

# Agriculture in the Classroom Program Request for Grant Proposals

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## Biennium Year 2023-2025 Request for Applications

### Application Due Date:

June 21, 2023 at 4:00 P.M. CDT

No late submissions accepted.



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## 1) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### a) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Agriculture in the Classroom Program (AITC) is authorized under chapter 4.1-01-22 of the North Dakota Century Code. Recognizing the need to promote and foster an understanding of the agricultural economy of the state of North Dakota and the values of rural lifestyle, an agriculture in the classroom program is established. The agriculture commissioner shall administer the program with advice of the agriculture in the classroom council.

The agriculture in the classroom council consists of seven individuals including six appointed council members and the superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee.

### b) PURPOSE

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) is pleased to announce a competitive solicitation process to award 2023-2025 AITC funds to develop and conduct programs for K-12 agriculture education, and the training of teachers and students in agricultural curriculum activities.

NDDA encourages those applying to develop projects based on the following activities:

- Secure private and public funding for the Agriculture in the Classroom Program through contributions and grants, with the objective of establishing a financial base for the current and future program needs;
- Coordinate in-service and pre-service training and promotional activities for K-12 teachers;
- Develop and distribute agriculture education information or materials targeting K-12 with a focus on 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students;

- Develop presentations and coordinate activities for agriculture education in North Dakota;
- Develop and coordinate Agriculture in the Classroom activities for North Dakota educator conferences;
- Develop and coordinate a program of agriculture tours or courses for teachers in North Dakota;
- Develop and coordinate a mini-grant program providing opportunities to expand agriculture education experiences for students;
- Development of technology tools for agriculture education;
- Development of agriculture education resources easily adapted to distance learning.

School year 2023-2025 grant priorities will focus on educating children in North Dakota communities where their food comes from and the connection to agriculture.

## **2) AWARD INFORMATION**

### **a) FUNDING EXPECTED**

NDDA anticipates up to \$100,000 per biennium will be awarded to projects to develop and conduct programs for K-12 agriculture education.

### **b) AWARD AMOUNT**

Grant project amounts for FY 2023-2025 do not have a floor or a cap. NDDA reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the amount requested.

### **c) GRANT PERIOD DURATION**

The maximum grant duration is two years and grant funds cannot be expended before July 1, 2023 or after June 30, 2025.

### 3) ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

#### a) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

All applicants that develop and conduct programs for K-12 agriculture education or comparable projects are eligible to apply.

### 4) APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

#### A) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be submitted via email to [khaff@nd.gov](mailto:khaff@nd.gov) by June 21, 2023. Each full application will include 2023-2025 Agriculture in the Classroom Project Template and AITC Program Request for Grant Proposals as posted on the NDDA website:

<https://www.nd.gov/ndda/ag-classroom/ag-classroom-grants-awards>.

All applicants must adhere to the following instructions, in addition to other requirements as stated in this RFP to be considered eligible for grants. The following information is addressed on the 2023-2025 Agriculture in the Classroom Project Template. Applications missing any of the subsequent information may be deemed ineligible.

- Each proposal must list the name of the company or individual submitting the proposal, street address, mailing address, telephone number, email address, and the person(s) who will be responsible for the project.
- Proposals must describe in detail which of the previously described services (Purpose) the bidder wishes to complete.
- Applicants may include any additional information that they consider pertinent and that will enhance the quality of their proposal.
- Applicants must be willing to work with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture State AITC contact to plan and carryout events.
- Applicants must also promote the North Dakota Ag in the Classroom program by use of the ND AITC logo.

**B) APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

NDDA will review grant applications to ensure the Project Template meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled, and that costs are allowable. Once applications are reviewed by NDDA, the Agriculture in the Classroom Council will complete an evaluation for each project. Below is the evaluation criteria:

<p><b>A. POTENTIAL IMPACT (30 points MAX)</b></p> <p>Does the project have a positive impact on expanding agricultural knowledge for PreK-12 teachers and their students? How effective will the project be at enhancing the mission of the program?</p>
<p><b>B. EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: (25 points Max)</b></p> <p>Does the project include one or two measurable outcomes that directly support the project’s purpose? Are they of direct importance to beneficiaries? Does each measurable outcome include a specific goal, benchmarks, and performance measure? How clear, appropriate and realistic are the goals and objectives?</p>
<p><b>C. WORK PLAN (20 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is the work plan feasible? Is the timeline reasonable? Do the tasks relate to the project objectives and expected measurable outcomes?</p>
<p><b>D. MATCHING FUNDS &amp; PROJECT COMMITMENT: (10 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is industry support for the project demonstrated? Do stakeholders have an active role in any activities outlined in the project work plan? Are industry stakeholders providing matching or in-kind contributions?</p>
<p><b>E. PROJECT OVERSIGHT: (10 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is the scope of the project meeting the goals for broad geographic consideration and multiple product application?</p>
<p><b>F. MERIT: (5 points Max)</b></p> <p>Each committee member may award a proposal up to five (5) additional points.</p>

**C) REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

All applications will be reviewed by NDDA and external reviewers after the grant application submittal deadline. Applications are evaluated on the merits of the proposals based on the scoring criteria listed above. Applicants will be notified during the review process if monetary adjustments to grant requests, project proposal scope of work and/or project budgets are necessary.

**D) ANTICIPATED AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES**

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they received a grant award. Successful applicants will also be sent a Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) to sign. NDDA anticipates that notifications will be made in late June 2023 and grant awards will be made shortly after.

## 5) AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### a) AWARD NOTICES

All applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they are a successful project. Notifications will be emailed by July 1, 2023. The NOGA for successful applications will be sent out immediately.

Prior to beginning work on the proposed project or receiving funding, successful applicants will be required to sign a NOGA with the NDDA indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks, report results, and authorizing NDDA to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

NOGA's must be signed and returned to NDDA within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the NOGA within 30 days of receipt may result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the grantee. Once the NOGA has been fully executed, grantees are able to work and expend money on their project.

### b) POLICY REQUIREMENTS

#### General Compliance

All awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award.

#### Monitoring

NDDA reserves the ability to perform site monitoring visits to any and all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required timeframe and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information, as well as site visits.

#### Liability

NDDA will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal, nor for any work performed prior to the formal execution of the grant award.

## **Open Records**

Proposals submitted for funding and all related grant awards and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the North Dakota open records law.

## **Other Considerations**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of NDDA. NDDA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement.

### **NDDA also reserves the right to:**

- Post funded proposals or final reports to the NDDA website
- Reject any or all proposals received
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to potential applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of North Dakota
- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants
- Require a good faith effort on part of the project sponsor to work with NDDA subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results
- Withhold any payments when grant award conditions are not met

## **Exclusions**

Grant funds may not be used to fund political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).



### **c) REPORTING**

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with NDDA, receipts, invoices and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. The grantee shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the Grant Award Agreement for a period of three years after the completion of the agreement. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records.

NDDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. Information submitted in any report to NDDA will be a public record. All quarterly, annual, and final reports must be submitted using the required format.

#### **Final Reports**

A final performance report will be required on the last day of the grant agreement. The final report may be posted on the NDDA website and is important for sharing project findings with state agencies and the public. The final report will include the following:

- Project Summary
- Project Approach
- Goals and Outcomes Achieved
- Lessons Learned
- Beneficiaries
- Contact Person
- Additional Information

In addition to the final project report NDDA reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects to determine long-term impacts of the project.

#### **Reporting Compliance**

Applicants who do not submit the final report or who submit an incomplete report may be required to return previously distributed funds to NDDA.

**d) PAYMENT**

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a quarterly basis. Each reimbursement request must include an itemized invoice and documentation of the work or expenses for which payment is requested. Itemization shall include the purpose, amount, and date incurred. Grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed (i.e. include receipts, invoices) and clearly outline expenditures. Ten percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the complete final report including receipts for all expenditures.

Below is the reporting period and due date for the quarterly reimbursement request:

<b>Quarterly Reimbursement Reporting Period</b>	<b>Reimbursement Due on or Before</b>
July 1 – September 30, 2023	October 15, 2023
October 1 – December 31, 2023	January 15, 2024
January 1 – March 31, 2024	April 15, 2024
April 1- June 30, 2024	July 15, 2024
July 1- September 30, 2024	October 15, 2024
October 1 – December 31, 2024	January 15, 2025
January 1 – March 31, 2025	April 15, 2025
April 1 – June 30, 2025	July 15, 2025

**Budget Adjustments**

If a material change (20% of the total grant amount or greater) in the budget is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to NDDA to reallocate budget funds between budget categories.

**e) CONTACT**

Potential applicants or assistance can be requested with the information below:

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

600 E Boulevard Ave Dept. 602

Bismarck ND 58505-0020

Phone: 701.328.2308

[khaff@nd.gov](mailto:khaff@nd.gov)