

Effective 8/1/2023

Grantees will be required to submit a final written report describing the work performed and the results obtained, prior to final release of grant funds. The report should also indicate how the project benefited the state and people of North Dakota. The grantee is required to submit a supplemental financial report of all expenses actually incurred and income generated by the project with supporting financial documentation.

Audit

To comply with the legislative purpose of APUC, protect the investment of APUC and the people of North Dakota, all financial documents, books, receipts, orders, expenditures, electronic data and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee are subject to examination by or for APUC. APUC, as a member of the ND Department of Agriculture, is audited by the ND Auditor's Office.

Evaluation and Funding Criteria

Qualified APUC grants are submitted by, or at the request of companies registered with the North Dakota SOS, higher education agencies, groups, and individuals developing and marketing agriculture-based products or services that add value to North Dakota agriculture.

Proposals will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- probability and extent of new wealth creation
- credibility and merit
- market potential and commercialization feasibility, including technical and financial feasibility
- scientific merit
- innovation
- technical qualification and competence of project principals
- probability of successful commercialization and application of research
- presence, source and level of matching funds
- geographic location of an applicant
- economic impact of the application

Applications are rated on a 100-point scale:

- Up to 30 points for the demonstration of a high level of probability of jobs and wealth creation.
- Up to 30 points for the scientific and technical merit of any project, as well as the qualifications of the project's principals. An application with substantial market and commercial potential will be favored over one with little perceived economic impact. Further, research applications should be innovative as well as commercially plausible.
- Up to 15 points for the demonstration of a high level of probability of successful commercialization.
- Up to 10 points for projects which demonstrate a shared commitment for funding from other sources (e.g. from the application and/or other public and private sources).
- Up to 5 points for geographical considerations.
- Up to 10 additional points may be awarded based upon an individual Commission member's judgment for the potential success of a proposal.

Each grant request and application will be judged on these criteria. Within a framework of 100 points maximum, each of the criteria will be considered as follows.

Probability and Extent of New Wealth Creation

APUC's objectives and mission are plainly stated. North Dakota is heavily dependent upon the revitalization of the agricultural economy. The creation of new industry, jobs and wealth are critical to any grant request; preference will be given accordingly. While APUC does not make any strict requirements for jobs created per dollar granted, return on investment is a prime consideration of all requests. *Up to 30 points will be awarded on this criterion.*

Credibility and Merit

Critical to the success of this program is the scientific and technical merit of any project, as well as the qualifications of the project's principals. APUC will judge each proposal for its perceived feasibility, both technical and commercial. The stated goal of APUC is to foster new wealth in rural North Dakota. An application with substantial market and commercial potential will be favored more than one with little perceived economic impact. Additionally, applications which feature a project that is innovative as well as commercially plausible will receive preference. A literature search will be required to demonstrate the relative innovativeness of each project application. A final criterion will focus on the relative competence and technical qualifications of the project principals. *Up to 30 points will be awarded on these criteria.*

Timeliness

It is the desire of APUC that the project it funds leads to timely application, commercialization and ultimate wealth creation. In keeping with this goal, preference will be given to applications demonstrating a high probability of successful commercialization. *Up to 15 points will be awarded on this criterion.*

Matching Funds

Enhanced consideration will be given to projects which demonstrate a commitment for funding from the applicant or from other private or public sources. Matching funds may be in the form of cash and in-kind services. Generally, grant applicants must commit a minimum match dollar investment of 25 percent of the total amount requested from APUC. In-kind support must not exceed 50 percent of the total match funding and must be supported by a detailed explanation as to how that amount was comprised (*prior approval required*). Approved indirect costs may qualify as matching funds.

Disbursement of APUC funds will be contingent upon evidence that matching funds have been allocated to the proposal. APUC desires to make the best use of its biennial grant pool. Consequently, preference will be given to proposals which allow APUC the most return on investment.

Applications that contain matching funds from other grant programs must demonstrate contingent approval from appropriate sources prior to release of funds by APUC. *Up to 10 points will be awarded on this criterion.*

Geographic Consideration

The majority of APUC's funding is derived from rural North Dakota. Accordingly, preference will be given to proposals which center efforts on non-urban locales. When the proposal requires specific research which cannot possibly be carried out in rural North Dakota, consideration will be given to the ultimate development and commercialization of the results of the proposal, with the same rural preference.

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APUC encourages and facilitates new agricultural products and processes within the state of North Dakota for the benefit of the state and its people. Grantees are expected to respect this objective and use any innovation funded by the program within North Dakota, or at a minimum demonstrate the direct benefit for North Dakota. *Up to 5 points will be awarded on this criterion.*

Commissioner's Opinion (Merit)

APUC members are appointed according to the Century Code 4.1-01.1. In the appointment, Commissioners accept their obligation to work with the highest ethical standards including diligence, resolution of conflicts-of-interest, accurate accounting, sustaining confidentiality, and compliance with the spirit of open-meeting deliberations. Because the selection of Commissioners is based on their commitment to the future of agriculture as well as a proven record of active involvement, Commissioners are allowed flexibility in scoring projects for merit and funding level. Commissioners are provided 10 percent scoring discretion based largely on individual judgment of the likelihood of success of each proposal. *Up to 10 points will be awarded on this criterion.*