can be executed on its own”**

Write an abstract that generates enough excitement and interest from readers that they will want to learn more about the project.

The Abstract text box is limited to 1,500 characters, including punctuation and spaces.

Thank You!

We appreciate your interest in helping NY farmers become more economically viable. If you have any questions or comments about our program, be sure to call or email us!

info@nyfvi.org

315-453-3823



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