



# Is the NYS Grown & Certified Infrastructure and Technology Grant Program the Right Fit for Your Business?

## Part 1: Seven Steps to Yes

If you've never applied for grant funding before, it can be hard to know what to focus on when reading the Request for Proposals (RFP). The document is long, and some of the terminology can be unfamiliar. While the RFP is important to understand, the list below may help you to more easily identify which of your business's needs might fit best with the grant program. All applicants should be able to say yes to these seven questions to know they are developing an **eligible** application.

1. **Eligibility.** Are you a farm or food system business that is producing a food or beverage product that is NYS Grown & Certified, or eligible to be certified?
2. **Use of Funds:** Is your project focused on one of the program priorities:
  - Distribution Capacity Enhancement
  - Processing and Packaging,
  - Production Automation and Labor Efficiency
3. **Use of Funds:** Will the use of the funds directly support the production, processing or distribution of NYS G& C product?
4. **Allowable Costs:** Are all costs that you would include in the project eligible for reimbursement and directly associated with the purpose of the project?
5. **Project Location:** Will the assets from your project be based in NYS?
6. **Project Impact:** Can you describe the impact of your proposed project to your individual enterprise as well as any other NYS G&C businesses that are part of your procurement process and/or will be impacted by the proposed project?
7. **Ability to Execute:** If selected for funding, can you execute the project within the structure of the grant program?
  - Grant Schedule
  - Project Duration
  - Grant Size and Matching Requirement
  - Reimbursement Schedule
  - Contracting Requirements

See the full RFP for more details, or watch one of the webinars that were held previously.



## Part 2: Beyond Eligibility: Focusing on a **COMPETITIVE** Application

Now that you better understand what makes an application **ELIGIBLE** for the NYS G&C Infrastructure and Technology grant program, it is time to focus on making sure it will be **COMPETITIVE**. Most farms and food system businesses have multiple needs. As you consider developing an application you'll want to closely consider the scoring criteria for the program, it is part of the Technical Requirement document and is included on page three of this document..

Keep in mind that we don't expect projects to be able to achieve a perfect score.

### TIPS

- Review the key dates for the program. No costs can be incurred prior to contract, so you need to make sure that you consider which of your business needs best align with the timing of the program.
- Think hard about the value proposition of the project relative to the scale of your business, if you were spending your own money, would the potential return on the project justify the investment?
- If you were spending your own money, would you start with a smaller scale or less expensive solution that would adequately meet your needs for the next five years?
- Value proposition: Within the next five years, Does the volume of NYS G&C product produced with funding warrant the size of the investment?
- Present your numbers in percentages as well as absolute dollars! A 25,000 dollar increase in revenue could be significant to a small operation. Make sure that reviewers can easily understand the numbers relative to your scale.
- If you know that your application is going to be weak in one of the scoring sections, focus on the areas that you can control!
  - Make sure your workplan is well organized and the structure of your project team builds confidence in your business's ability to implement the project!

See the full RFP for more details, or watch one of the webinars that were held previously. These resources can be found at [nyfvi.org](http://nyfvi.org) within the NYS Grown and Certified ITRD section under Full Request for Proposals and Informational Sessions.

## NYS Grown & Certified Infrastructure & Technology Scoring Criteria

Maximum points possible	Criteria	Section
5	Current or pending enrollment in NYS G&C as application is submitted.	Business Profile and Business Practices
20	The degree to which the project incorporates new and innovative practices or approaches to meet industry needs and consumer demands.	Level of Innovation
15	Project's ability to create measurable outcomes aligned with the program priorities	Project Description SMART Goal
5	Project recognizes threats and weaknesses and understands how to mitigate them.	SWOT Analysis
10	Alignment with applicant's business goals in the next five years	Business Profile and Next Step
15	Value proposition: The outcomes of the project will financially strengthen the business	SMART Goal and Project Budget
5	Value proposition: Project will result in the business bringing more NYS G&C product to market	SMART Goal and Project Budget
10	Active marketing of the NYS G&C brand to customer base	Business Profile and Business Practices
5	Overall plan includes appropriate specificity and reflects the complexity of the project	Workplan
5	Project Team includes necessary capacity and skills to implement the project.	Project Team
5	Organization's current business practices indicate management skills necessary to successfully implement the project	Business Profile and Business Practices
<b>Bonus Scoring Opportunities</b>		
5	Other benefits justified in the application	Full Application
5	Number of NYS G&C businesses benefiting	SMART Goal
5	Food Safety	Project Description SWOT Analysis and SMART Goal
5	Environment	Project Description SWOT and SMART goal sections