

VDACS office hours

March 26, 2024 2:00pm

Resilient Food and
Infrastructure Grants

What is a “project”?


A project is a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal.

◦ Follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period and withing specific limitations (costs, performance/quality, etc.)

◦ Uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people

◦ Have a limited duration, with a definitive beginning and end

◦ Have an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks



How do I
download the
application??

Microsoft Teams

Recording

2023-10-19 17:41 UTC

Recorded by
Rolph, Shaun - MRP-
AMS

Organized by
Rolph, Shaun - MRP-
AMS

Infrastructure Grants Application Requirements

Infrastructure Grant Template –



Evidence of Critical Resources –



Letter(s) of Support –



Match Verification Letter

Examples of Infrastructure Grant Projects



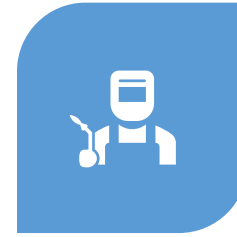
SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FACILITY;



MODERNIZE OR EXPAND AN EXISTING FACILITY (INCLUDING EXPANSION AND MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND/OR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS AT EXISTING FACILITIES);



CONSTRUCTION OF WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES, ETC.;



MODERNIZE PROCESSING AND MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT; AND



DEVELOP, CUSTOMIZE, OR INSTALL EQUIPMENT THAT REDUCES GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, INCREASES EFFICIENCY IN WATER USE, IMPROVES AIR AND/OR WATER QUALITY, AND/OR MEETS ONE OR MORE OF USDA'S CLIMATE ACTION GOALS.

Simplified Equipment Application Requirements

Infrastructure Grant Template –



Evidence of Critical Resources –



Letter(s) of Support –



Match Verification Letter

Simplified Equipment-Only Grants



THESE PROJECTS OFFER A SIMPLIFIED APPLICATION TO FUND SMALLER GRANTS BETWEEN \$10,000 AND \$100,000 FOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASES.



THE SIMPLIFIED EQUIPMENT-ONLY OPTION IS A FIXED PRICE GRANT, MEANING IT WILL FUND ONLY EQUIPMENT PURCHASES (AND NOT ASSOCIATED FACILITY UPGRADES, STAFFING, OR OTHER COSTS).



NO MATCH IS REQUIRED FOR THIS GRANT TYPE.



USING A USDA PROVIDED TEMPLATE, APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A PROJECT NARRATIVE THAT DESCRIBES THE OVERALL SCOPE OF THE PROJECT AND HOW IT ALIGNS WITH THE PROGRAM GOALS AND PRIORITIES.



APPLICANTS MUST ATTACH DOCUMENTATION TO SUBSTANTIATE THE COSTS OF EACH PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, WHICH CAN INCLUDE CONTRACTS, CATALOG PRICING, OR BINDING QUOTES PROVIDED BY LICENSE COMMERCIAL ENTITIES.

Executive Summary

A project or executive summary is a very brief description of your project.

*Must be less than 250 words. It should include:

- * 1. The name of the applicant organization
- *2. The project's purpose
- *3. A description of the general tasks/activities to be

Project Objectives



Objectives are what will be accomplished during the project, if selected for an award.

Objectives should be brief, but clear.

Objectives can be measured by the outcomes of the project.

Competitive applications will show a clear link between objective(s) and outcome(s)

Project Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiary is the applicant

Estimated number of beneficiaries should include local and regional producers that would benefit if the applicant were to receive the award.

Example: 4Peas, the applicant, purchase local fruits and vegetables from 5 farms across Virginia. The total number of beneficiaries of this project would be 6, one being 4Peas, the applicant, and 5 local/regional farms.

Outcomes and Indicators

- The outcomes and indicators provide a framework that allows for progress and activity to be tracked.
- The outcome is the result, while the indicator is a way of objectively measuring the outcome (or result).
- Example: An Infrastructure or Equipment Only project will add a processing line to your facility, and you have selected Outcome 3.
- Outcome 3: Increase economic viability of local/regional producers and processors.

- Outcomes and Indicators Example:
- 4Peas is installing a new canning line. They will need employees to run the line (5 employees), and from the previous slides, they purchase from 5 local producers. In this example, no new market outlets, value-added products or aggregation would be a result.

OUTCOME 3: INCREASE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF LOCAL/REGIONAL PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS			
Indicator	Description	Expected Numbers	N/A
3.1	Number of new jobs created:	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	Number of local/regional agricultural producers who benefited from the new or improved processing/aggregation/storage or distribution capacity:	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Number of new local/regional products processed, aggregated, stored or distributed:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4	Number of new value-added products developed:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.5	Number of new market-outlets established:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Budget Narrative

The budget will show the total cost of the project, as well as break down the costs by category and provide a justification for each expense in each category:

Funds requested

Match Amount

Justification

Budget Narrative Summary

Expense Category	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
Personnel	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Fringe Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Construction	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Contractual	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Direct Costs Sub-Total	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Indirect Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Total Budget	\$0.00	\$0.00	

Budget Narrative

- Categories Personnel: Someone whose time and effort is directly correlated to the project
- Fringe Benefits: benefits rates for each of the employees described in personnel
- Travel: each line is for each trip request; must meet the Federal Travel regulations set forth by GSA
- https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/per-diem-rates-results?action=perdiems_report&fiscal_year=2024&city=&state=VA&zip=
- Equipment: special purpose equipment to be purchased

Budget Narrative – Categories (Continued)

Supplies: Materials, supplies and fabricated parts (less than \$5,000 per unit)

Construction: administrative and legal expenses, structures, architectural and engineering fees, site inspections, site work (demo, removal, construction/expansion of facilities)

Contractual: contractual/consultant services

Other: any expense that does not fall into one of the previously mentioned budget categories, **conferences**, rental expenses.

Budget Narrative – Justification Example

PERSONNEL

List the personnel whose time and effort can be specifically identified and easily and accurately traced to Cooperative Agreement activities.

+	#	Personnel Name/Title	Level of Effort (# of hours OR % FTE)	Funds Requested	Match Value	Match Type
-	1	John Smith, CEO and Project Manager	20% FTE	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	In-Kind
Personnel Subtotal				\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	

PERSONNEL JUSTIFICATION

For each individual listed in the above table, describe the activities to be completed by name/title including approximately when activities will occur. Add more personnel by copying and pasting the existing list or deleting personnel that aren't necessary.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Personnel 1: Description and justification

Personnel 2: Description and justification

Personnel 1: John Smith is the CEO of ABC Produce Packers, and will over see and manage the project. It is expected that Mr. Smith will contribute 20% of his FTE hours, over the course of the course of the project. Half of the time he contributes will be in kind, or a total of

Budget Narrative - Justification example:

- Personnel 1: Mr. John Smith is the CEO of ABC Produce Packers and will oversee and manage the project. It is expected that Mr. Smith will contribute 20% of his FTE hours, over the course of the project (August 2024 - March 2027). Mr. Smith makes \$100,000.00 annually and will contribute 20% of his time to the project, for a total of \$20,000. Half of the time he contributes (10% FTE) will be in-kind, or a total of \$10,000. Ten percent of Mr. Smith's time contributed is requested for funding (\$10,000) and the other 10% will be an in-kind contribution (\$10,000), for a total of \$20,000.
- Mr. Smith's responsibilities will be meeting with contractors, managing the work and coordinating the various tasks, including the construction of the new wing of the facility, overseeing the installation of the equipment and coordinating the various contractors who will need to complete work. Mr. Smith will ensure that the project stays on schedule and see that the outcomes and of the project.

Budget Narrative – Justification

- Each budget category has a justification narrative section explaining:

What the expense is for

How it is critical to the project objective(s) and outcome(s)

How the cost/price was determined

- A well written budget narrative will allow reviewers to easily understand how you derived the cost for the funds being requested.
- For items, services, and labor you must provide and attach estimates or quotes

Budget Narrative – Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are typically administrative, clerical, and facility maintenance costs that are not specifically related to the project.

Any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Indirect cost may count towards match

Other requirements

- Recipients are required to have a Unique Entity ID (UEI), obtained through SAM.gov, at the time awards are made.
- VDACS strongly encourages applicants to obtain a UEI before applying.
- Selected applications will be submitted for USDA review May 24, 2024, any selected applications missing UEI will be omitted.

The image shows a screenshot of the SAM.gov registration process. It features a progress bar with four steps: 1. About Registration, 2. Set up a SAM.gov Account, 3. Prepare Your Data, and 4. Get Started. Below the progress bar, there is a section titled "1 About Registration" which explains the requirements for registration and provides a link to the "Entity Registration Checklist". To the right, there are two panels: "Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID" with buttons for "Get Started", "Renew Entity", and "Check Entity Status"; and "Already Registered?" which provides information on renewal and a link to "Go to your Entity Management Workspace".

Before You Get Started
Review these steps to choose which option is right for you. You can register to bid and apply for federal awards or you can request a Unique Entity ID only without having to complete a registration.

1 About Registration | 2 Set up a SAM.gov Account | 3 Prepare Your Data | 4 Get Started

1 About Registration
If you want to apply for federal awards as a prime awardee, you need a **registration**. A registration allows you to bid on government contracts and apply for federal assistance. As part of registration, we will assign you a Unique Entity ID. To see comprehensive instructions and checklist for entity registration, download our [Entity Registration Checklist](#).

If you do not want to apply directly for awards, then you do not need a registration. If you only conduct certain types of transactions, such as reporting as a sub-awardee, you may not need to complete a registration. You may only need a **Unique Entity ID**.
[What does it mean to get only a Unique Entity ID and not register?](#)

Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID
Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government.

Get Started
Renew Entity
Check Entity Status

Already Registered?
You must renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active. You can make updates to your registration anytime or during renewal. If you're already registered, you already have a Unique Entity ID.

Go to your Entity Management Workspace to update or renew your registration

SAM.GOV

- No cost to apply.
- If you are asked to pay a fee:
“STOP IT IS A SCAM”!!
- <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>



Letter of Critical Infrastructure

- Evidence that critical resources and infrastructure necessary to support the initiation and completion of a project are in place.
- Land, structures, and other critical resources must be in place and in working condition at the time of application submission.
- The letter must:
 - * indicate what the critical resources that are necessary for initiation and completion of the project.
 - * certify that they are in place and commitment prior to the start date of the project.

Letter of Support

- Explains why the project is worthy of funding:
 - an opening statement that identifies the project/program where funds are being sought
 - one or two middle paragraphs that indicate the relationship of the writer to the effort seeking funding
 - a closing statement.

- This comes from a business/grower/producer who would benefit from your project.

One letter required. Applicants may submit no more than 3.

A well written and competitive letter will demonstrate and quantify the benefits resulting from the applicant completing the project proposed.

Match Verification

- Match is only required for Infrastructure grant application
- Match Verification is required for each type of match.
- If you plan to use in-kind contributions and a business loan, you will need to provide 2 forms of match verification.

Examples of match verification:

- Letter of intent for in-kind contribution
- Letter of pre-approval from lender
- Letter of intent from investor/cash donation

Competitive review process

- Is the application complete (including all additional documents)
- Is being submitted by an eligible entity
- Is for a project with eligible activities
- Is responsive to priorities VDACS has identified
- Demonstrates financial viability, technical feasibility, and readiness
- Describes market impact and opportunities
- Demonstrates community impact and support, including labor and workforce considerations.



Important Dates

- Grant Opened: March 15th
- Office Hours : March 26th
April 11th
- Closes April 15th at 11:59pm est.
- VDACS Evaluation process: April -May
- Submit to USDA May 22, 2024
- USDA Evaluation: May –June
- Grantees announced July 2024
- Award funding begins August 1st 2024
- Grant terms ends June 31st 2027

Contacts



SETH BENTON

- Director of Distribution
- Seth.Benton@VDACS.virginia.gov

KEISHA WILLIAMS

- Grants Coordinator
- Keisha.Williams@VDACS.virginia.gov

Quick tips

NOT ELIGIBLE

- Costs/activities related to production, such as: farm equipment, tools, seeds or starts, production-related labor, training, or infrastructure.
- Costs/activities related to markets and consumers, such as: expanding sales staff for a farm store; renovation of retail space, including additional refrigeration; marketing and promotion.
- Acquisition of buildings, facilities, or land

ELIGIBLE

Expand capacity for processing, aggregation, and distribution of agricultural products.

*Modernize manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems Improve the capacity of entities to comply with food safety requirements

- Support the construction of a new facility
- Modernize or expand an existing facility
- Modernize processing and manufacturing equipment
- Develop, customize, or install equipment that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, increases efficiency in water use, improves air and/or water quality, and other climate action solutions

Questions