

Farm Viability Institute Competitive Grant Program 2027

New York Farm Viability Institute

This document provides the technical requirements of the RFP. A PDF of the actual application and a copy of the budget template may be viewed on the program page of the NYFVI website.

Overview

This request for proposals (RFP) is for the 2027 Farm Viability Institute Competitive Grant program. Administered by the New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) on behalf of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, this program exists to strengthen the livelihoods of New York's farmers, producers, and ranchers through dedicated agricultural research and support. Every project this RFP funds is ultimately judged by whether it puts something real and usable (knowledge, a practice, a tool, a market connection) into a producer's hands that leaves them better off.

The Request for Proposal Package includes 5 parts:

1. The 2027 Farm Viability Institute Competitive Grant [Program Page](#) of the NYFVI website. This contains an overview of the grant program, related program links and resources, as well as a list of Frequently Asked Questions.
2. Technical Requirements: This document outlines all program requirements and key dates. It should be read in its entirety prior to starting an application.
3. Eligibility Quiz: This quiz will be conducted online and is required of all applicants before they will be able to start an application.
4. Application: This is the online form (below) that must be completed and submitted by all applicants.
5. Questions and Answers: Answers to all questions that are submitted by applicants will be published on our [website](#) on an ongoing basis.

Submission Deadline

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm on Friday October 30, 2026. All applications must be submitted using our online platform. NYFVI staff will not be available for any technical support after 5:00 pm on Friday, October 30th.

Grant Size, Duration, Location, and Match

Grants can be between \$25,000 and \$150,000. There is \$3,045,000 total funding available this year. We anticipate between 20 and 25 projects to be awarded.

Timeframe and Duration: Funded projects must begin between April 1, 2027 and January 1, 2028. Projects must last at least two quarters (six months) and may last no more than eight quarters (two years). Final reporting must be completed and submitted within this timeframe.

Location: Work must take place in New York State, and outcomes must directly benefit the State's agriculture community.

Match: Match is not a requirement for this program.

How to Apply

The application and project will be managed entirely online using NYFVI's Grant's Interface Platform. **Applicants must first create an online account. The link to create an account and apply is available [here](#).**

Once logged in to the online system, the full RFP is available as a PDF by clicking the "Question List" box in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Instructions are also provided in each question group. If you would like to enter questions before putting them into the online system, a Microsoft Word document is available [here](#).

The online application form will collect information about the applicant, the proposed research, and the potential impact of the grant funds on New York State agriculture. The goal of the application is to provide a consistent evaluation format to ensure all proposals are reviewed in a uniform and objective manner.

Key Dates

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Opens	Wednesday, September 16, 2026
Program Overview Webinar 1	Wednesday, September 23, 12-1 pm
Program Overview Webinar 2	Thursday, October 1, 9-10 am
RFP Closes	11:59 pm, Friday, October 30, 2026
Staff comments on proposals to applicants	Monday, November 9, 2026
Proposals resubmitted	Monday, November 23, 2026
Review process	December 1, 2026 - January 21, 2027
Proposals Identified for funding	Friday, February 11, 2027
Anticipated completion date for project contracts	Monday, March 29, 2027
Projects may start	Thursday, April 1, 2027

Program Overview Webinar

The FVI process prohibits specific conversations between applicants and NYFVI staff about their proposals. Applicants are strongly encouraged to register and attend one of two webinars to familiarize applicants with the online grants interface platform and review key criteria.

- Program Overview Webinar 1: Wednesday September 23, 2026 12pm-1:00 pm. [Register](#)
- Program Overview Webinar 2: Thursday October 1, 2026 9:00am-10:00 am. [Register](#)

Both webinars will be recorded and made available for later viewing at nyfvi.org.

Eligibility

NYFVI welcomes applications from:

- Technical assistance providers
- Researchers and educators from academic organizations
- Ag membership groups and businesses
- Nonprofit or for-profit organizations

Ineligible applicants are encouraged to participate as project partners.

Additional eligibility requirements include:

- All project work must take place in New York State
- Project outcomes must benefit New York's agricultural community
- Project leader has no current NYFVI-funded project(s) delinquent in quarterly or final financial reports, progress narratives, or associated reimbursement requests.
- Project leaders must be willing to share all findings associated with the project's work.

Use of Funds

Agriculture is constantly changing and NYFVI believes it is critical for farmers to have the sound science and effective educational outreach they need to help them evolve their practices. Competitive proposals require clear relevance to NY's agricultural community, demonstrated producer support, and the ability to deliver farm-level economic impact over time.

Project Beneficiaries

Projects should have general applicability and statewide significance to the agricultural industry. They cannot benefit a sole commercial product, single business, organization or individual.

Examples of Acceptable Projects:

- Outcome: Improve Individual Farm's Operating Practices - A grower-led apple nonprofit partners with three Champlain Valley orchards to pilot a low-input scab management program using real-time weather modeling, tracking spray reductions and cost savings, and sharing results through grower field days.
- Outcome: Foster Industry Innovation - An agricultural consulting firm works with fifteen Finger Lakes dairy farms to evaluate a low-cost, on-farm feed testing method that lets producers fine-tune ration formulation without an outside lab, measuring feed cost savings and training farm staff to run the tests themselves.
- Outcome: Incubate New Ideas - A university researcher partners with two solar-hosting vegetable farms to test shade-tolerant varieties grown beneath elevated panels, comparing yield and quality to open-field plots and producing a decision-making tool for other farms considering agrivoltaic leases.

Examples of Unacceptable Projects:

- A specialty crop organization requests grant funds to cover its routine annual operating costs (staff salaries, office rent, membership administration) rather than a distinct research, education, or outreach project.
- A vineyard requests grant funds to purchase vine stock, bottling equipment, or tasting room upgrades intended to expand its own production or sales, rather than to generate knowledge that benefits NY's broader grape and wine industry.

Eligible Costs

- **Eligible costs include:** personnel, fringe benefits, travel, special purpose equipment, supplies, and contractual costs and services directly related to an eligible project. Cost categories are defined in the [Budget section](#). Indirect costs are calculated as a percentage of the overall budget and limited to 18%. If an expense does not fit into one of the budget categories, the project applicant should seek guidance from NYFVI.
- **Ineligible costs include:** political activities, lobbying activities, capital expenditures for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land. General purpose equipment means equipment that is not limited to research, scientific or other technical activities. Examples include office equipment and furnishings, motor vehicles, etc.
- **NOTE:** *This project prohibits expenditures associated with professional journal manuscript publication, academic page charges, open-access fees, editorial fees, or similar academic publication-related expenses arising from or related to work performed.*
- NYFVI **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 agreed upon start date of the project.

Measurement

- All projects must measure and report on the outcomes and indicators associated with their project.
- NYFVI reserves the right to conduct site visits as well as follow-up surveys of funded projects to determine long-term impacts.

Review Process and Scoring Criteria

Each proposal will be read and evaluated by three groups: NYFVI staff, Farmer Review Panels, and the NYFVI Board.

NYFVI Staff Review

The goals of the staff review are to ensure that the proposal meets all technical requirements and to help applicants improve their proposal before further evaluation. After receiving NYFVI staff comments, applicants will determine which, if any, of the comments they choose to address in a revised proposal.

Farmer Review Panels

The information provided in the Target Beneficiaries section will help NYFVI determine which of the standing Farmer Review panels should evaluate the proposals. If the proposal seeks to

support ag enterprises not represented by the standing panels, NYFVI will recruit reviewers to ensure that it is appropriately evaluated. All reviewers read and score the projects independently online, then meet virtually to discuss the proposals and establish the group ranking.

Board Review

The NYFVI board reviews all proposals independently, as well as the review panel scores, comments and recommendations. The board meets to discuss the work and makes final funding decisions.

Characteristics of a Competitive Proposal

Understanding NY farmers' needs is the first step to a successful proposal. The farmers on the NYFVI board and review panels have consistently been open to supporting new approaches to solving problems, however, the key to a competitive proposal is not necessarily the approach--rather the problem it will solve or the opportunity it will create.

If your idea is not aligned with critical needs, it will be important to clearly explain why the work is necessary and how it will support the business interests of New York's farmers.

Scoring Criteria

Scoring criteria for the program were updated to align with program goals and are also available both [online](#). The table below provides the maximum point value for each section and highlights the questions that reviewers will consider.

Points	Proposal Section
	Project Purpose and Justification—Strategic Intent (30 possible points)
10	Demonstrates that the problem (or opportunity) and its solution is important to NY farmers.
5	Aligns with the direction of the marketplace (consumer and regulatory).
10	Seeks to build a cost-effective solution.
5	Describes the likelihood of the proposed solution/practices change to be adopted by the ag community.
	Beneficiaries: Market Analysis (10 possible points)
10	Describes how the project leader (s) understands the stakeholders, potential scale, and value, of the work proposed.
	Project Network and Industry Support—People (20 possible points)
5	Clearly describes a structured team built for success.
10	Describes how NY farmers engaged in this proposal.
5	<i>Demonstrates industry support of the research and outcomes.</i>
	Workplan—Technical Excellence (25 possible points)
5	Describes a well-organized and easy to understand workplan.
5	Demonstrates realistic proposed goals and discrete tasks that show a logical approach to project completion.

5	Demonstrates a credible scientific approach and realistic indicators.
5	Clearly describes an appropriate evaluation of the target indicators.
5	Describes an effective outreach plan to share information.
	Budget—Value Proposition (15 possible points)
10	Budget reflects an appropriate investment relative to the potential benefit of the work.
5	Budget includes detail for all project components, is cost-effective, presents necessary and realistic costs.

Other Considerations

NYFVI reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received with respect to this RFP.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of the applicant.
- Request from an applicant additional information as deemed necessary to evaluate the proposal more fully.
- Amend the program's specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice posted on the New York Farm Viability Institute website.
- Select only certain portions of proposals for funding.
- Make all final decisions with respect to the amount of funding and the timing of payments to be provided to an applicant.
- Negotiate the terms of the scope of work and budget.

What to Know Before Applying

Receiving a grant is a contractual agreement. As applicants think about developing a proposal, ensure that it can be executed within the following parameters:

- This grant is a reimbursement-based award. No costs will be reimbursed until a project has achieved key milestones or is successfully completed and all required documentation has been submitted and approved.
- Grant recipients must be able to self-finance or secure financing to implement their project.
- The proposal is part of the contract, and all expenses for reimbursement must be clearly aligned with and specified in the application. See also the Project Budget section of the application for the rules applying to reimbursement.
- No expenses that pre-date the execution date of the contract can be reimbursed. A contract is executed when both parties have signed the document and it has been returned to NYFVI.
- If the project exceeds the proposed budget, the grant award will not increase.
- All projects must be able to be executed within the established timeframes.
- NYFVI reserves the right to offer a lower dollar amount to any applicant.

Online Platform Technical Tips

The following information provides an overview of the application format and the tools used within the platform.

Collaboration Tools

If you would like to collaborate on this request with other individuals, you may use the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner of the page. Type in their email address and a brief message inviting them to edit the application. [Click here for Collaborator troubleshooting.](#)

Branching Questions

The RFP uses branching questions to help reduce the number of fields that are visible to applicants and reviewers. Based on your answers, the system will bring up the appropriate section for completion. Instructions will indicate if a question is creating branching.

Character Counts

This system uses character counts to communicate the space available in each section. The character limit includes spaces. It may be helpful to consider the character limit in relation to a word or page count.

Contracting Requirements

NYFVI reserves the right to request further information prior to a project receiving a contract. Additionally, any business that requires NYS permits or licenses to operate must have them in place, or clearly demonstrate how the grant will allow the necessary permits or licenses to be secured.

Contracts will be executed on an ongoing basis. Every effort will be made to move quickly once a grantee submits the required documents. NYFVI will discuss any concerns with the applicant prior to making a final determination.

NOTE: *Applicants with current NYFVI-funded project(s) delinquent in quarterly or final financial reports, progress narratives, or associated reimbursement requests **shall be ineligible** for new funding under this RFP until all such reporting and payment obligations have been brought current and accepted by NYFVI.*

Reporting and Payment Requirements

All reporting and reimbursement requests will be managed electronically through the NYFVI online platform where the application was submitted.

Progress Reports

Projects **must** submit quarterly progress reports and reimbursement requests. Payments are made only after a quarterly progress report and reimbursement claim (with required backup documentation) are submitted and approved by NYFVI, and funds are received from NYS. Details on required backup documentation can be found [here](#).

Final Reports

A final report is due within 60 days of project completion. 10% of the total project budget will be withheld until the final report is completed and approved. All final reports will require a narrative summary and photos of the completed project. A final report and the reimbursement

request can be submitted prior to the final deadline if the purpose of the grant funds has been achieved. NYFVI staff may visit and photograph projects throughout the process.

Reimbursement Requirements and Payment Schedule

Reimbursement requests must accompany the final report and include itemized documentation for all costs to be reimbursed as well as the financial match, if any. Proof of payment, invoices or receipts must include the company name and location and a date and show a zero balance for all purchases. If the invoice does not show a zero balance, a cancelled check or other proof of payment must be provided. Unless otherwise specified in the contract, a single payment will be made following the submission and approval of the final report and reimbursement request.

Funding Source Acknowledgement

All projects must acknowledge NYFVI as the funder, or partial funder, for their work in all online information, printed material, and presentations.

Legislative Authority

This program is made possible through the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblymember Donna Lupardo, chairs of the Senate and Assembly Agriculture Committees, respectively. Funding for this RFP comes from New York State's Fiscal Year 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 budgets, allocated to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and directed to NYFVI for administration.

Questions and Answers

Questions must be submitted via email to info@nyfvi.org. Answers will be posted weekly on the NYFVI website nyfvi.org. Questions will be accepted until Friday October 23, 2026.

Resources

PDFs of all components, as well as other resources are available on the [Application Resources](#) page. Applicants are encouraged to read past awarded project [abstracts](#) for a clearer understanding of the common characteristics of competitive applications.

Equal Opportunity

NYFVI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or veteran status in the administration of this grant program, including the selection of grant recipients. Applicants must likewise carry out their funded project activities, hiring, and program participation in compliance with applicable federal and New York State non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws.

Funding Contingency

This RFP and any resulting grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds appropriated by New York State for this purpose. NYFVI reserves the right to modify, reduce, delay, or cancel this program, in whole or in part, if state funding is reduced, delayed, or not appropriated.

Record Retention Requirements

Grant recipients must retain all financial records, supporting documentation, and project records related to a funded project for a minimum of six years following submission of the project's final report, or longer if required by an active audit, claim, or litigation. Records must be made available to NYFVI, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, or their authorized representatives upon request.

Feedback

We are actively working to improve the application experience and would appreciate your feedback on the process. Please send any feedback to Lucy Bush at lbush@nyfvi.org.