



Show-Me Entrepreneurial Grants for Agriculture (SEGA) *Institutional Grants Program Guidelines*

The Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority's (MASBDA) objective for this program is to provide partial funding in the form of grants to Missouri institutions of higher education for the creation and implementation of unique learning opportunities for producers and businesses interested in increasing value-added agriculture.

An agricultural product is defined as: An agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, or vegetable product; growing of grapes that will be processed into wine; bees; honey; fish or other aquacultural product; planting seed; livestock; livestock product; forestry product; or poultry or poultry product, in its natural state.

Value-added agriculture is defined as:

- A change in the physical state or form of the product.
- The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan.
- The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product.

As a result of the change in physical state or the manner in which the agricultural commodity or product is produced and segregated, the customer base for the commodity or product is expanded and a greater portion of revenue derived from the marketing, processing or physical segregation is made available to the producer of the commodity or product.

APPLICATION CYCLES

MASBDA will consider SEGA Institutional Grant applications from Missouri institutions of higher education to develop educational programs designed to assist those interested in increasing value-added agriculture in the state.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

To be considered for June 2023 funding, MASBDA must receive one original, one copy, and an electronic version no later than 5 p.m. on April 28, 2023.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

1. Eligible applicants must be a Missouri institution of higher education. Joint applications may be submitted by two or more eligible Missouri institutions of higher education.
2. Eligibility will not be determined or otherwise affected by any consideration of race, religion, sex, creed, color or residence, other than that the recipient must be an institution(s) of higher education located in Missouri.
3. Grant recipients must be able to provide proof of citizenship; identity; residence; and enrollment in E-verify, the federal work authorization program. Please see www.e-verify.gov for more information about the program and the enrollment process.
4. Applications will be scored on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated on how they conform to the grant program's intent, near-term measurable results, objectives and criteria and the proposal's cost effectiveness.
5. The grant recipient will be responsible for any federal or state taxes applicable for funds received, if awarded, and it is recommended the applicant consult with a tax professional prior to submitting an application, and upon potential award.
6. Prior to final grant disbursement the grant recipient will be required to submit to MASBDA a final written report. The final grant disbursement will be withheld pending receipt of the final report. Interim reports will be required in accordance with the project's approved work plan.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be considered to fund up to 75% of eligible project expenses related to developing and implementing educational programs on topics that will assist new and/or existing businesses increase value-added processing in Missouri. Educational programs eligible for funding include but are not limited to:

- a. Speaker series
- b. Workshops
- c. Courses
- d. Seminars
- e. Training/Certification Courses
- f. Targeted Cohort Programs
- g. Training the Trainer Initiatives

Topics for the educational programs, may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Compliance with federal, state and local food safety regulations
- b. Developing business and financial plans
- c. Completing value-added grant applications offered by federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- d. How to start a new, or expand an existing, value-added enterprise
- e. Human Resources: how to find, hire and train new employees
- f. What to consider when seeking to grow your value-added business
- g. What to know about federal, state and local taxes

Missouri institutions of higher education are encouraged to submit applications with timely and relevant topics that will increase participants' chance of success in beginning or expanding a value-added agriculture enterprise. Given the focus on non-traditional students, consideration should be given to all forms of learning. This includes programs offered jointly with aligned agriculture

organizations, at night, on weekends and virtually.

RESTRICTIONS

The program does not provide funds for the following:

- a. Indirect expenses
- b. Substituting existing efforts or relevant educational programs already underway
- c. Equipment purchases to deliver the educational programs
- d. Payment of fines or penalties, bad debts, and lobbying or entertainment expenses

FUNDING LEVEL AND MATCH

The maximum grant award to any Missouri institution of higher education is \$100,000. Maximum grant awards for projects submitted jointly is \$250,000. Requests for funds must be justified with respect to the project scope.

Applicants are required to meet a minimum 25% cash and/or in-kind match for a funded project. For joint applications, no single entity may provide less than 20% of the required match. For example, a proposed \$250,000 project would require that each entity provide a minimum \$12,500 cash or in-kind match.

Cash Match is defined as cash that is contributed by the applicant specifically toward the cost of the project in categories funded by the *Institutional* Grant as detailed in Attachment B of the application. The Confirmation of Cash and In-Kind Contribution statement included on Attachment B must be completed.

In-Kind Match is defined as a non-cash contribution such as salary, services, facilities, equipment, other sources of funding etc. toward the cost of the entire project.

MULTIPLE PROPOSALS

Multiple applications from the same institution(s) will be considered if each application covers distinctly different educational programs focused on value-added agriculture. Applications that have been submitted to other state or federal grant programs may also be considered (and declared on Attachment B, Statement of Potential Funding Sources), but there cannot be duplication of the same expense.

CHANGES

All changes to contracts and/or budgets as presented in the grant application must receive prior approval from MASBDA before payment of invoices will be approved.

FEES

There are no application fees for the Missouri SEGA *Institutional Grant Program*.

EVALUATION AND FUNDING CRITERIA

Proposals will be selected on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated within a framework of 100 maximum points using the following criteria:

POTENTIAL TO INCREASE VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE (45 points possible)

The primary objectives of the Missouri SEGA programs are to accelerate increases in sales of value-added agricultural products. Increased sales of value-added agriculture products by new and existing businesses will be assisted by educational programs tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs.

These non-traditional students will benefit from practical, hands-on programs that address topics which improve the likelihood of success.

This category will be evaluated in terms of: 1) the extent to which the proposed educational program(s) will provide agriculture entrepreneurs with knowledge useful to starting, or expanding, their value-added enterprise; 2) the methods being used to arm entrepreneurs with needed knowledge; 3) the number of entrepreneurs able to benefit from the curriculum and scalability to regions throughout the state; 4) uniqueness of the proposed educational topics and format for learning; 5) potential for leading to an increase in new jobs and capital investment; and 6) interest in participation by entrepreneurs, including plans to encourage participation in the proposed educational programs.

CREDIBILITY AND NEAR-TERM IMPACT (35 points possible)

The qualifications of the project's principals are critical to the success of each proposed project. MASBDA will judge each proposal for its perceived feasibility, from both a technical and practical perspective. The qualifications of those developing programs and curriculum, as well as the instructors and speakers, is a key consideration.

Applications and anticipated project results should demonstrate a reasonable and feasible work plan and near-term time frame for completion. The potential for timely application of learned material, and the anticipated results will be major considerations. Applicants should also describe the process in which the educational program will be evaluated.

MERIT (20 points possible)

Each member of the MASBDA Board of Directors may award up to 20 additional points per proposal. These points are based largely on individual judgment of a proposal's likely success.

APPLICATION EVALUATION AND GRANT AWARD PROCESS

MASBDA will review, evaluate and award grants on an announced timetable. No partial applications will be considered. All applications will be screened for completeness and eligibility upon receipt by MASBDA staff.

MASBDA will consider each application individually. Each application will compete for limited funds. All proposals must include sufficient information to allow the funding criteria to be evaluated.

MASBDA reserves the right to decrease the amount of requested funding based on its findings and on its level of available funds. Should the process produce a funding level less than the amount requested in the application, MASBDA staff will confer with the applicant(s) to determine whether the amount recommended would alter the project's feasibility.

Each applicant will be notified of the MASBDA's decision. The decision is binding and not subject to review or appeal.

MASBDA reserves the right to audit the applicant's books and records relating to project performance during and up to 3 years following the project's completion. MASBDA also may recover grant funds not used per the contract or if a misrepresentation should occur.

Grant recipients must enter into a contract with MASBDA. Once the applicant and MASBDA staff agree to a contract, it will be considered for final approval by MASBDA's executive director.

MASBDA program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. The contract will establish an approved project plan of work and budget and will list responsibilities of project personnel.

Principals of a project awarded a grant will be responsible for the approved project plan of work, project budget, and responsibilities of project personnel. In the event a principal leaves employment of the Missouri institution of higher education prior to the conclusion of the grant, it will be the responsibility of the Missouri institution of higher education to provide MASBDA with written notice of the principal appointed to complete the project.

Grant recipients may be reimbursed for approved expenditures upon receipt of invoice and proof of payment such as a cancelled check and receipt of payment. Grant funds may be paid directly to the supplier of services upon receipt of an approved invoice.

The cash match commitment must be documented by proof of payment in each approved budget category as “Contributed Cash Match” as shown on Attachment C Project Budget Summary before the final grant funds can be disbursed.

Basic project information including the award amount and a brief project description may be used in media releases upon grant award.

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

Eligible applicants: Missouri institutions of higher education conducting educational programs in Missouri.

Missouri Institutions of Higher Education: Colleges, universities, and vocational/technical schools with physical locations within the boundaries of Missouri.

CONDITIONS

MASBDA will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the date of grant award.

MASBDA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all applications received;
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification and applicant agreement;
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the application requirements and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to better serve the interests of the State of Missouri;
- Amend the program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to all potential applicants;
- Approve the submitted budget on a line-by-line basis;
- Request copies of bids;
- Require a good faith effort on the part of the project sponsor to work with MASBDA subsequent to project completion to develop or implement the project results in Missouri; and
- Withhold any payments if contract conditions are not met.

All proposals submitted in response to a call for applications will become the property of MASBDA.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

One original and one copy, and an electronic version of the *SEGA Institutional* Grant Application should be sent to:

Missouri Agriculture and Small Business Development Authority
P.O. Box 630
1616 Missouri Boulevard
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Email: masbda@mda.mo.gov
Fax: (573) 522-2416

For additional information or to access the program application, call (573) 751-2129, or visit our website at masbda.com.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Interim Written Update

Interim reporting requirements will be based on the project's duration, nature, cost and approved work plan. Interim reports will include detailed coverage of project activities and findings and include goals for work to be completed prior to the next scheduled report. MASBDA reserves the right to modify the reporting requirements during the course of the project.

Final Report

An original and two (2) copies of a written final report will be required within 60 days following project completion. The final report shall include program and fiscal summaries. The program summary shall include the following:

- a. A brief description of the original intent of the project, including grant purchases
- b. The number of entrepreneurs who have participated in the educational program(s) over the course of the reporting period and the number estimated to participate over the next 12 months (if applicable).
- c. An evaluation of project results and benefits, including how they met original expectations
- d. Recommendations for future educational programs that will build upon the stated goal of increasing value-added agriculture in Missouri.
- e. Other appropriate information related to the project

The final grant disbursement will be withheld pending receipt of the final report.

Failure of the principal to submit required reports in a timely manner will result in delay of invoice reimbursement and ineligibility for future awards under the Missouri SEGA Program.

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